

# Social Media as a coping tool for nostalgic international students in New Zealand

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## ABSTRACT

Teaching on a campus that is built exclusively for international students, the academic and social wellbeing of these students is of utmost concern to staff and the institution. It is therefore essential that teaching and non-teaching staff are continuously evaluating their practices to see ways to improve the support provided to these students that have come from their various home countries to study in New Zealand. This paper is an attempt to begin a study on understanding the influence of nostalgia on the academic and social wellbeing of international students in New Zealand. Particularly, this paper looks at the role of social media as a coping tool for nostalgia amongst international students.

**Keywords:** Nostalgia, Social Media, International Students

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching on a campus that is built exclusively for international students, the academic and social wellbeing of these students is of utmost concern to staff and the institution. It is therefore essential that teaching and non-teaching staff are continuously evaluating their practices to see ways to improve the support provided to these students that have come from their various home countries to study in New Zealand. This paper is an attempt to begin a study on understanding the influence of nostalgia on the academic and social wellbeing of international students in New Zealand. Particularly, this paper looks at the role of social media as a coping tool for nostalgia amongst international students.

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Social media is increasingly becoming one of the prevalent tools for coping and acculturation for migrants today. The rise in websites and applications built to remember places and people connected to our past is making social media a coping mechanism for nostalgia (Evans, 2009). Davis (1979) was the first to connect nostalgia with coping and societal change. His works show a fundamental shift in nostalgia studies from emphasis on people, places and events to personalities, media creations and allusions. This shift is based on the prevalence of mass media and the obvious roles they play in our lives today. Menke (2017) argues that media is fast becoming the object of people's longing, and nostalgia is connected to individuals' endeavour to adapt to cultural and societal changes. Sedikides et al. (2015) claims that nostalgia can be a way of coping with psychological challenges especially where change is concerned. Media has vital mental and emotional value for people who are either faced with or required to adapt to change (Menke 2017).