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Philosophy for JCIHE

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The style and format of the *Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education* follows the APA style (7th Edition). Footnotes/Endnotes are not allowed. USA spelling (e.g., center, color, organize) and punctuation are preferred (single quotations within double if needed), and requires a short paragraph of bibliographical details for all contributors. Please see Instructions to Authors for additional formatting information.

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JCIHE: Vol. 13 Issue 2, 2021
Introduction

Rosalind Latiner Raby
California State University, Northridge
Editor-In-Chief

Dear Readers -

I am pleased to share the Vol. 13, Issue 2, 2021 of the *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education* (JCIHE). Interest in comparative and international higher education continues to expand and to respond, JCIHE has revised guidelines for submission.

ALL NEW JCIHE GUIDELINES: All authors are encouraged to contextualize their argument, when possible, by citing from existing debates and discussions previously published in JCIHE and by sharing how the results of your manuscript contribute to previous published articles on related issues. These links build a sense of continuity and foster scholarly dialogue within the journal. JCIHE accepts three types of submissions:

EMPIRICAL ARTICLES should demonstrate high rigor and quality. Original research collects and analyzes data in systematic ways to present important new research that adds to and advances the debates within the field of comparative and international higher education. Articles clearly and substantively contribute to current thought by expanding, correcting, broadening, posing questions in a new light, or strengthening current conceptual and/or methodological discussions in comparative and international higher education. We welcome new topics and issues that have been under-emphasized in the field.

SCHOLARLY RESEARCH-BASED REVIEW/ESSAYS should demonstrate rigor and quality. Original research that a) describes new developments in the state of knowledge, b) examines area studies and regional developments of social, cultural, political and economic contexts in specific regions worldwide, c) analyzes existing data sets applying new theoretical or methodological foci, d) synthesizes divergent bodies of literature, e) places the topic at hand into a platform for future dialogue or within broader debates in the field, f) explores research-to-practice, g) examines practical application in education systems worldwide, or h) provides future directions that are of broad significance to the field. Submissions must be situated within relevant literature and can be theoretical or methodological in focus.

EMERGING SCHOLARS RESEARCH SUMMARIES share thesis or dissertation work-in-progress or original empirical research. The intent of this special issue is to share cutting edge research that is of broad significance to the field of comparative and international higher education. Articles must include a literature review, theory focus, and strong methods section. **NOTE:** All submissions had a Letter of Support from the student's Supervisor/chair indicating their approval for the potential publication.

JCIHE VOL. 13 ISSUE 2, 2021

Issue 2, 2021 includes 11 research articles, 1 essay and a book review. Rebecca Tarlau reviews the book *Higher Education in a Globalising World: Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning* by Peter

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Mayo. The essay and empirical articles explore comparative and international higher education in two themes: Student Learning Strategies and Pedagogy, and Institutional and Business Policies.

Student Learning Strategies and Pedagogy

There are six articles and one essay in this section. *Chang* explores geography as a learning strategy for United States students who study abroad. *Oyeniya* compares the adjustment strategies employed by undergraduate and graduate international students studying in the United States. *Khunkum and Fourniew* explore the ability of South Asian international students to access healthcare services in Canada. *Shi* examines English Language Learners in a Chinese university to explore the relationship between self-efficacy and goal orientation. *Tavares* utilizes three theoretical perspectives to explore cultural, social, and linguistic influences on identity construction. *Song and Caldwell* explore the complex dimensions of 'becoming' a cosmopolitan teacher educator in an autobiography of a oversees study tour.

Institutional & Business Policies

There are four articles and one essay in this section. *Wilson* explores national policy & international scholar's restrictions on freedom in China. *Paudel* examines how university policy of productivity aligns with faculty in four academic schools in a university in Nepal. *Ivanova* examines the mission Statements of Japanese associations and companies to assess their support of international students in Japan. Finally, *Hewitt* explores the extraneous factors that are utilized in university ranking exercises in Brazil.

The JCIHE VOL 13(2) 2021 ARTICLES INCLUDE:

EMPIRICAL ARTICLES

Bo Chang, *Teachers College, Ball State University, USA*

Situated Learning - Foreign Sites as Learning Contexts

This article explores how foreign sites where students study abroad can function as learning context that can provide (a) cues to understand new knowledge from different perspectives; (b) context to understand the meaning behind words; (c) minute details tying facts towards abstract knowledge; and (d) space for stimulating emotional attachments.

W. E. (Ted) Hewitt, *The University of Western Ontario, Canada*.

Factors Affecting Competitiveness in University Ranking Exercises: Lessons from Brazil

This study examines external factors that can affect a given institution's impact on university ranking exercises in Brazil, that in turn, affects corporate status, geographic location, and access to resources.

Polina Ivanova, *Ritsumeikan University, Japan.*

Mission Statements of Japanese Civil Society Organizations Supporting International Students in the Kansai Area: Critical Discourse Analysis

This article explores how Japanese companies are important in providing incentives for internationalization and the welcoming of international students and how local governments are implementing a variety of international student support initiatives both via universities and directly, often with the help of their affiliated volunteer groups.

Inderpret Kaur Khunkhun, *Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, Canada* & Bonnie Fourniew, *Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, Canada.*

Newly Arrived South Asian Students' Experience with the Canadian Healthcare System

This article explores the experiences of newly arrived South Asian international undergraduate and graduate students in accessing healthcare services in a small town in British Columbia. The focus is to identify barriers and facilitators of accessing healthcare services to better meet the needs of international students.

Odunola Oyeniyi, *University of Central Arkansas, USA*, **Robert L. Smith**, *Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, USA*, **Joshua C. Watson**, *Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi*, and **Kristina Nelson**, *Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi*

A Comparison of First-year International Students' Adjustment to College at the Undergraduate and Graduate Level

This article explores how first-year graduate and undergraduate international students adjust to studying in the United States. Adjustment is based on resilience, relational skills, and acculturative stress. Findings show differences between graduate and undergraduate adjustment experiences.

Krishna Prasad Paudel, *Kathmandu University, Nepal*

Level of Academic Performance among faculty Members in the Context of Nepali Higher Educational Institution

The article identifies the level of academic performance in Nepal universities by faculty in the Humanities, Education, Management and Science schools. The study shows how university policy results in high-capacity building among the faculty members. The study also shows that individual differences and the organizational environment, culture, and technological infrastructure are crucial to capacity building.

Hong Shi, *China University of Petroleum-Beijing, China*

Examining ELLs' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Goal Orientation in Higher Education

The study examines self-efficacy and goal orientation of college-level English Language Learners (ELLs) in a Chinese university. It explored the positive correlation between self-efficacy and mastery goals and the negative correlation where self-efficacy was negatively correlated with performance-avoidance goals.

Vander Tavares, *Høgskolen i Innlandet, Norway*

Theoretical Perspectives on International Student Identity

The study explores the tendency of discussing international students and their identity-related experiences in homogenizing ways. To counter this, three theoretical perspectives on identity are designed to account for specific cultural, social, and linguistic influences on identity construction.

Hannah Soong, *University of South Australia, Australia* and **David Caldwell,** *University of South Australia, Australia*

Tensions, transformations and travel: Comparative narratives of 'becoming' a cosmopolitan educator through an overseas study tour in Singapore

This study uses autobiography of two authors from Asian and Australian backgrounds to document the complexity of 'becoming' a cosmopolitan teacher educator through an overseas study tour. The experiences are examined as to how it engaged teacher educators in self-reflexivity of their negotiation of multiple identities: academic, personal and cultural are identified.

ESSAYS/REVIEWS

Jeffry Wilson, *Virginia Commonwealth University, USA*

Chinese Higher Education and the Quest for Autonomy: One Step Backward

This essay explores the Chinese Communist Party national policy of postsecondary institutions and provides commentary on the scrutiny of international scholar's restrictions on freedom that impact travel as well as increased surveillance and scrutiny.

JCIHE is an open access, independent, peer-reviewed international journal publishing original contributions to the field of comparative and international higher education. The JCIHE is the official journal of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Higher Education Special Interest Group (HESIG). JCIHE has as its core principles: a) comparative research; b) engagement with theory; and c) diverse voices in terms of authorship. JCIHE supports a professional forum for the development, analysis, and dissemination of theory-, policy-, and practice-related issues that influence higher education.

I want to thank several individuals who were instrumental in the publication of this issue, Associate Editor, Hayes Tang, Copy-Editor Director, Nian Ruan, and Production Editor, Jie Liu. It is their dedication that helps keep the standards and integrity for the journal. I also want to acknowledge all the dedication that our numerous volunteers have given to the journal in the peer review process. Finally, I want to give special thanks to the JCIHE Copy-Editors for this issue: Ricardo Covele; Nazgul Bayetova; Gregory Malveaux; Ryan Deuel; Bob Cermak; Michael Lanford; Samatha Thompson; Soobrayen-Veerasamy Parmesware; Vutha Ros; Nian Ruan and William Federer

Editor-in-Chief,
Rosalind Latiner Raby
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Situated Learning – Foreign Sites as Learning Contexts

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ABSTRACT

As part of the globalization effort, study abroad has been researched in the fields of education, business, language, etc. However, what is not well-discussed is how foreign sites in study abroad programs can function as learning contexts to promote in-depth learning in various subject areas, which was the purpose of this study. Twelve participants from one public research university involved in study abroad programs were interviewed. Documents such as syllabi and travel plans relevant to participants' trips were also collected. The data were analyzed inductively. The findings show that foreign sites serve as learning context to support students' learning by (a) providing cues to understand new knowledge from different perspectives; (b) providing a context to understand the meaning behind words; (c) providing minute details tying facts towards abstract knowledge; and (d) creating a space for stimulating emotional attachments.

Keywords: foreign sites, learning contexts, situated learning, socio-cultural learning, study abroad

INTRODUCTION

Study abroad has seen rising popularity among universities over the past decade due to its ability to provide not only cultural and academic opportunities, but truly help prepare students for a globalized world (Dolby, 2004; Kishino & Takahashi, 2019). As study abroad becomes a more significant component of universities, students are able to develop their knowledge of the international, social, cultural, political, and economic issues, providing greater options for international mobility and employability, and contributing to students' home country (Singh & Jack, 2018). While, universities have enthusiastically promoted study abroad programs and engaged students in globalization of higher education to develop their cross-cultural competence (Gopal, 2011), there are still challenges and issues in study abroad programs. For example, study programs mainly enhance participants' experience and culture related knowledge, not the academic and systematic knowledge (Long, 2013); Even though many universities have made educational policies regarding study abroad, they do not have clear policies about how to achieve those very same educational goals. For example, many universities in Japan "do not have clear educational policies related to accelerating internationalization through study abroad. In fact, only a few universities set clear educational goals related to study abroad and educational support" (Take & Shoraku, 2018, p. 49); and not all study abroad programs lead to the goals that the instructors, administrators and participants expect (Maza, 1963; Long, 2013).

Many scholars have studied the benefits of study abroad in areas such as language, culture, and awareness of globalization. With structured designs, and pre-established learning goals and work assignments, the study abroad programs provide benefits to non-cultural and language related programs

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such as STEM and business programs which are typically not well developed regarding program design (Marijuan & Sanz, 2018; Pasquale, 2016).

This study will fill these gaps by investigating how the foreign sites were used to promote students' learning not only in language/culture related programs, but also in the programs which are not thoroughly studied, such as the programs of natural sciences, business, and architecture. The research question was: How can foreign sites serve as learning context to support students' learning?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Study Abroad in an Authentic Context

Study abroad is viewed as deepening language learning and creating cultural awareness. However, "it has been argued that simply studying abroad does not consistently or inevitably lead to increases in language proficiency or cultural competence" (Goldoni, 2013, p. 360). In order to deepen participants' learning, it is important for students to interact with the host community. However, not all study abroad experiences are as immersive and intensive as we expected. Often times, students are sent to attractive locations without utilizing the local context to conduct productive academic activities (Goldoni, 2013).

Study abroad programs highly value the form of immersion in learning (Doerr, 2015). That is, learners are immersed in authentic situations and are able to engage with the local culture of the host country. Rahmat et al. (2020) noted that by utilizing the local authentic context for planned activities to take place, knowledge is presented in an authentic situation. Learning that takes place in an authentic activity, context, and culture is situated learning (Lave & Wagner, 1990). As such, situated learning will be used as a theoretical framework for this study to guide data analysis.

Situated Learning

Situated learning has been applied in various fields, such as in education, business, science, etc. Situated learning emphasizes immersive learning in an authentic context (Brown et al., 1989; the Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt, 1990, 1992). Situated learning relates to the topic of study abroad since the local sites in a foreign country provide an authentic learning context for learners.

The reason that we encourage learning in an authentic learning environment is because knowledge is generalized from real life. Knowledge is created in the process of transforming the concrete experience to the abstract conceptualization (Kolb, 1984). Knowledge is the abstraction and de-contextualization of the practical world. To understand the origin of knowledge, we need to immerse ourselves in a context where knowledge is originally generated.

Situated learning aims to learn knowledge in contexts which "reflect how knowledge is obtained and applied in everyday situations" (Stein, 1998, p. 1). Brown et al. (1989) stated that:

> All knowledge is, we believe, like language. Its constituent parts index the world and so are inextricably a product of the activity and situations in which they are produced. A concept, for example, will continually evolve with each new occasion of use, because new situations, negotiations, and activities inevitably recast it in a new, more densely textured form. So a concept, like the meaning of a word, is always under construction. (p. 33)

This indicates that knowledge is generalized and produced from the real world, and the meaning of a concept evolves when it is used in new situations. For example, the word "democracy" has different meanings and variations in different societies, depending on the cultures and real-world situations in a specific society (Alnufaishan, & Alrashidi, 2019).

Situated learning values knowledge that is associated with its environment. To learn context attached contents, we situate ourselves in a local context. For example, language "is always situated in activities that are bound to an environment with its accompanying physical, social, and cultural aspects" (Santos et al., 2016, p. 4). To learn context related language, we immerse ourselves in its practical context. Luo and Jamieson-Drake's (2015) study indicates that a practical context, such as a foreign context, can provide a valuable opportunity for individuals

> to learn a foreign language or reinforce foreign language skills, to gain exposure to and an understanding of a new culture, and to return with empirical knowledge, fresh insights, and perspective-taking skills that can hardly be obtained without leaving the campus and stepping out of the familiar environment and comfort zones. (p. 52)

This citation further shows how a practical context can expose students to the cultural and empirical aspects of knowledge in an authentic real-life context. Situated learning values an authentic learning environment since it helps students see easily how new knowledge is associated with the local environment.

Knowledge also resides in local entities such as local museums, churches, and cultural institutions. Situated learning provides learners opportunities to learn through activities "that are relevant to or rooted in their social and physical environment or school context" (Pitri, 2004, p.7). By understanding the root of how the local knowledge is formed and developed, learners "can access the social entities that embody the knowledge" that they want to learn (Chang, 2018, p. 128). The responsibility of the teachers is to provide purposeful and focused activities that utilize those local entities.

Anderson et al. (1996) pointed out the discrepancy between knowledge learned in classroom (theory) and the actual need outside of the classroom (practice) and emphasized the importance of addressing specific situations in which we learn knowledge. They claimed that whether knowledge should be context-dependent (implicit knowledge which can be understood by being associated to its context) and context-independent (explicit knowledge which can be understood without being associated to its context) relies on the types of knowledge learners will acquire. Based on other scholars' researches, Anderson et al. (1996) stated that "combining abstract instruction with specific concrete examples is better than either one alone" (p. 8). In other words, for learning complex tasks, it is not enough to only know the explicit procedures. It is also necessary to explore the social settings of the knowledge. Priest et al. (2016) reaffirms this by stating that "Situated learning shifts the focus from learning about the social world to learning in and through it" (p.362).

Situated learning values the authentic context/situations in a study abroad program. In designing learning activities, educators can "re-contextualize abstract concepts into specific problem situations" to provide students real life experience (Roberts & Sayer, 2017, p.294). In such an authentic environment, learners gain new knowledge by interacting with local people and sites. Knowledge is distributed in environments and is constructed through the process of interacting with people and solving problems with teams in an environment (Young, 1993). It is important to select complex and realistic space/situations which can provide students an opportunity to identify the components resonate to their projects and can inspire students the possible solutions to their problem (Young, 1993).

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate how foreign sites can serve as learning contexts to support students' learning. General qualitative research design was employed in this study since the author has interest in participants' experience of attending study abroad programs. Qualitative method can be used "to answer questions about experience, meaning and perspective, most often from the standpoint of the participant" (Hammarberg et al., 2016, p. 499).

Twelve participants from one public research university in the Midwestern part of the United States were selected in this study (see Table 1). These participants were involved or attended the study abroad programs in eight countries, including ones focused on STEMS, business, social sciences, foreign languages, communication and journalism, humanity, and education. This group of programs covers the majority of the study abroad programs that were documented in the 2019 Open Doors Report (Fast Facts, 2019).

Since the participants attended different study abroad programs from this university, I will briefly introduce these different types of study abroad programs as part of the background information. Multiple study abroad programs are offered by this university, among which the faculty led programs, provider programs and consortia programs are the most popular ones. In faculty led programs, faculty members are responsible for recruiting students, dealing with logistical issues, and organizing students' study abroad activities; for provider led programs, outside organizations deal with all the logistic work, recruit students globally, and work with the faculty members to schedule the local activities. Faculty members design, manage and operate the study abroad activities for students. In consortia led programs, several universities in Indiana and the surrounding states share the faculty members and programs, deal with the logistical issues, and recruit the students and also faculty members who can lead the students to go abroad. The consortium has connections overseas to deal with the logistical arrangements. In this study, the majority of the participants were involved in faculty-led programs. Some attended all of the three programs. The countries they visited included Japan, India, Germany, Italy, England, Ireland and Spain. In this study, the majority of the study abroad programs for credits lasted for two to four weeks, with English as the instructional language.

Table 1

Participants

N	Name	Country/Cities Visited	Position
1	John	N/A	Director of Study Abroad
2	Penny	Germany	Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education
3	Dom	Italy	Professor, Department of Telecommunications
4	Nihal	India	Chair and Professor of Urban Planning
5	Kate	Rome/London	College of Business
6	Cat	Japan	4th year student of Japanese Language
7	Lisa	Japan	Instructor of Urban Planning President
8	Robert	India	Assistant Professor of Department of Anthropology
9	Joshua	Japan	4th year student of Urban Planning
10	Molly	Ireland	Assistant Professor of English
11	Lily	Spain	Assistant Professor of Spanish
12	Linda	Germany	Instructor of Elementary Education

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in my office, or in the participants' offices. The IRB protocols were obtained. Of the 12 participants, eight were faculty members, two were student participants and two were program directors. The majority of the participants are faculty members, Sargeant (2012) stated that "participants are selected who can best inform the research questions and enhance understanding of the phenomenon under study" (p. 1). Researchers select participants based on "the research questions, theoretical perspectives, and evidence informing the study" (p.1). In this project, I am interested in how foreign sites can serve as a learning context to support students' learning. I wanted to select the participants who were involved in the university study abroad programs and who could provide evidence as it relates to the research question. If meeting those requirements, those participants can be selected, no matter if they were faculty members, students or program directors. The focal point is that these participants were involved in the activities in foreign sites.

The snowball sampling method was used to recruit the participants since it is cost-effective and practically convenient to recruit the participants who can provide the data needed for this study (Marcus et al., 2017). Specifically, I interviewed one director who was familiar with the university-wide study abroad programs and their main activities. I informed him of the participant selection criteria and asked him to introduce me to the participants. He introduced me to several professors. After interviewing these professors, they introduced me to other professors/instructors, as well as two students and one director whom they thought could provide me with the data for my study since they were involved in study abroad programs and had attended study abroad activities in foreign countries. For example, one director had led study abroad programs several times. Two students had visited multiple foreign sites and were involved in study abroad projects. They all provided rich data which were relevant to my research question and situated learning.

I selected the participants from one university instead of multiple universities since I used a single case study approach, which is less expensive and time-consuming compared with the multiple case studies approach. This approach enables the researchers to better study a group of people in one institution/organization, richly describe the target subject, and have a deep understanding of it (Gustafsson, 2017). The director I interviewed introduced that activities involved in the study abroad programs not only happen in this university I selected, but also in other universities in the nearby states too. This university was selected as it is a representative case, and the findings of this study can be applicable to other institutions or organizations too.

The findings are generalized mainly from participants' experience in study abroad programs. The student participants and program directors provided complementary data to strengthen the ideas provided by the faculty members. The faculty members were from education, urban planning, communications, anthropology, and foreign languages. The purpose of selecting the participants from different programs was to identify the common or unique features across the study abroad programs that are beneficial for students' learning.

Each participant was interviewed for about one hour. In the interviews, the participants were asked to describe their study abroad experience. This included their various learning activities, such as how such foreign context impacted students' learning, and how new knowledge and perspectives can be gained and created in a foreign context. Documents relevant to participants 'journey, such as pictures, syllabi, and field notes were also collected. The data were analyzed inductively, which included reading the raw data, identifying the categories by using the words or phrases to label the meaning of the data, and then clustering the categories with the similar meanings into broader themes (Thomas, 2006).

The author read through the syllabi and field notes, compared how the learning activities were designed and scheduled in these programs, and compared and coded the similarities or the differences in these learning activities. Such comparison reveals how much the different study abroad programs adjusted their course designs to represent the physical and cultural priorities of the foreign sites.

FINDINGS

This study aimed to find out how foreign sites served as learning contexts to support students' learning. Four themes generalized from the data will be presented below, which indicate that foreign sites serve as learning context to support students' learning by (a) providing cues to understand new knowledge from different perspectives; (b) providing a context to understand the meaning behind words; (c) providing minute details tying facts towards abstract knowledge; and (d) creating a space for stimulating the emotional attachments.

Providing Cues to Understand Knowledge from Different Perspectives

Knowledge is rooted in daily life practice. Foreign sites provided contexts for students to understand why people in other societies have different lifestyles and approaches of doing things. One participant expressed:

> When I took them over to a real German market, they couldn't believe the things that were "missing" from the shelves. It's like, "They don't have crackers, people. They don't know what crackers are. They don't do crackers. They eat bread" … So, those kinds of things and just the different kinds of foods I think was the biggest thing for the students.

One participant related, "Well, everybody eats cereal and eggs for breakfast, don't they? No, they don't. In fact, that's very much a western hemisphere breakfast, you know…". When students saw local people's different lifestyles and customs, they realized that there are different approaches to doing things. Things which are difficult to understand become easy to understand in that context since it provides the explanations which are missing in learners' original context. Some realized that "not everybody does it the way Americans do it," and students started to have a new appreciation for cultural differences.

One participant studying urban planning shared his surprising observation of how bicycles were used and managed in Japan, which is different from how it is in America:

> Besides Copenhagen, Japan is one of the top bicycle-friendly countries in the world… I was really surprised by the amount of bikes I saw and, there were bikes…every corner you could look at, bikes were locked up or they had bike elevators. Instead of parking garages, there were bike parking garages or there were escalators just for bikes to underground storage and, things you wouldn't necessarily see in the United States.

It was not just about the lifestyles and constructions which were different from America that surprised the participants. The different social, cultural and political systems in other countries also provided participants different perspectives to look at certain issues. One participant stated how students were surprised when the taboo political topics in America were openly talked about in Spain:

> Well, and it can also be liberating for students because in the United States, and especially in a place like here in the Midwest here, politics can be kind of a taboo topic, just like religion can be a taboo topic.
>
> Most of our students when they go to Spain they realize "Oh, you mean, I just met this person and all of a sudden it's okay that we're talking about gay rights and politics and religion and all that sort of stuff and they're interested, and they want to talk about this with me and that's okay."

When students were in America, they were taught to think in the American way, and they accepted the ideas from American perspective. The readings they were provided in school usually reflected the general Western point of view and may not have shown the uniqueness and specific aspects of the locals in other contexts. One participant noted, "The specific experience of the West is taken as common in general, and other experiences are other... So, the students learn very soon, the West is also something like other places. Experience here is not general" [Note: It means that experience here is not the universal experience that also happens in other countries].

Studying abroad gives students an opportunity to see the other side of the world which are not covered in the western readings. When they worked with people in a foreign context, they became aware of a different perspective. One participant from the Urban Planning program said that local people who recovered from the tsunami in 2004 did not appreciate the houses given by the NGOs since the kitchen with the gas stove was not useful for them. He stated that:

> They keep breaking and making the houses because they don't like the houses and the Architects have given a nice little kitchen, 3 by 5, with a stove to use gas for cooking and all that…everything. But, people don't use gas because they don't have money to do that. They build another temporary kitchen to use firewood, right? … I want my students to learn what we give assuming our life is more superior to theirs—is useless, you know, because that is not how they live, and we cannot say how they live is inferior. That's how they live.

This participant showed his students that the architects' assumptions of what represent good homes with nice kitchens were not appreciated by the local people since they were not suitable for the local context. As architects, they needed to change their predetermined assumptions and cater to the needs of the local community.

One participant studying business talked about how situating in a foreign context provided students opportunities to observe the different working atmosphere in a foreign country and how it was influenced by different cultural and political system:

> Americans tend to work longer hours… students who would go to say, Spain or France, were like, "They take 3-hour lunch breaks. How do you get any work done?" and just conceptualizing what their life would be like, how that would be different, and how much you can or cannot voice your opinion in a business setting, as well as respecting the hierarchies.
>
> Some organizations in America have taken a much flatter approach, you know, "everybody's the same we are all one team." That's not necessarily the case of other places where like you might only speak to your supervisor and that's it, not any levels higher. So, just having an understanding and having an awareness that "not everybody works in the same way" was a big challenge for some of them to understand and grasp why it would be that different.

People's perspectives and assumptions are influenced by their daily routine and the context where they live. People's perspectives and assumptions are challenged when they are in a context where daily practices are different, and when people's assumptions/perspectives cannot be explained by the practices in a new context.

Providing A Context to Understand the Meaning Behind Words

People have different interpretations of the same story. Being in context helps people understand where the story is located and what meanings are behind the words. One participant stated that:

> When you go to places, people will tell you the story that you want to know… so, there's a whole mixture of different stories, you know, like you have to associated them for long enough to really get to know them, right? …You cannot just go and do a survey because …people will not be very honest about these things…they will like to tell me what I like to hear. I mean, that's (how) people relate to other people, right? …So, I think the students will have to learn how to kind of like, you know, understand people beyond the façade.

People's different interpretations of a different world community is not the same as what that community is really about. These interpretations were created under different agendas, circumstances, and mixed with people's different experiences. In order to see what a different world community is really about, students need to immerse themselves in that community, interact with local people, and translate their needs into the language that local people can understand. One participant said: "You cannot just go to the community and say, "What's the community like?" It takes a while to kind of like translate these things into something people can understand."

Another participant stated how interactions in a local foreign context helped students clarify the puzzles and understand local people and the meanings of the words:

> I think it's really hard for students to understand speech patterns. Even though Irish people are speaking English, they are speaking very differently and, I'm an American, … I could give them [students] a glossary of what these terms mean, these slang terms, but it's so much easier if they go to Ireland and listen to Irish people speak or have interactions with them and they pick up on, you know, if someone says like their "gaffe"—they mean their apartment or their house…or if they say like they call someone a "punter"—they mean a lower-class person. But, they might not know what that means when they come across it in the literature and it's so much better than me explaining it if the way they interact with the language that is used differently.

This participant noted that even though they all spoke English, students noticed that due to culture difference, the same words can have totally different meanings, or the meaning can be expressed differently, such as "half one" instead of "one thirty." Being in the context helped students understand the meaning of words.

One participant noticed that students who had not attended the study abroad program were only interested in what the literature says, while those who attended the study aboard program were more interested in politics and history in newspapers and what was happening in the current foreign context. She expressed:

> They [students attending study abroad program] were much more interested in talking about politics and history. So, they wanted to talk about things in Ireland that were going on right now that they were seeing in newspapers. They wanted to talk about the EU. My students [who did not attend a study abroad program] never want to talk about that—they always want to talk about the literature—they're interested in that, but they don't want to talk about problems that are happening in Ireland or they're not that interested in like the women's movement. They [students attending study abroad program] were seeing signs and they were walking around and seeing protests and busses, reading newspapers, and just kind of being around it, you know, talking to other people who came to class about things that were happening in Ireland right now.

Foreign context provided students studying abroad the living knowledge in daily life and helped them understand the meaning reflected in literature. Students attending study abroad programs had chances to interact with the local people to understand the history and culture in the literature, not just the "dead" knowledge reported in literature. What happened in the past still has some connections with current times in that local context? Those students who saw these connections in local community realized that such "history" was not too far away from their life, and it was actually part of the living experience in local community. They really brought that part of the living experience into their understanding of the history discussed in literature.

Providing Minute Details Tying Facts Towards Abstract Knowledge

Local foreign sites such as museums, churches, and parks serve as a context for learning. They introduced minute details that connect the dots of the facts towards abstract knowledge. Such context provides clues for learners to understand abstract knowledge in a living and practical context (Chang, 2018). One participant shared his study abroad experience in Japan and how the local context provided minute details which connected the dots of the facts to help him understand the abstract knowledge. He stated:

> A lot of times what you'll find is it's the same information repeated over and over and it's missing those minute little details that really make up what they're trying to say, or you overlook those. Whereas in study abroad, you see those minute details that actually create the outcome that you've been reading in the scholarly article and it just kind of clicks with you and makes sense. I think that's one thing that's really missing if you don't go on a study abroad.

This participant expressed that an experience in a foreign context really helped him to fill in the gaps for the articles he had read and put it all together. He also considered that experience in a foreign context really raised his learning to a new level, compared with only reading the abstract articles and giving his opinions about them. He explained:

> Most people just think "let's just paint down a stripe and we'll say bikes can go here" and you'll find that throughout the city, but you'll find areas where that doesn't necessarily work and you kind of just skip over that. People just look at it like it's a broad scope like there's bike lanes everywhere you go. Well, there's certain areas where you can't necessarily put bikes lanes in, but that article didn't necessarily cover when I got to that section. Whereas, when I went to Japan and I went to some of these areas or I stumbled across some of these areas by mishap, I was like, Wait! This doesn't necessarily work. ... One thing I noticed in the articles I was reading is that they kept saying that bike lanes are everywhere.

What this participant shared clearly showed the gap between reality and the abstract knowledge. Like this participant mentioned, in reality, "there are specifics in there." Such specifics or concrete details in an authentic context show something different compared with the generalized knowledge or abstract theories presented in the articles. But such specifics, which may include the flaws, are neglected a lot of times in the articles. This participant said that "knowing the flaws [in reality] is more important than knowing the perfect items [in articles] because knowing the flaws, you can figure out how to fix that. You can start changing things to make that 'perfect system' even better." Data from this participant show that it is important for students to learn in an authentic context since they can find out that these perfect ideas discussed in theoretical ideas actually will not always work in reality, and they need to be adapted based on the local context.

One participant shared her story about how students can better understand the poetry when it is situated in its historical context. She said that:

> I taught W.B. Yates' poetry and they [students] went to the associated jail, which is where some of the poems intersect with what was happening then at Easter, 1916 and, so the poems are in the jail, the museum there, and they got a tour, so they got to hear about some of the history of the jail. So, they could understand it in much better context. So, at the end of each week, they had to write a response paper and the response was connected to something they saw and something they read at the same time.

Students can better understand the poetry after they have experienced its historical site, since the site provided some historical background helping the students connect the scenes from the historical poem to reality. These students can see that connection between history and current events, and they bring that to their learning.

Creating A Space for Stimulating the Emotional Attachments

One participant shared his experience of visiting the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb site and how that trip had great emotional effect on him and reinforced his understanding of such historical event. He stated:

> It's something that's hard to put into words right at the moment. You can read books and documentaries from what other people have done…but you won't know necessarily what that experience kind of emotionally will put on yourself. From the documentaries and things like that that I have read about Hiroshima, I had a lot of sympathy. I had sadness, but it's not until I got to experience it firsthand for myself that a whole, entire different sympathy and sadness hit me.

Different from the historical descriptions in literature, when students were in a foreign location, their senses (smell, feel, touch, etc.) were open to the environment. Emotionally students were attached to that local environment and their understanding of such an event was deepened due to their emotional involvement in the context. One participant shared his observation about how immersing in a local foreign site such as India made a difference in students' learning compared with learning from books:

> That it's something you cannot learn in a textbook, something you cannot learn in a video, right? Because when you immerse yourself in that culture, you know, you're hearing the noise, you're breathing in the pollution, you're smelling all the fruits and vegetables at the market. You go into a temple. You know you have to take your shoes off, so you feel that marble underneath your feet, you smell the incense burning, you see the Priests, you can smell the flowers offered, right? So, that is a whole different—you feel the heat, right, of the fires at the temples. You can't get that from any book.

Direct experience in a foreign context enabled students to fully use their senses to hear, smell, see and touch things in that environment, which strongly stimulated their emotions and their understanding of the local culture and environment.

One participant explained how he tied his educational agenda to students' emotions in a local site:

> We had dinner at the hotel and some of the students just kept ordering food. So, they would order a dish, like a big dish, and then they would call the waiter over and order another dish. So, when I got the bill for dinner, it was quite expensive…much more than it should've been. So, I emailed the students that night before bed and just said, "We're visiting a country where 75% of the population lives on less than a dollar a day. I want you to think about that and be aware of the ways you're spending money, the ways that you are thinking about money, and just realize that we are so privileged to even be here." I think a lot of students really understood.

Without personal experience in a local foreign site and emotions triggered by the local poverty rate, it would be hard for students to make connections between their wasting of food and the poverty of the local site in India.

DISCUSSION

Knowledge is abstract. It is rooted in daily life routines and it indexes the world in which we live (Artemeva, 2008; Brown et al., 1989*). Foreign sites provide clues to understanding knowledge from different perspectives* since they are practical contexts of knowledge and they enable people to see practical aspects of knowledge through a different lens and form such as different ways of managing bikes in Japan or managing businesses in Europe. They provide practical explanations of the knowledge that is based on local, social, cultural and economic situations, thus making different perspectives of knowledge much easier to understand. Such different perspectives were not just reflected in lifestyles, but also in social, cultural and political systems and how people responded to certain sensitive topics. Situating in a foreign site helps students break their universal way of looking at issues from the dominated American perspective and see the uniqueness of the specific aspects of the local population. "Expanding beyond our own worldviews and perspectives opens new horizons for engagement" (Fasching-Varner et al., 2018, p. 145).

According to Vygotsky (1978), people's higher mental processes are relevant to their social milieu, the tools they use, and their social interactions; "a higher mental function is socially acquired, mediated by social meanings, voluntarily controlled and exists as a link in a broad system of functions rather than as an individual unit" (Subbotsky, n. d., para. 4). Immersing in a foreign context provided students opportunities to see how the locals' way of thinking is highly mediated by their broad social, economic and physical environment (Pitri, 2004). For example, a functionally designed kitchen for people in one region can be seen as dysfunctional in another region due to different cultural and economic conditions. When people are in a foreign context, they see things significantly different. When people cannot explain the daily routines in a foreign country based on their original assumptions, they were emotionally shocked, and their old assumptions were disturbed (Mezirow, 1978), which triggers them to reexamine their old assumptions, and adapt their perspectives to cater to needs of the local community (Chang, 2017).

Abstract knowledge has multiple meanings based on its contexts. It can be interpreted differently in varied contexts and it is influenced by multiple agendas and situations. *Foreign sites can provide context to understand the different meanings behind words*. Through interaction with the local environment and people, students learn how meanings are interpreted in their local contexts. Knowledge is constructed through interacting with people (Young, 1993). The same story may have multiple meanings, depending on how people interpret them under different circumstances. The interpretations are also influenced by different agendas and situations. Students not having attended a study abroad program were significantly influenced by the ideas or perspectives in the literature that are guided by certain agendas or perspectives. By immersing in a foreign context, students interacted with local people and put themselves into others' shoes to truly understand the living knowledge from the local perspective, see the meaning from the local context, and feel the social, cultural and political dynamics from the local environment. They were able to understand the hidden meaning, the special situations and agendas, and the languages/terms local people use. All of these give them a much more complete story compared to the literature. Such full access to the local context helps students clarify the puzzles, identify the meanings of the story interpreted in various versions, and understand the process of how ideas are created and formed.

Foreign sites provide minute details in an authentic context which enables people to see the practical aspects of abstract knowledge and how the new knowledge is formed in practice, and what details have been cut out. Foreign sites as authentic contexts provide clues for learners to understand abstract knowledge in a living and practical context (Chang, 2018). Such concrete living experiences help learners see where abstract knowledge comes from, and what the flaws and historical background are in the abstract form of knowledge. In the process of generalizing new knowledge, such practical aspects of knowledge in specific contexts are often "trimmed," with the salient properties remained and reorganized into new structure (Dreyfus et al., 2001). Situated learning intends to immerse students in a context and to reveal to them the practical aspects of abstract knowledge so that they can see how the new knowledge is formed in the process of having the practical "leaves" trimmed, and what important details have been left out. Students thus have a better understanding of such knowledge in an authentic context (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Stein, 1998), developing the ability to apply that knowledge in practice, and identify the solutions to the problems in the process of applying the knowledge in practice. Such experience in a foreign context raised students' learning to a new level since learners integrate their own thoughts and personal experience into the abstract learning rather than purely following the main ideas presented in the literature.

For situated learning, "learning and knowing are context specific" (Artemeva, 2008, p. 169). Different contexts allow learners to see how abstract knowledge varies in practice, and what can be avoided to execute knowledge successfully in a specific context. For example, a political topic avoided in one country can be discussed in another due to its context dependence. Within the authentic context, learners can see the multifaceted nature of cultural traditions and "the dialectical relationship between context and the individual's response to it" (Tsui & Ng, 2010, p. 373), thus helping learners see the rich choices influenced by cultural traditions and beliefs, and avoid conflicts and cultural stereotyping.

Foreign sites can create a space that stimulated the emotional attachments since these sites are foreign for students. Such foreignness can emotionally attract students' attention on the things which are new to them. Such emotional attachment also helps students build empathy with the local people and environment. Foreign context provides a space for stimulating the emotional attachments and emotional expressions—"neurophysiological arousal and cognitive processing that lea d to certain conclusions about the meaning of certain stimuli within one's environment" (Dirkx, 2008, p. 12). Experiencing the living knowledge in foreign sites triggers learners to retrieve the knowledge relevant to their emotional experience (Niedenthal et al., 2005). When involved in a foreign context, students have chances to fully use their senses such as smell, touch, and hearing to learn new knowledge from various facets. Such experience stimulates students' emotions and helps them pay more attention to the information that may otherwise be missed. What the senses connected, such as "breathing in the pollution", "feel that marble underneath your feet", and "smell the incense burning" also provided learners cues to the knowledge about local environment, local culture, history, religion, and political and economic conditions.

Significant emotions coordinate our behaviors and positively or negatively impact learning, and "conscious feelings help the individuals to voluntarily fine-tune their behavior to better match the challenges of the environment" (Nummenmaa et al., 2014, p. 646). Such embodied learning experience fully utilizes our body to senses and connects to the environment and helps us build empathy with the local people and environment, thus pushing us to modify our behaviors to better match the local environment. This is illustrated by one participant who helped students build empathy with local environment by comparing the local people's daily expenses and students' expenses in the restaurants, thus stimulating students' emotions to constrain their behaviors of wasting money. Such empathy "reaches beyond one's immediate surroundings and extends to those suffering in distant places" (Ikeda, 2010, p. 113).

IMPLICATIONS

To help students see different perspectives and challenge their taken-for-granted knowledge, instructors can select a learning site which is culturally and socially different from learners' familiar environments. Learning is "a socially organised activity that is inseparable from its sociocultural locus in time and space" (Tsui & Ng 2010, p. 364). For certain areas of knowledge, such as changing assumptions and learning different cultures, instructors can select a site which is foreign to students. The emphasis is "being there", anywhere which culturally and socially different from learners' familiar environments.

Knowledge "often becomes embedded not only in documents or repositories but also in organizational routines, processes, practices, and norms"(Davenport & Prusak, 1998, p. 5). To help students see the nuanced meanings of knowledge and how the meaning of knowledge is processed and formed, we can provide students opportunities to access documents, repositories, organizational routines, processes, practices, and norms which embody the meaning of knowledge that we expect learners to see.

Specific activities associated with the culture and history of knowledge provide the practical explanations of how knowledge is executed in different contexts. In designing a situated learning activity, we can select the situations/sites that contains the important components of a subject area (Young, 1993), such as famous buildings which embody components of the architecture knowledge that students are expected to learn.

Since knowledge is rooted in practice, the immersion into the local context enables learners to discover the particulars or the flaws out of the scope of the generalized knowledge. Situating in foreign contexts, students can document the origins of knowledge by accessing and observing its organizational routines, practice, and norms, describing the concrete details which are omitted in literature and finding out the significant parts that are not documented in literature.

However, not every local context entails such particulars. Not every location is effective for learning such subject-related knowledge, such as knowledge in natural sciences, business, architecture. Such knowledge is context based with specificity. It is derived from local people's interactions with their surroundings (Kassam, 2009), and is varied based on local economic situations, culture or politics. To understand the variations of such knowledge in practice, the sites selected need to entail the context specificity and variations of that knowledge in practice. For example, to study the hierarchical structure, we may select a site which employs such structure.

Immersing in an unfamiliar environment will not necessarily lead to conscious learning. Learning in an authentic context is not just about experiencing knowledge in context, but also generalizing knowledge from context (Kolb, 1984) and recreating knowledge in new context. The value of studying abroad is not just about the activity itself, but the detailed observation and analysis of the activity and transformation of the activity into learners' academic experience. It is not so meaningful to "simply transfer academic credits from one traditional discipline-based educational institution to another without intentionally utilizing the international experience itself as the basis for learning" (Montrose, 2015, p. 7). To create new knowledge, students can observe the concrete experience in foreign sites, reflect on such experience, compare the differences between such experience with the knowledge that they have learned from readings, and distill reflections into abstract concepts (Kolb et al., 1999). Such abstract concepts, or new knowledge might be different from the knowledge students have learned from readings. Observation, analysis and reflection of such experiences contributed to an in-depth understanding of knowledge. For example, observing how a bike lane was designed in Japan helped that particular student understands the flaws of the knowledge he had learned in the literature. To see how knowledge is produced, instructors can organize students to observe and analyze the activities in an authentic context, reflect on such process, and identify the important points, strategies, methods and procedures through various formats, such as writing reflection paper, personal journaling, photography portfolios, analytical papers, creating video diaries, and conducting case study project (Montrose, 2015).

To better support learners' learning, instructors can provide sites that can strongly stimulate students' senses and emotions. To stimulate students' emotions and their attention to certain type of knowledge, instructors can let students immerse in the living environment of such knowledge and let students touch, feel, and smell the local environment and use their whole body to fully experience the new environment. Abstract knowledge is like a dried flower. Using senses (smell, feel, touch, etc.) to embrace the living nature of the knowledge in an authentic environment can make such knowledge alive and the living nature of the knowledge ignited. Such embodiment experience not only provides cues to the local knowledge, but also triggers learners' emotions associated with knowledge and help them easily capture and retain the knowledge when such knowledge becomes the dominant in the retrieval process (Niedenthal et al., 2005).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This paper expanded our understanding of situated learning and study abroad programs by analyzing how foreign sites can serve as learning context that supports students' learning from various perspectives and providing the concrete suggestions of how to select an authentic learning site, how to organize learning activities in foreign sites, and how to stimulate emotions in foreign sites and build connections with local people and local communities.

Table 2

Summary of Findings, Discussions, and Implications

Findings	Discussions	Implications
Foreign sites provide clues to understand knowledge from different perspectives	Foreign sites are practical contexts of knowledge; they enable people to see the practical aspects of knowledge through different lens and forms and provide people practical explanations of the knowledge based on local social, cultural and economic situations.	To help students see different perspectives and challenge their taken-for-granted knowledge, select a learning site which is culturally and socially different from learners' familiar environments.
Providing a context to understand the meaning behind words	Abstract knowledge has multiple meanings based on its contexts. It can be interpreted differently in different contexts and is influenced by different agendas and situations. Immersing in foreign sites allows people to put themselves in others' shoes to truly understand the living knowledge from the local perspective, see the meaning from the local context, and feel the social, cultural and political dynamics from the local environment and see the hidden meaning, the special situations and	To help students see the nuanced meanings of knowledge and how the meaning of knowledge is processed and formed, we can select the sites that contain the important components of a subject area, or we can provide students opportunities to access documents, repositories, organizational routines, processes, practices, and norms which embody the social, cultural and/or political meaning of knowledge that we expect learners to see.

	agendas, and the languages/terms local people use	
Providing minute details tying facts towards abstract knowledge	Abstract knowledge is originated from the minute details in practice. Foreign sites can provide students with such minute details that enables them to see the practical aspects of abstract knowledge and the important details that have been left out. Revealing such process enables students to easily identify the solutions to the problems in the process of applying knowledge in practice.	To see how knowledge is produced, instructors can organize students to observe and analyze the activities in an authentic context, and reflect on such process and identify the important points, strategies, methods and procedures through various formats, such as personal journaling, videos, photography portfolios, etc.
Creating a space for stimulating the emotional attachments	Foreign sites create a space for stimulating the emotional attachments due to its foreignness. Such foreignness can emotionally attract students' attention on the things which are new for them and provide students a space to see and feel such differences. Such emotional attachment also helps students build empathy with the local people and modify their behaviors to match the local environment.	To stimulate students' emotions and their attention to certain type of knowledge, instructors can immerse students in a "foreign" or new place which embodies such knowledge and let students touch, feel, and smell the local environment and use their whole body to fully experience the new environment and reflect on such experience.

Note. Research purpose: Find out how foreign sites served as learning contexts to support students' learning.

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Factors Affecting Competitiveness in University Ranking Exercises: Lessons from Brazil

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, international and national university ranking exercises have become commonplace, serving a host of stakeholders and beneficiaries including students, institutions, and governments. As such, they have drawn increasing scrutiny from academics and other observers, many of whom have called into question the integrity of the methodologies employed, and thus the outcomes of the process. By contrast, relatively little attention has been paid to largely external factors that can affect a given institution's ability to compete within a given ranking exercise, such as their corporate status, geographic location, and/or access to resources. Building on previous work examining the impact of such "extraneous" factors, this study undertakes a quantitative analysis of the best-known university ranking exercise in Brazil to better understand the impact of such variables, both within other national contexts and well beyond.

Keywords: Brazil, competition, geography, rankings, universities

INTRODUCTION

The results of various international and national rankings of universities have been a source of interest and fascination for many years now—not only for prospective students, but university administrators, faculty, and even governments (see Marope & Wells, 2013). Among the best known and most respected of these include the Time Higher Education (THE, 2018) rankings, the Academic Ranking of World Universities (AWRU, 2018) published by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and the QS World University Rankings (QS, 2018). In addition, there are a large number of both national and international university ranking exercises undertaken annually by government, media outlets and not-for-profit organizations.

At base, the objective of these various exercises is fairly uniform; that is, to provide a reliable assessment of institutional quality, both in absolute terms and comparatively across the post-secondary array. In pursuit of this aim, measurements employed in the ranking process have tended to focus on both quantitative and qualitative variables associated, for example, with success and innovation in teaching and learning, research productivity and awards, levels of internationalization, community/business interaction, as well as factors related to perceived reputation.

Among observers, the benefits of rankings have been widely recognized. Many argue that such exercises can and do provide useful comparative data for students contemplating program enrolment, and or/for faculty looking to secure positions at the "best" institutions (see for example, Hazelkorn, 2013, 2018; Buela-Casal et al., 2007). They are also seen as providing for enhanced transparency and accountability on the part of institutions, and as potentially assisting government planning and decision-making with respect to where to invest scarce public dollars (Marope & Wells, 2013).

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At the same time, rankings have drawn significant criticism. To some extent, such critiques point to technical issues and the quality of data – how it is collected, analyzed and presented (Anowar et al., 2015; Liu, 2013). The bulk of criticisms tend to focus, however, on issues related to methodology, and specifically what variables are included and excluded in ranking exercises. For example, most measures of quality tend to focus on standard outcomes associated with university education and research. By contrast, very little focus is placed on universities' role in society (aside from commercialization), their importance in regional development or nation-building, or the preservation of culture (see for example, Ordorika & Lloyd, 2013).

While such criticisms continue to be the source of ongoing debate, virtually all focus on the integrity of the ranking process itself. Few studies examine the potential impact on rankings of factors external to institutions. For example, very little research has been undertaken on relative differences in rank between institutions based on their corporate status (e.g., private versus public). The same can be said of ranking differences associated with levels of institutional funding, or geographic placement, despite the fact that it is painfully obvious that institutions in the wealthier Global North vastly outperform those in the South. Such an omission is largely replicated by examinations of rankings undertaken within national boundaries.

In order to address this deficiency, and thus to further investigate the nature and impact of such "extraneous" factors on university competitiveness, this study undertakes a quantitative assessment of post-secondary rankings in Brazil. With a relatively large, complex, and dynamic post-secondary system about which detailed information is broadly accessible and rankings are well established, Brazil provides an excellent case-study revealing the critical external dynamics that can affect an institution's relative quality assessment. Specifically, building on an emerging body of work authored by Anowar et al. (2015), Jöns and Hoyler (2013), and others, the study points to the importance of three factors influencing the primary measures utilized to determine rank: corporate status, geography, and access to resources. The results help us not only to better understand the situation in Brazil, but may also be applied to better comprehend other nationals as well as global patterns of university quality and the external factors that potentially affect these.

BACKGROUND

The history of comparative quality assessment in post-secondary education can be traced to at least 1900. While utilized sporadically throughout the 20th century, real interest in the process did not begin to seriously evolve until after 1980. Even then, it is only more recently that the now well-known THE, AWRU and QS rankings really began to achieve broad currency (see Marope & Wells, 2013).

A number of factors appear to have stimulated this surge. There is little question that part of the demand comes from students (and parents) for whom the burden of educational costs has unquestionably risen in recent years. Increasingly, both students and parents have become savvy consumers (Hazelkorn, 2013, 2018, pp. 72-73; Buela-Casal et al., 2007, p. 350), and have sought assurance that institutions can provide value for money through the prestige and opportunities that their degrees afford. Selection of prospective institutions internationally for study abroad purposes has also been a factor. The number of students pursuing education in whole or part in countries other than their own has grown tremendously in recent years, with over three million now pursuing studies abroad outside their own countries. With over 30,000 universities currently operating worldwide, rankings provide a very effective resource for making decisions on university destinations (Sowter, 2013, p. 56; See also Sowter et al., 2017).

For institutions as well, rankings have progressively increased in importance, in part as a response to principal drivers of change within the post-secondary system. Not only have they become an effective tool for undergraduate recruitment (as per above), they serve as magnets for talent in the form of faculty, graduate students, and post-doctoral fellows—particularly as national and global competition for top performers in all three categories increases. They also provide a useful way of demonstrating relative quality to funders—whether they be in government, the private sector, or alumni as prospective donors (Hazelkorn, 2013, pp. 72-73; Hazelkorn, 2018; Sowter, 2013, p. 57; Buela-Casal et al., 2007, p. 350).

Last but not least, rankings have become useful tools for governments—at all levels—to assess their own efforts in building healthy post-secondary ecosystems with real impact, whether in terms of program quality, or the quality of research. Further, rankings help increase transparency and accountability in terms of institutional decision-making and investment, important objectives to both educational clients and taxpayers (Marope & Wells, 2013, pp. 12-15). Finally, rankings can provide useful parameters guiding government investment strategies, as institutions can be classified according to relative strengths in programs, research or other relevant areas and funded accordingly to further national or regional priorities (Hazelkorn, 2013, pp. 89-90; Buela-Casa et al., 2007, p. 350).

Such growing receptivity of rankings across sectors is at least in part linked to assurances of overall quality claimed by the rankers themselves. On this topic, however, there has been much debate within the literature. In some cases, criticism has focused on issues linked to data quality and data interpretation, such as the relative weighting of key variables (including the choice of weights), and or the use of two-dimensional ordinal ranking scales (Bekhradnia, 2016, pp. 9-10). Criticism has also been levelled at the use of reputational variables informed by "peer review" which some have argued is questionably based upon impressions of individuals that may or may not reflect underlying measures of quality (Anowar et al., 2015, p. 563; Liu, 2013, p. 33). Still other observers point to deficiencies in rankers' overabiding focus on average institutional performance while failing to take into account differences across programs, which can vary greatly in quality (Maxwell, 2018). Similarly, some have pointed to difficulties in assigning institutional credit where programs or research projects are shared across institutions (Anowar et al., 2015, p. 563).

The selection of variables that are used to construct rankings scales has also been a subject of considerable concern. In this regard, it has been argued that rankings often fail to measure what really counts in assessing quality, in favour of emphasizing what is easily countable (Hazelkorn, 2013, p. 77; Liu, 2013, p. 33). For example, education quality measures related to percentages of faculty with Ph.Ds—which are primarily quantitative – receive relatively more attention in ranking design exercises than qualitative factors that might be more important to students, such as support services, campus amenities, or availability of transit (Maxwell, 2018). Such measures also tend to favour more established, better known institutions that are better able to "crunch the numbers" (Marope & Wells, 2013, pp. 12-15) or employ consultants to assist in "massaging" the data (Maxwell, 2018). Other studies have pointed to the relative exclusion of important variables altogether, such as those related to social impact and social development (Nyssen, 2018). Ordorika and Lloyd (2013, p. 211), for instance, discuss the broad omission of factors related to the critical role of universities in many countries in state-building, as well as important work they do in providing care and community service – particularly in the absence of other support agencies.

That post-secondary ranking exercises per se could be improved through greater attention to debates such as these effectively goes without saying. What is still largely missing within the literature, however, is a broader discussion of how measures used in rankings (and hence perceptions of quality) may themselves be affected by external factors well beyond institutional control or oversight. Anowar et al. (2015, p. 563) for example, point to the relative impact of access to resources on institutional performance. Within the main global rankings exercises cited earlier, the most glaring impact of such disparities is plainly evident in the relatively low rankings of institutions in developing countries that have less access to funding. Further, Jöns and Hoyler (2013, p. 46) argue for the importance of geography in assessing the distribution of university rankings. There is a clear discrepancy in ranking performance, they argue, between the global North and South, reflecting both "uneven representation of different cultural contexts [and] the significant influence of deep-seated asymmetries in the global economy on higher education" (Jöns & Hoyler, 2013, p. 50). Pusser and Marginson (2013, pp. 558-560) move beyond this to consider the influence of global power in ranking exercises. In their view, ranking systems become a mere reflection of what drives conceptions of quality in the world's most influential post-secondary system—i.e., the United States. All others, but particularly those operating in non-Western, non-English contexts, engage in a futile exercise of "catch-up" driven almost exclusively by the rules of the game that are defined elsewhere.

Such research points to some relatively obvious macro-level tendencies related to the factors that may well drive rankings. For example, institutions with more limited resources may certainly be less able to develop attractive programming that increases enrolment, and/or to attract facilities, equipment, and talent in the form of researchers and trainees. Post-secondary schools in more remote locations may find it difficult to engage meaningfully and or to benefit from international networks. National policies and selective government funding may favour certain kinds of post-secondary growth and expansion, while at the same time limiting the possibility for institutions to compete effectively with peer institutions domestically or in other countries.

While the emerging body of research focusing on such external factors is encouraging, what is still largely missing to this point is precisely how such factors operate in real time to produce specific ranking outcomes in specific contexts. To shed further light on this challenge, we turn to the case of Brazil.

THE BRAZILIAN UNIVERSITY SYSTEM AND QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The Brazilian post-secondary education system dates at least to the time of its independence from Portugal in 1822. Owing to the country's reliance on commodity production and slow rate of development, however, expansion of the university system remained extremely limited until the modern era, with only 19 universities in place by the 1950s (see Nader, 2016; Steiner, 2007).

Significant expansion of the post-secondary system occurred following Brazil's 1964 military coup and the installation of authoritarian government lasting just over 20 years. Under the military, university structure and governance were reformed, accompanied by significant new investments facilitated by a rapidly growing industrial economy. Consequently, enrolments grew rapidly, from just 93,000 in 1960, to 425,000 in 1970, to over 1 million by 1975. In addition, a new national organization was established to support graduate education, the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES), as well as research funding agencies CNPq (Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico), and the Financiadora de Estudos e Projetos (FINEP). These early investments set the stage for further growth following the return to democracy in Brazil in 1988, resulting in a system that now includes nearly 2500 post-secondary institutions with a total enrolment of just over 8 million (Balbachevsky, 2013; MEC, 2017). Still and all, overall post-secondary participation rates for 25-64 year-olds are relatively low by OECD standards (at 12 percent for Brazil versus nearly 50 percent for OECD countries). In addition, as a middle income country, current Brazilian investments of approximately $US28B remain far lower than the OECD average (Nader, 2016, p. 64). As a federation, there are distinct differences as well in levels of wealth across Brazil's regions, resulting in serious imbalances in access to institutional funding in the form of tuition, ancillary fees, and/or state transfers.

In terms of its composition, the system is extremely diverse. As Table 1 shows, of the 2407 post-secondary institutions listed by the federal Ministério da Educação (MEC) (MEC, 2017), 197 are classified as "universidades" (universities)—that is, organizations primarily engaged in teaching and research. Another 166 are classed as smaller and academically more focused "centros universitários" (university centres), and the largest single group deemed to be "faculdades" (Faculties) or primarily teaching institutions focused on a range of specific career outcomes. Just over half of all universities are publicly funded (federal, state and even municipal level) and are tuition free. Entry, however, is extremely competitive, subject to scores on the national entry exam (the Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio—ENEM). The remainder are private (for profit and not-for-profit) and fee-based. The centros universitários and faculdades are overwhelmingly private and fee-based, with the latter offering full or part-time study catered to adult learners and the burgeoning population of younger Brazilians looking to expand marketable credentials (McCowan, 2004).

For their part, enrolments (see Table 2) tend to remain clustered in more traditional universities, which at just over 4 million, account for over half of post-secondary students. Approximately 2.1 million students attend faculdades, and another 1.4 million centros universitários. Across all three categories, private institutions predominate, attracting approximately three-quarters of enrolments. This distribution is far less skewed when one considers only the 197 institutions classed as universidades. As Table 3 shows, Public institutions at all levels (federal, state, and municipal) attract some 40 percent of enrolments, versus 60 percent for private schools.

Table 1

Post-Secondary Institutions in Brazil by Type, 2016

Type of Institution	Public	Private	Totals
Universidade	108	89	197
Centro Universitário	10	156	166
Faculdade	138	1866	2004
Other	40	n.a.	40
Totals	296	2111	2407

Source: MEC, 2017: Tabela 1.01

Table 2

Post-Secondary Enrolments in Brazil by Institutional Type, 2016

Type of Institution	Public	Private	Totals
Universidade	1,679,479	2,642,613	4,322,092
Centro Universitário	22,708	1,392,439	1,415,147
Faculdade	123,299	2,023,571	2,146,870
Other	164,592	n.a.	164,592
Totals	1,990,078	6,058,623	8,048,701

Source: MEC, 2017: Quadro Resumo, Tabela B

Table 3

Universities by Type and Enrolment, 2016

Type of University	Number	Enrolment
Federal	63	1,083,050
State	40	547,181
Municipal	5	49,248
Private	89	2,642,613
Totals	197	4,322,092

Source: MEC, 2017: Tabela 4.01; MEC, 2018

With the exception of state-funded universities, all post-secondary institutions in Brazil are subject to the regulatory oversight of the MEC (Balbachevsky, 2013), regardless of where they receive their funding. MEC is also responsible for collection, analysis and cataloguing of data on all aspects of post-secondary governance and operations, and importantly, monitoring of quality. The latter is undertaken through the Sistema Nacional de Avaliação de Educação Superior (SINAES), which routinely evaluates post-secondary institutions, programs of study, and student performance, reported through its Índice Geral de Cursos Avaliados da Institução (IGC). For its part, graduate programming is evaluated through CAPES (Nader, 2016, pp. 14-16; Tenório & Andrade, 2009, pp. 38-43). Overall quality is assessed on a 1-7 scale, with ratings of 6 and 7 representing world-class offerings (Steiner, 2007). Generally speaking, institutions that score highest on these scores are federally and state-funded universities.

While the SINAES and CAPES assessments provide significant insight on program quality, overall rankings of post-secondary institutions – primarily universities – are typically left to third-party organizations. To some extent, information relative to rankings can be gleaned from the global ranking exercises cited earlier. The Times Higher Education 2017 rankings, for example, include a total of 21 Brazilian universities, with three institutions (two state and one federal) in the top 600. QS (2018) ranks the same combination of three institutions in the top 400 (Nader, 2016, pp. 18-19). A far more extensive exercise, providing a detailed ranking of Brazilian universities has been conducted since 2012 by the Folha group of newspapers, and is referred to as the Ranking Universitário Folha (RUF) (Folha, 2019).

DATA AND METHODS

Data from the RUF 2018 university ranking form the core basis for the analysis conducted in this study. The manifest rankings, underlying data, and methodology employed in the RUF exercise are made publicly available, and are used here with the permission of its authors. The annual ranking is restricted to institutions classified by MEC as universidades (n=196). It is conducted in a manner similar to the major global rankings discussed earlier, and adapted to the Brazilian context, much in the same way as other national rankings of this type – such as Maclean's (Canada), the U.S. News and World Report (U.S), and the Guardian (U.K). The classification of institutions is based upon five criteria: academic research (42%), quality of teaching (32%), market impact (18%), innovation (4%) and internationalization (4%).

Table 4

Ranking Criteria and Weights, Ranking Universitário Folha (RUF), 2018

Criterion	Weight (%)
Research	42
Total publications	7
Total citations	7
Citations per publication	4
Publications per faculty member	7
Citations per faculty member	7
Publications in national journal	3
Funding per student	3
Percentage of faculty considered productive by CNPq	2
Thesis per faculty member	2
Teaching	32
National poll of university faculty	20
Percentage of faculty with Masters or Doctorate	4
Percentage of full and part-time faculty	4
Average Enade score of entering students	4
Market	18
National poll of company HR professionals	18
Innovation	4
Number of patents registered	2
Studies in partnership with industry	2
Internationalization	4
International citations per faculty member	2
Percentage of internationally co-authored publications	2

Source: Folha, 2019b.

Specific measures include primarily quantitative and limited qualitative measures, as summarized in Table 4. Each university in the ranking is assigned a score on each of these variables. The scores are then tallied to provide a final score out of 100. These final scores thus provide the basis for a numbered ranking from 1 to 196.

Obviously, these classifications and weightings share the same shortcomings as other global and local rankings, as discussed earlier (see Nader, 2016). For the most part, however, they have achieved a level of confidence within the Brazilian context, in part owing to the level of transparency provided by the report's sponsor. As a basis for further comparative analysis in the Brazilian context, however, they constitute an arguably reliable resource. As Nader quotes Brazilian philosopher and newspaper columnist Hélio Schwartsman, "taken in isolation, all of the indicators used in the RUF are imprecise, sometimes even problematic; taken together it is hoped however that they provide a reasonable portrait of the strong and weak points of each institution" (Nader, 2016, p. 22).

The data described above were extracted by the RUF 2018 national ranking database by the author and analyzed using SPSS. The analysis is largely based on descriptive statistics of a range of variables, some of which were contained in the database itself, and some which were derived from other sources. Variables taken from the RUF 2018 database included numerical rankings, overall raw scores and scores for each of the ranking criteria, geographical location, and corporate status for each institution in the population. These factors were further supplemented with other variables created using a range of background data on each institution gleaned from government statistical sources—including the MEC, and the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografía e Estatística (IBGE). These provided more detailed information on corporate status, funding source, location, population, and income per capita by state and geographic region (North, North-East, Central West, South and South-East).

For purposes of analysis, it is important to note that the institutions ranked in the RUF (presented in Table 5) represent not a sample, but the entire population of MEC-defined universidades in Brazil as summarized in Table 3. Overall, there are only slight variations between the two listings – in the total (196 versus 197) and across the state and municipal categories (n=2) – likely associated with a misallocation or recent change in status. Descriptive statistics and analytical trends discussed below therefore directly describe population attributes as they exist, without the need for statistical measures or more sophisticated methods designed to make inferences about population attributes.

Table 5

Institutional Type (RUF)

Type of University	N	%
Federal	63	32
State	38	19
Municipal	6	3
Private	89	45
Total	196	100

Source: Folha, 2019a.

RESULTS

We began by examining the broad characteristics of the top ranked universities in the RUF exercise, and the concordance of this list with other ranking exercises outside Brazil. Table 6 provides a listing of the RUF's 20 top ranked institutions in 2018, compared with the Brazilian national ranking outcomes published by the THE, ARWU, and QS, respectively that same year. Of the approximately 1000 universities assessed by each organization, the THE list included 32 Brazilian universities, QS 23 institutions, and ARWU, 22. Although in many cases only ranges of scores are presented (as the numbers are based upon the public data made available by these organizations) a casual glance suggests general concordance in terms of placement, with possibly the notable exception of the Universidade Federal de São Paulo. Arguably then, and at the top end of the list, the RUF rankings are at very least comparable with the assessments of the larger organizations' rankings exercises.

Table 6

Comparative Rankings of RUF Top 20 Universities (2018)

		Ranking			
University	Status	RUF (196)	THE (32)	ARWU (22)	QS (23)
Universidade de São Paulo (USP)	State	1	1	1	1
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ)	Federal	2	4-10	3	2-4
Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG)	Federal	3	4-10	9	5-6
Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP)	State	4	1	2	2-4
Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS)	Federal	5	4-10	5-8	5-6
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC)	Federal	6	11-21	12	8-11
Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR)	Federal	7	22-32	13-22	7
Universidade Estadual Paulista Julio de Mesquita Filho (UNESP)	State	8	4-10	4	2-4
Universidade de Brasília (UNB)	Federal	9	11-21	10-11	12-14
Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (UFPE)	Federal	10	11-21	13-22	15-18
Universidade Federal de São Carlos (UFSCAR)	Federal	11	11-21	10-11	12-14
Universidade Federal do Ceará (UFC)	Federal	12	11-21	13-22	15-18
Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ)	State	13	11-21	13-22	19-23
Universidade Federal da Bahia (UFBA)	Federal	14	NR	13-22	19-23
Universidade Federal de Viçosa (UFV)	Federal	15	22-32	13-22	12-14
Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF)	Federal	16	22-32	13-22	19-23
Universidade Federal de São Paulo (UNIFESP)	Federal	17	3	5-8	8-11
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul (PUCRS)	Private	18	11-21	13-22	NR
Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (PUC-RIO)	Private	19	11-21	5-8	NR
Universidade Federal de Goiás (UFG)	Federal	20	NR	NR	8-11

Source: Folha, 2019a; THE, 2019; ARWU, 2019; QS, 2019.

Notable in the top 20 list is the preponderance of federal and state public universities. Only two private institutions – both with religious sponsors – are included within this elite group. Consequently, as a first step in further investigating trends within the broader population, further analysis was undertaken with an eye to isolating the influence of corporate status on rank at a more granular level. This was done by comparing mean final scores (out of 100) of the 196 universities in the RUF survey, broken down by a number of administrative categories. The results of this analysis are presented in Tables 7 and 8.

As Table 7 reveals, for the entire population, federally funded public institutions outperform all other types by a fairly wide margin, scoring on average 62.73 out of 100. These are followed by state funded public institutions, at 47.16, private institutions at 39.87, and finally, municipal public organizations at 25. This largely conforms to broad characterizations of institutional types presented in the literature, with the possible exception of a select number of state universities, two of which rank within the top five universities on the RUF list for 2018 (see Table 6).

Table 7

Mean Performance Scores by Institutional Type, 2018

Type of University	N	Mean Score
Federal	63	62.73
State	38	47.16
Municipal	6	25
Private	89	39.87
Total	196	

Source: Folha, 2019a

Table 8

Mean Performance Scores – Private Institutions by Type, 2018

Type of Private University	N	Mean Score
Religious-PUC	7	68.36
Religious-Other	11	46.59
Secular for Profit	22	40.72
Secular Not for Profit	49	34.83
Total	89	

Source: Folha, 2019a

Certainly as well broad conceptions of the generally inferior quality of private institutions is borne out. Further analysis reveals, however, a marked distinction between private universities of different types (see Table 8). The seven institutions sponsored by the Brazilian Catholic Church for example—designated as Pontifícia Universitária Católica (Pontifical Catholic University) – achieve a mean score of 68.36. All others fare less well, with secular not-for-profit (typically community-based) organizations scoring on average 34.83. With an average score of just over 40, for-profit institutions generally live up to their reputation as focused primarily on sectoral career training, drawing low scores for research.

Beyond corporate status, the analysis moved to consider differences in ranking associated with geography. In fact, it would appear where institutions are located in Brazil very much matters in terms of their impact on the RUF listing. Nominally, nearly two-thirds (126 of 196) of universities in the country are located in the most populous regions of the country, the South and South-East. Just 14 (7 percent) are located in the Central-West, and 56 (29 percent) in the North and North-East. Table 9 reveals marked differences in mean scores for universities across these regions—from highs of just over 50 in the Central-West and South, to a low of just under 34 in the North.

Associated with location is the relative wealth of each institution's home region, which is particularly accentuated in Brazil. As a federation, Brazil has been compared to a fictional "Belíndia" – that is, a country that includes standards of living across regions that approximate in some cases Belgium, and in other, the poorest parts of India (Bacha, 2012; see also Pfeffermann, 2016). As Table 9 shows, income per capita ranges from a low of just over R$15,000 (R$1=USD$0.21) in the North, to a high of nearly R$40,000 in the Southeast. Correlational analysis reveals a strong association between the income per capita of an institution's resident state, and its RUF score (Pearson correlation=.563, p=000). This suggests that in some regions in the country, resources provided at the local level – through state governments, tuition-paying students, or the ability to collect ancillary fees – may be lacking to ensure the kind of performance that attracts higher institutional scores in those areas, particularly on key criteria such as research and teaching.

The most dramatic reflection of this appears in the comparison of state funded universities across regions. As Table 10 shows, state universities in the South-East post average scores of 73.87. Of the seven state-funded institutions in the region, moreover, four reside in RUF's top 20 list – they are in fact the only state universities within that top tier. By contrast, state universities in the North score on average only 21.54, with those in the North-East well under 50. Again, this presents a reasonable case to argue for the strong links between resources and performance.

What is perhaps far more interesting however, is the fact that a similar, if less dramatic variation also holds for federal universities which receive the bulk of their support from the central government. Again, referring to Table 10, the scores of federally-funded universities clearly align with the general trend found for RUF's larger 196 institution set. Mean performance scores for federal universities in the North and Northeast, at 40.74 and 57.27 respectively, are considerably lower than for the Central-West and Southeast, at 72.9 and 74.48. This represents a somewhat surprising finding, given the fact that federal universities are largely funded on the same formula across Brazil, and subject to the same budgeting process managed by the MEC and the federal government each year.

Table 9

Mean Performance Scores by Region, 2018

Region	N (%)	Mean Score	GDP/Capita	Population (%)
North	17(9)	33.53	R$19,204	18,182,253 (9)
North-East	39(19)	48.31	R$15,905	56,760,780 (27)
Central-West	14(7)	50.29	R$39.312	16,085,885 (8)
South	47(24)	50.19	R$36,312	29,754,036 (14)
South-East	79(40)	49.09	R$38,544	87,711,946 (42)
Total	196(100)			208,494,900 (100)

Source: Folha, 2019a; IBGE, 2019a: 9; IBGE, 2019b.

Table 10

Mean Performance Scores for Federal Universities by Region and Institutional Type, 2018

Region	Federal		State	
	N	Score	N	Score
North	10	40.74	5	21.54
North-East	18	57.27	14	41.80
Central-West	5	72.9	3	38.91
South	11	68	9	53.88
South-East	19	74.48	7	73.87
Totals	63		38	

Source: Folha, 2019a

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results presented in this study largely confirm assertions in some quarters within the literature regarding the importance of previously ignored factors associated with ranking differentiation (e.g., Anowar, 2015; Jöns and Hoyler, 2013). Without question, corporate status, geography and regional income levels can have a profound effect on where universities sit in national ranking exercises – in this case the RUF.

As to how precisely these types of factors influence institutional capacities in ways that affect rankings, the Brazilian case tentatively offers at least a few clues. For example, with respect to the impact of corporate status, private universities – with their over abiding focus on vocational training – are much less involved in "scoring-rich" activities linked to research. By focusing their activities on teaching and vocational training, they remain destined to remain at the bottom of the ranking pile. By contrast, public institutions at the state and federal universities are, for the most part, more heavily engaged in research activity, thus attracting top notch scholars, graduate students and international linkages that pump ranking scores.

To some extent, regional variations may also be understood with reference to a number of factors. Within Brazil, universities located within more populous regions benefit from significant pools of talented students and faculty, and other economies of scale that location affords. The higher density of institutions in the South and South-East also allows for more easy collaboration among researchers across multiple other high-quality institutions in the same state or region. Moreover, they are more easily connected by major airport hubs (primarily in the South-Eastern cities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo) facilitating international connections, attracting top-notch visiting faculty and/or fee-paying international students.

The relative wealth of Brazil's regions also clearly plays a role in determining what resources are available to support university excellence. As shown above, those states with higher GDP per capita and better able to provide institutional subsidies are home to many of the country's top-ranked institutions—most evidently displayed in the case of the South-East region. In addition, such institutions also have access to regional research funding agencies with relatively deep pockets, such as the Fundação de Amparo a Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (FAPESP), known internationally for providing outstanding research support programming. At the same time, the situation is not clear cut, owing to the fact that within the federally-funded network there exist discrepancies in ranking across regions by wealth, despite the fact that federal institutions are funded by the central government. Clearly other factors are at play in this case.

In this and other regards, the study does then offer as many questions as answers as regards to the influence of factors such as those examined here. This is a clarion call for further and more detailed research on variable impacts on ranking beyond the identification of patterns. For example, in the case of federal universities in Brazil, is funding uniform across regions, or is it variable and why? How might location affect relatively the ability of federal institutions to use available mechanisms to secure outside funding through ancillary services or other sources? Is it possible that funding levels are linked to regional variation in graduate/undergraduate enrolments, which in turn themselves may influence rankings? To what extent might political considerations linked to national and state-level politics affect funding flows? And how might rankings themselves be influencing how federal and state governments allocate resources now and more importantly, in future—thus creating circular effects? This last question is particularly salient as attempts have been made recently in Brazil (as well as other jurisdictions) to reallocate resources within the federal system to reflect questions of "quality" (see Folha, 2019c).

The answers to these and other questions certainly would provide considerable insight to underlying factors affecting the RUF rankings. Beyond Brazil, they also provide pathways to further analysis of ranking systems within other national jurisdictions and the international sphere more broadly. Given the increasing importance of rankings and reliance on them for decision making among a variety of constituencies, such work definitely assumes an increasing value and importance.

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Mission Statements of Japanese Civil Society Organizations Supporting International Students in the Kansai Area: Critical Discourse Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study is applying critical discourse analysis (CDA) to mission statements of civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Kansai area of Japan to examine how those texts may be reflecting their views on migration and impacting their practices related to international students. The analysis shows similarities across CSO types in choosing organizational names, using vague and bureaucratic vocabulary for formulating their mission statements, as well as confusing and contradictory style of some statements and event announcements that may be misleading or discouraging for potential members. At the same time, diversity of vocabulary referring to their target audience demonstrates shifting perspectives of CSOs on international students and more generally, on foreigners living in Japan.

Keywords: civil society organizations (CSOs), critical discourse analysis (CDA), Japan, international students, mission statements

INTRODUCTION

Japan is actively attracting international students into its higher education institutions as a part of its large-scale internationalization reforms initiated by the government in the 1980s and designed to transform Japan into an "international nation" (Otmazgin, 2018). The country is currently on the way to realize its 300,000 International Student Plan, meaning recruiting 300,000 international students by the year 2020. Besides benefitting the educational sphere, this initiative also helps to impact domestic factors in Japan, such as an aging and shrinking population growing demand for skilled human resources by Japanese companies to remain internationally competitive, and provides important incentives for internationalization (METI, 2018, 2019). To respond to these challenges, local governments are implementing a variety of international student support initiatives both via universities and directly, often with the help of their affiliated volunteer groups (see, for instance, Kyoto City, 2014; Kyoto City, 2020).

Internationalization of Higher Education in Japan

Numerous studies have focused on internationalization policies at Japanese universities (Knight, 2004, 2008; Ninomiya, Knight & Watanabe, 2009; Horie, 2015; Poole, 2016), university support system for incoming foreign students (Bradford, 2015; Rakhshandehroo & Yamamoto, 2017), international students' experiences on campus (Mock et al., 2016; Rakhshandehroo, 2018) and their strategies to cope with cultural adjustment (Mock et al., 2016; Shimauchi, 2017, 2018). However, the impact of third parties, such as on- and off-campus volunteer organizations on international students' sociocultural adaptation, has not been sufficiently studied.

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Civil Society in Japan

This paper relies on Pekkanen's (2006) definition of civil society as "organized, non-state, non-market sector" (p. 3). Although Japanese civil society has a long history of its own, it has been excluded from the postwar "iron triangle" (a close partnership between the ruling party, state bureaucracy and big businesses) and the law allowing citizens to register their own nonprofit organizations was passed only in 1998, much later than in other developed countries. Instead of contesting public policies like their Western counterparts, Japanese civil society organizations (CSOs) learned how to cooperate with the government; they are characterized by their top-down nature (Schwarz & Pharr, 2003; Ogawa, 2009; Reimann, 2010; Tsujinaka, 2010) and their predominant orientation towards service provision rather than political advocacy (Vogt & Lersch, 2007) which makes Pekkanen call them "members without advocates" (2006). The purpose of this paper is to critically examine mission statements of Japanese CSOs engaged with incoming foreign students and uncover underlying assumptions they hold regarding themselves and cultural "others" that could have an impact on the ways they interact with international students. The organizations in this sample are small local nonprofits and volunteer groups that are involved with international students in a variety of ways: sightseeing tours, cultural experiences, community activities, language classes or exchange, daily life support and career guidance. Although there is a greater variety among international student support CSOs (Ivanova, 2000), the organizations in this sample can be classified into three types for the purposes of this study: 1) CSOs initiated and funded by local governments, 2) CSOs initiated and funded by the MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology), and 3) university-affiliated student groups. Using Haddad's terminology, these types could be called "embedded organizations" as those having "close, ongoing relationships with the government" (Haddad, 2007, p. 164) directly or through universities as mediators. This confirms a dominant view in civil society studies that Japanese CSOs are wide-spread and active but because of its top-down character and close affiliation to the government their role remains reduced to that of implementing agencies (Schwarz & Pharr, 2003; Ogawa, 2009; Reimann, 2010). This paper focuses on CSOs that are active in four prefectures in the Kansai area, or Western Japan: Shiga, Kyoto, Osaka, and Hyogo. This area is Japan's historic heartland, a major economic center and home to numerous national and private universities attracting international students who also receive much attention from local volunteer organizations. Although all the organizations have some form of online presence (typically, a website and/or a Facebook page), this paper is only limited to those having their webpage or Facebook page written in English, the main language of the globalization and one of the main internationalization strategies in Japan as in many other non-English speaking countries (Dearden, 2014; Macaro et al., 2018). The terms CSOs, nonprofits, volunteer organizations and student support groups are used in this paper interchangeably as synonyms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mission Statements

The mission statement is defined as "a written, formal document that attempts to capture an organization's unique and enduring purpose and practices" (Bart & Tabone, 1998, as cited in Barniskis, 2016, p. 136). Researchers have noted the ubiquitous character of mission statements (Morphew & Hartley, 2006) and their critical role for organizations, in relation to both insiders and outsiders. Several studies (Drucker, 1989; Pandey, Kim & Pandey, 2017; Macedo, Pehno & Silva 2017) have demonstrated that mission statements are closely related to the organizational performance, although this relationship may be indirect, mediated by employees' organizational commitment (Macedo, Pehno & Silva 2017). Although mission statements do not always reflect objective reality and researchers question whether mission statements are strategic necessity or window dressing (Souder, 2016), these texts certainly almost reveal how organizations would like to be perceived from the outside.

Another group of studies has identified typical components of mission statements. Bartkus, Glassman & McAfee (2004) have formulated three criteria that organizational mission statements should fulfill: 1) identifying specific stakeholder groups, 2) including specific components (industry, geographic scope, values, competence, motivational messages, future orientation) and 3) achieving four objectives: communicating direction, assisting in control, guiding decision-making and motivating employees (p. 393). Based on their analysis of mission statements of American universities, Morphew & Hartley (2006) added to that list that mission statements can reflect organizational aspirations.

A number of studies (Chen & Collier, 2012; Woolford & Curran, 2012) have applied critical discourse analysis (CDA) to data coming from interviews with nonprofit employees in the US and Canadian contexts. CDA is an interdisciplinary approach interested in language as "social practice" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, as cited in Wodak, 2007, p. 209) and focusing on issues of power, ideology, domination and control (Wodak, 2007). In Chen & Collier's study, the approach was instrumental in uncovering how contradictory avowals (group members' representations to the outsiders) and ascriptions (representations of other groups) undermine the organizations' potential to serve the affected groups and fulfill their purpose (Chen & Collier, 2012, p. 45). Woolford & Curran (2012) have used CDA to show how indigenous reflexive practices and transpositions (ability of social actors to transfer their practices from one field to another) at nonprofits were able to counteract the dominant neoliberal welfare approach. These studies, however, have not focused on mission statements.

Some other researchers studied mission statements in the nonprofit sector but applied different methods of analysis (content analysis, thematic analysis, quantitative methods using software). Lawless (2012) described how mission statements of the US nonprofits focusing on poverty alleviation reflected the dominant ideology that individuals should be able to help themselves (Lawless, 2012, pp. 13-14). Dimitrov (2008) finds problematic that mission statements of many nonprofits look alike; this is also true for most Japanese CSOs in this study. Another challenge for mission statements is their need to handle "strategic ambiguity" (Dimitrov, 2008, p. 22); he sees a solution for this problem in creating specific messages for specific purposes and public while maintaining a general mission statement representing the raison d'être of an organization as a whole.

A comparative analysis of European, Japanese and US mission statements done by Bartkus, Glassman & McAfee (2004) revealed that Japanese companies were more likely to motivate employees by stating how their business can improve the society while US and European emphasized competitive superiority (p. 399). This tendency was explained by the collectivist value orientation of the Japanese as opposed to more individualistic Westerners.

Perceptions of Migration in Japan

This section highlights several factors influencing perceptions of migration and foreigners in Japan to better understand the context in which student-support CSOs are operating. According to Beciu et al. (2017), state institutions and policies adapt to migration by modifying their discourse and creating a sense of solidarity with migrants in order to retain their power status (Beciu et al., 2017, p. 231). This tendency may be true for some migrant support organizations in Japan focusing on political advocacy; however, most organizations from the present sample view themselves mainly as service providers to foreigners who are generally perceived as guests or temporary visitors. This view is in line with Nihonjinron ideology, a form of cultural nationalism, literally meaning: “discussions of the Japanese” and summarized by Stevens (1997) as follows: 1. Japanese are “culturally and socially homogenous,” 2. They are different from Westerners and also other Asian people, 3. They can only be analyzed by means of Japanese social theories (Stevens, 1997, p. 12). The first presupposition clearly fails to take into account many population categories, such as Japanese residents of Chinese and Korean descent, Ainu and Okinawan populations, foreign workers including Japanese returnees born overseas, children from international marriages and international students, among others. Historically, the myth of homogeneity of the Japanese was exploited by the authorities starting from the Meiji era to create nationalistic and militaristic ideology; since then, it has also spread across the world and continues to impact Japanese citizens’ perceptions of migration until today (Lie, 2001; Takeuchi, 2006; Burgess, 2010).

Another factor affecting perception of foreigners in Japan was a period of isolation in Japanese history, a so-called “Sakoku” lasting from 1633 till 1853 when the country was forcibly opened by the Commodore Perry had a deep impact on Japanese mentality and resulted in a number of fears and myths regarding foreigners, especially of non-Asian origin. The folklore classic *The Legends of Tono* by Kunio Yanagita (1910) includes stories of Western visitors among those of ghosts and of *Tengu*, long-nosed mountain goblins (Yanagita, 1910, 2008). Later, Japan’s defeat in the World War II, American occupation, and postwar economic progress (a so-called “Japanese economic miracle”) made Japanese more exposed to the rest of the world but not necessarily more willing to accept cultural differences. During the Sakoku period, Japanese authorities allowed a limited number of non-Asian foreigners to stay on an artificial island near Nagasaki called Dejima. Based on the analogy with the historical island, Shimauchi (2017) coined a term “dejimaization” to describe the current situation of isolation experienced by international students and faculty in Japanese universities. Civil society groups have the potential to tackle this issue of isolation by creating new ties among people that would not have met in their ordinary life without the mediation of volunteer groups (Ogawa, 2009; Vinken et al., 2010).

This paper appears to be the first attempt to apply CDA to Japanese CSOs’ mission statements written in English and analyze how these texts may be reflecting their views on migration and impacting their practices related to international students.

METHODOLOGY

Methodologically, this study uses critical discourse analysis (CDA), a cross-disciplinary inquiry analyzing language as a social practice and uncovering the ways discourse reproduces existing ideology, social inequalities, and domination (Fairclough, 1989). Both spoken and written texts can be analyzed by means of CDA; however, unlike a conventional document analysis, CDA does not stop at the micro-level, i.e., syntactic, semantic, or rhetorical structures shaping the text. As a “socially committed research,” (Lin, 2014) it proceeds to relating those specific language structures to the broader sociopolitical context by studying issues related to text production: institutions producing a text and its target audience, its purpose and processes of its production, distribution and consumption. CDA was chosen for this study due to its potential to reveal presuppositions underpinning representations of international students and self-representations among Japanese CSOs and understand how those assumptions may impact organizational practices.

As the previous section has shown, CDA has been frequently applied in migration studies to deconstruct the dominant discourse by identifying presuppositions related to cultural "others" and by uncovering ways certain migrant-related issues are framed in media, public documents, education or advertising.

Mission statements of Japanese CSOs have been analyzed to see how the organizations represent themselves and their service recipients, i.e., foreigners in Japan. This study focuses on mission statements written in English because they are mostly accessible for international students studying in Japan in English-medium programs (EMP) and are the main way of introducing the organization to the target audience. Mission statements in English play a role of signposts or sign boards for students allowing them to make informed choices as for joining CSOs and their events.

The mission statements of international student support groups are often embedded in a broader self-description, along with organizational history, contact information and event announcements. Although most CSOs in this sample employ English native speakers as their staff or volunteers; however, it remains unclear to what extent they make use of their services while presenting their website materials as the quality of their writing varies considerably. Sometimes, their sentences contain grammar mistakes, seem stylistically unclear or look like direct translation from Japanese. Consequently, it is uncertain how conscious their vocabulary choice is and to what extent the organizations are aware of the pragmatic effect these texts might create. In those cases, some ways of expression may be unintentional, and results should be interpreted with caution.

DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis focused primarily on lexicosemantic components of mission statements using qualitative approach and following these steps. First, websites of thirty organizations involved with international students across four prefectures of Japan were accessed in June 2019. Eleven out of thirty CSOs provided mission statements in English and they were therefore selected for this study. Next, an open coding was performed to break down selected texts into units and develop categories using inductive approach (Patton, 2002; Bengtsson, 2016). A qualitative content analysis focused on lexicosemantic components of mission statements for manifest analysis of surface structures ("What has been said?") and latent analysis of deep structures ("What was the author's intention?"). The content analysis highlighted which vocabulary units were used to operationalize mission statements and how the meaning of these words and expressions helped the organization to convey their message or prevented it from doing so. To complement the content analysis, the thematic analysis was used to identify recurrent themes in the mission statements (Patton, 2002; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The themes that emerged from the data were classified into three main groups: "organization mission and role," "key stakeholders," and "organizational values." Connecting the findings of content and thematic analyses allowed to unravel how the word choice of CSOs helped them express their unique purpose and/or their conformity to the established standards of international student support.

Furthermore, creating a simple typology based on organizational structure allowed to review tendencies in mission statements within each type and across the types. Among the eleven CSOs in the sample, only KyoTomorrow Academy belongs to the second type (sponsored by the MEXT) while Osaka University International Student Association (OUISA), Ritsumeikan Graduate Student Association(GSA) and Ritsumeikan Tutors for International Students' Assembly at Osaka Ibaraki Campus (OIC TISA) belong to the third type (university-affiliated groups) and the remaining seven organizations belong to the first type (affiliated with local governments).

The first draft of this paper was shown to an expert in pragmatics and applied linguistics a native English speaker to check the validity of the author's interpretations and enhance the trustworthiness of research results.

FINDINGS

Similarities in Organizational Names and Mission Statements

The first noticeable feature is the similarity among the CSO names: four of them are called "International Association," three others "International Friendship Association" preceded by the name of the town or city, and two more are "International Foundations." One possible explanation is that they may be learning best practices from each other, and the similarity occurs naturally in the process of knowledge transfer. Alternatively, this may also be due to the top-down nature of the CSOs as they are named by government officials following a similar pattern. It is not possible to give a definite answer to this question with the available data; however, the similarity itself may be also serving a purpose as it reinforces the impression of uniformity and "homogeneity" cherished by the Japanese establishment. University-affiliated groups or those targeting specifically international students (KyoTomorrow Academy) display more diversity in their names using other nouns such as Assembly or Academy.

Similarities are also found in their ways of formulating their mission statements. Most CSOs in the sample exhibit their mission statement as a short phrase at the top of their homepage or "About" section in their Facebook profile. However, in the case of Yasu City International Friendship Association, the mission statement is modestly hidden at the bottom of the page below the address, contact information and map. It refers to the town history (the merge of two towns into one) before engaging into the usual rhetoric of "smooth integration," apparently meaning that foreigners should become a part of Japanese society without destroying its inherent "harmony." Nakamatsu (2014) believes that the Japanese government prioritizes "stability over inclusiveness" (p. 142) and interprets constant referring to "living together in harmony" in the official discourse as attempts to conceal existing power inequality for the sake of harmony (Nakamatsu, 2014, p. 140). This points to the vast contrast in culture of Japan and the West, and can be seen in the ways local CSOs represent these cultural values in their mission statements.

Variations in Referring to Stakeholders

On the other hand, much more variations can be observed in the ways the CSOs refer to their stakeholders, clients or target audience: they are called "foreigners," "foreign residents," "foreigners living in the local area," "visitors from overseas," "citizens of the world," "international students," "members" and "people with diverse cultural background." Such diversity in terminology can demonstrate shifting perspectives on foreign residents in Japanese society after the recent emergence of multiculturalism discourse (Tsuneyoshi, 2011; Lee & Olsen, 2015; Bradley, 2016). In the past, they would be called only "foreigners" or "visitors" and perceived as temporary guests; somewhat later the "international students" category was added, and more recently, when "multicultural coexistence" became buzzwords in the Japanese media, such expressions as "citizens of the world" and "people with diverse cultural background" were brought up.

Lexicosemantic Operationalization of Mission Statements

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the most common word used to operationalize mission statements is "international" used 43 times throughout the sample texts in combination with nouns as "exchange," "understanding," "relationships," "friendship," "cooperation," and "communication" showing the organizational purpose. Next widely used words are "activity/activities" used eight times to point to the action-oriented nature of the CSOs, "support" and "culture," also used eight times including their derivatives like "cultural" or "multicultural." The popularity of the word "culture" may be explained by the emphasis on cultural differences rather than similarities that is dominant in Japanese media, official discourse, and mainstream thinking. The word "support" may also reflect paternalistic ideas of Japanese society that foreigners need to be supported and educated in order to "live in harmony" in the Japanese society, or another variation elsewhere: "live at ease with foreigners." The word "community" has been used four times which shows that there might be a growing attention to including newcomers into the community life. Other key words ("foreign," "global," "diversity," "smooth," "harmony," "connect") are used two or three times only. Overall, mission statements of the organizations of the first type (affiliated to the local government) present the same narrative of the "peaceful coexistence with foreigners" that can be interpreted as attempts to "tame" newcomers through providing some activities and educating them to behave in a way that would not disturb steady functioning of the local community.

Among activities provided by the CSOs, there have not been found any events or workshops on controversial topics (migration, sexual minorities' rights, gender gap) or those that could potentially undermine the international image of Japan (dealing with consequences of Fukushima nuclear meltdown, whaling practices, mental health issues, racism at schools or exploitation of "technical trainees," low-paid foreign workers from South-East Asia). The ways Japanese culture is represented through the CSOs activities: cooking events, sightseeing, language classes for beginners, seem superficial and limited to those aspects of culture that have been judged by the CSO decision-makers as safe and attractive. Being overly concerned with making a good impression on foreigners, CSOs opt for "*kireigoto,*" literally meaning "beautiful or clean things" that can be shown to outsiders (Stevens, 1997).

Differences across Types

The CSOs of the first group often refer to their sister cities, usually those in the United States. This could be seen as a geopolitical marker and a way to legitimize themselves as Japanese society and culture have been considerably Americanized and virtually everything related to the US is perceived in Japan as inherently superior. It could also serve as a reference to the organizational evolution and history: many of the CSOs in smaller towns were founded in relation to a partnership agreement as an attempt of local authorities to engage citizens in welcoming foreign visitors to their town and encourage them to visit their sister city in turn. This history of interaction in form of exchanging visits may also explain the prevalence of the phrase "international exchange" in the mission statements.

The second type (sponsored by MEXT) is represented by only one organization KyoTomorrow Academy. Unlike the first type open to all categories of foreigners in Japan (tourists, spouse visa holders, missionaries, trainees, English teachers or company employees), KyoTomorrow focuses uniquely on international students studying in Kyoto City and aims to provide employment support to those who would like to find a job in Kyoto after graduation.

The main problem of their mission statement is that it does not articulate the organizational purpose clearly enough. After a good starting sentence mentioning "international students" and "employment," they continue by saying that students can participate in "traditional cultural activities" that they "wouldn't find anywhere else." This statement is confusing because the main purpose of the group is not providing cultural activities, and secondly, it sounds misleading because there are multiple CSOs in Kyoto City that organize tea ceremony demonstrations, kimono-wearing sessions, calligraphy classes and similar events that can be classified as "traditional cultural activities." Since incoming international students are usually bombarded with various invitations from volunteer groups, they may easily overlook the message from KyoTomorrow, which is the only organization in its genre focusing on long-term support and integration instead of merely entertaining activities.

The third group is represented by three student support organizations initiated and run by universities. They are managed differently: Osaka University International Student Association (OUISA) is run primarily by international students, Ritsumeikan OIC TISA is operated almost entirely by domestic Japanese students recruited by the university to organize events with international students, and Ritsumeikan GSA includes both international and domestic students with more focus on academic affairs rather than social life. Mission statements of both Ritsumeikan-affiliated groups are written in the same vague bureaucratic style as most statements of the first group, while OUISA's mission statement differs from them in a somewhat problematic way.

The text starts by inviting the audience to reach out for "fun stuff" in a sentence that sounds quite relaxed and friendly; however, the number of restrictions mentioned in the introduction may discourage the reader to do so. A disclaimer "We basically do not respond to the requests from OUTSIDE (sic) Osaka University" is repeated twice with the word "outside" written in all capitals, and after each bullet point, there is another statement in brackets ("most of our activities are for Osaka University students only"). These contradictory statements in introduction and mission statements may represent the conflict between some willingness to open up and support international students, on one hand, and tight institutional control, on the other hand. In particular, these restrictions may be problematic for those students who come to study with their families and would like to bring them to a party or an event, or if someone wishes to invite their friends from another university.

Another notification states: "We generally do not take requests for assistance (help about life in Japan, interpreting, guiding etc.)" which may also seem unfriendly and hostile from a student support organization, particularly if read by international students who recently arrived and are experiencing confusion and discomfort in their transition process. The final reminder: "Studies are the most important work for any international student, so you are welcome to participate when you have time from studies" can be interpreted as "Don't forget you are here to study, not to have fun" and may be seen as patronizing and unpleasant by some international students. This section is also interesting from the viewpoint of politeness pragmatics and shows how cross-cultural misunderstandings may arise from the differences in politeness perceptions in different cultures.

Organizational Roles and Values in Mission Statements

The organizational roles across the three types are described as "a base for international exchange" (Kyoto City International Foundation), "a community for international students" (KyoTomorrow Academy), "a student circle" (OUISA), "a core organization for international relationship and multicultural coexistence" (Miki City International Association), "facilitating international communication of the city" (Nishinomiya International Association), "an official organization which mission is to represent and defend the student's interests" (Ritsumeikan GSA) and "an organization of Ritsumeikan University" (Ritsumeikan

OIC TISA). Some of those self-definitions or role description clearly point to organizational values: for instance, “an official organization” sounds more formal than “a student circle” and demonstrates a sense of pride in achieving an official status which requires a significant amount of time and paperwork in Japanese universities. Similar inference can be made regarding a self-definition of Miki City organization that displays the most updated vocabulary of Japanese multiculturalism.

In contrast, some other role descriptions or self-definitions are more difficult to interpret. For instance, the word “community” used by the KyoTomorrow Academy sounds definitely much friendlier than the “base” (Kyoto City International Foundation) that reminds of a military base; however, it is not clear whether the word choice is intentional and reflects certain organizational values. Authors of mission statements of the CSOs remain unknown, which allows to apply the theory of “vanishing author” proposed by Gergen and Whitney in regard to mission statements of IT firms when anonymous writers of the company mission become a “center” and “ultimate referent of the dominant discourse” (Gergen & Whitney, 1996, as cited in Hackney & Pillay, 2002).

DISCUSSION

This paper reviewed mission statements of international student support organizations in the Kansai area of Japan using qualitative discourse analysis. The analysis has shown similarities among CSO names and word choice to operationalize their mission statements. Other common points included abundance of vague and bureaucratic language, and frequent use of confusing and contradictory messages to describe the organizational purpose or events.

On the other hand, there was a considerable variation in terminology referring to CSO target audience which could demonstrate evolving attitudes to foreigners in Japanese society or, at the very least, CSOs’ awareness of the government discourse of multicultural coexistence. In practice, most CSOs maintain the same approach to international students as they would have used for entertaining guests: the choice of activities is superficial and is limited to safe and pleasant topics.

The self-description of organizational roles and values also demonstrate considerable diversity: from simply indicating the organizational purpose to showing pride in the achieved status or awareness of the current government policies regarding foreign residents.

The CSOs of the first type refer to their sister cities in the United States in their mission statements as a way to legitimize their status and highlight their organizational history. While these organizations are open to all foreigners in Japan, those of the second and third types focus only on international students. The organization of the second type sponsored by the MEXT is unique in its mission of providing long-term integration support to international students through job-hunting support; however, their mission statement and event descriptions do not make their purpose clear and can easily remain unnoticed by the target recipients. The mission statements of university-affiliated organizations (third type) include contradictory messages that intend to encourage students to have fun and build trust but also point to the institutional control that some students might experience as discouraging. Overall, mission statements of the CSOs in this study uncover organizational attempts to maintain a fine balance between building trust and international friendships, on one hand, and following the government guidelines and restrictions, on the other hand.

CONCLUSION

This paper contributes to the sociology of education and migration studies by analyzing mission statements of Japanese civil society organizations supporting inbound international students in their sociocultural adaptation. Despite the importance of mission statements for international students, only a minority of organizations involved with international students have them posted online in English (11 out of 30 CSOs). The analysis has shown similarities across types in choosing organizational names, frequent use of vague and bureaucratic vocabulary for formulating mission statements confusing and contradictory style of some statements that may be misleading or even discouraging for potential members. Therefore, it is advisable that CSOs working with international students choose clearer messages capable of attracting and inform their stakeholders and motivate their own volunteers and employees.

The data shows that some CSOs still view foreigners in Japan, including international students as temporary visitors in need of protection and support or even as potential threat and disruption to "smooth" and "harmonious" functioning of the Japanese society, while others use a more contemporary terminology that might attest some changes in their views on migrants in Japan. However, their approach to interaction between Japanese and foreigners remains largely the same regardless of their vision and structure, with a notable exception of KyoTomorrow Academy focusing on long-term integration. The main emphasis is on differences and diversity, not on unity or equity, and most intercultural activities are done on a very superficial level related to the visible part of culture: examples of popular activities include cooking classes and sightseeing tours; controversial issues and thought-provoking topics are carefully avoided.

The limitations of the study include a small sample size (only eleven organizations) and the fact that mission statements in English could have been written by non-native speakers of English, the word choice might have been unintentional and therefore, interpretations of the discourse should be made with caution.

Further research is needed to determine who chooses mission statements, to what extent CSO staff and volunteers have a sense of ownership vis-à-vis their organizational statements or whether they feel those statements have been imposed upon them by authorities or anonymous writers, and most importantly, whether they see a possibility of interaction between Japanese and foreigners on equal terms.

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APPENDIX A

List of Japanese CSOs in the Study

Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation http://www.himeji-iec.or.jp/e_jigyo.html

Kyoto City International Foundation: What is the Kyoto City International Foundation http://www.kcif.or.jp/web/en/foundation/about/

KyoTomorrow Academy https://www.studykyoto.jp/kyotomorrowacademy/en/

Miki International Association: Our Story: https://www.facebook.com/mikiinternational/

Nagahama International Friendship Association http://www.nifa.jp/

Nishinomiya City International Association: https://www.nishi.or.jp/shisei/seisaku/tabunkakyosei/nia/aboutnia/nia.html

Osaka University International Student Association: About https://www.facebook.com/pg/OUISA.OU/about/?ref=page_internal

Ritsumeikan GSA: see Appendix 1

Ritsumeikan OIC TISA: About https://www.facebook.com/pg/oictisa/about/?ref=page_internal

Suita International Friendship Association: About SIFA https://suita-sifa.org/en/about-sifa-english/

The Yasu International Friendship Association: About http://yifashiga.org/english/access/

APPENDIX B

Ritsumeikan GSA mission statement is available online only on internal university messaging to current students and not accessible outside university.

[Important】Announcement of the opening of the application for the position of New GSA Committee Members

December 18th 2018
Name (*omitted for privacy reasons*) / Election officer

The Graduate School Association (GSA) is pleased to announce the opening of the application for the position of GSA Committee Members for the academic year 2019- 2020.

According to the organization within the Graduate School of International Relations, the students are convened to elect their representatives to represent their interests to the various entities across the university.

About the GSA The Graduate School Association is an official organization which mission is to represent and defend the student's interests within the Graduate School of International Relations of Ritsumeikan University. Its main role is summarized as follows:

1. To act as an intermediary between the graduate students and the Administrative office.
2. To ensure that social life of the students within the department will go smoothly and in harmony.
3. To intervene whenever it is needed on all issues related to the students' life.

Newly Arrived South Asian Students' Experience with the Canadian Healthcare System

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ABSTRACT

In this article, we report on the experiences of newly arrived South Asian international students (undergraduate and graduate levels) with accessing healthcare services in a small town setting in British Columbia, Canada. The objective of the study was to better understand the barriers and facilitators of accessing healthcare services. We used a qualitative design with an exploratory approach and conducted 8 semi-structured interviews with South Asians students that had newly arrived in the city of Kamloops and had been enrolled at Thompson Rivers University (TRU) for less than 12 months. Findings included barriers such as needing more information during on campus orientation, inefficiencies of the healthcare system, and accessing healthcare service. Facilitators of accessing healthcare services included attending campus orientation, having a curiosity, and a social support system. These findings provide new knowledge regarding the barriers and facilitators of accessing healthcare in Canada. In order to better meet the needs of international students programs and services must be tailored to this unique group of students.

Keywords: Canada, healthcare system, international students, small town, South Asian students

INTRODUCTION

According to the 2016 Census, approximately 21.9 percent of the Canadian population was composed of foreign born immigrants from many parts of the world (Statistics Canada, 2017). Additionally, 1 in 5 people in Canada are immigrants ("people born outside of Canada") (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2019, p. 5). Furthermore, a stable population is needed to maintain a low dependency ratio, as this indicates there are sufficient working-aged populations (20-64 years) who can support the dependent population (0-14 years and over 65 years) (Statistics Canada, 2016). Thus, in Canada, as the dependency ratio increases and fertility rates continue to stay below replacement levels, immgration opens the opportunity for support in this ageing Canadian population (Beaujot, 2003). Immigration is important as it not only assists with the country's demographics but also allows for an increase in the economy, the diversity and cultural richness of Canada (Beaujot, 2003; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2013).

In 2017, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (2019) reported over 317, 328 study permits were issued to international students and as of December 31, 2018, that figure has increased to 572,415 (ICEF Monitor, 2019) – a 45 percent increase from one year to another. International students contribute $12 billion to Canada's GDP and support 158,300 jobs (Global Affairs Canada, 2018). The Canadian Bureau for International Education (2018) reports that 51 percent of international students plan to become permanent residents of the country. Therefore, understanding international students' needs around

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navigating the Canadian healthcare system is important as they have a significant impact on the Canadian economy in supporting jobs, producing revenue and in improving our demographics.

New Immigrant Challenges

At the time of arrival in Canada, immigrant's rate their health status as high, however, over time this healthy immigrant effect subsequently declines (Newbold, 2005). The healthy immigrant effect describes the health status of a newly arrived immigrant when their health is higher, but subsequently declines over time (Beiser, 2005; Newbold, 2005). Beiser (2005) explains that the health of immigrants declines as they try to converge towards the social and environmental norms of the country of settlement often adopting habits such as smoking and unhealthy eating. As a new immigrant, navigating the healthcare system, several challenges arise. These challenges relate to communication barriers related to speaking another language, lack of interpreters, socioeconomic barriers such as not being able to take time off work to visit a doctor, or lack of social support (Higginbottom & Safipour, 2015; Lum et. al, 2016). Furthermore, the Mental Health Commission of Canada (2019) demonstrated how the social determinants of health, like language, income, education, and discrimination all play major roles for immigrants in being able to access healthcare services. In addition to understanding the barriers, researchers also discuss several facilitators like social support networks, cultural organizations and their accessibility to the certain healthcare services, like having a family doctor, as key factors (Lum et al., 2016; Straiton & Myhre, 2017). While there is a growing body of research exploring these barriers for immigrants in general, very little is understood about the experience of international students regarding accessing health care services while being a student at a Canadian University.

The Experience of International Students

Existing literature about new immigrants focus on various issues, like healthcare, language, education, and housing. Issues concerning international students are almost absent from the discussion. The published studies that do exist highlight international students' negative experiences around housing, finances, cultural shock, and the stress of being in a foreign country (Akhtar & Kroner-Herwig, 2015; Calder et al., 2016; Presbitero 2016). Furthermore, a study conducted at TRU, where the current study takes place, explored female international student's experiences with the healthcare system (Burgess et al., 2016). This study highlighted struggles that women from many different countries face including trying to stay healthy, problems in knowledge translation, social support and more (Burgess et al., 2016). While having a broad understanding of the issues that female international students encounter with the healthcare system, there is still much variation within this population. It is difficult to generalize the findings from these types of studies to all international students. Therefore, we decided to narrow the focus to explore the experiences of newly arrived South Asian students in order to broaden the knowledge within this area of study. Therefore the focus of this research was to understand the experiences of newly arrived South Asian students at TRU regarding access to healthcare services in Kamloops, British Columbia.

Context

TRU is situated in a small town called Kamloops in the province of British Columbia, Canada. The total student population on campus at TRU during 2017-18 was 15, 622, of those, 11,461 were domestic students and 4,161 were international students (Integrated Planning and Effectiveness, 2018). According to the TRU's factbook for 2017-2018, almost 50 percent of the international students are from India, whereas students from other countries range from 1-3 percent (Integrated Planning and Effectiveness, 2018).

Therefore, studying the needs of South Asian students would be meaningful for the university, educational specialists, healthcare practitioners and others.

When newly arrived international students come to the University's campus for the first time, they attend a week-long orientation before the start of a new semester. During orientation students are provided with information about the Kamloops, TRU and learn practical information such as local banking, obtaining a cell phone, available shopping and accommodation. Many businesses and vendors from Kamloops are part of orientation and provide information about their services as well. Students also learn about the International Student Advisory (ISA) group, who are a diverse group of members that assist students in a variety of topics, like personal counselling, housing, settlement services and much more (Thompson Rivers University, 2019). Furthermore before arriving in Canada or during their program, students can book an appointment with any of the ISA members (Thompson Rivers University, 2019).

When international students first come to Canada for University such as TRU, they are automatically enrolled in a private insurance called "GuardMe" for the first three months (Thompson Rivers University, 2018). During orientation, one full day is dedicated to introducing students to the government funded insurance called medical services plan (MSP). Student can then choose to stay with the private insurance plan or ISA members will assist the new students in transitioning to MSP. Either way, students must be enrolled in a medical insurance plan that covers them for the duration of their stay in Canada. Another healthcare related event during orientation is the cultural sessions, where throughout the week, these sessions are conducted in the students' primary language. During a cultural session, information regarding where the hospital is, what to do in an emergent situation, and the location of the walk-in clinics, are shared with students. Additionally, information regarding maintaining student's mental health is also briefly shared. If any international student misses orientation week, or misses the MSP sign-up session or their cultural session, they are able to make an appointment with the ISA members, who then provides a one-on-one session with the student, throughout the year.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A qualitative design with an exploratory approach was the methodology for the study to answer the research question – what is the experience of newly arrived South Asian students with accessing healthcare services? The study was approved by TRU Research Ethics Board. South Asian students were contacted and recruited through the TRU World International Student Services. Eight face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted for approximately 30-60 minutes. Due to funding constraints on time, we were only able to gather eight participants for this study. These interviews were held at a place of convenience for the participants, which was usually on campus. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim for data analysis. Specifically the questions asked in the interview were related to the participants' experience around the accessibility of healthcare services, the barriers and facilitators of accessing health care services and their previous and current knowledge around the healthcare services in Kamloops. The interviews with each of the participants ended when participants were unable to share any new experiences regarding healthcare. At the end of the interview, the participants were given a $20 gift card as an acknowledgement for their participation.

Data Analysis

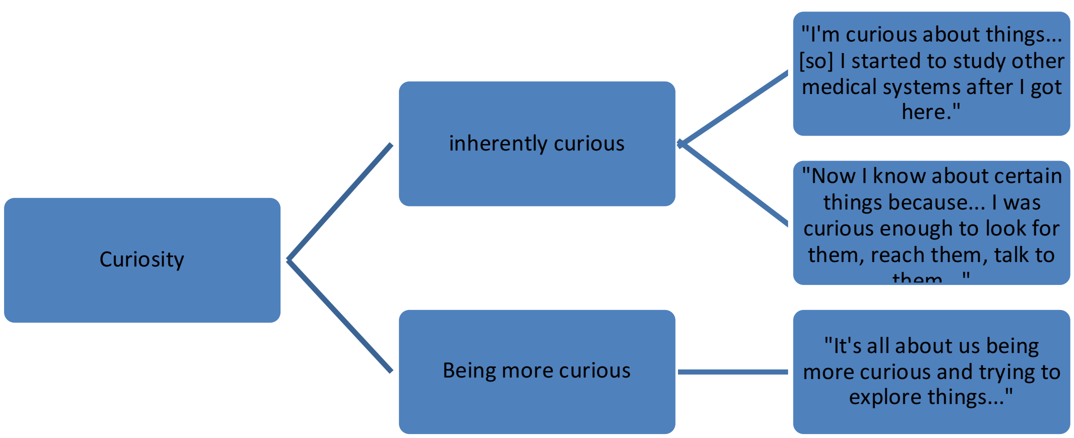
The data collected was analyzed using the thematic analysis approach. Thematic analysis is a coding process that identifies themes or patterns presented in the data (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Braun and

Clarke (2006) six-phase framework was utilized for coding the data. The six steps are (1) become familiar with the data, (2) generate initial codes, (3) search for themes, (4) review themes, (5) define themes, (6) write-up. This approach to data analysis is not tied to a particular theoretical framework, and it does not come with methodological stipulations about, for example, how to sample, or to collect data. We engaged with the data using a *semantic* focus – meaning that we coded on *explicitly-stated* ideas, concepts, meanings, experiences, etc. stated by the students. For example, students would report their answers to the interview questions and we developed a theme that connected each students' answers from that specific question.

Familiarizing occurred from reading and re-reading the transcripts, making notes about interesting statements, and constantly asking what does this mean? Coding occurred to identify and label interesting aspects in the data at the semantic level. The dataset was reviewed twice during the coding process. Once the codes were generated, they were organized into higher level patterns which resulted in the current reported themes. For example – by rereading each participant's transcript, codes that were similar were drawn, and from there specific themes were generated (See Figure 1). Themes were organized using the NVivo 12 software. Saturation was met when no new themes could be developed by the researcher. Once the themes were reviewed and defined, the results revealed significant information regarding South Asian student's experience with navigating the Canadian healthcare system.

Figure 1

Coding / Theme Tree



Participants

Recruitment criteria included students from South Asia and enrolment in an undergraduate or graduate level program at TRU. Furthermore, the participants needed to have been in Canada for 12 months or less. Participants included students from various regions in India. Out of the eight participants, two of them were female and six were male. Due to funding restrictions related to time, the researchers were unable to avoid the unintended gender imbalance. All of the participant's native language was Hindi, which is also the national language of India. The age range of the students was 19-25 years old.

Results

The results have been organized around the two main foci for the study - facilitators and barriers. A number of themes were developed related to facilitators and barriers of accessing healthcare. Facilitators included campus orientation, curiosity, and social support system. Barriers included more information needed at orientation, inefficiency of services, and a lack of understanding of the government sponsored medical services plan.

Facilitators

Campus Orientation

The TRU orientation was seen as one of the facilitators for most students who were interviewed. While not initially stated during the interview, when prompted, stated "[at] orientation we are actually told about GuardMe and to register for MSP." There was diversity in the answers regarding how students felt about orientation. Four students felt that the international students' orientation was a helpful facilitator as one stated "ISA educated me [on] how healthcare works or how the insurance works, that was helpful as I had no idea." Another student stated "as you come to orientation, you come to know that you are supported by GuardMe for three months and then…you need to apply for MSP at the same orientation." Furthermore, another student reflected that "orientation explained what are some things that we should do for example, if there is an emergency, how to call the ambulance and that the Royal Inland Hospital has an emergency room". Generally, most students interviewed found orientation was helpful in pointing them in the direction of insurance and how it works in British Columbia.

Curiosity

Another interesting facilitator was the student's own curiosity in seeking information. When asked what was helpful in understanding the healthcare system in Kamloops, a participant specified "to make this very simple, I am curious about things and I want to save money … back in India, I was more focused on other things but after getting here, I started to pay money and wanted to learn how I am putting my money or what I am putting my money towards." Another student reflected that "I know certain things [about the medical system] because I am more involved with ISA and more and more with…. clubs because I was curious enough to look for them, reach them, talk to them and because of ISA, I was able to do this interview." Overall these students demonstrated that their curiosity was what drove them to understand more and to navigate the healthcare system in Canada.

Social Support System

Students also felt that having a social support system, whether it be their family, peers, or even campus members like the ISA members, were helpful in navigating the healthcare system. One participant stated "I do get information from campus from making friends who are in nursing and stuff [healthcare field]. Another participant stated that ISA was helpful in answering their questions as they "just went in for more information" regarding medical insurance. Furthermore, a different participant reflected that having friends on campus was helpful for them in navigating the system as they stated "now I know about certain things because now I'm more involved with ISA and more and more with the Intercultural club, and humans of TRU…." Students that would meet with their ISA members or who had peers on campus, felt that they were useful in helping them in navigating the health services in town.

Barriers

More Information needed at Orientation.

While some students believed orientation was a facilitator, several students discussed a number of barriers and challenges. One student stated "information that was given through ISA was briefing … they were more basic stuff." Another student felt that "it would have been more helpful if they could guide us for the first three months on how to use GaurdMe and how it will or will not help us … [and that] international students should be more prepared and informed" when it comes to utilizing medical insurance. Furthermore a student shared that they were unable to make it to orientation and therefore felt at orientation "you cannot give … information on one day because everyone is going to forget about it, so maybe they need to make it more available to people, like reminders." This particular student suggested that since this information is so important, it should be shared throughout the year, rather than on one day, as information shared in one day may get forgotten about. Another student had a similar experience as they shared "…I know you forget things [that is shared during orientation] after 3 months but you should get back to your student advisor [the ISA members] to remind you what it is again." A different student reflected that "we could work a little more on the orientation part, it would be nice for the students to have more information from the medical staff on campus about little things." Another participant had a similar reflection as they stated "I want the people [ISA] to educate the students and make them be more aware of the healthcare system [by] practically taking them to the clinics or the emergency room." Overall, students felt that orientation lacked information, whether it be about the insurance policies or more information regarding the services in town.

Inefficiency of the Services.

Students felt the stress of long wait times and lack of efficiency when it comes to making healthcare appointments. The participants expressed that they were "expecting more seamless, more efficient, more advanced technology like the apps." Another participant stated "the fact that even if you have a medical emergency and you [still] have to wait is pretty bad [unacceptable]." Another student expressed that they "[had] to wait for an hour and then I got an appointment… another situation was when I had severe back pain for a week… [for that] I have to wait for a long time as well… about 3 to 4 hours." The students mentioned that seeing a doctor in India is much faster than in Canada due to the many private clinics available in India. Another participant had shared a similar feeling, as stated there is an application used in India called "Practo" which allows citizens to make appointments with doctors very easily with very minimal wait time.

Lack of Understanding of Medical Insurance Plans

Another challenge students expressed was dealing with the expenses with medical insurance. One student expressed frustration when they had to pay an "invoice which went upto $20,000 [dollars]" as "GaurdMe did not try to help [me]." When asked as to why they were not covered, the student stated that the insurance company, GaurdMe, needed them to have "…followed the physician's advice." The student however added, that they did get their "…physicians advice well back home." Meaning, this participant had listened appropriately to their physician back in India, but the insurance company needed the student to follow the advice of a Canadian doctor rather than the doctor from India, in order for them to be covered by the insurance policy. Another participant felt that for the amount that MSP costs, there "should be a plan that should cover dental, eye care, and healthcare." Another participant expressed "there are some kind of loopholes which was not clear, particularly eye care and dental which MSP does not cover." Overall students felt that MSP was expensive and that there are loopholes with the insurance policies that students were not aware of, like the lack of eye and dental coverage.

DISCUSSION

There is considerable amount of research regarding the experience of international students studying abroad. However, there is minimal research around international students' experiences with the healthcare system within the country they have migrated too. Therefore this research presents qualitative data that represents several themes regarding the experience of students with the Canadian healthcare system.

Facilitators

During the interview, students had positive and negative feedback towards the campus orientation. Students stated that the orientation was helpful in understanding what MSP is. Furthermore, campus orientation was also helpful in explaining ways that students were covered by MSP if they were to seek medical attention. Along with understanding what their medical insurance plans are, participants also recall, from orientation, information regarding what to do in an emergent or medical situation, like dialling 911 and where the emergency department is. Overall, the majority of participants appreciated the campus orientation regarding health services as it allowed them to get a better idea of what MSP is. As back in India, health insurance is not mandatory and is therefore not spoken of often, hence coming to Canada, the participants appreciated the information shared at the orientation. These findings relate to Guvendir (2018) and Jones (2013) research whereby international students also had a positive outlook towards orientation, as it gave them the opportunity to learn information about different processes.

Curiosity can play a major role when it comes to learning, which was another common facilitator noted by three participants. Over the centuries, there have been many definitions for curiosity, however a more contemporary definition of curiosity is that it is a form of information seeking that is intrinsic (Kidd & Hayden, 2015). When asked what was helpful in understanding the healthcare system in Kamloops, these participants stated that mainly their curiosity or their will to ask questions had helped them in understanding the health services in Kamloops. Kidd and Hayden (2015) describe the psychology and science behind curiosity as major motivators when it comes to our learning and decision-making. Furthermore, these participants had also indicated that campus orientation was not as helpful, one of the participants had not even mentioned campus orientation at all. These participants found researching and asking other people questions about the services in Kamloops more helpful than attending orientation. Their curiosity also demonstrated that these participants were more open to asking questions and being sociable which allowed them to gain more information about the services in Kamloops. Therefore with this finding in mind, fostering this aspect of curiosity, as a positive learning tool, during orientation provides students a different way of learning, potentially allowing them to comprehend more information. An example of this is the campus ISA group hosting question and answer sessions strictly regarding healthcare annually for students.

Students found that having a support system, whether it is the ISA members or friends around campus was helpful in understanding the healthcare system better. Such findings are also consistent with the literature for example, Lum, Swartz and Kwan (2016) interviewed immigrant families and discovered that having social supports had assisted these news families into entering the healthcare system. However, the findings from this research adds the perspectives of international students and further presents that having a well established social support system can help even international students in navigating the healthcare system better. An interesting finding from this study, even though all of the eight participants in this research had roommates from India, was that none of them mentioned their room-mates as helpful, in fact one participant mentioned that their room-mate was just as lost as they were when it came to navigating the healthcare system. However, Russell, Thompson, and Rosenthal (2008) presented that Asian international students who had friends on campus were actually more likely to reach out to healthcare services; this was not researched in this study. Therefore continuing to allow students to make appointments with their ISA members raises this idea of maintaining social support.

Barriers

Participants stated they appreciated the campus orientation for international students, however there were also some challenges. Many participants had different issues with the campus orientation but a common theme was that orientation lacked practicality, meaning, students wished more information was shared regarding where the services are located and or how to make physician appointments. Higginbottom and Safipour (2015) also point out that one of biggest barriers for immigrated families is the lack of information about the healthcare system, which similarly, is what these participants also felt. Students also suggested that this information is important regarding health and should not be shared in one day. Instead, they suggested that email reminders or year-round information should be shared. In addition to students not being able to recall campus orientation, when six out of the eight students were asked about their priority before coming to Canada, their responses were around housing, food, or school. Health was only a priority for one student, and that was only because they had a pre-existing medical condition. Hence, it is also a possibility that the information shared during orientation, or even orientation as a whole, could have been overlooked, or even forgotten about, due to the many other priorities students are challenged with like food or housing. Educations.com (2019) conducted a survey whereby they demonstrated health as not even one of the major factors when it comes to a priority for studying abroad. The main issues international students look at are regarding housing, ability to work post-graduation, and or quality of the education at the institution (Educations.com, 2019). Since health is just as important as housing and food, universities should promote more information regarding local health care services and how to utilize them.

Long wait times were mentioned as a challenge. Participants reflected that since Canada is a more economically advanced country, they expected it would be more efficient in the delivery of healthcare services. Burgess, McKenzie and Fehr's (2016) study focused more on female international students. The findings from this research were similar as international female students also found the long-wait time frustrating (Burgess, et al., 2016). One participant shared that they were surprised to see the lack of use of the available technology that could be used to improve appointment times. This further demonstrates that even though Canada is more economically advanced than other countries, we are still far behind regarding the utilization of the available technology that could be used to improve the efficiency of our healthcare system. As in India, they are utilizing smartphone applications, like Practo, to make appointments and to decrease the wait times. Zhao et al. (2017) conducted a systematic review whereby they demonstrated that utilizing web-based appointment systems not only decreased wait-times but also decreased staff labour, reduced no-show rates, and improved patient satisfaction. However, shifting towards a more web-based approach in making appointments can also have their limitations. Zhang et al. (2014) present barriers like lack of access to the Internet and low computer skills as challenges patients can face.

Another challenge South Asian international students reported was regarding the health insurance policy. Among the students interviewed, there seemed to have been a pattern whereby participants that had visited a health care professional, stated that they found "loop-holes" within the health insurance policy. Many of the participants did not know that MSP does not cover dental or eye care, and this was a problem for three out of the eight participants, specifically among those that visited a healthcare professional (HCP). The students are however aware of the additional insurance plan that is provided by the student union on campus, whereby all students, domestic and international, are automatically enrolled in the "greenshield plan" which covers dental and eye care. Therefore, it could mostly be a lack of understanding for these students regarding what MSP covers. This lack of understanding of what MSP covers, causes students to wait longer to receive treatment or they do not get treatment at all, due to the fact that they are not covered and it is therefore going to be expensive to pay for. Or students receive the treatment or care, but then end-up receiving invoices that are too high for them to pay. Similar findings were also presented in Asanin and Wilson's (2008) research, whereby immigrated families also felt that health insurance was expensive and that the insurance should cover dental or eye care and even prescriptions.

Much of the research reported immigrated families have financial challenges with health insurance (Higginbottom & Safipour, 2015; Mackert et al., 2017). An interesting difference between immigrated individuals and international students in regards to health insurance is that it is mandatory for all international students to be enrolled in a private health insurance before coming to Canada. Since these students are not covered for the first three months by the government issued medical plan, they are then covered by their private insurance. Whereas, immigrated individuals and families are not required to purchase private insurance, and it is their choice, therefore the majority of them tend not to do so, as they find it more expensive (Lum et al., 2016). Overall, little research has been conducted among international students regarding whether they actually understand their insurance, therefore this research provides some insight towards this area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We have several recommendations for other similar institutions who recruit South Asian students from their home country. First, the students in this research study recommend that the information shared during orientation about healthcare should be shared throughout the year rather than on one day only. As explained earlier, arriving into a new country and adjusting to all the new changes, it is understandable that some of the information shared during orientation could get missed. Presenting some of the key information on a regular basis through emails or through social media posts like Facebook or Instagram may help students engage and retain more of the important aspects of orientation. Second, during orientation when information is shared regarding healthcare, the focus of this discussion should expand to include not only about how MSP works, but also more details about how to make appointments and how the emergency department works. These details may require consultation with health care professionals in order to ensure accurate information. Mackert et al. (2017) report that during orientation there should be opportunities on how to actually seek and use the health information shared during orientation sessions. For example, scenario-based situations should be presented to the students to solve, as this will allow them to be aware of how to utilize the information that was presented to them. Information that was shared was not sufficient for informing the students about navigating the healthcare system, as issues and confusion were still presented by the students. Last, students suggested having more on-campus services regarding healthcare, whether they be simple blood pressure clinics to information-tables sharing resources that are available on campus or in the community. A potential partnership with one of the universities healthcare facilities like nursing could be created whereby semi-annual health fairs are organized by nursing students for this purpose.

Based on our experience, future research considerations include: (1) conducting research with international students from specific countries and comparing these students experiences with those of this study; (2) focusing research on what the experiences of international students are regarding the Canadian medical insurance plans; and (3) exploring the health or experience of those international students who have a more information-seeking personality/ curious personalities.

Despite having a smaller sample size and a gender imbalance for this research, this study also lacked a clearer understanding of what international students' knowledge is regarding the medical insurance policies, therefore future researchers should consider including questions regarding knowledge in this area. As English was not their first language, another limitation was the students may not have been able to articulate themselves fully in English. Therefore having an interpreter would have been useful for the interviews, as that would have produced more precise data. Furthermore, instead of a semi-structured interview, structured interviews may have been more beneficial as it would have produced data that was consistent and reliable. As this type of data would have allowed for comparisons to be made more easily from the students answers.

CONCLUSION

In this study, South Asian international students shed light on their experiences in navigating healthcare services in a small town in British Columbia. Students expressed the facilitators and barriers that have supported and hindered their experiences. They identified campus orientation for international students as a good source of information. Their own curiosity was also seen as another facilitator, as it allowed students to ask questions and be active in their learning. Furthermore, students found that having a social support system is also helpful for navigating the healthcare system. Barriers expressed by the students were that more practical information is needed to help them navigate through healthcare services. Participants also found that our healthcare system was not as efficient, specifically, there are longer wait times in Canada when compared to their home country India. Last, participants demonstrated a lack of knowledge related to "loop-holes" with insurance policies, when really it has to do with a lack of understanding about the insurance policies. Overall this research provides international students' perspective on the Canadian healthcare system and what their facilitators and barriers were regarding how to navigate it. Additionally, our findings reveal insights into how to support new international students when it comes student services regarding health services that is specific to international students. Newly arrived international students are unclear about how the Canadian healthcare system works, therefore as a university, providing as many on-campus resources and opportunities can assist these students to transition well from their home country to Canada.

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Declaration of Interest Statement

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Examining College-Level ELLs' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Goal Orientation

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to investigate the self-efficacy and goal orientation of college-level English Language Learners (ELLs). It further explored the relationship between self-efficacy and goal orientation. The data were collected from 198 ELLs by using an English Language Learning Survey. Participants had positive self-efficacy toward their English learning. ELLs who were 25 years old and above had a higher level of self-efficacy than those who were less than 25 years old. Females had a greater mastery goal orientation tendency than males. There was a positive correlation between self-efficacy and mastery goals, whereas self-efficacy was negatively correlated with performance-avoidance goals. Teachers are encouraged to provide scaffolding and set assessment focus on ELLs improvement and mastery of content to enhance their self-efficacy and facilitate adopting mastery goals.

Keywords: English language learner, goal orientation, higher education, instructional strategy, self-efficacy

INTRODUCTION

According to the 2020 Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange, the number of English Language Learners (ELLs) at U.S. colleges and universities surpassed one million during the 2019-20 academic year (Institute of International Education, 2020). Many ELLs have come to the United States from countries where little or no English is spoken. Although many programs or projects in universities are designed to provide regular academic English language courses for international students or scholars, it has been reported that language barriers are identified as the main barriers for ELLs since limited English language proficiency impacts students' self-confidence and participation in academic life. These students may think that they cannot communicate well with L1 users, and this perception affects their communication in class when discussing with others, while asking and answering questions in and outside class (Newman & Hartman, 2012).

Therefore, many ELLs continue to experience difficulty in developing competency and confidence since they do not acquire English skills quickly enough to achieve academic success (Grafals, 2013). What is more, the increasing number of enrollment of ELLs in post-secondary levels in the U.S. makes it important to consider ELLs' self-efficacy and motivation in their academic life. Researchers in the field of second language learning and teaching found that previous studies were not able to offer effective solutions to improve language learners' motivation, autonomy, and performance because they did not address students' individual learning needs in the classroom, and learners' self-efficacy and goal

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orientation have not yet been integratively examined in an ESL program (Lee & Zentall, 2012). Furthermore, most of the previous studies explored strategies to help ELLs across levels of pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade to learn to understand and use English effectively and efficaciously, however, fewer of L2 studies investigate the perspectives of ELLs in the post-secondary setting (Bifuh-Ambe, 2011).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To help ELLs in post-secondary levels to achieve English competency and confidence required for academic success is vital for ELLs as well as educators. This study examined self-efficacy beliefs and goal orientation of college-level ELLs enrolled in the ESL program and suggested effective pedagogical practices for higher education faculty, bilingual education specialists, and teacher educators who teach ELLs in university courses. The research questions are as follows:

1. What are the self-efficacy beliefs of college-level ELLs enrolled in the ESL program in relation to their age and sex?
2. What are the goal orientations of college-level ELLs enrolled in the ESL program in relation to their age and sex?
3. What is the relationship between self-efficacy and goal orientation for college-level ELLs enrolled in the ESL program?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopts Bandura's views on self-efficacy and Midgley et al.'s views on goal orientation. We will discuss these two theories respectively. Bandura (1977) was first to present, research, and expand on the construct of self-efficacy. According to Bandura's social cognitive theory, learning is knowledge acquisition through cognitive processing of information. The social cognitive theory explains the role of vicarious, self-regulatory, and self-reflective processes in learner development in conjunction with human functioning and also emphasized the importance of cognition in an individual's ability to self-regulate, perform behaviors and complete tasks, it also offers an approach to motivation and self-regulatory development (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura (1997), a person with higher level of self-efficacy tends to engage in the task, and work harder, for longer portions of time. These behaviors are essential for academic success. Even when failing at a task, the level of self-efficacy plays a role in the learner's cognitive processing of the outcome (Bandura, 1997).

Goal orientation theory includes cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. This theory is highly relevant to explain different academic behaviors, and motivation can be defined by the general goals that students pursue in the process of learning (Midgley et al., 2000). Goal orientation can "reflect a type of standard by which individuals will judge their performance or success, which then has consequences for other motivational beliefs." (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996, p. 234). Different goals foster different response patterns. The three goals identified by Midgley (2000) are (1) mastery goals, (2) performance-approach goals, (3) performance-avoidance goals. When students have mastery goals, they tend to develop their competence and promote their mastery and understanding (Midgley et al., 2000). Mastery goals focus on acquiring new knowledge or skills and which characterize individuals who enjoy participating in the activity for its own sake. A mastery goal orientation has been associated with adaptive patterns of learning (Elliott & Dweck, 1988; Midgley et al., 2000). Students who perceive an emphasis on mastery goals in the classroom report to persist in the face of difficulty, express intrinsic interests in learning activities, have a more positive attitude toward the class and have a stronger belief that success follows from one's effort (Elliot, 2005; Kaplan & Maehr, 2007). When students have performance-approach goals, they aim to demonstrate their competence in an achievement setting. Students try to gain positive external evaluation or favorable judgments or public recognition that they have achieved better than others (Elliot & Thrash, 2001). A performance-approach orientation has been associated with both adaptive and maladaptive patterns of learning (Midgley et al., 2000). With performance-avoid goals, students are more likely to avoid the demonstration of incompetence in an achievement setting (Midgley et al., 2000). Student's learning interest tends to decrease, and they tend to avoid challenges, withdraw efforts when they encounter difficulty to avoid appearing incapable (Dweck, 1986; Elliott & Dweck, 1988). Performance-avoidance goal orientation has been associated with maladaptive patterns of learning (Midgley et al., 2000).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Students' level of motivation, affective states, and actions are strongly influenced by self-efficacy, and when students believe they are capable of performing well on an academic task, they are motivated to perform well (Bandura, 1997). Previous studies identified that academic major, English fluency, learning strategies and career goals were all associated with students' self-efficacy (Lee & Zentall, 2012). Students' self-efficacy was a key determinant of learning behaviors (Wigfield & Cambria, 2010). Self-efficacy was a powerful predictor of motivation and performance goals (Komarraju & Dial, 2014), and test anxiety (Nie, Lau, & Liau, 2011). These studies either focused on primary or secondary schools exploring grade 9 Singaporean students (e.g., Nie, Lau, & Liau, 2011) or students' development from childhood and adolescence (e.g., Wigfield & Cambria, 2010), or emphasized self-efficacy and goals without including demographic factors (e.g., Komarraju & Dial, 2014). Fewer of them examined post-secondary level ESL students' self-efficacy and goal orientation based on their age and sex.

Some studies found that male students had higher self-efficacy than female students did in science education (Lerdpornkulrat et al. 2012; Stoet & Geary, 2018). However, some other studies did not find gender differences regarding students' science self-efficacy (e.g., Sezgintürk & Sungur, 2020). These studies focused on self-efficacy in specific STEM domains. Some studies explored the effectiveness of intervention based on self-efficacy. For example, Namaziandost and Çakmak (2020) found that females had greater improvements in self-efficacy than males in the flipped classroom practice in EFL setting. The relationship between sex and self-efficacy was found complex for university students in multilingual Danish setting under a Bourdieusian perspective (Lueg & Lueg, 2015). In the field of language learning in ESL context, self-efficacy and sex has not yet been intensively explored from the perspective of cognitive theory.

Researchers who support the cognitive view of motivation believe that goals can give learners directions and momentum toward completing tasks (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Differences in motivational variables for language learning were found between male and female students (Dewaele et al., 2016; Kissau, Kolano, & Wang 2010). Oga-Baldwin and Nakata (2017) suggested that female students had higher levels of motivation in language learning. Females had higher levels of task orientation and intrinsic motivation than males (Fasczewski, 2012). However, different studies focused on different classification of goals, and the present study is based on Midgley's goal orientation theory and classification: (1) mastery goals, (2) performance-approach goals, (3) performance-avoidance goals.

Motivational variables lead to a higher level of self-efficacy (Tin, 2016). Students with higher confidence or positive perceptions in their ability tend to become more mastery-oriented by being involved in challenging tasks and showing positive affect and greater persistence in the face of difficulties. In contrast, students with low confidence or negative self-perceptions are more likely to have performance goal orientation by avoiding challenging tasks and showing low persistence in the face of difficulties (Midgley et al., 2000). For students with mastery goal orientation, learning is inherently interesting, an end in itself (Midgley et al., 2000); thus, students with higher mastery goals are more likely to report better emotional states and enhanced self-efficacy (Kaplan & Maehr, 2007). It was also reported that students with high-performance goals had a lower level of cognitive engagement and were more likely to present behaviors such as gaining social recognition, pleasing the teacher, or avoiding work (Midgley et al., 2000).

Liem et al. (2008) identified a positive relationship between performance-approach goals and perceived academic efficacy, and suggested that mastery goals and performance-approach goals can generate adaptive behaviors and outcomes. McGregor and Elliot (2002) claimed that approach goals were positive predictors of positive affects such as eagerness, hope, and self-efficacy while avoidance goals were positively related to negative affects such as worry, fear, and anxiety. Deemer, Yough and Morel (2018) found that performance-approach goals were significant positive predictors of procrastination through their relationship with science anxiety only for students with (a) low science self-efficacy and (b) a preference for either low or highly difficult science tasks. These effects were not found for students with high level of efficacy.

The relationship between performance goals and educational behaviors and outcomes is not clearly defined. It was expected that mastery orientation would have the highest positive relation with self-efficacy, followed by a performance-approach orientation. Conversely, it was expected that the performance-avoidance orientation would be negatively correlated with self-efficacy. There is not enough evidence and little in the L2 motivation literature about how L2 learners' goal orientations affect their learning behaviors. Researchers have conducted studies to investigate relationships among self-efficacy beliefs, goal orientation, and performance (Diseth, 2011). However, these relationships have not been examined extensively in the context of L2 learning in U.S. university setting. Koul, Roy, and Lerdpornkulrat (2012) suggested that motivational goal orientations and perceptions of learning and learning environment were gender-dependent and domain-specific.

METHODS

Participants

The participants of this study were international students who were taking English courses in the ESL program at a southeastern university in the United States of America. The ESL program include students enrolled in Intensive English Program (IEP) as well as students enrolled in the course INTL1820, Classroom Communication for International Teaching Assistants, and the course INTL 1830, Writing Proficiency in English for International Students. They had to have attended at least one semester in the ESL class. The above criteria were to ensure the ESL participants had identical educational background before they participated in the study. The total number of students who participated in this research was

207. Among those responses, nine were eliminated because over 15% of their answers were blank or incomprehensible and that failed us to clearly understand the respondents' views on the questions. Therefore, 198 responses were included in the analysis for this study. Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of 198 survey participants by each demographic group.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Characteristics	f	Percent
Sex		
Female	88	44.4%
Male	110	55.6%
Age		
18-24	115	58.1%
25-59	83	41.9%
Geographic Background		
African	4	2.0%
Asian	139	70.2%
European	3	1.5%
Middle Eastern	30	15.2%
American (including Brazilian, Colombian, Mexican)	22	11.1%
Years of Study English		
Less than 5 years	61	30.8%
5-10 years	82	41.4%
More than 10 years	55	27.8%
Highest Education Level		
High school	93	47.0%
Bachelor	67	33.8%
Master	33	16.7%
Ph.D.	5	2.5%
Self-Perceptions of Overall English proficiency		
Excellent	14	7.1%
Good	108	54.5%
Fair	71	35.9%
Poor	5	2.5%

Measurements and Procedures

This study included an analysis of data gathered from a self-report questionnaire – an English Language Learning Survey, which was voluntarily completed by ELLs. The survey was adapted from the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, & McKeachie, 1991), and Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey (PALS) (Midgley et al., 2000) with some inapplicable items for the context of the study deleted. The MSLQ or the PALS have been used in many previous studies (e.g., Cikrikci-Demirtash, 2005; Duijnhouwera, et al., 2010; Lavasani, et al., 2011; Mendoza-Nápoles, 2020). The MSLQ was developed based on a social-cognitive view of motivation (Pintrich, 2003). The authors of the MSLQ completed two confirmatory factor analyses to determine "the utility of the theoretical model and the operationalization of the MSLQ scales" (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, & Mckeachie, 1993, p. 805). The PALS have been developed and refined over time using goal orientation theory to examine the relation between the learning environment and students' motivation, affect, and behavior. The PALS was first developed based on research showing that a differential emphasis on "mastery" and "performance" goals is associated with adaptive or maladaptive patterns of learning (i.e., Ames, 1992; Dweck, 1986; Maehr, 1984; Midgley et al., 1996). Furthermore, a performance goal orientation can be conceptualized in terms of both approach and avoidance components (i.e., Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996; Skaalvik, 1997).

The researcher and the English instructors from the ESL program handed out the survey and collected responses from students. Students' participation in this study was completely anonymous and voluntary. There were no foreseeable risks associated with this study. The participants were asked to honestly answer in terms of how well the statement describes them according to their own English learning experience in the U.S. It was made clear that there was no right or wrong answer for each item. All the participants were informed that all of the personal information, answers, and responses collected from them would be kept confidential.

All collected data were analyzed by using SPSS-PC 20.0. The descriptive analyses were conducted to scrutinize demographic variables and an independent sample t-test was used to investigate students' self-efficacy beliefs and goal orientation concerning age and sex. To answer the question regarding the relationship between self-efficacy, and goal orientation, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used.

Results

With the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha test, the results of the tests for self-efficacy, and each type of goal orientation with values higher than .70 showed the evidence of reliability in Table 2.

Table 2

Reliability of the English Language Learning Survey

	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Self-efficacy	8	.903
Goal Orientations		
Mastery	6	.833
Performance-approach	5	.883
Performance-avoidance	6	.880

SPSS software was used to perform the descriptive statistics to examine the scores of self-efficacy beliefs. The mean score of self-efficacy is 5.48. The subscale of MSLQ used to measure self-efficacy is a 7-point Likert scale, which indicates that participants in this study have a positive self-efficacy belief. SPSS software was used to perform the independent sample t-test to examine the differences of self-efficacy based on their sex and age. Table 3 shows that the difference in self-efficacy beliefs between male students and female students was not significant. However, as shown in Table 4, students 25 years old and above ($M=5.65$) had a significantly greater self-efficacy than students less than 25 years old ($M=5.36$), $t\ (198) = -2.23$, $p=.027<.05$. The value of Cohen's d effect was 0.33, indicating a moderate effect size.

Table 3

Summary of Variation in Self-efficacy by Gender

Self-efficacy	Female (N=88)		Male (N=110)		*t*	*p*
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation		
	5.58	.857	5.40	.933	1.337	.183

* *p*<.05

Table 4

Summary of Variation in Self-efficacy by Age

Self-efficacy	<25 (N=115)		≥25 (N=83)		*t*	*p*
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation		
	5.36	.932	5.65	.835	-2.230	.027*

* *p*<.05

The independent sample t-test was used to examine the differences in goal orientation based on sex and age. The results of the t-test analyses are illustrated in Table 5. There was only a significant difference in mastery goal orientation between female (M=4.01) and male students (M=3.80), t (198) =2.087, p=.038<.05. The effect size (Cohen's d effect=0.30) was moderate. It indicated that female students had a greater tendency to use mastery goals than male students did. No other types of goal orientation produced significant differences based on learners' sex.

A series of t-tests for independent means was run to examine the difference in learners' goal orientations based on their age. The results of the t-test analyses show that there was no significant difference in goal orientation produced based on their age.

Table 5

Summary of Variation in Goal Orientation by Gender

Type of Goal Orientation	Female (N=88)		Male (N=110)		*t*	*p*
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation		
Mastery	4.01	.644	3.80	.734	2.087	.038*
Performance-approach	3.38	.996	3.47	.958	-.623	.534
Performance-avoidance	2.95	.971	3.06	.931	-.819	.414

* *p*<.05

A Pearson product-moment correlational analysis was conducted to examine if there was any statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy, mastery goals, performance-approach goals, and performance-avoidance goals. The results are illustrated in Table 6. There was a positive correlation between self-efficacy and mastery goals (r=.34, p=.00<.01). Whereas self-efficacy was negatively correlated with performance-avoidance goals (r=-.19, p=.005<.01). There was no significant relationship between self-efficacy and performance-approach goals.

Table 6

Pearson Product Correlations of Measured Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4
1.Self-efficacy	--	.34**	-.02	-.19**
2.Mastery Goals		--	.23**	.08
3.Performance-approach Goals			--	.51**
4.Performance-avoidance Goals				--

* *p*<.05, ***p*<.01

DISCUSSIONS

College-level ELLs enrolled in the ESL program had a positive self-efficacy. The participants had gone through similar English learning situations. In the U.S. University setting, if ELLs' English proficiency does not meet the requirement for taking the regular school classes, they will be required to take English lessons, which are designed for the ESL students. For the college level students, usually the ESL program does the language skills training for these students. Before the students enter the language program, they are tested on their language proficiency. The language program then assigns each student to the proper level of class according to their language ability. Once they complete all the levels of the language program, they are qualified to register in the college or university to take regular classes. Another way the students might skip the language program is to take the TOEFL (Testing of English as a Foreign Language) test. Once their scores on the TOEFL test meet the school requirement, they can register for the regular classes directly. However, if they want to work as teacher assistant or research assistant and their English language proficiency does not meet the requirement they have to take the English courses also. The ESL program is designed for those who are not completely proficient in English and who would like to improve their English skills in a pleasant, academic environment. Thus, participants enrolled in the ESL program had great eagerness or expectation to meet the English course requirement to enter academic programs or work as teacher assistants or research assistants. If they cannot meet the course requirement, they cannot apply for these programs or assistant positions. What is more, it may be the case that the classroom ecology and participation patterns in these students' home countries were different from that in the U.S. For example, in some Asian countries, many ELLs lacked independent learning, initiative, or autonomy in study practices (Fang, 2014; Jingnan, 2011). They were more likely to be in teacher-centered classrooms and dependent in student-teacher relations, but when they came to the U.S. classroom setting, and when they were no longer told what to do but had to manage resources, make decisions, and deal with problems, they could develop some characteristics of autonomous learning, and they expect teachers to help them in setting objectives, using learning strategies, and establishing class environment for autonomous learning (Fang & Zhang, 2012; Fang, 2014). Littlewood (2001) had a similar finding by collecting data from eight Asian and three European countries. Studies have found that ELLs' perceived autonomous support predicts emotional well-being, behaviors or performance (Hall & Webb, 2014; Sawtelle, Brewe & Kramer, 2012). Klassen (2004) reviewed 20 articles collected over the course of 25 years to investigate self-efficacy beliefs across cultural groups. The conclusion indicates that self-efficacy beliefs of participants from Asian, collectivist cultures became higher in western, individualist cultures. Students feel successful when they reach goals and this feeling of success increases the students' interest and self-efficacy beliefs in learning (Lipstein & Renninger, 2007). Thus, participants in the present study were reported as having a positive self-perception, and it indicates that in linguistically diverse classrooms teachers need to establish a relaxing and autonomous class environment to promote students' self-efficacy and self-direction.

The difference in self-efficacy beliefs between male students and female students was not significant. This finding is in accordance with the findings of the study by Sezgintürk and Sungur (2020) and Vogel and Human-Vogel (2016) where the results indicated non-significant gender differences concerning self-efficacy. Nevertheless, it contradicts with the study by Stoet and Geary (2018), which found that male students had higher self-efficacy than female students did in science education. A possible explanation for this finding is that female students were believed behind males in the science education due to social values or the roles imposed upon them (Stoet & Geary, 2018). However, in the context of language learning, it can counter the bias and stereotypes for females. Furthermore, most students were highly motivated to study English well for its practical functions in their academic communities. As a result, the sex difference in self-efficacy has been minimized.

Participants who were 25 years old and above had a higher level of self-efficacy than those who were less than 25 years old. This could be due to the different program requirements for these students. Most participants who were 25 years old and above had already registered in the university and entered academic programs to pursue their degrees and they just needed to pass the English course exams to apply for teacher assistant or research assistant, however, those who were less than 25 years old needed to meet the college language requirement to register in the university and enter academic programs. As for this group of learners, they were more likely to have a higher level of anxiety and lower level of self-efficacy than those who were 25 years old and above. This finding indicates that teachers should pay more attention to learners were less than 25 years old, and try to establish classroom environment and design class activities to increase their learning interest and intrinsic motivation and decrease their pressure and anxiety.

This study also found that female students had a greater mastery goal orientation tendency than male students. According to Elliot (2005) and Kaplan and Maehr (2007), mastery goals were associated with intrinsic interests and a stronger belief that success follows from one's effort. Based on the finding of the present study, it may be the case that female students anticipated a greater likelihood of success when emphasized on acquiring new skills or mastery of knowledge. Probably, female students tended to focus on acquiring new skills and had better achievements in language learning; however, male students had a lower level of motivation, engagement and achievements, and were more likely to seek extrinsic interest or practical goals (e.g. entrance exams and jobs) in language learning (King, 2016).

Self-efficacy was positively correlated with mastery goal orientation. This finding affirmed a previous finding that students with higher self-efficacy or positive perceptions in their ability tended to become more master-oriented (Kaplan & Maehr, 2007). There are many models of motivation of student learning. According to Midgley's goal orientation theory, a mastery goal orientation has been associated with adaptive patterns of learning (Midgley et al., 2000). Individuals adopting mastery goals tend to be more involved in academic content (Church, et al., 2001) and have a higher level of academic interest (Harackiewicz, et al., 2008). Students who perceive an emphasis on mastery goals are more likely to persist in the face of difficulty, express intrinsic interests, and have a more positive attitude toward class tasks. Pintrich and Schunk (1996) discussed three types of motivational beliefs: (a) self-efficacy beliefs, (b) task value beliefs, and (c) goal orientations. According to Pintrich (2000), goal orientation is related to self-regulated learning, and if students self-regulate their learning, performance, and behavior, they have some goal, standard, or criterion against which to compare their progress. Studies on goal orientation fit nicely with self-regulated learning theory. Pintrich (1999) pointed out that many studies found mastery goals were strongly positively related to self-regulated learning. Self-efficacy is a personal resource that students can draw upon when they are faced with the difficult and time-consuming tasks associated with academic learning and self-regulated learning (Pintrich, 1999). Mastery goals could facilitate intrinsic motivation, and if students are mastery-goal-oriented, they are more likely to be inherently interested in language learning, focus on skill and knowledge development, and have a higher level of emotional states and self-perceptions. It indicates that teachers need to promote ELLs' mastery goals and help learners to set goals to increase cognitive and emotional engagement. It applies to all learners in higher education setting especially for linguistically diverse classrooms in universities.

However, self-efficacy and performance-avoidance goals were negatively correlated, and as performance-avoidance goals increase, the level of self-efficacy decreases. It affirmed a previous finding that students with mastery goal orientation had been found positively correlated with learners' perception, whereas performance-avoidance goal orientation was negatively related to their perception (Utman, 1997). According to Midgley's goal orientation theory, performance-avoidance goal orientation has been associated with maladaptive patterns of learning, and individuals who have performance-avoidance goals, try to avoid the demonstration of incompetence (Midgley et al., 2000). The pressure to avoid negative external evaluation can lead to a cascade of negative affective and behavioral processes. Performance-avoidance goals are almost universally related to negative outcomes (Deemer, Yough, & Morel, 2018), and especially associated with lower performance expectancies (Smith, 2006) and increased anxiety (Song, et al., 2015). Students with performance-avoidance goals are more likely to have less intrinsic interest or motivation, and present behaviors such as avoiding challenging tasks, withdrawing efforts when they encounter difficulty in order to avoid appearing incapable. This could decrease learners' task involvement and persistence in the face of difficulties. Students may show worries, fears, and anxieties, which perhaps have negative effects on their confidence, self-perceptions, and graded performance. It suggests that teachers design easier tasks for ELLs in classrooms and set evaluation to emphasize their skill or ability development instead of focusing on setting normative performance standard to alleviate learning pressure. Of course, the current findings are only correlational, and further studies are needed to provide more analysis and evidence of causal relations between self-efficacy and goal orientation.

It was also found that there was no significant relationship between self-efficacy and performance-approach goals. It is similar to the findings that approach goals have either a negative or no relationship on positive thoughts (McGregor & Elliot, 2002), feelings (Harackiewicz, Barron, Tauer, & Elliot, 2002), and behaviors (Wolters, 2003) when a difficulty arises. But it contradicts with the finding of Liem et al. (2008), which identified a positive relationship between performance-approach goals and perceived academic efficacy. The different findings may be due to different participants investigated, and the current study explored college-level ESL students' English language efficacy, whereas Liem's study examined year-9 students' academic efficacy. What is more, participants in this study generally have a positive self-efficacy, and as Deemer, Yough and Morel (2018) identified the effects of performance-approach goals on behaviors were not found for high efficacy students.

All the findings indicated that among three types of goal orientations, mastery goal orientation was the most adaptive and possessed the facilitating roles in enhancing learners' self-efficacy. It indicates that teachers need to adopt appropriate strategies to facilitate mastery goals and help learners to focus on skill or knowledge development instead of external evaluation or demonstration in linguistically diverse classrooms in universities. It is suggested that classroom practices can be changed to facilitate adaptive efficacy beliefs, encourage interest and value, and foster the adoption of mastery goals (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Based on motivational theories, Perry, Hutchinson, and Thauberger (2007) elaborated the following characteristics of classroom environments: the classroom should provide complex meaningful learning tasks (i.e. tasks that address multiple goals, extend over time, integrate cognitive processes and allow for the creation of a variety of products); learners have opportunities to exercise some degree of control over their learning processes and products; provision of classroom tasks and practices that engage learners in evaluating their work; learners receive instrumental support from peers and teachers, which often takes the form of modeling and scaffolding.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusions of this quantitative study were that college-level ELLs enrolled in the ESL program had a positive self-efficacy. ELLs who were 25 years old and above had a higher level of self-efficacy than those who were less than 25 years old. Females had a greater mastery goal orientation tendency than males. There was a positive correlation between self-efficacy and mastery goals, whereas self-efficacy was negatively correlated with performance-avoidance goals.

The findings are of relevance to bilingual education specialists, higher education faculty, and teacher educators who teach ELLs in university courses and is very timely, given the current institutional push to recruit more ELLs to college campuses. It is suggested that English language educators in linguistically diverse classrooms assist in promoting higher education level ELLs' confidence, motivation and learner autonomy. Cummins (2001) identified three fundamental pillars of effective language instruction for ESL students—activate prior knowledge/build background knowledge, access content, and extend the language. Teachers can use strategies to influence self-efficacy by making the task appear easier so that students believe they are capable of completing the task. By applying prior knowledge to the new content and extending learners' knowledge, learners can know not only what to think and do, but how to think and do and new skills can be applied in new contexts. It is suggested that teachers make complex English language accessible to language learners; create settings to involve learners in the activities and facilitate the mastery of the English academic course content; include visual support, hands-on activities, and timely feedback in curriculum design and classroom activities. In order to increase the sense of self-satisfaction and motivation, it is better to design meaningful classroom activities to encourage learners to persist longer in the learning tasks and involve students' actively in classroom tasks.

ELLs can be encouraged to adopt mastery goals and teachers are suggested to design class tasks and activities that emphasize the individual's interest, ability and skill development. Teachers need to support and guide learners by providing feedback, encouragement and reinforcement. Learners also need to learn skills to deal with stress and other negative affective factors that may interfere with learning and reduce learners' self-efficacy. It is suggested that learners become self-motivated and self-disciplined, thus promoting self-efficacy, which in turn facilitates goal orientation and performance of learners.

Teachers are encouraged to adopt evaluation methods to focus on ELLs' ability improvement and mastery of academic content. Participative and interactive assessment methods like self or peer-assessment can be used to evaluate ELLs performance to help them feel more confident, efficacious, and in control of their learning.

This study explored one university campus whose programs may not precisely parallel others. Students' behaviors and perceptions cannot be understood by only using a self-reporting questionnaire. Further research can be done with a large number of participants to examine factors that influence ELLs' self-efficacy and goal orientation. Studies can be carried out to provide more analysis of causal relations between self-efficacy and goal orientation. Other methods such as observation, focus group, and diaries can be used to explore how to foster ELLs' self-efficacy and adoption of mastery goals. Other institutional organizations' perspectives can be investigated together with students' perspectives to help understand students' behaviors in campus. Qualitative studies can be combined with quantitative studies to explore further learners' individual differences, motivational variables and their relations with proficiency in an ESL setting.

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APPENDIX

English Language Learning Survey

The following questions ask about your self-efficacy, language learning strategy use and goal orientation about English language learning. Answer in terms of how well the statement describes you. This usually takes about 10 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, let the researcher know immediately.

Demographic Information

Please first answer the following questions about yourself. Your answers will be treated in a confidential manner and only identified to the researcher for this study.

1. Sex:
   - o Male
   - o Female
2. Age: ___________
3. Country of origin:_________
4. First (Native) Language: ____
5. Highest education level: ____
6. How many years have you been studying English in your life? ___
7. Please indicate the program or course you are now enrolled:

☐Intensive English Program
☐Level 1 ☐Level 2
☐Level 3 ☐Level 4 ☐Level 5
☐INTL 1820
☐INTL 1830

8. How do you rate your overall English proficiency?
   - o Excellent
   - o Good
   - o Fair
   - o Poor
9. How do you rate your overall English proficiency as compared with the proficiency of other students in your class?
   - o Excellent
   - o Good
   - o Fair
   - o Poor
10. Why do you want to learn English? (Check all that apply)
    - o I have an interest in learning English
    - o I am interested in English speaking countries
    - o I have friends who speak English
    - o The need for future jobs
    - o The need for future education
    - o Need it for traveling
    - o Required to take English courses to graduate
    - o English is a tool of communication
    - o Other(list):___________
11. Besides the U.S., have you ever lived in an English-speaking country?
    - o Yes
      Indicate country__________________
      Length of stay____________________
    - o No
12. How long have you been in the U.S.? ________

Part A—Self-Efficacy

Please read each statement and check the box that best describes how you feel:

1= Not at all true of me to 7= Very true of me

	Not at all true of me 1	2	3	4	5	6	Very true of me 7
1. I believe I will receive an excellent grade in this English class.							
2. I'm certain I can understand the most difficult material presented in the readings for this English class.							
3. I'm confident I can understand the basic concepts taught in this English course.							
4. I'm confident I can understand the most complex material presented by the instructor in this English course.							
5. I'm confident I can do an excellent job on the assignments and							

tests in this English course.							
6. I expect to do well in this English class.							
7. I'm certain I can master the skills being taught in this English class.							
8. Considering the difficulty of this English course, the teacher, and my skills, I think I will do well in this class.							

Part B—Goal Orientation

Please read each statement and check the box that best describes how you feel:

1= Never or almost never true of me to 5= Always or almost always true of me

	Never or almost never true of me 1	Usually not true of me 2	Some-what true of me 3	Usually true of me 4	Always or almost always true of me 5
9. I like class work that I'll learn from even if I make a lot of mistakes.					
10. An important reason why I do my class work in this English class is because I like to learn new things.					
11. I like class work in this English class best when it really makes me think.					
12. An important reason why I do my work in this English class is because I want to get better at it.					
13. An important reason I do my class work is because I enjoy it.					
14. I do my class work in this English class because I'm interested in it.					
15. I would feel really good if I were the only one who could answer the teacher's questions in class.					
16. I want to do better than other students in my English class.					
17. I would feel successful in class if I did better than most of the other students in this English class.					
18. I'd like to show my teacher that I'm smarter than the other students in this English class.					
19. Doing better than other students in English class is important to me.					
20. It's very important to me that I don't look stupid in my English class.					
21. An important reason I do my class work is so that I don't embarrass myself.					
22. The reason I do my class work is so my teacher doesn't think I know less than others in this English class.					
23. The reason I do my work is so others won't think I'm dumb.					

	Never or almost never true of me 1	Usually not true of me 2	Some-what true of me 3	Usually true of me 4	Always or almost always true of me 5
24. One of my main goals in this English class is to avoid looking like I can't do my work.					
25. One reason I would not participate in this English class is to avoid looking stupid.					

Survey adapted from the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, & McKeachie, 1993), and the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Strategies (PALS) survey (Midgley et al., 2000).

Theoretical Perspectives on International Student Identity

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ABSTRACT

Interest in international student identity has grown considerably over the last few years. In the context of international education, the emphasis on identity and the individual student may also be seen as an emerging response to the tendency of discussing international students and their identity-related experiences in homogenising ways. While there is considerable discussion about how international students' sense of self is affected by cultural differences in higher education, a theory of identity is not always in place. The purpose of this paper is to bring together three theoretical perspectives on identity that are designed to account for specific cultural, social, and linguistic influences on identity construction. These perspectives are examined with examples from data-based case studies. This paper identifies the unique affordances of each perspective while also highlighting their mutual role in challenging broad discourses that have unfavourably defined international student identity.

Keywords: agency, higher education, identity, international student, language

INTRODUCTION

Interest in international student identity at the individual level has grown considerably over the last few years. Examining identity at the individual level affords us the necessary opportunity to understand the multiple and complex ways in which broad sociological phenomena and experiences, such as transnationalism or discrimination, affect an international student more individually and qualitatively. Such an interest reflects a more recent trend in the social sciences in general, in which identity is explored increasingly more from a social perspective (Abdelal et al., 2006). Yet, in the context of international education, in particular, the growing emphasis on identity and the individual student may also be seen as a response to the prevailing trend of discussing international student identity in a collective light. Indeed, much critique has been presented with respect to the effects of the characterization of international students as a monolithic group. Popadiuk and Arthur (2004), for instance, have argued that "treating international students as a homogeneous group ignores issues of gender, culture, and power, and places individuals at greater risk for marginalization within our institutions of higher learning" (p. 128).

Some studies have attempted to move away from homogenising the whole population of international students by concentrating on ethnic groups. However, in matters related to identity, individual variation within ethnic groups still exists to such a significant extent that the same risk of misrepresentation and generalization remains. Studies which have explored identity-related experiences from the perspective of international students from the same ethnic group have unsurprisingly shown that no two students' experiences are meaningfully similar (Skyrme, 2007). Studying international student identity on a group

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basis can oftentimes help identify some common or universal patterns of experience for the members of the group under consideration (Li, 2004). Nevertheless, a more context-sensitive and holistic approach can reveal how a student's understanding of self in light of a common experience may be mediated by individual characteristics and previous life experiences (Tian & Lowe, 2009). In her research with international students in higher education, Gargano (2012) demonstrated that a common collective identity categorization, such as that of a mutual nationality, may be insufficient to help understand how some international students construct their identities in their new socio-cultural contexts.

Language and ethnicity continue to be the main basis upon which international student identity is generalized. Yet, such generalizations rarely reflect the students' own voices. When exploring the identity-related experiences of Afro-Caribbean international students (ACIS), Malcolm and Mendoza (2014) showed that the students went through complex negotiations of ethnic and racial identities that were neglected by their peers due to incorrect assumptions that the students' experiences in such sociological regards could be equated to those of other similar groups, such as African-Americans. Some students felt frustrated when their interlocutors categorized their identities abstractly as "Caribbean" because the label obscured the rich individual variation that existed within the group with respect to identity. The authors argued that the "tendency to homogenize ACIS overlooks their experiences and development, and so their issues become essentially invisible for administrations and in the literature on student identity development" (p. 595). Similarly, in Campbell's (2017) autoethnography as an international student, Campbell had "to negotiate his Afro-Caribbean experience and identity with American labels and definitions" (p. 42) which reduced the complexity of his experiences to a common denominator embedded exclusively in the American sociocultural context.

At the same time, international students have also been strongly and traditionally associated with an identity of deficit. Monolingual and monocultural frameworks in higher education have contributed to positioning international students as individuals with disruptive and deficient abilities (Sawir et al., 2008), because such frameworks exclude knowledges and skills that may be regarded as foreign. Ryan (2011) has spoken of how instructors may resist "to change and adapt to new conditions and imperatives, seeing their role as simply educating students" (p. 637). By doing so, local knowledge remains privileged and opportunities to engage authentically in intercultural learning are lost. The emphasis on "fixing" international students' language has a direct impact on how the students see their place in the English-speaking academic world (Zhang, 2011). The deficit view of multilingual international students leads the academic community to focus on challenges, and consequently, to sustain discourses that frame international students as less intelligent. However, the very experience of leaving one's country to study abroad should be seen as the kind of success that can challenge these prevalent beliefs of inferior identities (Ryan & Carroll, 2007).

These broad narratives, assumptions, and overgeneralizations regarding international students have become deeply ingrained in the international education literature. As a result, international student identity from an individual perspective remains systematically under-theorized, despite the complexity and diversity of individual lived experience which scholars have called attention to as well as the availability of widely applied theories of identity. The purpose of this paper is to briefly bring together three theoretical perspectives on identity that are contextually sensitive and designed to account for specific cultural, social, and linguistic influences on identity construction. These theoretical perspectives—construals of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), social identity theory (Hogg et al., 1995), and post-structuralist perspectives

(Han, 2011)—are employed upon an individual data-based case study with an international student (Tavares, 2020). Each perspective focuses on a distinct process or dimension of identity development, and its respective impact can be seen in the case presented for each student's journey of identity construction and identity-related experiences. These perspectives provide a rich portrayal of identity and (together) foreground congruent themes with respect to international student identity, as will be discussed later in this paper.

The data presented in this paper originated from a case study (Creswell & Poth, 2016) with three international students at a university in Canada (see Tavares, 2020). The objective of the case study was to explore the students' lived experiences holistically with particular attention to how the students' multiple and diverse experiences impacted their identity construction and enactment. Case studies normally focus on a small number of individuals so that a specific concern may be examined in depth (Gerring, 2007). Furthermore, research conceptualized through a case study approach explores the cases in their real-life contexts in order to understand the situated nature of meaning-making in subjective experiences (Yin, 2017). In harmony with this, case study research tends to account for various contextual factors simultaneously.

"Southern Ontario University" (SOU hereafter) is the pseudonym for a large, research-oriented university in Canada. According to its website, approximately 50,000 students, undergraduate and graduate combined, attended the university in 2019. SOU hosted more than 6,000 international students from over 150 countries in 2019 and had exchange agreements with over 80 international partner universities. SOU offers pre-admission English language education through its language institute for multilingual international students who speak English as an additional language. Both locally and nationally, SOU is known for its multicultural and multilingual campus community, embodied by its notably diverse student population. SOU has two campuses in Ontario, each with its student residence which hosts both local and international students.

Three multilingual international students were recruited to participate in the study through an email invitation in the winter of 2019 (see Table 1). The email invitation was distributed with the assistance of the international student group at the university. Since this paper focuses on three theoretical perspectives, case studies of three participants were selected to differently illustrate and contextualise the potential of each perspective. Twelve interviews were conducted as part of this case study: four with each participant. The interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes and were semi-structured. Richards (2009) explained the affordance of semi-structured interviews by saying that:

> the interviewer has a clear picture of the topics that need to be covered (and perhaps even a preferred order for these) but is prepared to allow the interview to develop in unexpected directions where these open up important new areas. (p. 186)

General interview topics included but were not limited to, academics, social life, language use, Canadian culture, psychological and physical well-being, spirituality and religion, finances, and work experience. Data analyzed consisted of a multiphase process. Interviews were transcribed, read multiple times, and aggregated into categories based on common themes (Gbrich, 2007) that related to the focus on identity. All identifying information has been anonymized.

Table 1
Information on Participants

Participant (pseudonym)	Gender and age	Multilingual repertoire	Academic level and program	Place of origin	Length of time at SOU at time of study
Pablo	Male, 22	Spanish, English, Portuguese, French, ASL	Undergraduate, BA with honours in criminology	Colombia	Three and a half years
Sabrina	Female, 31	Portuguese, English, French, Italian, Spanish	Graduate, Master of Business Administration (MBA)	Brazil	Four months
Seth	Male, 24	Cantonese, English, Mandarin	Undergraduate, BA in linguistics	Macau	Four months

Over the next several paragraphs, each theoretical perspective will be presented individually. The first perspective examines the influence of the culture, in its broadest sense, on Seth's identity experiences as he navigated his international journey in the United States and Canada. The second one considers how membership in social groups, which are created socially on the basis of a common category, impacted Sabrina's identity construction as someone who was positioned as an ESL speaker in Canada. The last perspective on identity draws on post-structuralist approaches which view identity in the plural sense and as primarily a product of discursive practices embedded in political contexts.

SETH: IDENTITY AND CULTURE

In terms of identity, cultural psychology is concerned with the role culture plays in the process of one's identity construction and enactment. Two individuals who grow up in two different cultural environments are expected to behave, think, and feel differently from each other (Markus & Kitayama, 2003). While such a difference should not be the product of culture alone, cultural psychology considers how and to what extent cultural "systems" contribute to that variation. Integrating perspectives from cultural psychology in theorising international student identity is important because experiences of transnationalism, such as studying abroad, can and often have the potential to cause identity conflict based on different cultural values. Much of the early culture-oriented research into international students' experiences in higher education has concentrated on culture shock, particularly by comparing cross-cultural collective behaviour between international students' sending and hosting countries (e.g., Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004; Hamboyan & Bryan, 1995; Lewthwaite, 1996).

One seminal framework for understanding the influence of culture on the individual is that of construals of the self. Construals are patterns of behaviour (Markus & Kitayama, 2003) encapsulated in "two broad modes of being—an independent self-construal and an interdependent self-construal" (p. 280). Through the independent construal, one's behaviour and sense of self are defined by "one's own internal repertoire of thoughts, feelings, and actions" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 226). On the other hand, through the interdependent construal, one's behaviour is "determined, contingent on, and, to a large extent organized by what the actor perceives to be the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others in the relationship" (Markus

& Kitayama, 1991, p. 227). Construals of the self thus shed light on the potential impact culture can have on the ways one ascribes value to and sees the self, the other, and the relationship between the two. The independent and interdependent construals are primarily discussed in contexts of collectivist and individualist societies (Triandis, 2018).

Previous research offers interesting insight into how cultural differences may impact the identity of an international student. Nevertheless, in such research contexts, the focus tends to be on a specific component of the academic experience, thereby positioning identity more peripherally (Choi, 2015; Jackson, 2002). Furthermore, there is considerable discussion about how international students' sense of self is affected by cultural differences in higher education, but a theory of identity is not always in place (e.g., Lee, 2009; Wang, 2012). For international students learning in an additional language, proficiency in the language of instruction contributes immensely to how international students demonstrate their knowledge and enact their identities in the classroom; however, language is rarely the sole factor (Tavares, 2019). Sociological factors whose regard may vary from culture to culture, such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and age, in addition to (conflicting) behavioural differences between individualist and collectivist societies, particularly when manifested in the academic classroom, can lead to international students feeling excluded or inferior in relation to their local peers (Tatar, 2005; Tavares, 2016; Xing & Bolden, 2020).

Herein, the identity-related experiences of Seth are theorized through the framework of construals of the self. Prior to beginning his academic studies in Canada, Seth had studied in the United States first as a high school student in New York, and second as a college student in California. Consequently, he had gained extensive exposure to cross-cultural experiences. When Seth began his studies in New York as a teenager, he was linguistically and academically unprepared for the demands of his high school. Yet, Seth's greatest challenge was cultural in nature. A sense of community was important for his emotional well-being. However, the competitive and individualist behaviour characterising peer relationships and the social environment of his new school caused him much internal conflict for it only methodically diverted him from the possibility to meaningfully connect with others. He observed, for instance, that asserting one's position spiritedly over someone else's in the shared space of the classroom evoked approval and recognition from others. In that particular community, standing out was linked to individual academic success, and he felt the pressure to act similarly as a way to embody that kind of identity, though this was not his intrinsic inclination.

Outside the school, Seth believed that New Yorkers generally prioritized autonomy, privacy, and formality. Seth's unexpectedly brief social experiences with New Yorkers only resulted in him feeling less like his envisioned self. He wished to be part of a social group, but described inland New Yorkers as "closed off." Fueled by the need to practice his language as well as form new relationships, he was disappointed when his casual conversational attempts with locals were experienced awkwardly by his interlocutors. When juxtaposed with his gregarious personality and desire to relate, Seth's continuously formulaic interactions with locals left him feeling out of place for three years. Despite having the chance to meet many others during such a long journey, none of these connections organically evolved into a deep and long-lasting friendship. It was only when Seth moved to California for college that he experienced significant progress in his social life. In fact, his social life in California was the complete opposite of that which he had had in New York. He believed that the "nicer" weather was the sole reason behind Californians' apparent openness to socialise with newcomers.

In college, Seth made new friends and the active social network he was then embedded in contributed directly to his feeling of belonging. In his interviews, Seth would never refer to any of his acquaintances from New York as friends. In discussing his experiences in California, conversely, many of the people he referred to were mentioned as "my friends (from Cali)." He described the college as "very small" and explained that international and local students interacted together with ease. These two contextual factors afforded him access to a community with which he identified more, especially since he shared many individual interests with his peers in the computer science program. Today, what Seth missed the most about his time in California was going to the beach and playing sports with friends. When Seth moved from California to study at SOU in Canada, he felt as if all progress had been lost. He did not know any locals in the community surrounding SOU, and after a few weeks of "feeling out" the new place, he considered the new Canadian city gray and uninviting. Local Canadians—like New Yorkers—were for him boring and reticent. He explained:

> I just kind of like west coast better. I'm kind of more like a[n] outgoing person. And [Canadian city] [is] more like east coast, people are more... conservative. I think of the east coast like that. When I was in New York, people were more like, sort of checked out, just not as open as like, in the west coast. You can easy make friends [on the west coast], very easily. Yeah, and people just less judge [you]. That's why. The weather is always so nice. Actually, I miss it so much.

Now in the present time, Seth defined himself as more culturally western-oriented as a result of his complex cross-cultural experiences. He explained: "I've been living in a western society for too long, I'm kind of like a mix, so I don't have strong, like, east opinions, east perspectives… [but] more west perspectives." Considering Seth's identity-related experiences in terms of construals of the self provides insight into how the cultural set-up of his communities in the United States and Canada interacted with his view of himself. Indeed, the focus within the framework lays upon the person rather than on the place. We might argue, for example, that Seth felt like himself more fully in California when he was part of a community. However, New York and California may still be considered individualist societies in general (though subcultures may function differently), so the emphasis returns to be on the individual. Most importantly, after almost seven years in the United States, Seth may have experienced a shift in his construal: "I'm kind of like a mix," meaning that he came to adopt some of the cultural values and practices of the host society, while simultaneously retaining others from his upbringing.

Seth's "more western perspectives" also caused him conflict with other students from Macau whom he met along the way. He explained that his ways of seeing the world often clashed with those from his peers from Macau, saying explicitly that he was "just too different" now. Additionally, he refused to invest time into potential friendships with those he believed he could not come to culturally relate to. He saw these investments as threats to the self-development he had experienced and preferred to avoid situations in which his new "mixed" orientation might bring his new identity into question. Including the cultural context into an exploration of an international student's experience therefore affords us the chance to account for how different cultural systems impact the individual in regard to emotion, cognition, and the desire to act. It also allows us to consider how and to what extent one's well-being may be interconnected with acculturation for different individuals—the more conflicting the local values may be, the more disconnected one may feel from their perceived or hoped-for self.

Of course, construals of the self is by nature a broad framework to study the influence of culture on the individual through two divergent modes of being. Needless to say, individual variation from the prescribed collective behaviour will always exist to reflect diversity at the individual level. By examining identity from a cultural perspective, the individual is not conceptualized as lacking an individual identity. Much to the contrary, individuals are seen as agents, though agency is exercised differently (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Nevertheless, the individual is always embedded in a specific cultural context which, in turn, affects how important others become for one's understanding of themselves. In Markus and Kitayama's (1991) words, what people "believe about the relationship between the self and *others* and, especially, the degree to which they see themselves as *separate* from others or as *connected* with others" (p. 226, italics in original) can result in markedly distinct implications for one's cognitive, emotional, and motivational experiences.

SABRINA: IDENTITY THROUGH SOCIAL GROUPS

Stemming from social psychology, social identity theory looks at how identity is influenced by group membership. From such a perspective, society is composed of social groups, which are based on a diverse range of categorizations, such as racial, ethnic, linguistic, and so on. Pioneered by Henri Tajfel and John Turner throughout the 70s, social identity theory proposes that when individuals from different social groups interact, they act as representatives of their respective groups, and when doing so, the individual's identity is thus derived "from the social categories to which [the individual] belongs" (Hornsey, 2008, p. 206). Although an individual belongs to several groups simultaneously, each group will produce a distinct social identity for the individual (Hogg et al., 1995). The interactional context wherein the individual member is embedded will affect which social identity becomes more salient at a given time and place, therefore making social identities dynamic. Between individual and group identities, the group one takes precedence and becomes prescriptive of how the group member should act, think, and feel. Group-specific stereotypes play a major role in enforcing boundaries between groups (Hogg et al., 1995).

The enactment of a social identity through group membership may occur through a process called depersonalization. Despite the name, depersonalization is not the erasure of the individual, but "a contextual change in the level of identity (from unique individual to group member)" (Hogg et al., 1995, p. 261), rendering individual identity less relevant. The notion of self-categorization (Turner, 1985), which includes the process of depersonalization, proposes that prototypes govern people's representations of social groups. Hogg and colleagues (1995) defined a prototype as "a subjective representation of the defining attributes (e.g., beliefs, attitudes, behaviors) of a social category" (p. 261). Prototypes can be based on actual people who most fully represent the group or on the "ideal" member, conceptualised upon a sum of general, positive features (Hogg et al., 1995). In-group members evaluate themselves and those from the outgroup by comparing oneself and the other with the prototype. Prototypes are highly responsive to contextual changes and reflect the dynamic nature of group interaction, that is, they change according to the outgroup in question.

Paying attention to the individual as someone who functions within a larger social group helps us understand why individual members behave the way they do. In other words, by studying the group, we learn about the individual and by studying the individual, we learn about the group. Examining international student identity from a social identity theory perspective is relevant in relation to at least two obvious and often interrelated categorizations: the institutional and the linguistic. A student arriving from overseas will be automatically grouped into the "international" or "foreign" student group. In comparison with their "domestic" or "local" peer groups, for example, international students tend to face more discrimination on the basis of their institutional status (Charles-Toussaint & Crowson, 2010; Lee & Rice, 2007), which is constructed through and maintained by a set of negative stereotypes that differentiate them from the "domestic students" group (Heng, 2018). Stereotypes may be reinforced by social, educational, and institutional practices extended differently to each group. Being in the marked group will therefore affect the members' identity-related experiences in complex ways.

The second categorization for international students is linguistic in nature, and often goes hand-in-hand with the institutional. To illustrate, in Canada, the vast majority of international students in higher education are multilingual learners for whom English is not a first language (Canadian Bureau of International Education, 2019). In light of language alone, students are divided as either native speakers or non-native speakers; the latter commonly referred to as English as a second language (ESL) students. In this juxtaposition, the non-native group remains the marked one, whose collective identity is also linked to specific stereotypes which tend to conflate non-native proficiency with inferiority and deficit (Marshall, 2009). Students who speak English as an additional language routinely have to resist the material ramifications of the prevailing assumption that they cannot succeed academically because of their language. Because language difference is seen as a form of deficit, the legitimacy of the identity of the group is never fully solidified and is subject to much lexical experimentation, varying from LEP (Limited English Proficiency) students (Shapiro, 2014) to the widespread ESL and beyond (Tavares, 2020).

Sabrina was an international student whose identity was influenced directly by her group membership. Though Sabrina had studied English for years in Brazil before coming to Canada, following her first few weeks in the new environment, she concluded that her level of proficiency in the language was insufficient for what she desired: to communicate naturally and effortlessly with local Canadians. In particular, her oral language skills needed further practice, and her vocabulary was limited. Additionally, Sabrina held an undergraduate degree in journalism, but felt that her ability to demonstrate her expert knowledge was also constrained by her level of proficiency in the English language. She decided to enrol herself in English language courses at a private ESL school in order to improve her linguistic skills. However, as her journey as an ESL student proceeded, she grew increasingly dissatisfied with the overall experience. She did see improvement in her language, but she metaphorised her personal ESL student experience as if "living in a bubble" or in "the little international student world" wherein every interaction with the "real world" through the language program seemed programmed and superficial.

Sabrina defined one marker of the collective ESL student identity she experienced specifically on the basis of language proficiency. She explained that being an ESL student meant that "nobody spoke completely correct, but it was that feeling of not being judged." Language proficiency was central to differentiating the ESL from the native-speaker group: "Canadians always diffuse that kind of intimidation because they speak so well, natives speak so well, so automatically that intimidates you," she explained. Despite the feeling of comfort and safety that Sabrina experienced as an ESL student, she felt as though the pace of improvement was too slow and that she needed to be more intensively challenged in the language so as to live through her real potential. However, what caused her the most conflict was that her lived social experiences were becoming incrementally more incongruent with the ones she had envisioned for herself as an international student. She knew that she would be attending college or university in Canada sometime after the language program, contrary to the vast majority of her ESL peers who would be returning home immediately after the program's conclusion. Therefore, she needed to find a way to step out of the "ESL bubble" in preparation for an upcoming, different experience.

Despite being a difficult decision, Sabrina opted to formally disconnect herself from the ESL school once she had completed her course. She still had another level to take before finalising her entire language program, but her association with the school progressed to eventually be the very means sustaining the social part of her ESL identity. Sabrina's identity-related experiences may be theorized through social identity theory by centering on her membership to the ESL student group. Her insufficient proficiency in English upon her arrival in Canada led her to join a language school. Yet, alongside learning the language emerged an identity which she had not anticipated, but enacted fully in the beginning as it afforded her the chance to meet her immediate needs. In the context of her personal experience, the prototype of the ESL student group was someone who spoke English incorrectly, interacted limitedly with Canadian society, and remained primarily within the group. Sabrina gradually deviated from the prototype as her individual identity needs gained priority but conflicted with those of her group identity. Moreover, the ways in which she perceived to be judged by outgroup members—i.e., by native speaker Canadians—fueled her desire and acceptance to be less like her ingroup members.

In joining the ESL group, Sabrina's identity at the individual level was qualitatively minimised. Other roles, skills, interests, and abilities that constituted her identity became irrelevant to her social group and collective experiences. Social identity theory focuses primarily on the importance of group membership for one's positive sense of self. However, Sabrina's case might suggest that this (beneficial) feeling can also be temporary. While the theory continues to be expanded today, the assumption that one's self-definition is extracted principally from one's collective identity was one of its original shortcomings (Hornsey, 2008). Hornsey (2008) has argued that the theory has evolved to recognise that "individuals and groups mutually influence each other" and that group norms can be "actively contested, discussed, and shaped by individuals" (p. 216). Indeed, Sabrina's own experiences illustrate these (re)actions in context and suggest that individual group members' behaviours can help challenge our assumptions about the group as an invariable entity.

PABLO: NEGOTIATING MULTIPLE IDENTITIES

Poststructuralist approaches to the construct of identity tend to reject notions that manifestations of identity remain static, singular, exclusive, and coherently organised across the lifespan. Duff (2012) explained that poststructuralism is "an approach to research that questions fixed categories or structures, oppositional binaries, closed systems, and stable-truths and embraces seeming contradictions" (p. 412). Essentially, poststructuralism holds skepticism toward metanarratives and considers identity to be largely a product of a discursive process embedded in complex political, social, and cultural contexts (Han, 2011). The boundaries between identity categories are blurred, unlike in social identity theory, and may evolve over time, thus forming "a dynamic and shifting nexus of multiple subject positions, or identity options, such as mother, accountant, heterosexual, or Latina" (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p. 35). Viewed as contextually and discursively shaped, identities may be imposed, resisted, or claimed by the individual—identity is primarily something one *does*. Social interaction typically becomes the "common ground" on which identities are (simultaneously) indexed.

By focusing on language in interaction, Koehne (2005) illustrated the many positions international students may simultaneously occupy, at times even contradictorily. The students' storylines revealed how cultural hybridity in international higher education mobility afforded the students "the space to *speak* themselves as a different person" (p. 114, italics added). This "space" was one where the students could reinvent themselves by claiming new positionings, but wherein they also had to resist imposed identities of otherness in the host environment. Similarly, Wang (2020) investigated how Asian teaching assistants (TAs) monitored their English language to re-position themselves as more legitimate instructors at a university in the United States. Since having an accent and tone were markers of professional identity illegitimacy, the TAs worked to model their language to sound more native-like in order to avoid marginalization and gain acceptance from students. In general, a student's sense of legitimacy and of competency in higher education are constructed around eloquent language. Multilingual international students who do not perform linguistically like their native speakers are thus often considered less competent by their local peers (Yoon, 2013).

When Pablo began his first year of studies at SOU, he was unfamiliar with the culture and the register of language used in Canadian academe. For all of first year, he feared that he would be unable to perform like local, native-speaker students, who had grown up in Canada and consequently had much more exposure to the local education system. To cope, Pablo introduced himself to his instructors in first year explicitly as an international, ESL student as he believed that such labels would help contextualise his academic performance in case it grew to be unsatisfactory. Yet at the same time, he wished to meet local students to expand his cultural and linguistic repertoire. One of his first-year lectures had a tutorial attached to it, divided into two sessions: one for ESL and one for non-ESL students. Pablo signed up for the latter so that his chances to socialise with locals might be better, especially because the small size of tutorial sessions allowed students to familiarise themselves with one another more naturally. Thus, for much of first year, Pablo cleverly embraced and occupied two seemingly contradictory identity positions. Each of them consisted of a specific audience, and therefore, different possibilities for his future.

Concurrent to his academic journey at the time was the broadcasting of a show titled "Narcos" on Netflix. The series took place in Colombia—Pablo's home country—and presented the investigation into the life of a Colombian drug lord who coordinated major illegal drug trafficking. The stereotypes perpetuated by the series, such as those of Colombia being a society marked by poverty, violence, drug traffic, and corruption, directly impacted Pablo's identity in interaction. Many of his classmates would approach him to "confirm" these stereotypes, covertly positioning Pablo as a spokesperson whom he did not wish or have to be. Confronting these stereotypes and resisting association or the superimposition of them upon his individual self was a laborious and vexatious task for Pablo. He commented very emotionally on this experience by criticising not the show itself, but the far-reaching effect it had, to the point of materialising fiction into his lived experiences:

> I hate it. I hate it when everyone talks to me about *Narcos*. 'Cause they're like: where are you from? And I'm like: Colombia, and they're like: oh, Narcos. I'm like, yeah, sure. I hate it, I hate it. When I came here in first year, that was the boom: Narcos. People think that's how Colombia looks like. That is how we all live, we don't have any cities or cars.

Progression into his academic program and social life resulted in strong feelings of self-confidence for Pablo. In the third and fourth years of his BA program, his classes advanced from lecture to seminar-style. Smaller conversational classes afforded him more agency and control over the construction of his identity—he had more open "space" to do identity work—and in return, he permanently discarded the ESL identity which he had been stepping in and out of, mostly for precaution, during his first and second years. He was no longer an unknown student in the large lecture hall crowd, and because he could now be seen as an individual, consistency in self-presentation was key. As a result of this self-expansion, Pablo spoke as if he inhabited "two worlds": one which he inherited and one which he pieced together for himself through (the English) language. Despite the importance of this dual identity for him, they were not fixed and oscillated according to the surrounding context. "When I'm in English" suggests identity-related experiences that are transitory (in or out of English) but also unstable (when). Life in English consisted largely of friendships with other like-minded multilingual international students with whom he only spoke in English. English was not just a new language; it was also a new experience of selfhood:

> I feel like English is my life. When I'm in English, I feel like it's my real life. And when I'm speaking Spanish, it's just like, a side. Like, my family and vacation and that's it. But like, my friends, like, everything to me now is English.

From a poststructuralist point of view, Pablo's identity may be (better) seen in the plural sense, as in a dynamic collection of intersecting experiences and positions sustained primarily by language. He drew on language to self-ascribe two oppositional identities synchronically, each with its own set of perceived characteristic embodiments: ESL if unsuccessful academically, and non-ESL when successful socially. His dual identity position exposed the artificiality with which the institution created the ESL label for him as a multilingual individual. This position was thus not static, but variably situated. As Gee (1999) put it, there are "multiple identities we take on in different practices and contexts" (p. 39), depending on what is at stake and whom our interlocutors may be. Moreover, some of Pablo's identities competed with one another. Such was the case when he spoke English and Spanish. However, speaking Spanish evoked a seemingly less significant identity. He considered it to be just a "side," although one which he could not completely dismiss. Nevertheless, it was accompanied by specific experiences (i.e. family and vacation) that were not part of his "English" world.

Like any other theory, poststructuralist perspectives to identity are not without criticism. Block (2013) calls for more attention toward the psychological processes of identity formation. In alignment with other authors, Block rejects the notion that selfhood is a product of social interaction alone and suggests that psychoanalytic orientations should be combined with social ones so that identity may be viewed "as fluid and unstable, not just as a response to an ever-changing environment but also as an effect of emotions" (p. 21). This means that psychological characteristics unique to an individual should be taken into consideration. When viewing identity as a discursive construction, Haugh (2008) cautions that the collaborative process by which identities are defined in interaction needs to be made more explicit. He argues that poststructuralist traditions often proceed as if "what international students say can be *equated* with their identities, without critical attention being paid to the way in which identities emerge as a conjoint construct through interaction" (p. 207, italics in original). In short, he states that the actual discursive negotiation of identities by interlocutors needs to be clearly articulated.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Construals of the self, social identity theory, and poststructuralist perspectives help culturally, socially, and linguistically/politically situate international student identity construction, respectively. All three perspectives coherently consider the context in which international students may be embedded and reveal its interplay with international students' lived experiences. However, the prevailing discourse that shapes international student identity unfavourably does so because it greatly dismisses the context. Without paying critical attention to context(s), identity is seen as static and as a choice of the individual completely, and from there, overgeneralizations follow automatically. Thus, the role played by the sociocultural context may be seen as the most salient theoretical theme among all three perspectives. At the same time that these perspectives allow us to explore and account for some of the cultural, social, and linguistic processes encircling international student identity construction, they do not position international students merely as products of their environments. On the contrary, they recognise individual agency to varying extents and purposes.

Agency is therefore approached differently, as each case illustrates. Construals of the self as a theory is concerned with how cultural systems influence the psychological development of an individual into two modes of being: namely the individualist and the collectivist. Consequently, the self experiences conflict when navigating a cultural environment where the "opposite" construal is in place. This was precisely the case for Seth. Yet, Seth's identity changed and expanded to reflect his experience as a transnational. This may also speak to the notion of whether one is either fully an individualist or a collectivist. On the other hand, social identity theory considers how group memberships impact the individual. These memberships, often based on common categorizations, still vary from place to place as societies ascribe value to these categories contrastingly. As a newly arrived student, Sabrina met many of her initial needs by joining a community formed on the basis of language. Because her school failed to connect her meaningfully with the host society, she saw her potential gains constrained by the ESL student experience specific of the group she joined. After some time, Sabrina left the school to actively search for new communities.

Differently, poststructuralist perspectives tend to focus on the multiple and intersecting identities of the individual and how these emerge in interactions wherein power at play needs to be more explicitly examined. Pablo was positioned by others, but also resisted and re-positioned himself creatively as he increasingly acquired the means to do so. These similar insights from all three perspectives link the theories together around the dynamic nature of identity. Of course, as the cases suggest, identity being dynamic is relative to each theoretical perspective. At another level, all three students demonstrated awareness, from their immediate lived or perceived experiences in their host environments, of the international student identity being one of an outsider. This is not a surprise considering the very title "international student" implies a kind of foreignized identity. However, each theoretical perspective contextualized the unique ways by which such exclusions occurred. When analyzed from all three perspectives, the students' experiences suggest that the educational environments to which the students belonged were culturally inflexible. Their monocultural orientations may then be seen as the very force behind the construction of an othered identity, which cannot exist naturally, but only as a consequence of dominant institutional cultures. The theories help look at this construction from different angles.

Consideration of international student identity as a complex and situated experience better allows for international student individual agency. Put differently, identity homogenization stands in conflict with individual agency because it favours a group-based view of the individual that is simplistic and contextualized by collective rather than individual patterns of development. All three theoretical perspectives illustrate possibilities of individual agency by focusing on the students' choices of what to invest in, culturally, socially, and linguistically/politically speaking. The students' investments may be seen as those toward the "collective:" refusing to take part in cultural experiences, to join or leave social groups, and to (re)invent the self through new language. These would be experiences or interactions in which the identity of the group overrides that of the student, thus hindering individual progress that is meaningful to the self. In terms of supporting international student agency, members of the host academic community, including but not limited to faculty, support staff, and local students, should therefore avoid the "tendency to homogenize" (Malcolm & Mendoza, 2014, p. 595) and the tendency to focus on deficit. Moreover, a critical evaluation of the institutional environment continues to be necessary for international student success.

In closing, all three perspectives have their own conceptual and methodological limitations, discussed extensively in the literature already. Most importantly, each perspective focuses separately on *distinct* dimensions of identity (e.g., cultural, social, linguistic) and on the specific processes therein. For this reason, while the concern remained the same throughout this paper—that is, on international student identity—these theoretical perspectives are not interchangeable and should be evaluated in their own right. Jointly or individually, these perspectives can contribute to a systematic exploration of the influence of the context and of the agentive nature of international students in relation to their identity-related experiences.

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Level of Academic Performance Among Faculty Members in the Context of Nepali Higher Educational Institution

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ABSTRACT

Academic performance is taken as the process of carrying out academic activities and discourses by faculty members to enhance their academic activities and discourses. The purpose of this research was to identify the faculty member's level of academic performance in higher educational institutions. To conduct this research, a quantitative methodology was employed. The tools to measure the academic performance of faculty members were developed using Delphi method. The data were collected with 445 sampled respondents from four universities. The factor analysis was used to explore the dimensions of academic performance. The factor analysis identified four factors of academic performance i.e., research and publication, innovation, interactive learning, and capacity building. To analyze the level of academic performance, mean and the standard deviation was used. It was found that individual differences and the organizational environment, culture, and technological infrastructure were crucial to influence the pace and level academic performance in academia.

Keyword: academic performance, faculty member, intellectual capital, level, university

INTRODUCTION

This study identifies the level (low, medium, and high) of academic performance among faculty members in the universities of Nepal. In the context of higher education institutions, faculty members' academic activities and discourses to enhance their research, innovation, and capacity building process are considered as academic performance. Likewise, the level refers faculty members' degree of engagement in academic activities. The knowledge of individual and institutional supports to enhance academic activities in academia. Davenport and Prusak (1998) highlighted knowledge as "a dynamic perception, beliefs, thought regarding situational information from an expert perspective that provides an integrated framework and design for assessing, managing and incorporating information" (p. 5). These scholars also emphasize that knowledge is generated from the mind of an individual and is incorporated in relevant works. Knowledge often gets embedded in organizations in the form of documents or repositories and manages organizational practices, standards, routines, and processes. The working environment of academic institutions plays a vital role in enhancing faculty members' capability in both teaching-learning and research activities. According to Fives and Looney (2009), "teacher-efficacy has been identified as a critical construct in the process of teaching and research in academia" (p. 182). Furthermore, the efficacy of faculty members' beliefs can also affect their goals, motivation, ability, and perception in confronting the existing problems and challenges of academic institutions. The academic roles of faculty members in Higher

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Education Institutions (HEIs) vary by their process of conducting academic activities and thought of academic discourses. Hence, universities conduct academic activities such as teaching, learning, conducting academic activities, workshops, and seminars along with the publication of research findings.

According to Steinberger (1993), academic performance is a multidimensional concept related to human growth and cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development. Likewise, Fairweather (1996) and Asif et al. (2017) explained academic performance as activities like teaching and research. In this line, Hazelkorn (2015) considered peer review and accreditation as faculty member's performance assessment in most of the higher education institutions. The achievement and performance of universities' vision, mission, and goals depend on the rigorous academic activities of faculty members. Faculty members' engagement in different academic activities also makes them competent which ultimately contributes to the university by making it more competitive in educational and research services.

Different studies highlighted teaching, learning, and research activities as the main key activities of faculty members in the context of a higher education. Elrehail et al. (2018) stated that innovation in higher education institutions is considered the ability to implement a new proactively reinforced organizational method, process, and product which has a significant effect on the activities of higher education institutions and their stakeholders. The study of Chiasson et al. (2015) shows that each faculty member is responsible for the quality and content of instruction in the classroom. In this regard, the working environment, including the sharing culture and the leadership of academic institutions, plays a vital role in enhancing the academic activities and discourses of faculty members in the higher education context.

Faculty members are expected to use their expertise and professional experience to serve their departments, their colleges, the university, the community, and their professions through service activities (Abes et al., 2002). The role of the faculty member at the school-level focuses more on teaching while in higher education institutions it focuses on mentorship and making the students involved in research activities. The past research highlighted that faculty members' engagement in academic activities helps to enhance the academic performance.

PERFORMANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The organizational strategy determines the expected performance of any institution. The strategic objectives are measured based on the performance of an institution (Rejc & Zaman, 2012). In the academic context, the overall performance needs to align with academic and administrative activities. Hazelkorn (2015) found that the majority of higher education institutions use peer review, publications, and accreditation as their performance evaluation. HEIs ensure that students receive high-quality service in academic activities. Suryadi (2007) highlighted that HEIs have a responsibility to produce graduates that can accommodate challenges emerging in society, such as graduates producing high-quality profiles and competence in their respective professions. In the same line, Miller (2007) explained academic performance as academic status, classes of degree, and graduation rates. Likewise, Knapp et al. (2012) mentioned the job of HEIs to teach, research, and perform service. In the same way, Ahmed, Ismail, Amin, and Islam (2014) noted that high institutional support of teachers increased student satisfaction and academic performance. Todays' higher education institutions demand smaller class sizes, library resources such as scholarly journals, research and teaching assistants, grant writing support, and offering required training and faculty meetings in flexible delivery methods (Delello et al., 2018). The performance management literature advocates securing the effective implementation of the strategy of any organization. In an academic context, research-related and teaching-related performance evaluation system are highly prioritized (Cadez et al., 2017). Hence, scholars highlighted the activities of the higher education institutions as core administrative and academic activities.

Academic Performance in Higher Educational Context

Academic performance refers teaching and research activities (Ter Bogt & Scapens, 2012). To be more competitive, research is more highly valued than teaching in academic institutions (Newman, 2008). The research activities of the faculty member carry the root cause of any issues to the society, so the publication of research is a widely accepted matric of academic performance. In contrast, publishing in low impact journals reduces the academic excellence of the researcher (Harvey et al., 2010). Hence, the teacher's effectiveness can be measured by the quality information inside the classroom, students' placement, the position of the employment of graduation, research carried out, and publication in the indexed journals in the context of higher education institutions. Universities are the key places to conduct academic activities such as teaching, learning, conducting academic activities, workshops, and seminars along with the publication of research findings. According to Steinberger (1993), academic performance is a multidimensional concept of academic activities and discourses related to the emotional, social, cognitive, and physical development of humans. The main objective of academic output is to prepare both faculty members and their students for research activities. Besides this, another objective is to prepare them for delivering the ideas and concepts of research inside a classroom along with developing new concepts. University Grants Commission (UGC) India (2010) identified the academic performance indicator (API) into three categories-(1) teaching and learning (2) co-curricular and professional development, and (3) research and academic activities. The framework highlights both activities of lecturing in classrooms and conducting research activities outside the classrooms. Research innovations inside as well as outside the classrooms help them to develop new knowledge. It further enhances the capacity of the individuals in the context of educational institutions. Asif et al. (2017) explain academic performance as activities like teaching and research. They focus on the academic performance of faculty members as their teaching inside classrooms and conducting research outside the classrooms. After teaching, the next job would be to conduct research activities which generate new concepts and enhance the capacity of both the students and faculty members. Hilman and Abubakar (2017) mention that academic performance is concerned with academic attainment and extra-curricular achievements of students. The researcher further explained the students' academic activities include the academic ranking, graduation classes, and graduation rates of students as indicators of university performance evaluation while the extra-curricular accomplishments consist of competitive roles, creativity, organizational strength, sustainability, and market share. In the line of Taylor (2007), most universities emphasize their dual mission of teaching and research. The major objectives of the university are to teach, make active participation of the learners along with the faculty members in the research activities, produce new knowledge which is required in the society and nation, and enhance the individuals' and organizational capacity. The faculty members' academic performance is associated with teaching, learning, research, publication, generation of new knowledge, and capability of solving problems in academia. The next section explains the teaching and learning activities in higher education institutions.

Teaching and Learning

The teaching performance of a faculty member is related to the classroom activities including information inside the classroom along with grades of the students, the number of degrees awarded graduates, and their job position (Ter Bogt & Scapens, 2012). These performances of the faculty members are measured only at the organizational level. Therefore, the quality of education offered by individual teachers inside the classroom during teaching and interaction is dependent upon the implementation of those measures at the organizational level. Similarly, student perspectives and expectations also play an important role in determining their teaching quality in an academic setting (Bedggood & Donovan, 2012). Hence, the organizational culture assists employees to share ideas and concepts among peers and co-workers. The knowledge-sharing culture in an organization is directly associated with leadership support and commitment. Likewise, Lin (200) highlighted that the extrinsic and intrinsic motivation of the individual matters in the knowledge sharing process in an institution. So, the influence of leadership has a remarkable role in knowledge sharing processes in any institution (Lee, Gillespie, Mann, & Wearing, 2010). It further enhances the learning and mentorship capabilities of the employee of institutions. Teaching performance relates to the number of students, degrees awarded, and the quality of the education provided (Ter Bogt & Scapens, 2012). Research-based performance evaluation in academia is detrimental to quality teaching (Kallio and Kallio, 2014). The teaching and learning activities in higher educational institutions are concerned with the capacity building of both faculty members and students through research activities.

Research and Publication

Researchers have emphasized the value of quality of research impact and the number of papers published in high-quality index journals to measure the performance of the academic staff in universities (Harvey et al., 2010). Bedggood and Donovan (2012), focuses on teaching quality, effectiveness, and student assessment as the performance of the faculty members in the academic world. We can say that the core business of a university is to teach and conduct research activities. In this regard, Schimank and Winnes (2000) explained the model of teaching and research in university as (i) pre-humboldtian model, which particularly focuses on teaching and research, (ii) the integration of research and teaching in an academic institution at the same time, and (iii) post-humboldtian pattern differentiation for teaching and research. Henningsen (2006) explained that "research is carried out separately from teaching and mentioned as scientific inquiry of a researcher" (p. 404). This scholar further argued that "the blending of teaching and research was declared as an important thought of scientific education" (Henningsen, 2006 p. 98). This showed that teaching along with research is the key activity of higher education.

Knowledge is the information stored in our minds. The information is either transferred to others or cannot be transferred. The element of knowledge can be explicit and tacit by its characteristics and nature (Chen & Hung, 2010). The knowledge sharing attributes of individuals matters in the organization. These scholars further explain that tacit knowledge is the knowledge that is formed based on the concept and ideas of know-how and created through experiences of individuals and applied in both classroom and research process. Whereas explicit knowledge is the know-what knowledge and related with day-to-day tasks and jobs. Hence, the tacit explains the subjective phenomenon and the explicit refers to the objective nature of knowledge of the individual. Initially, the concepts of the tacit and explicit knowledge came in practice as the form of knowledge creation theory by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995). Later, the perspectives of knowledge are carried in both business and academic worlds. In academic institutions, research is valued more highly than teaching (Newman, 2008). In academia, research is used to bring the individual concepts and ideas into products or in some context in the form of articles.

Academic Activities in Nepalese Universities

Nepali higher education institutions play a significant role in the development of the nation's human capital and the economy in general, particularly after 1989. Investment in education from the private sector has provided more opportunities for Nepali than ever before to pursue higher education within the country. The Higher Education Policy by University Grants Commission Nepal (2015) emphasized: (i) to promote the access to higher education by regulating, managing and maintaining the dignity of the higher education institutions regarding its establishment, operation, regulation, and management, (ii) to develop human resource inclined to science and technology, competitive and enterprising for the overall socio-economic development having established higher education as cornerstones of original knowledge and identity considering extension and diversification of school education, and (iii) to make globally competitive citizens with due focus on relevance, usefulness, and quality that increases the opportunities for higher education and research. According to the National Educational Policy released by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MOEST, 2019), the goal of education is to develop human resources by making education competitive, techno-friendly, employment-oriented, and productive as per the need of the country. Hence, the education of Nepal demands highly capable graduates from university. The idea of research and publication is yet to be resituated and clearly understood as a productive instrument for socioeconomic, technological, and cultural progress through inquiry and inquiry-based teaching/learning (Bista et al., 2019). Nepali researchers have limited publications in peer-reviewed journals (Simkhada et al., 2014). Researchers highlighted that Nepali universities are in a growing phase to implement research activities as a regular activity of the institution. Universities are knowledge centers which aim to open academic and professional avenues for the students, parents, faculties, administrators, and other stakeholders (UGC Nepal, 2011). The policies of higher education highly prioritized research and capacity building in Nepal. It also emphasizes the development of human capital to enhance the intellectual capital of individuals and institutional.

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative methodology was used to conduct this research. The population of this study primarily comprises of all the teaching faculty of different schools/faculties of four different universities of Nepal. The survey tools were self-developed employing Delphi methods. The Delphi method is a popular process to achieve consensus on the important issues or complex social problems with the help of subject experts and practitioners in a particular field (Linstone & Turoff, 2002). The Delphi technique is a method used for enabling a group of individuals to collectively address a complex problem through a structured group communication process (Hasson, Keeney, & McKenna, 2000). The different steps followed in the Delphi process are (i) participation of first round of the questionnaire, (ii) selection and invitation of a panel discussion, (iii) collection and analysis of the completed questionnaire for the first round, (iv) feedback on the responses gathered from all participants, (v) presentation and analysis of second round of questionnaire, and (vi) iteration. The Delphi process takes place through several rounds of surveys that elicit panelists' opinions about the topic at hand (Geist, 2010). Delphi questionnaires are designed based on the problem at hand and emerge based on group input. Each round is based upon the results of the round before it. The surveys may be paper-based or electronic (Geist, 2010).

The Delphi process was carried out considering the local knowledge, norms, and values on the social context (Paudel, 2019). The Delphi process generally includes in-depth interviews with practitioners in the field (grounded), written interview, open-ended questions, and panel discussion with experts. The identified indicators from the grounded data, including experts' views and insights received from the panel discussion, were compared with literature and categorized into different dimensions of academic performance. Linstone and Turoff (2002) stated that the process might also vary depending on the complexity of the subject matter. For example, there may be one in-depth interview with few experts or several in-depth interviews with numerous experts representing different professional arenas. In my study, I applied all of the above-mentioned steps of the Delphi technique to identify the dimensions of academic performance.

Identification of the research problem(s) is the first and most important step in the Delphi process (Keeney et al., 2011). To understand pressing research problem(s) and issues, I conducted in-depth interviews with practitioners and experts. During the interviews with experts, I collected information about factors that determine the academic activities of faculty members in a higher educational context. The in-depth interview, literature, and written responses from the practitioners identified 26 items of academic performance under two dimensions of academic performance. Keeney et al. (2011) mentioned that if 70% or more of the experts' panel agree on the importance of a statement, it is considered to have reached a consensus. In my case, I retained items having more than 70% of the total rating under strongly agree and agree categories. I removed items scoring less than 70%. I invited experts, professionals, and practitioners for a panel discussion to provide their views on academic performance. As suggested by Linstone and Turoff (2002), I compared the indicators suggested from the grounded data, including experts' views and insights received from panel discussion, with literature and categorized these 23 items into two dimensions of academic performance (teaching & learning and research & publication).

The researcher developed 7-point Likert scales from the indicators identified from the field (grounded) expert interviews and literature to measure knowledge management practices. Croasmun and Ostrom (2011) argue that high scale points increase reliability. On that account, the researcher followed the 7-point scale to develop a questionnaire for this research. The validity and reliability of the tool was checked before collecting the data. Many statistical tools are available to measure the reliability and internal consistency of the data. Among them, the split-half method and alpha coefficient of consistency is mostly used (Best & Kahn, 2006). Throughout my analysis, I used Cronbach's alpha-coefficient to test the instrument's accuracy. The internal reliability coefficient of the instrument is measured through the Cronbach's alpha (α) as at least 0.7 since all dimensions of academic performance are greater than 0.7 and satisfy this criterion (Santos, 1999). Creswell (2008) explained validity as to whether the questionnaire measures what it intends to measure or not. The construct, content, and criterion validity are three principal validities that need to be considered at the very outset in quantitative research (Huck, 2012; Cohen Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

Developing research questions, hypotheses, and research tools need to align with the research problem and articulating their interconnection and association enhances construct validity (Mohajan, 2017). Explaining the concept of social construct clearly and breaking the abstract concept into different underlying dimensions and measurable items improve construct validity. The Delphi method, a rigorous process of constructing tools ensured content validity. It was further supplemented by literature review and field interaction with faculty members and experts. The content validity is further validated through the factors and items of the particular factor/dimension. Mohajan (2017) stated that the content validity checks whether various items of the questionnaire have covered all the aspects of the study. For content validity, I reviewed all the relevant literature and obtained advice from the subject experts and the practitioners to make sure that all the variables to measure the concept in question were included. Moreover, the researcher applied the Delphi technique while developing questionnaires, which incorporated the contextual experience of practitioners and experts in a particular field. Criterion validity is further categorized as concurrent validity and predictive validity (Schutt, 2014). The concurrent validity refers to a test's ability to predict an occurrence in its present form (Drost, 2011). The concurrent validity addresses and supports research by adopting and applying the same tools developed by the Delphi method.

I administered the constructed tools before finalizing the questionnaire among the faculty members of different universities. The pilot survey was done to obtain estimates about expected response rates, data quality, validity and comprehensibility of the questionnaire (Silman & Macfarlane, 2001). Different researchers mentioned that near about 10% sample was needed from the total number of the final sample to estimate the reliability of the scale (Lackey & Wingate, 1998; Hertzog, 2008). Thus, I took 49 sample respondents while conducting the pilot test and established the internal reliability of this scale. Almost 11 percent of the total sample students participated in the pilot. Those faculty members were not included in the survey study. These scales were administered among those faculty members of the university who were not involved as the sample respondents for the study. From the observation of the pilot study, no serious issue was found. This study confirmed that the main study was feasible to complete within a given period. Furthermore, the pilot study ensured that the survey through a questionnaire was appropriate to address research problems and research questions of the study.

The data was collected from 445 faculty members of higher education institutions of Nepal. The data was collected through stratified sampling methods. The respondents were taken from the four different departments, Faculty of Arts, Education, Management, and Science of the four universities who work in the centrally located colleges of such universities. So, it was strata of a relevant university and later the sample was selected through a random sampling process. Initially, the data was coded in SPSS version 25. The factor analysis was used to identify the dimensions of academic performance. Analysis of the factor is a multivariate statistical method which was used to identify and explore the concerned items and variables in a group called factors (Rummel, 1967; Shenoy & Madan, 1994). The factor analysis loaded 16 items of academic performance under four dimensions. For identifying the level of academic performance, I categorized the mean score by using the formula of Best’s (1977, as cited in Shabbir et al., 2014) criteria as follows:

$$\frac{Higherscore - Lowerscore}{Number of Levels} = \frac{7-1}{3} = \frac{6}{3} = 2$$

The levels are categorized as high, medium, and low. These levels were calculated mainly based on the faculty members' mean score of 1 – 2.99, 3 – 4.99, and 5 – 7 as low, medium, and high respectively.

LEVEL OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG FACULTY MEMBERS

The factor analysis was used to identify the dimensions of academic performance. The factor analysis explored four dimensions of academic performance such as research and publication, innovation, interactive learning, and capacity building in this study. The level of academic performance was then measured by combining the values of each dimension. The academic performances are presented in the form of research and publication, innovation, interactive learning, and capacity building. The level of dimensions of academic performance was measured by using mean and standard deviation. The findings of the statistical analysis are presented in Table 1. Table 1 shows that overall academic performance including the dimensions of academic performance research and publication, innovation, and interactive learning is high. But in case of capacity building the level of academic performance is medium.

Table 1

Level of Academic Performance

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Level of AP
Research and Publication	5.80	0.76	High
Innovation	5.74	0.95	High
Interactive Learning	5.79	0.86	High
Capacity Building	4.93	1.20	Medium
Academic Performance	5.56	0.72	High

Note. AP= Academic Performance, SD=Standard Deviation

Table 2 explains the frequencies of academic performance among faculty members of higher education institutions in Nepal. The majority of the respondents pose a high level of academic performance in universities. The academic performance is the sum of the mean score of four dimensions (research and publication, innovation, interactive learning, and capacity building) in this study. A study conducted by Paez-Logreira et al. (2016) unveiled that the commitment of organization is changing in the global context which makes differences in the level of dimensions of academic performance. The knowledge creation process takes place in e-learning and web-based environments and this impact academic activities in academia (Syed Mustapha et al., 2017). So, due to the technological environment of the institution, it makes differences in managing and accessing the different academic activities and discourses by the faculty member in the higher educational institution.

Table 2

Description of Academic Performance Level

Dimensions	High		Medium		Low		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Research and Publication	365	82.0	78	17.5	2	0.5	445	100
Innovation	364	81.8	76	17.1	5	1.1	445	100
Interactive Learning	346	77.8	96	21.6	3	0.6	445	100
Capacity Building	193	43.4	217	48.8	35	7.8	445	100
Academic Performance	341	76.6	103	23.2	1	0.2	445	100

Note. N = Number of Respondent, % = Percentage for a particular number

The majority of the respondents had high academic performance in all dimensions except capacity building. The result shows that very few respondents have the low level of academic performance. The result shows that the practices of the faculty member of HEIs are participating regularly to enhance their academic excellence except for the capacity building processes. The growing demands of society can be fulfilled only by conducting projects and carrying out the findings to the society as a product of knowledge as intellectual capital (Wiig, 1993). The intellectual capital can be enhanced through practices of academic activities and discourses. The innovation combined new ideas, thought, and concepts to produce new knowledge in academia (Manhart & Thalmann, 2015). So, it demands learning environment and innovative ideas to succeed in the organizational goal.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The factor analysis identified the four factors of the academic performance of the faculty members as research and publication, innovation, interactive learning, and capacity building. The first factor, research and publication, indicated most activities of research in academia by the faculty members. The second factor showed the innovative processes and activities of the faculty members. The third factor explained the interactive learning process and the fourth factor showed the activities of the faculty member to enhance the capacity building at the individual level. The quality level in education is one of the major concerns of government leaders, politicians, academics, and researchers (Fialho et al., 2010). The organizational success or failure will be decided by the degree of direction through the pinnacle administration. The evolving approach focuses on the social dynamics between organizational members and the complexity of day-to-day tasks; the engineering method focuses on management strategies to promote awareness of the transition that is necessary for capacity enhancement (Van den Hooff & Huysman, 2009). Through know-how sharing, development, codification, and incorporation of explicit and tacit knowledge, leaders play a necessary function in including value to business processes (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Organizational lifestyle, on the other hand, is another essential thing which contributes to knowledge development and leverage.

The involvement in research is kept as a necessary academic performance indicator to be a good faculty member of the university to increases the level of individual academic discourses. Here the level of academic performance of the faculty member of higher education institutions is categorized as low, medium, and high. Research results on education quality show a positive relationship between student's academic performance and teaching quality (Fialho et al., 2010). The overall academic performance including the dimensions of academic performance, research and publication, innovation, and interactive learning is high. But in the case of capacity building, the level of academic performance is medium. The pace of capacity building shows in the level of medium. This may be the cause of low access to technology and low rate of research activities in the context of the higher education institution.

The research and publication dimensions are determined by the different activities conducted by the faculty member in HEIs. The different activities include involvement in research activities, bringing of research in classroom, mentoring through technology, converting theory in practice, interaction with students, and publication of the academic activities in the different journals. Likewise, the innovation dimension is comprised of worthy information inside classroom, case base learning, environment of the classroom, and focuses on academic activities. For interactive learning, it includes preparation of lesson plan, usage of e-portal, and dissemination of the information based on the lesson plan. In case of capacity building, it includes generation of new knowledge, involvement of students to the research activities, and technology in the classroom.

A lot of research suggests that factors influencing teachers to engage in research activities are the demand of this century. Advanced information is improved and disseminated through research (Levin, Cooper & MacMillan, 2011). In this context, the research award and the conduction of research activities are the key concerns to prepare and publish article as academic activities in academic world. Cadez et al. (2017) illustrated the research-based output comparison in academia that determined the faculty member's exceptional teaching. According to Ebersberger and Altman (2013), universities face challenges of high expectations from stakeholders, global competition, and technological advances. Suciu et al. (2013) considered that universities are centers for knowledge creation to promote knowledge retrieval using appropriate tools and technologies. In this context, leadership determines the practices of academic activities and discourses regarding the nature of knowledge sought and created in academia (Al Saifim et al., 2016). The cycle of information development in academic institutions also exists in the e-learning process and web-based environments which affects academic activities (Samoila et al., 2014; Syed Mustapha et al., 2017). Consequently, the efficiency of faculty members increases and a higher level of productivity is achieved (Laloux, 2014). Leadership plays an integral role in designing, improving and maintaining organizational skills with the support of the wonderful groups within a large number of staff (Chawla & Joshi, 2010). The academic institution plays a vital role to strengthen the overall development of the nation through the production of human capital. The role of the institution's head and policy adopted by the academic institution is important to the human capital development process.

In the situation of the pandemic, the pedagogy of teaching and learning is changed and mostly focused on instructional methods through technological tools (Brown et al., 2020). A growing number of reports document that universities striving for government funding, research grants, and high rankings have adopted strategies including recruitment and reward systems that favor academics with top publications or the potential to secure such publications (Cadez et al., 2017). In these days, facts of publications, citations per article, and research are awarded to the institution to rank public universities. Hence, the finding showed by this study emphasizes the rigorous engagement in the academic activities and discourses to maximize the research collaboration by the higher educational institutions.

CONCLUSION

This study identified a considerably high level of academic performance among faculty members of higher education institutions of Nepal. The pace of academic performance of faculty members of HEIs seems high except capacity building. The learning behavior, network building, and assessment capacity of faculty members varies to each other to enhance their capacity building processes, to produce new knowledge, and to become more innovative. The academic performance of faculty members in higher education institutions are concerned with improved practices of academic activities and discourses. The findings indicate that HEIs need to emphasize greater attention to the key processes and activities of academic activities to enhance the knowledge economy of the nation.

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A Comparison of First-Year International Students' Adjustment to College at the Undergraduate and Graduate Level

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ABSTRACT

Predictors of first-year undergraduate and graduate international students' adjustment to college were examined using an online survey in 2019. The research sample consisted of 95 international students attending two universities in the United States. Findings showed a statistically significant difference between first-year graduate and undergraduate international students, as related to college adjustment. Further analysis discovered significant relationships among the predictor variables - resilience, relational skills, acculturative stress - and the criterion variable, which is adjustment to college, explaining 55% of the variance. Implications of findings for educators, college counselors, and college administrators, are provided, as well as directions for future research.

Keywords: acculturative stress, college adjustment, international students, relational skills, resilience

INTRODUCTION

Each year, thousands of international students from countries across the globe travel to the United States to obtain degrees in higher education at colleges and universities in all fifty states (Brunton & Joffrey, 2014). These students contribute to the diversity and internationalization within their campuses, classrooms, and communities, and they enrich the university environment by bringing together faculty and students from different cultural backgrounds (Valdez, 2015). Most students face adjustment challenges when entering college (Jou & Fudaka, 1996). However, first-year international students are confronted with unique challenges when pursuing a college degree outside of their home country (Tan, 2019; Yakunina et al., 2013). Some of these challenges are universal, while others depend on the institution and community in which one undertakes their studies (Sabbadini et al., 2013). These challenges include, but are not limited to, language, anxiety, depression, climate differences, cultural practices, financial hardship, university procedures and politics, and homesickness. Unfortunately, the result is often culture shock that occurs to students when studying abroad (Ji-yeon & Pistole, 2014; Nasirudeen et al., 2014; Pei & Friedel, 2019; Rabia & Karkouti, 2017; Telbis et al., 2013; Yakunina et al., 2013).

Engagement in activities with students from the US helps international students become more involved in college life and in their overall adjustment to the university (Gomez et al., 2013). Gebhard (2012) has also suggested that international students become involved in religious activities that can help them connect with domestic students, therefore avoiding isolation from others. US universities and colleges can be overwhelming

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for first-year international students (Telbis et al., 2013). Many undergraduate students, particularly those who go to college abroad, embark upon significant changes, including leaving the security of home and family, taking on additional responsibilities, and seeking independence. The everyday stresses and challenges of first-year undergraduate and graduate university students are substantially increased for the 1,097,729 international students enrolled in the US who are going through an acculturation process, requiring both time and priority management skills (IIE, 2017; Lowinger et al., 2014). Acculturation issues facing international students may give rise to adjustment problems that can be stressful physically, socially, or psychologically (Mesidor & Sly, 2014; Morrell et al., 2013; Onabule & Boes, 2013).

BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The United States has historically been the most frequent destination for international students due to its quality higher education system, welcoming culture, and relatively open labor market (Banjong, 2015; Eland & Thomas, 2013). The plight of international students enrolled in the US university educational system is well documented in terms of language, adaptation, and cultural barriers (Cao, 2019; Hong & Jianqiang, 2013; Yakunina et al., 2013), yet this population persists in seeking this educational experience because the perceived benefits can outweigh the challenges (Borgia, 2011). Cultural adjustment is one of the most common social challenges first-year international students face while studying abroad. The available literature on this topic emphasizes the importance of acclimation and integration if international students are going to adjust to studying abroad (Cheng & Erben, 2012; Mamiseishvili, 2012).

College Adjustment

Adjustment, derived from the Latin word ad-justare, is the process by which one balances the needs and the obstacles in their environment (Gebhard, 2012). Yi et al. (2003) identified five areas in which first-year international students are likely to experience adjustment issues. These areas included academics, physical health, finances, vocation, and personal/social conflicts. Gebhard (2012) also studied these issues and found that students encountered problems in adjustment in three primary areas: academic, social interaction, and an emotional reaction to their new environment. Language barriers, an unfamiliarity with available resources and how to access those resources, as well as a lack of an established social support system and social network, compound the students' problems (Johnson, 2019; Leong, 2015) and often manifest in depression, loneliness, and isolation (Valdez, 2015). Wang et al. (2015) used the term "cross-cultural loss" to describe the process in which international students struggle to adjust to the loss of things familiar to them (e.g., personal relationships and the educational system of their home countries) while trying to adjust to a new culture and environment (p. 263). Wang et al. (2015) found that cross-cultural loss tended to decrease with the existence of life satisfaction, positive affect, general self-efficacy, and social connection with peers and academic communities, all of which are indicators of increased cultural adjustment or acculturation.

Acculturative Stress

Acculturative stress represents a growing threat to the health of many first-year international students as they seek knowledge in an unfamiliar cultural environment (Li et al., 2014). A study conducted by Russsell et al (2010) involving 900 international students attending colleges in the US showed that 41% of these students experienced substantial levels of stress in their first year. Language is considered one of the most significant issues causing stress and hindering a seamless adjustment to college for international students (Reid & Dixon, 2012; Trice, 2004). Robertson et al (2000) surveyed international college student athletes' experiences with non-educational staff members. Findings indicated that most staff members lacked empathy as related to international students' language deficits, an unfortunate common occurrence that can further create a sense of social isolation and anxiety. In a longitudinal study, Mamiseishvili (2012) found that first-year international students who are less fluent in English have trouble integrating into peer groups and experience lower levels of academic tenacity.

A study by Poyrazli and Kavanaugh (2006) affirmed that language issues place international students at a higher risk for academic difficulties when compared to domestic students. According to Gomez et al. (2014), low levels of acculturation have been found to be associated with psychological symptoms of depression and suicide among international students. This research supports the notion that language deficits, a lack of group interaction, and academic difficulties are perhaps the main concerns of international students. Language issues also may have an adverse effect on the relational skills of international students, thus contributing to adjustment problems.

Resilience

Resilience is an important variable associated with adaptation to the university environment (Mamiseishvili, 2012; Mesidor & Sly, 2016; Wang, 2009). Research shows that resilience can reduce the risk of psychological distress, assist with the management of academic demands, and can improve academic outcomes, while also facilitating effective coping strategies when faced with academic challenges (Constantine et al., 2004). The lack of resilience can affect a student's mental health, increase psychological distress, and result in greater adjustment problems (Brandner, 2019; Pittman & Richmond, 2008). Research on resilience has primarily focused on individuals who are affected by short and long-term adversities such as registering for classes, completing assignments, and facing academic stressors and environmental pressures (Lee & Robbins, 2000; Pei et al., 2019; Zhang, 2016). Research findings suggest that resilience in the university environment is positively associated with better mental health, as well as a successful transition and adjustment to university life, indicating that international students need to possess effective resilience strategies if they are to succeed in their new academic environment (Drotos, 2019; Pei et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2012).

Relational Skills

In addition to being resilient, international students must develop effective relational skills in order to interact with their peers. Positive interactions with peers perhaps can increase the student's level of adjustment and overall satisfaction with college life. Unfortunately, there exists additional complications as scholars have noted that international students learn differently than their domestic counterparts (Kezar & Moriarty, 2000; Kuh et al., 2008; Kuh & Hu, 2001). Based on a qualitative study with 24 international students from over 15 countries, Lee and Rice (2007) asserted that international students who studied in the US often felt uncomfortable in relating to others when participating in group activities. Interactions with their classmates and the use of relational skills might be difficult for many international students because of their constant worries about their proficiency in English. Researchers have examined the impact of student-faculty interactions on international student development and learning outcomes. McFadden (2014) found that student-faculty interactions are positively associated with a wide range of student outcomes, such as students' self-assessed leadership abilities and social self-confidence (Lee & Rice, 2007; Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004). It is further believed that relational skills can play a role in the degree to which international students interact with faculty.

International students, both graduate and undergraduate, experience a great amount of stress and anxiety when they enroll in a university outside of their country of origin (Li et al., 2014; Russel, 2010). Acculturative stress - as well as adapting to a new culture, language, and customs - plays a significant role in the students' levels of anxiety. Adjustments may require a certain level of resilience, which becomes an important factor in the international students' ability to register for classes, complete assignments, face academic stressors, and adjust to a new environment (Brandner, 2019; Lee & Robbins, 2000; Zhang, 2016). According to Russel and Petrie (1992), the inclusion of personal factors for international students, such as resilience and relational skills to academic challenges, were expansions of the original research conducted by Tinto (1975) and Bean (1980; 1982). Russel and Petrie (1992) demonstrated that personal factors, in addition to those of previous studies, play an essential role in students' decisions to withdraw from college or persist and graduate. Baker and Siryk (1989) identified a wide range of college adjustment factors by incorporating theories of Bean (1980; 1982), Russel and Petrie (1992), and Tinto (1975; 1986) in order to develop a comprehensive measure of student adjustment. They assumed that starting university life, which is a significant challenge for most students, requires adjustment to a variety of demands that are social in nature. Therefore, being able to develop relational skills and build relationships are salient factors related to international students' success in higher education. Acculturative stress is associated with depressive and anxiety symptoms which might hinder college adjustment for international students. However, with a healthy sense of resilience, international students can tackle obstacles and try new experiences, and relational skills can help them learn a range of critical social emotional skills, such as cooperation and problem-solving strategies which can help them adjust positively in the US. In consideration of the above discourse, it seems appropriate to examine resilience, acculturative stress, and relational skills (independent variables) as they predict college adjustment (dependent variable) of first-year undergraduate and graduate international students in the United States.

METHOD

A survey was conducted among first-year undergraduate and graduate international students on resilience, acculturative stress, and relational skills as they predict these students' college adjustments, and the results were included in a regression analysis. Multiple regression procedures were considered appropriate for this investigation due to their history of being used in nonexperimental research and their flexibility (Hoyt et al., 2006). A standard multiple regression was used to identify contributing factors to international students' adjustment to college. Standard multiple regression allows the researchers to examine the variables in the regression equation in order to see relationships between predictor (resilience, acculturative stress and relational skills) and criterion (college adjustment) variables, rather than searching for a relationship between only one predictor variable and a criterion variable. Specifically, quantitative data were collected and analyzed to address the three research questions below and to gain insight into variables predicting international students' college adjustment:

1. Are there differences between first-year undergraduate and graduate international college students' levels of resilience, relational skills, and acculturative stress on college adjustment?
2. Do resilience, relational skills, and acculturative stress predict a significant percentage of the variance in college adjustment among first-year undergraduate and graduate international students?

3. Is there a difference in model fit between first-year undergraduate and graduate international students for the predictive model regressing resilience, relational skills, and acculturative stress on college adjustment?

After Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, data were collected in March of 2019. The aim was to recruit first-year undergraduate and graduate international students from different colleges and departments. An email, which included a brief explanation and purpose of the study, was sent to professors and the International Student Offices within two universities where international students were recruited. We scheduled class visitations with professors who willingly gave up 30 minutes of their class time in order to help recruit volunteer research participants.

The age criterion to participate was 18 years old or older. Participation was voluntary, and responses were anonymous. A survey link including an information letter, demographic form, and instruments measuring the study constructs (Brief Resilience Scale [Smith et al., 2008], The Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students [Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; 1998], Relational Skills Inventory [Smith, 2019], and the Inventory of New College Student Adjustment [Watson & Lenz, 2018]) were given to volunteer participants. Before taking the survey, participants were asked to read the information letter.

International student participants were asked to complete the following five sections of the survey:

Demographic Information

Demographic information included participant’s age, gender, country of origin, academic major, degree level (e.g., bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral), years of residency in the U.S., and name of the university.

The Brief Resilience Scale

The Brief Resilience Scale assesses resilience as the ability to recover or bounce back from stressful or difficult situations (Smith et al., 2008). The Brief Resilience Scale is a 6-item self-report scale in which respondents rate the degree to which they agree with an item, using a 5-point Likert scale. Responses range from 1= “Strongly Disagree” to 5= “Strongly Agree.” A total scale score for resilience is calculated by dividing the total score by 6, the number of items on the scale. Scores can range from 6 to 30, with higher scores indicating higher resilience. Smith et al (2008) reported good internal consistency for the Brief Resilience Scale. Based on scores across two college student samples, the Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient ranged from 0.80 to 0.91 (Smith et al., 2008).

The Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students

The Acculturative Stress Scale for International Students was developed to measure cultural stress reported by international students living and studying in the US (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994; 1998). ASSIS assessed students' perceptions of stresses experienced by circling a number that best described their response to each of the 36 items on a 5-point Likert-type scale, anchored by 1= “Strongly Disagree” and 5: “Strongly Agree.” Total scores could range from 36 to 180, with higher scores indicating higher levels of acculturation stress. Sandhu and Asrabadi (1994) reported that Cronbach alpha internal consistency for the scale was .95 among international students, like Yeh and Inose's value (2003) of .94.

The Relational Skills Inventory

The Relational Skills Inventory has 32 items and was developed to measure attributes of individuals as they engage in interpersonal relationships (Smith, 2019). Fifty-four items were initially constructed. A content analysis was conducted using suggested procedures (Lawshe, 1975), and this narrowed the number of usable items to 32. The RSI includes four factors: general relational attributes (disposition toward self and others), core communication skills (listening, understanding, and empathy), trust (trust in self and others), and creating a safe environment (ability to emit safety and openness), each of which are grounded in research and theory. The Relational Skills Inventory is based on Relational Leadership Theory (RLT) by Uhi-Bien (2006), Humanistic Theory by Rogers (1959), Trust Theory by Castelfranchi and Falcone (2010), and Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura (2001). The Relational Skills Inventory uses a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much).

The Inventory of New College Student Adjustment

The Inventory of New College Student Adjustment was developed to assist college employees in assessing adjustment problems experienced by first-year college students (Watson & Lenz, 2018). The newly developed questionnaire consists of two sub-scales, including 14 items rated on a 4-point Likert scale to assess participant responses from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The (INCA) sub-scales measure adjustment strain based on participants' responses to items within the following sub-scales: supportive network and belief in self. A sample of 696 young adult Ghanaian college students reported alpha reliability coefficients of .74 for both the Belief in Self subscale and the Supportive Network subscale.

Sample

Participants of this study were first-year international students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate level courses at two south Texas universities. A total of 103 students volunteered for this study from a pool of 148 potential subjects, 51 from one campus and 97 from a second nearby campus. Of the completed surveys, 40 participants were undergraduate international students and 55 were graduate international students. Eight of the surveys were found to be incomplete, which makes the total of the successfully completed surveys 95. A priori power analysis yielded a total sample size of 86, as recommended to find statistical significance with a moderate effect size ($f^2 = .15$). Based on this recommendation, the sample size of 95 was deemed appropriate for finding differences between groups, should they exist.

The mean age of undergraduate international student participants was 21.60 years (SD = 3.7; range: 18-35 years). A larger number of men (n = 24; 60 percent) participated, as compared to women (n = 16, 40 percent). Undergraduate level participants in this study came from a variety of countries (see Appendix A). For undergraduate student participants college majors, see Appendix C. Twenty-six undergraduate participants (65 percent) reported that they arrived in August 2018, and 14 participants (35 percent) reported they arrived in January 2019.

The mean age of the graduate international student participants was 29.19 years (SD = 3.9; range: 22-40 years). More men (n = 37, 67.3 percent) than women (n = 18, 32.7 percent) participated in this study. Participants reported their academic levels as master's (n = 48, 87.3 percent), and doctoral (n = 7, 12.7 percent). Graduate level participants studying in the US came from a variety of countries (see Appendix B). For graduate student participants college majors, see Appendix D. With respect to when graduate participants arrived in the US, 44 (80 percent) reported that they arrived in August 2018, and 11 (20 percent) reported arriving in January 2019.

Analysis

For this study, data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0 software. Before data analysis, data were screened for entry errors and missing values. Missing values were replaced with the series mean (missing values of 428 which implies 4.7% of the cases). Descriptive statistics, multiple regression models, Fisher's z transformation, and MANOVA were conducted to address the research questions. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and organize the data, such as means, standard deviations, percentages, and range scores. Furthermore, model assumptions for each analysis were reported. A total of 103 participants initially volunteered for this study. The data utilized in the study were derived from a single administration of the RSM (n= 103), the RMS (n= 102), the ASSIS (n=101), and the INCA (n=102). Eight cases were removed from the graduate and undergraduate international student groups due to incomplete survey responses, reducing the initial sample from n=103 to n=95.

RESULTS

Research Question 1

We conducted a one-way MANOVA to determine if differences existed in levels of variables for the first-year undergraduate and graduate international students. An alpha level of .05 was utilized as the criterion for determining statistical significance. Descriptive statistics for the independent variables across the first-year undergraduate and graduate international students' college adjustment are presented in Table 1. It was found there was no significant difference between undergraduate and graduate international students in level of resilience, relational skills, and acculturative stress on college adjustment. $F(11, 162) = 1.51$, $p > .05$; Wilk's $\lambda = 0.12$, partial $\eta^2 = .51$. Using Wilks's Lambda, there was a significant effect of relational skills and acculturative stress, $\Lambda = 93$, $F(4, 54) = 7.53$, $p = .001$ on student groups. A separate univariate ANOVAs on students' groups revealed a non-significant effect of resilience, $F(4, 89) = 7.53$, $p = .233$ (See Table 2).

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviation for Student Groups and Four Variables

	Undergraduate		Graduate		
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	α
Relational Skills	97.50	15.84	119.35	25.51	.97
Resilience	3.37	1.11	3.61	1 .41	.68
Acculturative Stress	121.02	29.11	113.75	33.39	.98
College Adjustment	37.40	5.97	41.32	4.83	.93

Table 2

Multivariate and Univariate of Variance for Standard Groups Measures

	Multivariate		Univariate			
Source	df	F^a	Relational Skills	Resilience	Acculturative Stress	College Adjustment
Student Group (SG)	4, 54	7.53*	26.64*	7.53	18.65*	4.18

*p < .05

Research Question 2

We performed a standard multiple regression analysis to evaluate the relationship between resilience, relational skills, and acculturative stress on college adjustment (see Table 3). Resilience, relational skills, and acculturative stress were added to the model as predictor variables, with college adjustment as the criterion. This is because the literature did not indicate a strong relationship between resilience, relational skills, and acculturative stress on college adjustment. The researchers of this study postulated that unique factors - such as relational skills, resilience, and acculturative stress - will provide a better understanding of the differences between undergraduate and graduate international students when adjusting to their new learning environment. These predictor variables (resilience, acculturative stress, and relational skills) statistically predicted college adjustment, $F(3, 90) = 36.72$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .550$. Relational skills and acculturative stress added statistically significantly to the prediction, $p < .05$, and resilience did not add statistically significantly to the prediction, $p > .05$. In summary, relational skills and acculturative stress were positively correlated with undergraduate and graduate international students' college adjustment, while resiliency was not positively correlated (see Table 3).

Table 3

Summary of Regression Model for Resilience, Relational Skills, and Acculturation Stress as Predictors of College Students

Variable	B	SEB	B	T	sr^2	F	R^2
						36.7*	.55
Relational Skills	.507	.068	.677	7.39*	.615		
Resilience	.133	.320	.041	417	.044		
Acculturative Stress	-.084	.023	-.287	3.72*	.365		

Note. N = 95.

*p <.05.

Research Question 3

To address research question 3, we ran a series of simultaneous multiple regression analyses to examine the relationships between resilience, relational skills, and acculturative stress on college adjustment and to compare the models derived from undergraduate and graduate international students. The amount of variance accounted for by the predictor variables was 49% for undergraduate students and 55% for graduate students. Comparing the model fit for the undergraduate and graduate international student groups revealed no significant difference between their respective R^2 values, Fisher $Z = -0.42$, $p > .0.5$. A comparison of the structure of the models from the two groups was also conducted by applying the model derived from international graduate students to the data from undergraduate international students and comparing the resulting crossed R^2 with the direct R^2 obtained initially from these groups. The direct $R^2 = .46$ and crossed $R^2 = .50$ were not significantly different. Fisher $Z = -1.11$, $p > .05$, indicated that the apparent differential structure of the regression weights from the two groups described above do not warrant further interpretation and investigation.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study examined the extent to which relational skills, resilience, and acculturative stress predict first-year undergraduate and graduate international students' adjustment to college. The findings suggest that relational skills and acculturative stress relate to how well international students adjust to college while resilience does not. Additionally, there was no difference (statistically) in resilience among the group of students, undergraduate and graduate; suggesting both groups were affected similarly. This supports previous research that suggests relational skills are an essential factor contributing to international students' adjustment to college (Duru & Poyrazli, 2007). In a related study, Hendrickson et al. (2011) found that nearly 40 percent of undergraduate international students reported having no close American friends as a result of internal factors, such as limited language proficiency or shyness. However, beyond language proficiency, undergraduate international students may not always be interested in initiating contact with domestic students, faculty, or staff, which may result in lower relational skills among this group (Tan, 2019). Furthermore, Borland and Pearce (2002) reported that undergraduate international students' language knowledge without relational skills is not enough to adjust to college. Compared to graduate students, undergraduate students are more likely to be younger and have fewer professional opportunities to build relational skills. Additional factors that may lead to higher levels of adjustment to college by graduate students include a greater number of experiences adjusting to academic demands, building adult-life skills (such as cooking for oneself), and managing time between school-life and home-life responsibilities. Additional considerations are that graduate students perhaps have more time to gain familiarity with their professors and may benefit from being enrolled in smaller classes. Time pressure and homesickness have been found to be stressful experiences, particularly among undergraduate international students (Erichsen & Bolliger, 2011). Furthermore, alienation, concern about future academic prospects, work demands, a lack of familiarity with educational and cultural norms, and anxiety are most often considered major stressors attributed to undergraduate international students (Poyrazli, et al., 2004).

A pattern found in the current study of the college adjustment of undergraduate international students is their low mean scores for relational skills, resilience, and college adjustment, and a high mean score for acculturative stress, particularly when compared to the graduate student group (see Table 1). Given this information, the barriers related to communication, language, age, life experience, and culture shock may contribute to low relational skills, low resilience, and a higher level of acculturative stress; these factors might eventually lead to a lower level of college adjustment for these students. A standard multiple regression analysis used in this study showed that relational skills and acculturative stress strongly predict first-year undergraduate and graduate international students' adjustment to college. This finding also suggests there is a difference in how undergraduate and graduate international students adjust to college based on relational skills and acculturative stress. Komiya and Eells (2001) state that international students face challenges in developing satisfying social relationships and face numerous stressors and challenges to accomplishing their academic goals. Therefore, university administrators are strongly encouraged to enhance the integration of international students enrolled in US universities. For example, it might be wise to introduce international students into settings where they can connect and interact with domestic students, international alumni, and university staff, perhaps at the beginning of every semester.

Results from the use of a regression analysis showed that resilience did not predict how undergraduate and graduate international students adjust to college. This finding suggests that undergraduate and graduate international students may have enrolled in the university after meeting several challenges and were confident about thriving while attending a US university. International students bring with them many assets characterized by feelings of excitement that can be helpful when adjusting to a new learning environment (Ramsay, et al., 2007). Upon enrolling in a US university, these students might feel good about themselves, with visions of starting a new adventure, support from friends and family, and the perception they have of themselves and their potential for success. They may feel a sense of accomplishment because they are learning in a foreign land and their dreams are about to come true (Cao 2019; Holmes & Vaughn, 2015). For students not experiencing this excitement, perhaps it is essential for their university to incorporate activities and training programs that might increase their level of self-confidence.

Consistent with previous findings (Constantine, et al., 2004; Gomez, et al., 2014; Jou & Fudaka, 1996), the results of this study indicate that relational skills and acculturative stress were positively associated with undergraduate and graduate international students' adjustment to college. Studies have shown that international students learn relational skills by interacting with faculty, staff, and family members, as well as socializing with their peers and the community (Kuh & Hu, 2001; Lee & Robbins, 2000). Healthy relational skills among first-year international students can reduce stress, resolve conflict, improve communication, increase understanding, and promote joy (Jou & Fukada, 1996; Misra & Castillo, 2004). Using a statewide college-adjustment dataset, the above cited study found that acculturative stress is a significant and negative factor of adjustment among international students. These findings suggest that colleges and universities that serve international students should provide a wide range of social support networks, as well as create new directions for counseling students who are dealing with acculturative stress. International students can benefit from athletics, student clubs, counseling, volunteering, and various extra-curricular activities. By participating in these activities, international students might increase the likelihood of developing relationships, which could minimize acculturative stress and maximize a belief in self.

An important finding of this study is the three predictor variables reporting no significant differences between the first-year undergraduate and graduate international students. It appears from the findings these variables play a parallel role in the adjustment process for these students. On the contrary, while there is no difference in the model fit for the two groups, our results from the regression analysis show that relational skills and acculturative stress variables have significant correlations among these students (see Table 3). These findings point out the need for further investigation on factors such as grit, achievement motivation, self-efficacy, hope, and self-esteem that might play a role in predicting the adjustment of both undergraduate and graduate international students in US colleges and universities.

Although adjusting to US college and university culture can be a very stressful experience for both undergraduate and graduate international students, some students are able to traverse through this process quickly and with minimal stress while others might find it challenging to adjust; these findings have led researchers to identify relational skills as an essential factor for the adjustment of these students (Andrade, 2006; Antonio, 2001). Constantine et al. (1996), Duru and Poyrazli (2007), and Terui (2011) state that peer and faculty members' interactions with international students have a positive influence on their adjustment. It is concluded that modifications should be made in and outside of the classroom in order to respond to the needs of international students. Therefore, practices such as group projects, workshops, conferences, presentations, classroom discussions, and other campus activities should be introduced to help connect international students with domestic students and the community. Campus programs may be beneficial to international students, primarily if led by an international professor or staff members with a similar background as the students who are attempting to adjust to their new environment. These programs may help international students feel more comfortable in asking questions. Additionally, international students may have opportunities to further acclimate to the US culture by attending social gatherings (e.g., churches, mosques, parties, and carnivals), as well as through the media (e.g., watching television, communicating through Facebook, listening to the radio, and reading newspapers). Based on the findings of this study, helping international students build relational skills, reduce stress, and increase resiliency might improve students' self-belief and adjustment to college.

Limitations

This study was limited by the relatively small sample size of students who had been in the United States for less than one year. The sample from only two universities in the Southwest region of the US is also a limitation. Therefore, results are not to be generalizable to international students attending universities across the United States. In addition, while the dataset used in this study provided vital information related to the adjustment of international students, this study was limited to the investigation of the three independent variables and one criterion variable, adjustment to college. Additional variables not included in this study (e.g., self-efficacy, grit, and achievement motivation) could play a prominent role in adjusting to college. The Inventory for New College Student Adjustment (INCA) (Watson & Lenz, 2018) was designed for first-year, first semester students at the undergraduate level. In this study, the INCA was used to investigate the adjustment of first-year undergraduate students, as well as graduate international students. Also, while measures included in this study were supported by their psychometric properties, the most recent instrument, Relational Skills Inventory, was in the process of analysis, (EFA and CFA). Finally, response bias, due to the use of self-report questionnaires, increases errors of validity and reliability.

CONCLUSION

By employing quantitative research methods, this study compared first-year undergraduate and graduate international students on factors related to adjustment to college life. The study included students from a wide range of countries. The findings indicated that international undergraduate and graduate students differ in terms of relational skills and acculturative stress. It might be surmised that, during their first year at US colleges, international students are generally private in their social lives - keeping their own company or interacting only with other international students. The adjustment to the US culture is believed to take time and effort, and it often requires university support programs. A better understanding of how international students adjust to college through the assessment of resilience, relational skills, and acculturative stress might help in addressing one's readiness for college. Accommodations should be provided in universities in order to meet the needs of international students. College counselors can implement activities to enhance relational skills and manage stress for newly enrolled international students, particularly those at the undergraduate level. Finally, creative programs seem to be needed that connect international students with domestic students and community members, thus helping students adapt and succeed in new cultural surroundings.

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APPENDIX A

Undergraduate International Student Participants' Nationality

Nationality	Percentage
Australia	2.5 percent
Bangladesh	10 percent
Canada	5 percent
China	10 percent
Ecuador	7.5 percent
Ghana	2.5 percent
India	15 percent
Jordan	10 percent
Nigeria	12.5 percent
South Korea	5 percent
Sri Lanka	2.5 percent
Taiwan	5 percent
Venezuela	2.5 percent
Vietnam	12.5 percent

APPENDIX B

Graduate International Student Participants' Nationality

Nationality	Percentage
Bangladesh	5.5 percent
Canada	5.5 percent
China	20 percent
Ecuador	1.8 percent
Ghana	1.8 percent
India	34.5 percent
Jordan	3.7 percent
Nepal	1.8 percent
Nigeria	18.2 percent
Vietnam	3.7 percent

APPENDIX C

Undergraduate International Student Participants' College Majors

College Major	Number	Percentage
Business and Management	8	20 percent
Education	16	2.5 percent
Liberal Arts	2	5 percent
Nursing	5	12.5 percent
Science and Engineering	24	60 percent

APPENDIX D

Graduate International Student Participants' College Majors

College Major	Number	Percentage
Business and Management	11	20 percent
Education	2	3.6 percent
Liberal Arts	4	7.3 percent
Nursing	3	5.5 percent
Science and Engineering	35	63.6 percent

Tensions, Transformations and Travel: Comparative Narratives of 'Becoming' a Cosmopolitan Educator through an Overseas Study Tour in Singapore

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the dynamic and complex dimensions of 'becoming' a cosmopolitan teacher educator through an overseas study tour. It employs autobiography as a research method to interpret the experiences of an overseas study tour, and how it has engaged the teacher educators in self-reflexivity of their negotiation of multiple identities: academic, personal and cultural. Our self-narratives reveal how becoming cosmopolitan educators is not only intimately linked to the process of re-construction of oneself as a reflexive person. The process can also be conflicting and unsettling because of how we were positioned by our pre-service teachers. It concludes by highlighting the conditions in which our multiple identities come into existence and how they shape our ways of becoming, and the need for teacher educators to engage in a continual process of professional development as cosmopolitan teacher educators.

Keywords: Asian-Australian academic, autobiography, cosmopolitan learning, reflexivity, study tours, transnational

INTRODUCTION

As the world becomes more globalized, an increasing number of universities are providing opportunities for students to undertake overseas study tours. The opportunity to travel and deepen intercultural understanding through study tours is particularly attractive to university students eager to embark on fresh challenges both in their professional and personal lives (Henderson, 2018).In view of the changing landscape of mobility and its nexus with higher education (Marginson, 2014), a number of empirical studies in the United Kingdom (e.g., Miller et al., 2015), United States (e.g., Perry, et al., 2016), and Australia (Bretag et al., 2014) have explored the experiences, interactions, needs and challenges that tertiary education students encounter in host countries through overseas study tours.

Hitherto within the field of teacher education, overseas study tours for pre-service teachers (PSTs) have also been regarded as producing new conditions and possibilities for identity re-construction (Henderson, 2018; Talbot & Thomas, 2019). For example, Henderson's (2018) case-study of how ten Australian PSTs make sense of their study tour experience in Malaysia to become Asia literate beginning teachers, shapes up the background context of our paper. Drawing on Nussbaum's view (1996) of an ethical education program that fosters cosmopolitan citizens, Henderson (2018) further highlighted the authentic interactions between the PSTs with the locals as significant, and argues that study tours can be seen as a pedagogical

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strategy to help develop future teachers to be culturally responsive. Similarly, Talbot and Thomas (2019) consider the notion of 'epistemology of experience' between the academic mentors who followed their PSTs and the assessment of the PSTs against the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (AITSL, 2017). In their institutional ethnographic study of fifteen Australian PSTs (during a one-month overseas teaching placement in Indonesia), they raised critical questions about the 'important positioning of place and experience' and also the 'affordances made available by experience in other "places" in helping the PSTs understand the relationships between theory and practice (p. 2).

In spite of the heterogeneity of the educational study tour contexts and conceptual tools, the majority of these qualitative studies have broadly classified overseas study tour as potentially problematic due to differences in expectations, intellectual and cultural traditions and educational provisions across cultures. As a consequence of such challenges, various support mechanisms have been put in place by universities, such as establishing programs to prepare students for overseas study tours and to foster the value of cosmopolitanism (Deardorff, 2004), as well as creating a culture that is responsive to the social and interpersonal dimensions of global inter-connectivity within a transnational space (Doerr, 2012). Despite this research, and the response from the academy, the experiences and identity formation of the teachers leading the study tours remains unknown. This paper responds to this gap by drawing on our self-narratives (as autobiographies and personal responses) in re-construing our experience of negotiating multiple identities as teacher educators in an overseas study tour. We come from Singapore-Chinese and Australian backgrounds and share common patterns in navigating cultural, academic and personal demands anchored in teacher education. However, our stories are unique.

The paper begins by addressing the notion of cosmopolitan identity formation within the context of transnational mobility. Next, we each present our autobiographical narratives as cosmopolitan teacher educators. The first narrative addresses the process of becoming a cosmopolitan "Asian-Australian" teacher educator, straddling between Singapore (birth country) and Australia (host country), around the negotiation of plural identities: as a transnational migrant and intercultural teacher educator. The second narrative reflects on the negotiation process of becoming a cosmopolitan "Australian-Asian" teacher educator, shifting from Caucasian-Australian English language teacher educator, to the unstable and contested identity of 'knower' of Singapore, and cosmopolitan educator more generally. We then draw on three 'formative events' from the study tour to individually examine and critically reflect on how that event shaped our identities as cosmopolitan educators. In light of this critical analysis of our reflective autobiographical accounts (both as autobiographies and as first-person recounts of the same formative event), we further examine the concept of cosmopolitan learning and its implications for overseas study tours, with a particular focus on Singapore as a site for future educational research.

COSMOPOLITAN LEARNING AND IDENTITY-FORMATION IN AN AGE OF TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY

One way of conceptualizing and analyzing the study tour experience is through the concept of 'cosmopolitan learning' (Rizvi, 2009; Soong, 2020). We recognize that the notion of 'cosmopolitan' is highly contested. On the one hand, it invokes an image of a state of being elite and non-ordinary. On the other hand, the term is used synonymously as a form of identity; one that is impacted by the entangled experiences of intercultural contact and transnationality. It is the latter definition that this paper will employ in understanding how the formation of a 'cosmopolitan' identity for teacher educators is impacted by a study tour experience. The aspiration to become cosmopolitan is shaped and re-shaped by a range of factors, including the institutional responses to the conditions of globalization in facilitating students to develop an intercultural understanding and knowledge of multiple cultural values, life histories and professional goals. During overseas study tours, these factors can often contradict or harmonize, causing fragmented identities (Santoro, 2014).

While varied definitions and approaches have been developed within the research that links overseas student mobility to cosmopolitanism (e.g., Sidhu & Dall'Alba, 2012; Yang et al., 2018), we take a position of cosmopolitanism that is inseparable from a transformative potential which involves community participation and a mode of learning that Rizvi (2009) has identified. Underlying this mode of learning is how individuals are conceived to be subjects with agency or individuals with capacities to make choices for resisting particular social conditions, or re-appropriating one's positioning, in order to organize their sense of place and value in the fluid social world (Isin, 2009). In this paper, we extend on Rizvi's notion of cosmopolitan learning to consider how an overseas study tour experience can assist teacher educators develop cosmopolitan teacher educator identities.

According to Rizvi (2009), cosmopolitan learning involves cultivating a set of epistemic virtues that promote a different perspective of understanding or knowing. Such cosmopolitan learning, which is paradoxically different from neo-liberal policies of cultivating talents to suit its global knowledge economy, should be the premise for developing dispositions which are worthy for preparing our future educators to be culturally responsive and globally minded. However, how study tours organizers can develop such virtues can be ambivalent. Furthermore, in the context of study tours, such human mobility echoes the conditions that Rizvi (2009) outlines as necessary for cosmopolitan possibilities, and they are mainly in two parts: empirical and normative. First, within the empirical practice, it relates to learning about how global processes are creating conditions that are changing our identities and affecting our communities. Second, as for normative practice, it involves asking and understanding how the different effects and forms of global shifts (which can be highly differentiated) are contributing to the production and reproduction of those conditions, and consequently leading to social inequalities. The ultimate goal for such learning is to 'develop an alternative imaginary of global connectivity … which views all of the world's diverse people and communities as part of the same moral universe' (Rizvi, 2009, p. 266). This goal does not mean the rejection of local knowledge or issues. Instead, produced by global flows and networks, the term 'cosmopolitan learning' identifies the dynamic context of social and cultural exchanges that influence how individuals develop an 'openness' to generate new forms of critical knowledge (Appiah, 2006). A form of knowledge that places the nature of transnational mobility experience is at its core. By reconfiguring cosmopolitan learning through the transnational lens, it helps to first make sense of the notion of *trans* that precedes the term *nation*. This *trans* concept pays close attention to the complexities on migrants' mutual adaptations to both home and host societies. Marked by a quality of openness and acceptance of differences in adapting to a globalizing world, we argue that it is this kind of transnational mobility that ties with 'cosmopolitan learning'. Our paper draws on this by analyzing the dynamic lived realities that shape and reshape identity formation of ourselves (the authors) as cosmopolitan teacher educators.

Based on Egan-Robertson (1998), identity is viewed as a developmental process, posited as unfixed, fluid, co-constructed and reconstructed over time. Identity is also impacted by various social and cultural factors (such as race, gender, and social status) which are context specific (Alsup, 2006). In such a condition, this leads us to the question of how features of teacher identity, in particular teacher educator identity, are variously formed over time and space (Boei et al., 2015; Beijaard et al., 2004). In closely reflecting on and examining our personal experiences and identity change, we argue that our distinct past experiences of transnationality are powerful because they are representational of our 'knowing' in shaping our identities of becoming cosmopolitan educators. By writing our autobiographies, we consider identity growth as grounded in history and memory (Walker, 2001) with prior personal understandings and concerns that are being enacted in multiple, often conflicting, representations of otherness. In this sense, how we interpret the present and the future is influenced by us questioning certain core values resulting from differentiated subjectivity, agency and power.

Before proceeding to our autobiographies, it is important to briefly outline the study tour itself. The Singapore study tour comprised twelve high-achieving third year pre-service teachers from one Australian university, and two academic study tour leaders (authors of this paper). Funded by Australian New Colombo Plan, the tour was motivated by the Australian Curriculum's Cross-Curriculum Priority – Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia (Australian Curriculum, 2016), and centered around three key objectives: 1. to experience Word Englishes (specifically Singapore English) and Singaporean literature; 2. to experience world-leading pre-service teacher (PST) training; and, 3. to experience Singapore culture.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AS A RESEARCH METHOD IN TEACHER EDUCATION

The use of autobiography as a research method has become more recognized in social science research over the past two decades (Soong et al., 2015; Coffey, 2004; Tenni et al., 2003). Coffey describes autobiography as 'the telling and documenting of one's own life' (p.1) and its focus is to capture invisible or hidden voices (Coffey, 2004). Such approach enables us to provide an account of our experiences and present our self-narratives as a method of data collection and analysis. The focus of autobiography, in this paper, is to provide an account of key episodes of our experiences that help us make sense of the complexities of an overseas study tour as teacher educators. This means that the research approach we are undertaking is reflexive and involving self-observation within a social and cultural world on which we straddle.

We believe our autobiographies impact on how we re-create our identity through intercultural overseas study tours and how we engage in our own cosmopolitan identity trajectories. In order to unpack how we re-construe the factors shaping our own identity formation as cosmopolitan educators, we have drawn on the concept of professional self-narratives from Sachs (2001). Sachs (2001) argues 'teachers themselves construct these self-narratives, and they relate to their social, political and professional agendas… These self-narratives provide a glue for a collective professional identity' (pp. 157-158). In reflecting on our own experiences of transnationality, we have engaged in self-reflexivity and moved beyond our own comfort zones to write about 'rich, full accounts' of our own past and present which may include self-doubts, contradictions and complexities (Tenni et al., 2003, p. 2).In doing so, we too connect our reflective autobiographical narratives with the 'contextual' and 'personal', the 'internal' and 'external', and the 'individual' and 'collective' factors that Sachs (2001) refers to.

In terms of data generation and collection, we draw on our engagements with the PSTs, and each other, from 'dawn to dusk'. We would informally debrief with each other at the end of each day (typically verbally, but also often recorded through digital communication). We also organized a formal focus group debrief with our PSTs on the last day in Singapore, which was recorded and transcribed. Upon our return to Australia, we met twice in each other's office to reflect on the study tour. After our second meeting we decided to frame the experiences of the study tour, our individual histories, and our respective roles as teacher educators, as a research problem. Following Talbot and Thomas (2019), we identified three key 'places' of experience as field of transformational formative events: the classroom, the home, and a public place (public transport). Rather than simply reflecting on those formative events, we also want to consider the multiple layers of our self-narratives as parts of the internal relations of the field. This is where we found the lens of 'cosmopolitan learning' (Rizvi, 2009) significant in recognizing the space we are working in and with. In so doing, we have weaved how our perceived cosmopolitan identity reformation is framed within various kinds of connections within the global teacher education landscape.

Soong's Self-Narrative

Before I migrated to Australia with my husband and young daughter, I have been living in Singapore for almost three decades and taught in Singapore schools for a decade. My migratory experiences of becoming an academic began when I was awarded an Australian Postgraduate Award to complete a doctorate degree. In my research, I investigated the transitioning experiences of a cohort of international pre-service teachers undertaking postgraduate teacher education degrees with an intention to remain in Australia upon graduation. During the period of time, as a PhD student, I have learned to understand my worldview from a hybrid position. I understand that my journey of becoming an Asian-Australian academic will inherently be marked by a process of mediating different identities that are associated with my multiple experiences (Sears, 2011, p.71) including being a daughter, migrant mother, an Australian migrant-student, and an intercultural scholar. Thus, my engagement in an overseas study tour back to my home country, Singapore, entails a dynamic interplay of challenges, self-reconstruction, self-formation and identity re-definition (Soong et al. 2015, 2016).

The sub-identities as a daughter, migrant, and teacher educator have become core aspects of my academic, intercultural and personal development of becoming a cosmopolitan educator. I have been grappling with issues pertaining to my personal identity, professional identity, relationships with 'the other' (as compared with kinship), and the meaning of transformative learning as a process rather than an endpoint to a learning journey. For me, going back to be a 'visitor' of my country of birth feels very strange. I find myself constantly trying to negotiate who I have become whenever I return to be with my family in Singapore.

Because of the constant socio-political and cultural fluxes in Singapore, I feel like a stranger in my hometown each time I go back to visit my family. Whilst I am pleased that my parents and siblings are living in a secure and thriving Singapore, in a deep sense, I find myself fluctuating within the transnational lifeworld of mobility between Australia and Singapore. As a first-generation Australian migrant, my mind and body are presently in Australia; but my heart is still connected to Singapore because of my emotional connections with family. I am very grateful to both my home and adopted countries for giving me opportunities to grow, learn and become an active contributor to both societies. For me, my process of becoming a cosmopolitan teacher educator in Australia is intertwined with my own transnational relations and experience of 'living-in-between'. Still, through the migratory process and experience as a migrant mother, I have gained freedom of mind to imagine what a future might hold for my children living in a globalizing world. Is this what it means to live in a world of transnational mobility? Is this what it feels to be living 'in-betweenness' of nostalgia and fantasy, or past and present, of here and there (Soong, 2016)? Is this what I will continue to experience from a hybrid position as long as I am a cosmopolitan teacher educator?

Ccaldwell's Self-Narrative

I began working as a lecturer in pre-service teacher education in my early-twenties and have remained in the sector for the last fifteen years. As a linguist, my discipline area in pre-service teacher education has focused primarily on English Language and Literacy. With the exception of my formative two-year Assistant Professor post at the National Institute of Education (NIE) in Singapore, all of my tertiary level teaching and research has been in Australian Universities.

My two-year tenure in Singapore was both challenging and rewarding. It was the first time I had lived overseas. I was accompanied by my former partner who came to Singapore without employment. I ultimately chose Singapore as a destination because they were the only institute to offer me a position so soon after graduating with my PhD. In this way, I am forever grateful to NIE for proving 'a start' to my academic career. There were however many challenges over that two-year tenure. These challenges were both personal and professional. On a personal level, there were extended periods of separation between myself (in Singapore) and my partner (in Australia). On a professional level, I was battling a post-thesis depression, in an unfamiliar working culture that fostered 'output' through a mantra of individualism, competitiveness, and performance bonuses. At the same time, Singapore was home. And it was a transformative space. I relished the various hybrid, cosmopolitan spaces and identities that Singapore affords. I lived in a traditional shop house. I dined in international restaurants, and regularly ate local hawker food. I attended local Singapore-Malay weddings and multi-million dollar corporate events. I learned to speak, and teach, Singapore English. I travelled widely in the South-East Asia region. I continued to consume Australian sports and American television. And I developed and maintained strong relationships with academic colleagues from Singapore and around the world. In short, I lived and performed a cosmopolitan identity, both personally and professionally. After completing two years of a three-year contract, I resigned from NIE, and my partner and I returned to Australia, where I took up a post at the University of South Australia (UniSA) in 2014.

My identity as a teacher educator transformed dramatically as a result of this two-year tenure in Singapore. It was only during early conversations with colleagues at UniSA that I became conscious of this transformation, and the capital it affords. I was appointed to an International Strategy group; I accompanied UniSA colleagues to a conference in Singapore; and I was encouraged to apply for this New Colombo Plan study tour to Singapore. Moreover, I bonded and collaborated with my colleague and co-author in a way that would not have been possible without this experience. Ultimately, I began to see myself as a 'knower' of Singapore, South-East Asia, and as a cosmopolitan teacher educator more generally. Put another way, I conceive of myself as an Australian-Asian educator, in a similar way to how my co-author conceives of herself as an Asian-Australian educator. However, as will be discussed below, this self-perception and identity performance, was, and continues to be, seriously challenged, re-imagined and re-configured following this study tour experience. To unpack this further, the following are three key events that happened during the study tour which we have reflected on, reveal how each event has established a deep imprint on our process of becoming cosmopolitan educators.

THE OVERSEAS STUDY TOUR: NAVIGATING RESISTANCES AND ENGAGEMENT BY THE AUSTRALIAN PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

Formative Event 1: The Singapore English Classroom

The study tour comprised two workshops on the topic Singapore English. These workshops were prepared and delivered by the second author. Workshop one introduced the PSTs to World Englishes, while the second workshop specifically focused on the sounds and words of Singapore English. These two workshops were especially interactive, with the PSTs listening to, practicing and experiencing Singapore English. A key aim here was to raise the PSTs' consciousness regarding the different types of Englishes around the world, and ultimately, for them to recognize and acknowledge these Englishes as legitimate forms of English that they will invariably encounter in their classrooms. The first author was in attendance, and an active participant in the workshops, often modeling particular sounds and pronunciations of Singapore English.

Soong's Reflections

Positioned near the back of the classroom, I listened with great respect and interest to the second author's ability to speak Singapore English, or 'Singlish', and observed how the class reacted and responded to him speaking 'differently' from his normal Australian accent. I did not expect to participate and model local Singaporean English. Yet, as the only native speaker of Singapore English in the room, it was inevitable that I would be called on. In hindsight, we both agree that my participation in these workshops was not productive because of how we were being represented by our PSTs.

I did not foresee that the PSTs would essentialize me as an 'expert' in Singapore English, and not the second author. At the same time, I was often corrected by the PSTs in casual conversation for not being able to speak standard Australian English. For instance, on one specific occasion, I was instructed by a PST to say the word 'film' in Australian English, and then repeat it back to the PST. I was shocked by this instruction. Especially because I did not make a point to correct the PSTs when they were interacting with local Singaporeans. I simply let them experience communicating and even experimenting what they could remember about Singapore English. I only came in to support or correct if they requested me to. Such choice is in line with Krashen's (1982) theory of 'affective filter hypothesis'. Essentially, the theory promotes the need to allow learners to practice a new language without fear of being wrong in order to feel positive and confident about acquiring a second language.

As a result, it appears we were unsuccessful in enabling the PSTs to recognize the plurality of Englishes: how one's proficiency to sound like a local should not be prescribed and categorized as un-Singaporean or un-Australian. It seems that a major contributing factor to this stems from the inclusion of my voice as the 'expert' in the classroom – the 'ideal' speaker of Singapore English. Despite our best attempts, this encouraged a binary of 'correct' and 'incorrect' language use: expert and novice. Rather than opening up the PSTs to the possibilities of diversity and fluidity across a single language, they took it as an opportunity to demonstrate knowledge/power over me with respect to my Australian identity, and essentialize my Singaporean identity.

Caldwell's reflections

This context was very familiar to me: teaching World Englishes and Singapore English. As always, in line with my linguistic values, the workshops were *not* presented as an opportunity to essentialize and parody Singapore English. In fact, the point was made very clearly that we were legitimizing Singapore English, and other varieties of English. The PSTs were seeing, tasting, smelling, and hearing Singapore. This was an opportunity to 'speak' Singapore. For the most part, the PSTs were engaged in the session, practicing Singapore sounds and words both in the class and then occasionally in authentic communicative contexts. However, there were two moments where I observed a resistance from the students regarding my knowledge of Singapore English, and at the same time, a promotion of (and ultimately essentialization) of the first author's knowledge of Singapore English.

I read the students a picture book in Singapore English. Again, this was mostly well received, including the first author admiring my (relative) level of expertise in Singapore English. However, there were several 'calls' from the PSTs for the first author to read the text instead of the second author. On another occasion I had to leave the room, and the first author took the students through some words in Singapore English. Upon my return, there was a marked increase in their levels of engagement and enthusiasm when the first author was teaching Singapore English.

These responses are indicative of the kind of resistance and rejection I felt from the PSTs with respect to my attempts at presenting, modeling and performing a Singaporean identity. Of course, from the first author's perspective, these responses are equally confronting and containing: presenting her as the quintessential Singaporean. Despite the fact that I am a linguist, who is expert in Singapore English (and had literally taught this topic to *Singaporean* University students two years prior at the same institution), the PSTs seemingly wanted an 'authentic' native speaker experience to consume, rather than a model of cosmopolitanism that they could learn from, and ultimate enact and embody in the future.

Formative Event 2: A Home Visit

Part of the study tour is to provide PSTs with local experiences which the first author prepared and led. As such, the study tour would include a visit to local suburbs, schools and to the home of the first author's family. The aim is to increase the PSTs' awareness of the different lived realities of local Singaporeans. We first brought the PSTs to the first author's parents' home – a traditional old housing apartment, which the first author lived in for twenty-five years. The first author's Chinese-Singaporean parents who are in the age range between early to mid-eighties, speak Mandarin, Hakka (dialect) and a bit of colloquial Singaporean English. They were looking forward to hosting and interacting with the Australian PSTs.

Soong's Reflections

I know my parents were very excited to meet their new guests; they created an atmosphere of warmth and hospitality. However, I immediately felt a sense of helplessness not knowing if the PSTs would further define me as a Singaporean, as opposed to an Australian with a Singaporean root. The PSTs observed me how I spoke with my parents (in Mandarin), and how I translated and code-switched within the third space of communication. Yet, whilst this was happening, I sensed being 'pushed' into a space where the PSTs would not be able to accept my current identity of an Asian-Australian educator. I acknowledged they were genuinely grateful for the opportunity to see my parents and where I grew up in. But that was where their understanding of my identity ended.

Caldwell's Reflections

Despite having extensive experiences with many Singaporeans of various ages and social class, I was very conscious of the personal nature of our visit to the first author's home. I had multiple roles to play – a colleague and friend to the first author (my relationship as a colleague, but also as a friend visiting her parent's home for the first time); a guest to the first author's parents (a professional relationship between myself and the first author's parents, but also as a non-Singaporean entering their home); and a teacher to the PSTs (a model of cosmopolitanism; demonstrating appropriate behavior when visiting a home in a new cultural context). I had a very special formative experience with first author's father, whom, after I admired his biography of Lee Kuan Yew, and much to my surprise, very kindly offered it to me as a gift. As a friend to the first author, guest of her parents, and teacher to the PSTs, this was an extremely important intercultural exchange for me to have, particularly as a model to the PSTs. On another family occasion, the first author's relatives commented on how 'Singaporean' I presented to them. It was striking then, as I have illustrated above, and illustrate again in the formative event blow, that even with the 'endorsement' of local Singaporeans, and in the presence of the PSTs, that there was a resistance to any knowledge, status or authority I might have from the PSTs.

Formative Event 3: The Mass Rapid Transit

A feature of Singapore is its highly efficient and effective Mass Rapid Transport (MRT) (a rail system). We used this often as a mode of transport throughout the study tour. The first and second authors typically took the lead as the study tour group entered the station; pointing to signs, walking towards the appropriate platform and so on. And of course, as to be expected, especially given the intricacies of the network, and the many places visited, there were moments of disorientation and misdirection (although these were minimal). Ultimately, the MRT was chosen as the final formative event because it both literally and symbolically represented the 'journey' of the study tour.

Soong's Reflections

Having lived in Singapore for almost three decades, I knew how to get around via public transport well. However, over the years, the MRT has undergone major extensions to almost every suburb and housing area. Whilst I could still get around with the PSTs quite easily, there were always some unfamiliar names which I was not sure about due to the constant upgrading and development constructions of housing and expansion of MRT transport. During a few episodes of taking the MRT, I noticed how the PSTs would verify with me whether they were heading in the right direction even after the second author has given clear instructions of where they were going. I felt very uncomfortable about it.

Apart from this uncomfortable feeling, I was also troubled by how little interests the PSTs showed in the new surroundings while they were on the MRT train. On many occasions during the MRT trips, I noticed there were missed opportunities for them to observe Singaporeans more closely. Instead, for most of the time, the PSTs were sitting amongst themselves, chatting and laughing without a clue that for many Singaporeans, who are English literate, they could hear and understand what they were saying.

Caldwell's Reflections

It was in the context of the MRT that I was openly criticized by the PSTs for my 'apparent' lack of knowledge regarding the MRT, and ultimately, my way around Singapore more generally. These initial critiques then became an albeit humorous bond between the PSTs; the idea that the second author didn't know where he was going. This was in direct contrast to the first author, who was never criticized or questioned when leading the group. In fact, on one occasion, a PST explicitly suggested that the first author 'take the lead'. This response from the PSTs was especially peculiar for several reasons: 1. For the vast majority of the time, I *did* know where I was going. There were very few occasions where I had to re-navigate. 2. The first author would often defer to me as to where to go. NB: as a local, first author had not visited many of the inner-city and 'tourist' locations that we visited. Often, I was the *only* 'knower' amongst the group with respect to the destinations, and journey there.

As with the classroom experience as a formative event, there was a conscious rejection of my capital as a knower of Singapore from the PSTs. In this case, it is especially salient; not only was it an explicit rallying point for all PSTs, but it was simply ill-founded. Paradoxically, in a context where Second author had the most knowledge (and demonstrate this to the PSTs by leading them to a range of destinations most 'local' Singaporean's aren't aware of), he was roundly rejected and ridiculed by the PSTs.

CONCLUSION: THE NOTION OF BECOMING A 'COSMOPOLITAN EDUCATOR'

The journey of 'becoming' cosmopolitan educators involves a process of mediating and harmonizing contradictions and differences that are critical in any study tour. The events have helped us to uncover a particular paradigm of a cosmopolitan learning that Rizvi (2009) has referred to. The matter of being and becoming a cosmopolitan educator is not only intimately related to the new knowledge about how we perceive ourselves, it is also intimately relational to the PSTs' responses. The process is never stable and straightforward. Despite our individual transnational experiences of becoming cosmopolitan educators, we found that our PSTs struggled with taking a positive 'first-step' towards detaching particular homogenous and essentialized identities to us.

In response, we held a debrief session on our final day in Singapore where we explicitly asked the PSTs whether they could see the nuance; whether they could see the first author as Asian-Australian, and the second author as Australian-Asian. Unfortunately, in their eyes, the first author's cultural and national identity remained Singaporean, and the second author Australian. We stress however that such accounts should not position these PSTs as deficit (especially when we have not engaged the PSTs' views). Such is the limitation of an autobiographical study. The challenge for us is to give an in-depth analysis of our accounts, with personal reflective views, without being misinterpreted as a study of 'self-absorption' (Bunde-Birouste et al., 2019, p. 515).

Ensuring that we keep moving towards a more positive and transformative approach of valuing diversity and transnational understanding and experiences of intercultural study tours for our PSTs is key in building a cosmopolitan teacher education. The challenge to become cosmopolitan educators is visible from both sides (Boei et al. 2015).In the process of pursuing our professional and personal development of reflexivity, the values and experiences that we gain by adapting to cosmopolitan environments plays a vital role in how we can contribute back to the education of these PSTs. These reflective autobiographical accounts of our past experiences, and formative events, highlight the need for cosmopolitan teacher educators to be aware of the tensions and dilemmas facing the cross-cultural experiences of teachers and PSTs alike.

By way of conclusion, it is also worth considering the potential impact of the location of Singapore itself on these recounted tensions and transformations, and as a site for future study. Singapore provides a unique cosmopolitan context for PSTs; the city-state is renowned for blurring the binary perceptions of 'East' and 'West' (Brown, 2005). And yet it might be this sense of the familiar – East and West – the 'other' and the knower (or non-knower), that afforded, and reinforced the kinds of essentialized identities imposed on the first author and the second author respectively by the PSTs. We have also found that as we navigate tensions to which the perceptions of our PSTs play a role, we are not arguing that we want them to actively position us as fixed in terms of our cosmopolitan identities. Rather, what we hope is that our PSTs are actively revising their views in relation to what is in effect a dialogue about how they reflect and conceptualize their study tour experiences. Such form of reflexivity with self and others corresponds closely to Archer's (2007) communicative reflexivity. In framing this way, we see the focus of our autobiographies makes the form of our continual reflexivity 'pedagogical' (Henderson, 2018), rather than critical. This means that the capacity to become cosmopolitan teacher educators can be deepened if we consider how we prepare our PSTs before their study tours, and also how we can create spaces for exploring each other's ways of knowing culture and place: one that Talbot and Thomas (2019) employ in their study through the notion of 'epistemology of experience'. The question is how we, as cosmopolitan teacher educators, unlock the potential for cosmopolitan learning for our PSTs who themselves also come with a complex web of values, experiences and histories on which different kinds of 'cosmopolitan learning' can come into effect. The study tour can also create another pedagogical space for us to consider: how, as cosmopolitan teacher educators, we promote intercultural interactions between Singaporeans who come into contact with our students. In this way, the terrain that host members, our students and us are navigating in requires cosmopolitan teacher educators to co-produce critical knowledge of our place in the global world, and hone our PSTs' intercultural awareness and competence, to becoming "global citizens" in a cultural sense (Soong, 2018). A timely future study would be replicating a similar study tour, in a location that is more homogeneous in its cultural identity. Paradoxically, would a study tour to China for example invoke less essentializing from the pre-service teachers towards their hosts? More comparative studies on the impacts of study tour experiences is needed.

Finally, whilst our reflective accounts do not lend this study as generalizable, they have highlighted the ways in which overseas study tours have a potential to shape the capacities of teacher educators, and PSTs, in becoming cosmopolitan educators, from diverse backgrounds and histories. Our self-narratives show that becoming a cosmopolitan educator is a continual process of re-constructing oneself as a reflexive human being (Alsup, 2006). In the process of writing this paper, following Rizvi (2009) and Appiah (2006), we hope that we have presented an exemplar of cosmopolitan learning, not simply in our self-perception and experiences, but in our 'openness' to generate new forms of critical knowledge. In this case, in simple terms, the knowledge that our self-perceptions as cosmopolitan educators, are likely to be resisted and rejected by others, including those whom we are hoping to develop a sense of openness. An awareness of our multiple identities, the conditions in which they come into existence, and how they shape our ways of becoming, are essential for our continual process of professional development as cosmopolitan teacher educators.

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Chinese Higher Education and the Quest for Autonomy: One Step Backward

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ABSTRACT

China's quest for autonomy took a step backward as leaders of the Communist Party amended the bylaws at several postsecondary institutions. China's restrictions on freedom do not stop at its border and scholars within and visiting the country encounter increased surveillance and scrutiny. This paper explores China's continued interference in postsecondary autonomy.

Keywords: academic freedom, autonomy, China, communist party, freedom, governance, government, higher education, laws, leadership

INTRODUCTION

The quest for autonomy continues to take a step backward in China as the Communist Party leadership amended the bylaws to several post-secondary institutions in 2019 to reflect obedience to the party rather than operating independently. At Fudan University, the phrase "freedom of thought" was abruptly removed from its 2014 revised charter. Fudan is described as "a prestigious Chinese University known for its liberal atmosphere" (Li, 2019, p. 1). The language to the institutions' bylaws was quickly changed to that in which the institutions' loyalty is stated as being to the Chinese Communist Party (Fischer, 2019). The bylaws now read "the university sticks to the party's leadership, fully implements the party's policies on education" with reference to promoting a politically backed form of philosophy known as "Xi Jinping Thought" (Fischer, 2019). Formally, the university's original document included language whereby its "educational philosophy was in accordance to the values advocated in its school song, which are 'academic independence and freedom of thought" (Li, 2019, p. 2). The new version of the bylaws has the phrase "freedom of thought" removed.

Additional changes include an amendment to the previously worded phrase "the school independently and autonomously runs the university" and "teacher and students independently and autonomously conduct academic studies while abiding with the law" whereby the word "independently" was deleted (Li, 2019). Substantial additions were made to the bylaws. New language around party leadership states "the university sticks to the party's leadership, fully implements the party's policies on education," and "adheres to Marxism as the guiding philosophy and socialism as the foundation of the school's operation" to the constitution, and that the school should "always serve the people, serve the party's governance of China," and "serve the consolidation and development of China's socialist system with Chinese characteristics" (Li, 2019, p. 3). Other institutions the following suit with similar changes include Nanjing University and Shaanxi Normal University (Fischer, 2019).

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Reaction to changes to Fudan's bylaws has been negative. An English professor in China told a graduating class in a speech that they should fight for individual liberty and likened the new bylaws as a form of "shameless suppression and temptation" (Li, 2019, p. 3). On the Chinese social networking site called Weibo, someone posted "I am really worried that children in the future will never know that Fudan had a period of valuing 'freedom of thought' and academic independence' (Li, 2019, p. 4). In America, the reaction has been equally concerning as many American institutions with collaborative agreements with Chinese institutions watch with great interest the rollbacks on academic freedom (Belkin & Wen, 2019).

Since the 1990s, China's higher education system has benefited greatly from an infusion of funds by the Chinese government (Owen, 2020). "The Chinese government has sought to transform Chinese academia into a world-class university system in a matter of decades" (Owen, 2020, p. 248). As China moves full steam ahead towards being the premier nation on innovation with stellar research being conducted by its universities, governmental intrusions into academic life and freedom continue to plague the nation (Zha & Shen, 2018).

Move for Modernization in Higher Education

"Modern universities in China were established based on Western experience borrowed from Europe, America, and Japan" (Pan, 2009, p. 7). "Since the First Opium War in 1840, China was inflected by Japanese and Western imperial powers and started its modernization process" (Wu & Zha, 2018, p. 2). Closely aligned with the state, "traditional Chinese cultural heritage and theories have affected the development of Chinese higher education over the centuries (Pan, 2009, p. 20). "Unlike traditional Chinese higher education, modern Chinese higher education has been linked to economic development and Chinese national identity under foreign economic and cultural influences" (Pan, 2009, p. 21).

"The modern university was established in China in the late 19th century based on the structure of Western universities, and it developed further in the Republic of China (ROC) under the leadership of the KMT. It was influenced by the perceptions of the university held by Chinese scholars who had studied in Western universities and introduced the Western conception of the university to China. In particular, the ideas of Cai Yuanpei, which he had absorbed from Germany and France, influenced the development of China's universities in the early 20th century" (Pan, 2009, p. 23). "Chinese higher education has made remarkable progress in terms of massification and internationalization" (Wu & Zha, 2018, p. 3). "Project 211 and Project 985 were implemented by the Chinese government in 1995 and 1998, respectively, for promoting China's elite universities to reach world standard" (Wu & Zha, 2018, p. 3-4). "By 2009, 122 universities were supported by the central government through Project 211 (Ministry of Education of People's Republic of China [MOE] 2015, and 39 of them were supported through Project 98/5 (MOE, n.d.)" (Wu & Zha, 2018, p. 4).

The twentieth century saw two prevailing higher education philosophies dominating the Chinese landscape, epistemological and political considerations (Wu & Zha, 2018). According to John Brubacher (1982), the epistemological approach "tend to pursue knowledge as an end" (p. 13) while the political philosophy focuses on "intricate problems of our complex society" (p. 14). The competing philosophies often clash whereas one approach, epistemology, is more on the side of "value-free" and the political philosophy runs contrary to that notion (Brubacher, 1982). "Scholars rather than political parties should administer the university so that it remained an institution for advancing knowledge and pursuing truth, rather than becoming a political tool" (Gao, 1992).

Academic Freedom and China

Academic freedom "involves the rights of faculty members to pursue their research, undertake their classroom teaching, and in the American context, enact the full rights of citizenship devoid of restrictions" (Cain, 2016, p. 157). Academic freedom restrictions are woven into the culture of the university in countries such as China, Vietnam, and Cuba (Altbach, 2016). Observers argue that "in mainland China, state and university authorities have employed a range of tactics to intimidate, silence, and punish academics and students" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 4). For example, access to certain internet resources has been restricted to scholars by Chinese officials (Altbach, 2016). The Chinese government has "long monitored and conducted surveillance on students and academics from China and those studying China on campuses around the world" (Human Rights Watch, 2019, p. 2). Altbach (2016) noted that in Hong Kong "an academic pollster was warned by his university's vice-chancellor not to publish polls critical of the region's chief executive" (p. 238).

Chinese higher education has been in existing for over 2,000 years, thus, ranking as one of the oldest in the world (Wu & Zha, 2018). Universities in China operate under a dual-governance structure whereby there is a "coexistence of an administrative system chaired by a president, and a party system embodied as a party committee" (Han & Xu, 2019, p. 936). China is able to maintain strict oversight on institutional operations by "controlling the appointment of presidents and party secretaries, especially those of key research universities, and endowing the two positions with both political and administrative authorities over university affairs" (Han & Xu, 2019, p. 937). Consequently, China has implemented a number of oppressive tactics to clamp down on academic freedom such as "limits on internet access, libraries, and publication imports that impair research on topics the party-state deems controversial; surveillance and monitoring of academic activity that result in loss of position and self-censorship" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 4). Additional steps include "travel restrictions that disrupt the flow of ideas across borders; and the use of detentions, prosecutions, and other coercive tactics to retaliate against and constrain critical inquiry and expression" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 4).

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has sought to change the education system to be more in line with Party ideology through "Xi Jinping Thought Centers," teacher training in Party ideology, and leveraging Party loyalty through research funding opportunities" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, pp. 4-5). "The pro-democracy protests of 2014 marked a turning point for Hong Kong, where Beijing has increasingly sought influence over higher education and civil society, including by attempts to eliminate dissent and critical inquiry" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 5).

In December of 2016, China President Xi Jinping asserted that universities in that country "should be strongholds of the Party, and that teachers should be propagators of 'advanced ideology' and 'staunch supporter' of the Current Political Climate" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 15). "The Constitution of China contains provisions from which protections for academic freedom may be independently and interdependently derived" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 16). For example, "limited access to information including filtering of online content, scholars being denied access to literature and archival materials, and challenges in accessing human research subjects deprives scholars and students in China of access to quality research, teaching, and learning" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 22). Additional measures expose students and faculty to extreme surveillance that includes "closed-circuit television, facial recognition technology, internet surveillance, and student informants" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 25). "Government and higher education authorities have censored academic expression in China, including publications, lectures, and events" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 27).

China's restrictions on freedom do not stop at its border. "Chinese authorities have restricted Chinese and international scholars and students travel in, out, and within the country in connection with their academic activity, including by denying entry and exit, refusing visas, and confiscating passports" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 29). "Chinese diplomats have also complained to university officials about hosting speakers such as the Dalai Lama whom the Chinese government considers sensitive" (Human Rights Watch, 2019, p. 2). Scholars from western nations have had visas denied or revoked if they published researched that is considered off -limits by Chinese authorities (Owens, 2020). In China itself, scholars are subjected to "investigations and suspensions to termination and credential revocation, retaliation by university authorities disrupts studies and irreparably harms careers" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 31). "State authorities in China have intimidated, taken coercive legal action against, and imprisoned scholars and students to restrict and retaliate against academic work and other nonviolent expressive activities" (Scholars at Risk, 2019, p. 33). This paper explores China's system of higher education and the continued governmental interference in postsecondary autonomy.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this paper was to examine China's unique higher education system and the apparent rollback in academic freedom for students and scholars in the communist nation. By examining China as a case study, opportunities presented the chance to participate in a conference proceeding, lead a course lecture, live in on-campus housing, tour facilities, and examine college informational brochures. Thus, enabling further unpacking of China's unique higher education culture phenomena (Merriam, 1998).

Data Collection and Analysis

In October of 2019, I had an opportunity to visit China as a visiting scholar where I spent time on two college campuses. This was my first visit to China and I was eager to experience higher education in another nation. Part of my China visit was related to an inaugural research conference sponsored by my home institution, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), and Jiangnan University (JU), a *211 Project* institution, located in the city of Wuxi. The conference theme was *Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Research, Teaching, and Learning* and was marketed as being "a safe space within which both well established, and early-career academics can find a forum to provoke debate, stimulate discussion, offer new ideas, and share their research findings" (Call for Proposals, 2019, p. 1).

I was also invited to conduct a full day-long professional development workshop for Shanghai Normal University's new faculty training program. My session focused on expanding cultural competency and knowledge acquisition. The road to stepping on the plane to embark on the 16-hour flight to China required numerous steps. Before embarking on my trip I had to secure numerous documents and go through a thorough visa approval process. First, an official letterhead document from my college Dean verifying my trip to China and confirming expense coverage was needed, as well as verification that I was in the process of applying for a Category F Visa. In addition, I needed an invitation letter on an official letterhead paper from the Chinese host institution stating that they were extending an invitation to me as a participant of the joint conference during a specified time period. Exact travel dates and information related to hotel stays for each night while in the country were needed. Having completed the extensive visa application paperwork, my visa was approved within a week of departure.

An Invitation to Learn About China

Upon touchdown at the Shanghai Pudong International Airport, my first trip to China far exceeded expectations. I was comforted to see the display of signage in both Chinese and English. The customs process went smoothly and as I entered the main entrance of the airport I spotted a poster with my name on it where I was met by two Shanghai Normal University students who would assist with my arrival and check-in to the hotel.

The students I encountered in my walk around the two campuses, in the classroom, and at the conference were extremely polite and spoke good English. They informed me that it was a requirement in grade school. They were enthusiastic about their students and fielded my numerous questions about college life in China with ease and enthusiasm. Despite not having access to the familiar Google website or my university Gmail account, there were no inconveniences throughout my stay in China.

I encountered my fellow Chinese academic colleagues who were as passionate about research and student learning as my colleagues in the U.S. I was able to engage several professors in their individual research pursuits. The students who attended my workshop at Shanghai Normal University appeared eager for knowledge and freely engaged in conversation about the U.S. education system and comparisons with China. I couldn't help but think about what these recent governmental rollbacks to academic freedom will mean for their continued educational freedoms.

On my visit to the Jiangnan University campus, I noticed in one of the academic buildings a few offices devoted to the government. The door signage on each office read "Party Secretary's office" and "Party Committee Office & Personnel File Room". A sign of the times that in China, unlike America's separation of governmental intrusion in many institutional functions, China's postsecondary institutions do not know that luxury or freedom.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Altbach (2016, p. 271) noted that "as Chinese universities seek to compete globally, academic freedom is becoming more recognized as a necessary part of a world-class university". China's recent actions to curtail academic freedom at its universities set these institutions on a downward trajectory rather than upward in attaining elite status. "An effective academic culture must be free of corruption" (Altbach, 2016, p. 271). Groups such as Human Rights Watch (HRW) suggest postsecondary institutions should not only be alarmed by China's effort to undermine academic freedom but also resist where they can (Human Rights Watch, 2019). Laying out its rationale in a recent release 12-point Code of Conduct plan to stand up for freedom against the Chinese government, HRW calls for institutions around the world to:

1. Speak out for academic freedom
2. Strengthen academic freedom on campus
3. Counter threats to academic freedom
4. Record incidents of Chinese government infringement of academic freedom
5. Join with other academic institutions to promote research in China
6. Offer flexibility for scholars and students working on China
7. Reject Confucius Institutes
8. Monitor Chinese government-linked organizations
9. Promote academic freedom of students and scholars from China
10. Disclose all Chinese government funding
11. Ensure academic freedom in exchange programs and on satellite campuses

12. Monitor impact of Chinese government interference in academic freedom (Human Rights Watch, 2019, p. 6).

The call for unity among the institutions with ties to China is an effort to better address and propel attempts by the Chinese government to clamp down on academic freedom for those students and scholars who seek to study abroad (Human Rights Watch, 2019). As outlined above, by taking steps to ensure note only that Chinese scholars and students enjoy protected academic freedom rights at visiting institutions, but to also put China on notice that any infringement to these freedoms is unacceptable in modern-day academia.

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Review of:
Higher Education in a Globalising World: Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning by Peter Mayo. Manchester University Press, 2019. 160 pp. £80.00 (hardcover).

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This book is at its essence a plea to rethink the future of Higher Education (HE) in Europe and globally. Rather than propose a yet-to-be-seen utopian vision of HE, Peter Mayo offers us concrete examples of how HE institutions have been organized to support a democratic ethos and the "public good"—not simply prepare students for an uncertain and unequal job market. To this end, Mayo highlights lifelong learning programs within the HE sphere, which often have more flexibility for innovation than traditional college programs while also incorporating community engagement as a central focus. Through Mayo's analysis of the European HE education context, this book offers us both a sense of urgency about the need to fight the neoliberal tendencies that are currently shaping our HE institutions and a preliminary roadmap about what alternatives to the neoliberal model can and do look like, thus imbuing us with the hope that another higher education is possible. The book could easily be incorporated into a diversity of graduate student courses, including courses on adult education, higher education (focused on the United States and internationally), and comparative and international education. While the book analyses higher education and lifelong learning, its practical application of Freire theory and the concept of praxis could also be helpful in more general courses on social theory and education and social justice.

The book is organized in eight chapters that each offer a theoretical contribution in addition to a diversity of empirical anecdotes to support these theoretical claims. The first chapter presents the overall framework of the book: higher education is shaped by both hegemonic globalization, which has as its base a neoliberal ideology of free market capitalism, as well as globalization from below which "is characterized by international networking involving the use of technology for progressive ends" (p. 4). As a thoughtful Gramscian theorist, Mayo is careful not to position these two types of globalizations as binaries but rather processes taking place on the same institutional, social, and economic terrain. This first chapter analyses how higher education has been influenced by hegemonic globalization, leading to a strong private sector bias, the reduction of HE to a consumption service, an obsession with human resources and human capital, the public financing of private needs, an emphasis on international quality comparisons, and, in the Lifelong Learning (LLL) sphere, the "vocationalizing" of all adult learning opportunities. Overall, Mayo argues that we are witnessing a re-conceptualization of the university in which "the idea of the university as a public good is being eroded in the public discourse" (p. 11). Nonetheless, this gloomy scenario that Mayo lays out is not meant to paralyze us; rather, this first chapter is Mayo's call to action. He contends that any of us

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who care about the future of the university and public lifelong education have the duty to be part of a "struggle for preserving and opening up democratic HE spaces motivated by the principles of and commitment to social justice" (p. 13).

The subsequent seven chapters provide us with both additional justifications for this call to action and examples of what alternative HE and HE LLL could potentially look like. Chapter 2 and 3 do the former, analyzing the influence of hegemonic globalization on HE and HE LLL. Chapter 2 examines how the expansive concept of lifelong education developed by UNESCO, which provided a "humanistic view of the entire process of human learning 'from the cradle to the grave,'" was replaced by the late 1980s with the OECD's vision of lifelong learning (LLL) focused on preparing workers in the 25-64 age bracket for the job market. The OECD emphasis transformed learning from a social to individual responsibility. In an appropriate analogy, Mayo writes that "invest in LLL" is the new "pull up your bootstraps," blaming individuals for not obtaining the learning they need to succeed in the new "knowledge economy." In Chapter 3, Mayo continues to critique the ways that hegemonic globalization has shaped HE institutions; however, he also offers us some glimmers of hope. Again, drawing on his Gramscian lens, Mayo notes that institutions such as the EU are not monolithic and within the increasingly neoliberal HE sphere there is still space for bottom-up forms of globalization. Mayo uses the example of the EU's focus on "active citizenship," which emphasizes the collective "in the sense of people working and acting together, complementing each other" (p. 24) in contrast to the individual citizen often reduced to the consumer/producer. Mayo argues that this idea of the "active citizens" could provide a framework for universities to re-conceive their mission as "a regeneration of democracy and the public sphere" (p. 39). The key to this reimagining, according to Mayo, is the idea of praxis, or the interconnection between theory and practice, reflection and action—and especially important for higher education institutions—teaching and research.

After laying this groundwork and explaining European HE institutions as they actually exist, Mayo turns in Chapters 4-7 to concrete examples of alternatives. In Chapter 4, Mayo examines the Euro-Mediterranean region, including HE institutions in Turkey, Morocco, as well other nearby locations. Mayo shows how HE institutions in this region have invested in LLL, offering dozens of interesting examples of the adult education and workers' education programs that have been developed. These programs focus on diverse topics from domestic violence to cultural festivals to social solidarity economies—all of which show that the Southern Mediterranean and Southern Europe already have "their own traditions of university involvement in LLL, often community-oriented, which can be instructive, in this regard, for other universities in other parts of the world" (p. 52). Chapter 5 focuses specifically on HE and LLL and how, despite the overall focus on the job market in many of these adult education programs, there are important exceptions. For example, in this chapter, Mayo examines partnerships between HE institutions and social movements, which are part of what Mayo refers to (drawing on Raymond Williams) as the "long revolution." Of course, it is often the marginalization of these programs within the HE sphere that allows social movements to co-create these programs and also allows these programs to flourish often out of sight of the scrutiny of university administrators.

Chapter 6 focuses on how HE LLL can prioritize community engagement. This chapter is much more of a roadmap or a "how to" guide to developing these types of Freirean programs that center the community. Some of the best practices that Mayo identifies are worth repeating here, including ensuring that this education is context-specific, being aware of stereotyping and pathologizing, avoiding a deficit approach, inviting learners for meetings to discuss and learn about the community, incorporating outdoor activities and celebrations, being cautious about what divides the community, and making sure to prioritize gender, ethnicity, and climate change as central topics in LLL programs. Mayo also reminds us that this type of community engagement does not mean you should avoid sharing "academic" or what he refers to as "powerful" knowledge, which communities often want but are not able to access. The key is not to avoid academic theory and research, but rather, ensure a dialogue between different forms of knowledge. Another key is to always approach communities with the humility that allows for these communities to take collective ownership over the educational process. As Mayo himself admits, these suggestions are a "tall order" that might feel overwhelming to implement. This is why Mayo's penultimate chapter is a reflection on his own practice, and more specifically, his attempt to develop a community engagement project at the University of Malta. In this chapter Mayo opens up his own practice to critique, as he reflects on his attempt with his colleagues to use "Holy Week" as a community education project. Mayo's final chapter, Chapter 8, revisits the most important themes from the book and reminds us, once again, that "alternative prefigurative institutions already exist" (p. 117) and that it is our job to expand on and build these alternatives in our own institutions.

Mayo's *Higher Education in a Globalising World* has many strengths. First, the book seamlessly weaves theory and practice together throughout all of its chapters, avoiding a common pitfall of separating the theoretical and empirical into different and distinct parts of a text. Second, the book illustrates, without any doubt, what is currently at stake both for HE in general and HE LLL programs in particular. Mayo shows how our higher education institutions are being transformed by a hegemonic form of globalization that is obsessed with the preparation of students—adult and otherwise—for the job market and providing them with the skills necessary for a so-called "knowledge society." He shows us that our HE institutions are more likely to be shaped by the needs of corporate interests, rather than any dedication to a democratic ethos or collective, public good. Third and finally, a big strength of the book is that Mayo does not simply leave us with this critique. He offers concrete examples of what HE alternatives have already been developed and he articulates the major components of these alternatives that people can draw on to implement in other locations. Through his regional examples of the European-Mediterranean region, his focus on HE lifelong learning programs, and his roadmap for community engagement, Mayo illustrates that higher education does not have to adhere to a market agenda, even in this global moment when neoliberalism is still hegemonic.

As a junior scholar at a public higher education institution in the United States that follows many of the neoliberal tenants Mayo describes, I did find myself searching for more answers than this single book could provide. For example, although Mayo shows how the bureaucratic tendencies in our universities are winning out over academic interests, it is still unclear how assistant professors can take action to change this trend. I am part of one of the remaining few adult education programs in United States, yet there is still an intense pressure to publish in only the best academic journals (not other popular media outlets); there is little-to-nothing in the tenure process that prioritizes community engagement; and, there is a strong push for more tuition-paying undergraduates in our classes—not incentives for extension work with adults in the community. Furthermore, female professors like myself at the beginning of their careers often have young children and thus carry a huge amount of social reproductive work in our homes. How can we be part of creating the alternatives that Mayo outlines in this important book, while also obtaining tenure and supporting our families? I found in my experience that it is only possible to do this community and activist work *in addition* to your other university responsibilities, which means more work not different work. A second topic I wanted more clarification on as I read this book is how to navigate the very real tensions that, as Mayo points out exist in every community, when organizing university-community engagement projects. In particular, I wanted to know more about how to navigate conflicts that emerge in diverse communities across racialized groups, or in the case of where I am located, in majority-white working-class communities that embody conservative and even reactionary (white supremacist) ideologies. Third and finally, although I was inspired by Mayo's call for faculty to join with students to build a broad-based social movement to fight against the neoliberal tendencies in our universities, I also selfishly wanted a "how to" explanation of how to build this type of movement. Social movements take a long time to develop, as do their educational initiatives. For example, Mayo brings up the example of the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement's National School Florestan Fernandes (ENFF), which was founded 21 years after the founding of the movement itself. Should faculty and students be prepared for that long of a struggle to build the types of institutions we want to see? Although not explicitly addressed, Mayo's answer to this question seems to be yes, as he continually refers to these types of fights in HE institutions as the "long revolution." In many ways, Mayo's book is simply a *starting point* to begin having these conversations about how to transform our universities.

Higher Education in a Globalising World makes several important and timely contributions to the field of comparative and international higher education. First, the book illustrates some of the general trends in higher education, and more specifically, the book articulates how the competitive and corporate nature of the U.S. HE sphere is shaping educational institutions across the world. Second, the book offers an in-depth examination of European HE, describing the lexicon of HE vocabulary that has come to dominate EU HE institutions and how this vocabulary is reflective of a hegemonic form of globalization that prioritizes the market over democratic citizenship and the public sphere. Third, this book shows that within this new lexicon of HE vocabulary there are still remnants of the "social Europe," which can provide the seeds for alternative forms of institutions and programs. Fourth, this book offers countless examples of where these alternatives exist, highlighting HE LLL as an important sphere where programs that prioritize Freirean praxis have flourished. Fifth and finally, perhaps the most important contribution of Mayo's book for the field of comparative and international higher education is the friendly reminder that *lifelong learning* is an important part of the higher education institutional milieu, and indeed one of the most critical spheres to study about, learn from, and build on for those of us who still believe in the "progressive social justice-oriented higher education of the future" (p. 118).

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