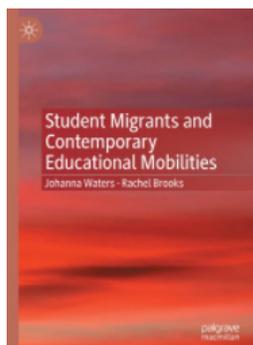


Student Migrants and Contemporary Educational Mobilities

Waters, J & Brooks, R. (2021). Cham, Switzerland. Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN 978-3-030-78295-5 (eBook). 264 pp., \$109.

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Student Migrants and Contemporary Educational Mobilities offers a timely, holistic, and engaging contribution to the field of international higher education with focus on the status and trend of international student mobility (ISM) and various issues related to international students in the global context. International educators who work with international students closely as well as scholars with research focus on international student wellbeing and success will find this book extremely informative and insightful.

This book reflects the profound geographic changes of ISM as well as its social-economic diversification in the past decade. Waters and Brooks argue that the ISM flow has shifted from students pursuing education in the traditional regions (i.e., countries and institutions in the global north) to the global south led by Asia: China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore. Students from middle-class families have increased substantially in the global mobility compared to the conventional ISM model (i.e., students from privileged and wealthy families). These fundamental changes have brought many new perspectives to the field of ISM and internationalization of higher education, such as: 1) implications of international student diversification; 2) social characteristics of international student learning; and 3) ethics in relations to ISM.

Waters and Brooks argue that the conventional trend of students uniformly seeking education in the “Anglophone West” with the predefined conceptual framework has diverged in the past decade. The depictions of ISM as a Global South to Global North or East to West cannot capture the nature and complexity of ISM anymore. Waters and Brooks utilize China as an example and illustrate China as a newly emerged destination for international students, which has significantly increased its number of international students, with over 400 percent increase from 1999 to 2008 and continuous increase onwards. Most international students who study in China are from less affluent backgrounds and show little interest in permanent relocation as traditionally framed in ISM literature a decade ago. They study in China because of scholarship offered by the China government which on the other hand lacks interest in financial gain as many conventional international student destinations do. Another example Waters and Brooks discuss is the Erasmus ISM which increases the prevalence of middle-class students as opposed to elite students seeking education across national border in popular destination countries in EU.

The socio-economic diversification of international students implies the potential change of the role of ISM playing in “state-building” (residency and citizenship), emergence of new education stratification, and the differential value of international education. For example, China’s soft-power competitive strategies to award scholarship to international students to study in China; tension between international students and locals in Singapore; international students included in immigration policy and Brexit discussion in U.K.; and the education abroad opportunities pursued by less privileged students may possess different quality from those accessed by well-resourced students. Waters and Brooks then continue to discuss two new perspectives in ISM related to international students’ academic learning and ethical concerns that ISM may bring. They argue that the precepted division between domestic and international students still exist in many education abroad destinations. Cultural hegemony continues to prevail, and the notion of engaged and inclusive pedagogy stay stale. International students are more exposed to racism and discrimination compared to domestic students.

Waters and Brooks present a timely critical review of the mobility flow change of international students and its implications in society, politics, and economy, three major rationales of international education. The analysis in chapter 2 to 5 is holistic and comprehensive with authentic cases and data. Chapter 6, Learning and Classroom Experiences, stands out among existing ISM literatures for its unique and insightful perspectives on international student learning. International student learning is an area that has been overlooked by the existing international education literature but essential to student success. Chapter 7, Ethics and Student Mobility is comparatively less

convincing. It will be helpful to narrow down its discussion topics and focus on one to two issues.

In Chapter 2, Waters and Brooks articulate the emerging and different ISM patterns, for example, multiplied and decentered destinations and non-traditional students. According to the authors, the ISM movements now include South to South and North to South, instead of predominately South to North. What is most interesting in this chapter is that Water and Brooks identify the urban cities' role in ISM. For example, a university located in rural area may establish a site in urban cities to attract international students. What is missing in this chapter is that some universities from the Global North are establishing education sites in the Global South to offer education mostly to the locals. In Chapter 6, Waters and Brooks raise a critical topic related to international students learning. The existing scholarly work and initiatives in international education rarely discuss how to support academic success of international students. This is an area overlooked by many higher education institutions and professional organizations in the world. As Waters and Brooks point out, a large body of relevant literature focus on students from East Asian countries studying in Anglophone nations of the Global North, while ignoring the new geographies of student mobility. The authors spearhead a study that needs to examine how international students (other than the traditional student population being studied) learn in their respective destinations, for example, how American students study in Europe, how African students study in China, and others.

Overall, this book offers a timely and unique analysis of international student mobility and issues related to international students from the global lenses. It allows international educators and international education researchers to have a deeper understanding of strategies and initiatives associated with international students.

About the Reviewer

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