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**PRELIMINARY STUDY OF INVESTIGATING ACADEMIC CHALLENGES,
MOTIVATION TO LEARN AND COPING STRATEGIES OF INDONESIAN
TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)
STUDENTS IN A CHINESE VOCATIONAL COLLEGE UNDER THE INDONESIA-
CHINA TVET INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

Yu Xinrui ^{1*}, Rosy Binti Talin ²

¹ Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Sabah, Malaysia;
Liuzhou City Vocational College

² Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Sabah, Malaysia
*Corresponding e-mail: yuxinrui2023@gmail.com¹, rostalin@ums.edu.my²

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Abstract

This study aim investigates the impact of internationalization and motivation on vocational education and training (TVET) programs in Indonesia. Specifically, the study examines how international cooperation and collaboration can enhance the quality and relevance of TVET programs, as well as the role of motivation in influencing student academic achievement. The study draws on qualitative which draws on interviews, and focus groups with Indonesian students, educators, and industry professionals. It is expected that the findings will shown an internationalization can lead to improved curriculum relevance, better job prospects, and increased student motivation. However, challenges related to infrastructure, funding, and cultural differences also emerged. The study highlights the importance of addressing these challenges to ensure the success of TVET programs in Indonesia. Implications for policymakers, educators, and practitioners will be discussed, emphasizing the need for a more nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between internationalization, motivation, and TVET program outcomes.

Introduction

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) defines international cooperation as the collaboration between two entities to achieve common objectives through a "mutually agreed division of labor" (UNCCD, n.d.). In countries like China and Indonesia, this form of cooperation involves the respective governments working with local stakeholders and external partners, such as international agencies, to develop and implement a development strategy (Maulana, 2018). One area of focus is vocational education, which is an essential component of the education system for generating skilled workers (Tripney & Hombrados, 2013).

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) aims to equip individuals with knowledge and skills for work, promoting employment, decent work, and entrepreneurship while supporting inclusive and sustainable economic growth (UNESCO, 2020). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has designated UNESCO-UNEVOC as its center for TVET, which supports UNESCO member states in strengthening and upgrading their TVET systems (UNESCO-UNEVOC, n.d.). China and Indonesia are among the member states of UNESCO-UNEVOC.

Vocational training is a significant aspect of this study, as the Chinese-Indonesian collaboration faces challenges despite its ideal portrayal on paper and policy. Indonesia believes that producing a TVET-trained and skilled workforce will help the country transition from agricultural industries to technology and industrial sectors (Ichwanto et al., 2021). Similarly, China views TVET as a means to create an affluent society and meet market demand for knowledgeable and skilled workers (Postiglione & Tang, 2019).

To meet societal and industrial expectations, TVET programs are crucial in nurturing the skills needed to upgrade Indonesians and Chinese from low-paying blue-collar occupations to a performing economy that relies on locally trained workers. The relationship between China and Indonesia has established a vocational education international cooperation mechanism at the government level, with vocational colleges serving as the core of the relationship (Maulana, 2018).

The Dual Vocational Education and Training (VET) system was introduced to provide short-term training and internship opportunities and exchange programs for students (Maulana, 2018). According to Wibowo et al. (2022), the dual VET system allows students to learn in more than one location, such as classroom learning and industrial training. Oeben and Klumpp (2021) emphasized that this system has long-term benefits, providing local industries with a capable workforce equipped with necessary skills.

As this cooperation involves two countries with distinct differences in terms of language, culture, and beliefs, this study aims to gain insight into the impact of international cooperation on Indonesian TVET students' learning and coping strategies during their two-year training in a selected Chinese TVET College in Lizhou, China before returning to Indonesia for a one-year internship as part of their graduation requirement.

The present study aims to investigate the phenomenon of international collaboration between Indonesia and China, specifically from the perspectives of Indonesian students, to better understand its efficacy in enhancing international cooperation and contributing to constructing China-Indonesia's common goals (Abovitz, 2018; Lü, 2018). For this purpose, the researcher

will focus on two organizations: SAIC-GM-Wuling Automobile Co., Ltd. (SGMW), located in Liuzhou, China, and its Indonesian subsidiary Pt. SGMW Moter Indonesia (Guo & Chen, 2019). SGMW set up its subsidiary in Indonesia in 2015 and invested \$700 million to build a 60-hectare vehicle assembly plant and parts park in Bekasi, West Java, Indonesia (SGMW, n.d.).

The second organization is Liuzhou City Vocational College (LCVC), an 80-year-old institution actively involved in international education and educating international students (LCVC, n.d.). Since 2015, LCVC has collaborated with overseas companies and vocational schools in Indonesia, including the Indonesian government, schools, and local enterprises (Liu et al., 2020). The college has one branch and two overseas training bases in Indonesia and has trained over 1,000 Indonesian students (LCVC, n.d.).

These two organizations, SGMW and LCVC, were selected as they exhibit a strong commitment to internationalization (Sohn & Wang, 2016). Their collaborative effort began in 2015, with the Chinese and Indonesian counterparts working together since early 2016 (SGMW & LCVC, n.d.). Liuzhou City Vocational College Indonesia campus, the first overseas branch of Guangxi higher vocational colleges, was set up in Jakarta in 2017 (LCVC, n.d.). During these years, the two parties established three training bases in China and Indonesia. Over 400 Indonesian international talents have benefited from SGMW and LCVC cross-border cooperation, with 1,137 employees trained (SGMW & LCVC, n.d.).

As the cooperation involves two countries with distinct differences in language, culture, and beliefs (Hofstede et al., 2010), the researcher hopes to gain a clearer insight into the international cooperation's impact on Indonesian TVET students' learning, motivation to learn, and coping strategies through the students' perspectives when undergoing a two-year training program at a selected Chinese TVET college in Lizhou, China before returning to Indonesia for a one-year internship as part of their graduation requirement.

As part of international cooperation, the China-Indonesia TVET system is responsible for equipping Indonesian trainees with industrial-related skills, especially those training in Chinese vocational schools. The collaboration seems ideal; however, the dual VET system is not without challenges (Yu et al., 2020). For instance, students may experience culture shock and language barriers (Yu et al., 2020). Although previous studies have focused on Indonesians as international students in China, showing that they face issues such as adjusting to a new living environment (Liu, 2019; Wang, 2020; Song, 2021), these students eventually adapt and learn to enjoy their experiences in the country.

Wang (2020) studied the status quo, difficulties, and countermeasures of the overseas academic program between Jiangsu Food and Pharmaceutical Science Vocational College and Inner Mongolia Mengniu Dairy Company to cultivate talents for Mengniu's Indonesian factory. The study revealed that there is a lack of policy basis for this cooperative education, high financial pressure on overseas cooperative education, and quality risks due to the lack of international standards in the field of cooperation (Wang, 2020).

While Wang's study pointed out that weak policies and poor financial management could result in the program's quality and efficacy (Wang, 2020), there is a need to investigate issues related to Indonesian TVET students that will help shed light on the TVET's colleges' teaching and learning experiences, organizational goals, and whether the colleges' operations consider the Indonesian students' academic and social needs.

This study aims to investigate the types of academic challenges that could affect the dual VET system and determine the motivating factors that helped the Indonesian students cope with changes throughout their two-year learning experience at Liuzhou City Vocational College. The study also aims to identify the dominant motivation factors that would help to improve the existing China-Indonesia collaboration.

2.0 Literature Review

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) plays a vital role in equipping students with the practical skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in the workforce, and is a crucial aspect of education in both Indonesia and China. In Indonesia, TVET is known as "Kejuruan" and is offered at the secondary level, providing students with training in specific vocational skills such as automotive repair, electrical engineering, and culinary arts (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2017). This focus on practical skills is essential for addressing the country's labor market needs, as Indonesia faces a shortage of skilled workers in certain industries (World Bank, 2018). The Indonesian government has recognized the importance of TVET and has made significant efforts to improve its quality, including increasing the number of TVET institutions and improving the curriculum to better meet the needs of employers (World Bank, 2018). For example, the government has introduced new TVET programs in areas such as construction, manufacturing, and healthcare to address labor market demands (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019). Furthermore, TVET institutions in Indonesia have also implemented innovative teaching methods, such as apprenticeships and work-based training, to enhance students' practical skills (ASEAN Labour Observatory, 2020).

In China, vocational education is a crucial aspect of the education system, known as "vocational education" and offered at both junior and senior high school levels. The primary focus of vocational education in China is to provide students with practical skills in areas such as manufacturing, construction, and healthcare, allowing them to develop hands-on skills and knowledge that can be applied directly to the workforce (Chen & Xu, 2016). The Chinese government has recognized the importance of TVET and has implemented various initiatives to promote its development, including the establishment of vocational high schools and training programs for adults (Li & Li, 2018). According to Chen and Xu's study (2016), these efforts have been successful in improving the employability of graduates, with a staggering 70% of graduates finding employment within six months of graduation. This suggests that vocational education in China is effective in providing students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the labor market.

Both Indonesia and China encounter significant challenges in implementing effective Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) systems. In Indonesia, the quality of TVET is hindered by inadequate infrastructure and limited resources (World Bank, 2018). According to the World Bank, many TVET institutions in Indonesia lack modern facilities and equipment, making it difficult for students to receive hands-on training. Additionally, limited resources have resulted in a shortage of qualified instructors and a lack of opportunities for students to participate in internships and apprenticeships. This has led to concerns about the employability of TVET graduates and the relevance of TVET programs to the labor market.

In China, the challenge lies in the mismatch between the skills provided by vocational education and the needs of employers (Li & Li, 2018). Many vocational education programs in China focus on providing students with theoretical knowledge rather than practical skills,

which can make it difficult for graduates to adapt to the demands of the labor market. This mismatch has resulted in a significant gap between the skills of vocational education graduates and the requirements of employers. Furthermore, there are concerns about the low status of vocational education in both Indonesia and China, with some parents and students viewing it as a less prestigious option compared to academic education (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2017). This perception can discourage students from pursuing TVET programs, leading to a shortage of skilled workers in key industries.

In China, another challenge is the emphasis on theoretical education over practical training. Many vocational education programs focus on providing students with a strong foundation in theoretical knowledge, but do not provide adequate opportunities for hands-on training or apprenticeships. This can result in graduates who are not equipped with the practical skills needed to perform their jobs effectively (Li & Li, 2018). To address this issue, the Chinese government has launched initiatives such as the "National Vocational Education Reform" which aims to increase the emphasis on practical training and apprenticeships in vocational education.

In Indonesia, another challenge is the lack of coordination between TVET institutions and industry. Many TVET programs are designed without input from employers, resulting in graduates who are not equipped with the skills that industry needs. This can lead to a mismatch between the supply of skilled workers and the demand from employers, making it difficult for graduates to find employment (World Bank, 2018). To address this issue, the Indonesian government has launched initiatives such as the "Job Creation Law" which aims to improve the coordination between education and industry, and to increase the employability of TVET graduates.

Furthermore, both Indonesia and China face challenges in ensuring that TVET programs are relevant to the labor market. In Indonesia, many TVET programs are based on outdated curricula that do not reflect the changing needs of the labor market. This can result in graduates who are not equipped with the skills that employers need (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2017). In China, there is a lack of data and research on the labor market needs, making it difficult to design TVET programs that meet the needs of employers. To address this issue, both countries need to invest in labor market research and analysis to inform TVET program design.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a crucial aspect of education in both Indonesia and China, as it provides students with the skills and knowledge necessary for the workforce. In Indonesia, TVET is known as "Kejuruan" and is offered at the secondary level, providing students with training in specific vocational skills such as automotive repair, electrical engineering, and culinary arts (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2017). The Indonesian government has made significant efforts to improve the quality of TVET, including increasing the number of TVET institutions and improving the curriculum to meet the needs of the labor market (World Bank, 2018).

In China, TVET is known as "vocational education" and is offered at both junior and senior high school levels. Vocational education in China focuses on providing students with practical skills in areas such as manufacturing, construction, and healthcare (Chen & Xu, 2016). The Chinese government has implemented various initiatives to promote TVET, including the introduction of vocational high schools and training programs for adults (Li & Li, 2018). According to a study by Chen and Xu (2016), vocational education in China has been

successful in improving the employability of graduates, with 70% of graduates finding employment within six months of graduation.

Both Indonesia and China face challenges in implementing effective TVET systems. In Indonesia, issues such as inadequate infrastructure and limited resources have hindered the quality of TVET (World Bank, 2018). In China, there are concerns about the mismatch between the skills provided by vocational education and the needs of employers (Li & Li, 2018). Furthermore, there are also concerns about the low status of vocational education in both countries, with some parents and students viewing it as a less prestigious option compared to academic education (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2017).

TVET plays a vital role in both Indonesia and China by providing students with practical skills necessary for the workforce. In Indonesia, TVET is crucial for addressing the country's skill shortage, particularly in the fields of manufacturing, construction, and healthcare (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2017). The Indonesian government has made efforts to improve TVET by increasing the number of TVET institutions and programs, as well as introducing vocational training for adults and out-of-school youth (World Bank, 2018). Similarly, in China, TVET is seen as a key strategy for addressing the country's labor market needs and promoting economic growth (Chen & Xu, 2016). The Chinese government has implemented various initiatives to promote TVET, including the introduction of vocational high schools and training programs for adults (Li & Li, 2018).

However, despite these efforts, both countries face challenges in implementing effective TVET systems. In Indonesia, issues such as inadequate infrastructure and limited resources have hindered the quality of TVET (World Bank, 2018). Additionally, there are concerns about the mismatch between the skills provided by TVET and the needs of employers in both countries (Li & Li, 2018; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2017). Furthermore, there are also concerns about the low status of TVET in both countries, with some parents and students viewing it as a less prestigious option compared to academic education (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2017). To address these challenges, it is essential for policymakers to prioritize TVET and take steps to improve its quality, relevance, and status. This can be achieved by increasing funding for TVET institutions, developing more industry-relevant curricula, and promoting awareness among students and parents about the importance of TVET.

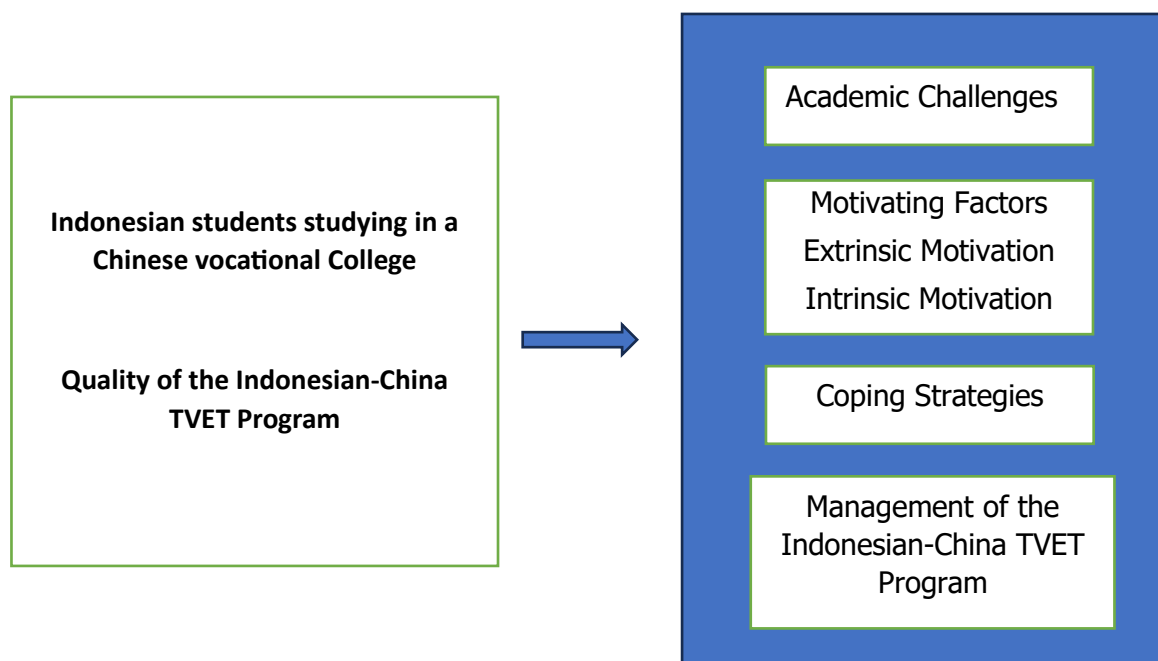


Figure 1 Proposed Framework for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Students' Academic Performance

From Figure 1, this study examines the factors that influence the academic performance of TVET students in a Chinese vocational college, particularly those participating in the China-Indonesian training program, with the aim of producing skilled talents for the Indonesian-based SAIC-GM-Wuling Automobile Co., Ltd. (SGMW). The study focuses on four key terms: academic challenges, factors that motivate them to continue learning, coping strategies, and the management of the Indonesian-China TVET school-enterprise cooperation program.

Academic challenges are a significant factor that can affect students' learning outcomes, as discussed by Yu et al. (2020), who found that Indonesian students may struggle to adapt to Chinese-style education, which differs from their familiar learning environment in Indonesia. Herpratiwi and Tohir (2022), Von Tonder et al. (2022), and Vo et al. (2022) also emphasized the importance of motivation factors in influencing students' academic performance, with motivated students being more likely to become self-directed learners and achieve better outcomes.

Coping strategies are another crucial aspect of this study, as they provide insight into how students manage challenges and stay focused on their education. The Administrative Management Theory will be used to analyze the effectiveness of the program in accommodating students' academic and personal needs.

The China-Indonesian TVET collaboration is also an important factor in this study, as it aims to determine the program's effectiveness in producing Indonesian TVET talents for SGMW. Interviews and document analysis will be conducted to gather information on the current policies and programs, as well as the needs of Indonesian students.

By applying theories such as Self Determination Theory and Coping Theory, this study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the Indonesian TVET students' experiences in China and identify strategies to support their academic success. Ultimately, the findings of this study will inform policymakers and educators on how to improve the effectiveness of the China-Indonesian TVET program and better prepare Indonesian students for their future careers.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopts an interpretivist approach, which allows the researcher to acknowledge and accept subjectivity, recognizing that realities are unique to individual experiences (Levers, 2013). This paradigm enables the researcher to independently comprehend the respondents' behaviors, as their realities are shaped by their individual perspectives (Levers, 2013). Furthermore, interpretivism is preferred over other approaches as it methodologically acknowledges the researcher's own voice, concerns, and practices (Burns et al., 2022). This approach allows the researcher to understand the respondents' feelings and thoughts during interaction.

To investigate the academic challenges faced by Indonesian TVET students in China, this study will employ a qualitative approach to collect data and explore the richness, depth, and complexity of human experiences (Renjith et al., 2021). As Tenny et al. (2022) noted, qualitative research strongly emphasizes the context in which phenomena occur, allowing researchers to understand how social, cultural, historical, and environmental factors influence the subject of study. Semi-structured interviews will be used to collect data, with prompts designed to elicit information about the challenges faced by the respondents and how they cope. This qualitative tool enables the researcher to be part of the investigation and explore the respondents' emotions when faced with challenges (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

The data will be transcribed and analyzed using NVivo 12, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the respondents' experiences. By adopting an interpretivist approach and using semi-structured interviews, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the academic challenges faced by Indonesian TVET students in China and their coping strategies.

4.0 Expected Findings

The expected findings of this study suggest that Indonesian TVET students in China will face a triad of academic challenges, namely language barriers, cultural differences, and limited resources. Language difficulties, for instance, have been shown to have a profound impact on the learning outcomes of international students, as Kunnan (2012) notes, "language proficiency is a critical factor in determining the success of international students" (p. 1053). Similarly, cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings and difficulties in adapting to the new educational environment, as Hofstede (2001) suggests, "cultural differences can create misunderstandings and conflicts" (p. 12). Moreover, limited resources and infrastructure can hinder students' ability to access quality education, as Altbach (2013) highlights, "the lack of resources and infrastructure can hinder the quality of education" (p. 123).

In addition to these challenges, this study expects to identify the dominant motivation and coping strategies used by the students to overcome these obstacles. Research has shown that motivation plays a crucial role in students' academic success, and that coping strategies such as social support networks and self-efficacy can help students overcome academic challenges. For instance, Lent et al. (1994) found that "students who reported higher levels of self-efficacy also reported higher levels of academic achievement" (p. 115), while Zimmerman (2000) notes

that "social support networks can help students develop coping strategies and build confidence" (p. 16). By understanding the motivations and coping strategies of Indonesian TVET students in China, this study aims to provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders involved in TVET education.

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on TVET education in Indonesia and China, particularly in understanding the experiences of Indonesian TVET students in China. By shedding light on the challenges faced by these students, the study aims to inform policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders involved in TVET education on the importance of addressing these issues to improve the quality and accessibility of TVET programs for international students (Altbach, 2013). For instance, the study's findings may highlight the need for language support services, such as English language training and cultural orientation programs, to help Indonesian TVET students adapt to the Chinese educational system (Liu et al., 2019).

Moreover, the study's results may also provide valuable insights for educators on how to develop effective teaching strategies that cater to the diverse needs of international students. For example, research has shown that students' motivation and self-efficacy are crucial factors that influence their academic performance (Lent et al., 1994; Zimmerman, 2000). Therefore, educators may need to develop strategies to enhance students' motivation and self-efficacy, such as providing opportunities for peer support and encouragement.

Furthermore, the study's findings may also have implications for policy-making in both Indonesia and China. For instance, policymakers may need to consider developing policies that promote international cooperation and collaboration in TVET education, such as student exchange programs and joint degree programs (Mareschal et al., 2015). Additionally, policymakers may need to develop policies that address the challenges faced by international students in China, such as visa requirements and accommodation costs.

Therefore the findings of this study are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of the experiences of Indonesian TVET students in China and provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders involved in TVET education. By addressing the challenges faced by these students, it can improve the quality and accessibility of TVET programs for international students and promote greater cooperation between Indonesia and China.

5.0 Conclusion

This study's findings suggest that Indonesian TVET students in China face significant challenges in adapting to the local education system, culture, and language. The study's results indicate that language barriers, cultural differences, and limited resources are major obstacles that hinder their academic success. The study's findings also highlight the importance of addressing these challenges by providing language support services, cultural orientation programs, and access to resources.

The study's results suggest that policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders involved in TVET education should develop strategies to address the unique needs of international students, particularly those from Indonesia. This may involve developing language training programs, cultural orientation sessions, and providing access to resources and mentorship.

Furthermore, the study's findings imply that international cooperation and collaboration between Indonesia and China can play a crucial role in addressing the challenges faced by Indonesian TVET students in China. This may involve developing joint degree programs, student exchange programs, and collaborative research initiatives.

In conclusion, this study's findings emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges faced by Indonesian TVET students in China. By understanding the experiences of these students and developing targeted strategies to support their academic success, we can promote greater cooperation between Indonesia and China and improve the quality of TVET education for international students.

Policymakers may need to consider developing policies that promote international cooperation and collaboration in TVET education, such as student exchange programs and joint degree programs. Additionally, policymakers may need to address the challenges faced by international students in China, such as visa requirements and accommodation costs.

Overall, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the experiences of Indonesian TVET students in China and provides valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders involved in TVET education. By addressing the challenges faced by these students, we can improve the quality and accessibility of TVET programs for international students and promote greater cooperation between Indonesia and China.

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