OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION

Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 1-6
Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education
https://ojed.org/jcihe

JCIHE: Vol 15(1) 2023

Introduction

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California State University, Northridge

Editor-In-Chief

Dear Readers -

This issue represents the 15th year in the *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education* (JCIHE) has been presenting innovative and emerging topics in the fields of comparative education and international higher education. JCIHE is listed in numerous databases including Cabells, Ebscohost, Eric and others. Over the past 15 years, JCIHE has published authors from around the world and in so doing is expanding research on various countries. More importantly, these publications include voices from regions that have previously been invisibilized in the publishing world. In Volume 15, Issue 1, 2023, I am pleased to share the JCIHE annual report, one essay and nine empirical articles that focuses on higher education issues in the following countries: Asian countries, Australia, Canada, England, Greece, Netherlands, Puerto Rico, Sudan, and USA. The annual report shows the growth and depth of publications within the past year.

JCIHE is an open access, independent, double-blinded 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). The mission of the journal is to serve as a place to share new thinking on analysis, theory, policy, and practice, and to encourage reflective and critical thinking on issues that influence comparative and international higher education. JCIHE showcases new and diverse international research that uses rigorous methodology that focuses on theory, policy, practice, critical analysis, and development analysis of issues that are influence higher education. JCIHE has as its core principles: a) comparative research; b) engagement with theory; and c) diverse voices in terms of authorship.

Three broad themes are represented in the articles in the 15(1) issue: Student Learning Strategies, Institutional and Pedagogical Contexts, NGO and National Contexts.

Student Learning Strategies

Student learning strategies and pedagogy are explored in two articles. Torres-Arends examines how international students understand academic regulations in how to interact with their professors and how curricula can be re-designed to clarify communication processes. Ghazarian, Bhandaria, and Chena share that despite difficult experiences of international students studying in the United States during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the image of the United States as a destination of choice remains attractive.

Institutional and Pedagogical Contexts

Four articles explore specific institutional types and their roles in supporting global learning. Bowling examines global liberal arts colleges and universities in Asia and the messages of critical hope given to students by admission staff. Katsara examines the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy within the teaching context of Problem-Based Learning in Greece. Mall & Payne show how international students of color (ISOC) during the COVID-19 pandemic at a predominantly white institution (PWI) are viewed as having "double-invisibility" - both racially minoritized and foreign status - international students of color face unique challenges. Rodríguez-Vargas and Collins examine the interchange of interruption of coloniality by university professors in the public university system of Puerto Rico and the reproduction of coloniality by university administrators. Gonzales, Chai, & King use the Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (REMS), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and the Perceived General Wellbeing Indicator (PGWBI) to measure the reporting of racial microaggression of mostly Asian international students in Australis.

NGO and National Contexts

Three articles explore the interconnections between NGO and National contexts and higher education. Alcaide, Meyer, Greco, Abdallah, and Ahmed examine the employment outcomes from students in Sudan who participate in the grant funded INSO project. Woolf critiques practices in study abroad of prioritizing community engagement where the focus on communities within urban change are constantly shifting. Gian-Louis Hernandez introduces the concept of anationality to move the debate around the nation and nationality beyond normative, essentialistic conceptualizations to negotiate local, regional, national, and global processes.

Articles

The following articles are included in this issue:

Peter G. Ghazarian. Ashland University**, Babita Bhandari.** Ashland University **and Shuoyu Chen** Ashland University. *"It Can Be Chaos Here" International Student Experiences of U.S. Higher Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic.*

This phenomenological study documents the experiences of international students in US higher education during the pandemic to determine how they adapted, how they were shaped, and how their attitudes toward study abroad in the US may have changed. The findings reveal a sense of chaos, an aversion to online instruction, a lack of non-academic support form institutions, and a tarnished, but still attractive image of the US as a destination for study abroad.

Jorge C. Naranjo Alcaide (Comboni College of Science and Technology, Sudan)**, Jean-Baptiste Meyer (**Université Paris Cité, IRD, Ceped, France)**, Sabrina Greco (**Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche-Istituto di Scienze del Patrimonio Culturale, Italy), **and Sahar A. Abdalla (**Comboni College of Science and Technology, Sudan). *Youth, Training and Labor Insertion in Sudan: Lessons from the INSO Project*

The article explores the relation between higher education and employment in Sudan. It evaluates the efficiency of a training project realized in collaboration between international and local private and government partners that aim to provide university graduates with employment opportunities. The INSO Project (Innovation in society: Training paths and human capital enhancement in Sudan) took place from 2017 to 2019. The article explores the employment achievements after almost two years of their graduation and a series of interviews about their professional integration. The collected data are analyzed in the context of the Sudanese socio-economic environment, higher education, and development. The study reveals a significant rate of employment for the graduates of this training project and a positive impact of specific training related to job search techniques.

Renee L. Bowling. The Ohio State University, USA. *Global Liberal Arts Colleges and Universities: A Source of Critical Hope.*

This article applies a critical internationalization lens and a mapping framework to analyze the verbiage of admission colleagues from global liberal arts colleges and universities in Asia to incoming students. The study analyzes the underlying motivations to discover whether global liberal arts colleges and universities might present a source of critical hope in highlighting their multiculturalism, lower fees, and proximity to students' home countries. The study situates the rise of global liberal arts colleges and universities within competing narratives of higher education internationalization. I propose global liberal arts colleges and universities are a trend that offers a source of critical hope for imagining new possibilities for the internationalization of higher education.

Lorainne Rodríguez-Vargas, Azusa Pacific University, USA **and Christopher S. Collins** Azusa Pacific University, USA. *Comunidad y Universidad: Spaces of Decoloniality in Boricua Public Higher Education*

This article uses critical observation of the influence of coloniality in the public university system of Puerto Rico through exploring community engagement by university professors. This research implemented qualitative inquiry through document analysis. Pattern analysis was performed through three conceptual frameworks: coloniality, colonial state of exception, and ecologies of knowledge. Findings included both the interruption of coloniality by university professors and the reproduction of coloniality by the university administration. These findings illustrate current spaces of decoloniality in Boricua higher education.

Irene Torres-Arends, Yorkville University, Canada. *"I Thought We Were Friends": International Students: Challenges in Navigating Basic Academic Regulations at a Private Canadian University.*

This article examines international students' understanding of academic regulations in regard to academic requests and/or complaints to professors within the host university. Qualitative analysis of email messages shows that students perceive the academic environment to be governed by a complex set of informal understandings rather than being regulated by a

straightforward set of institutional rules. The re-designing of curriculum and a progressive learning strategy can play a central role in reducing complexity by communicating academic regulations clearly and consistently and by giving students pedagogical opportunities to develop the required skills.

Ourania Katsara, University of Patras, Greece. *Reconceptualizing pedagogy within the context of an Internationalized Problem-Based Learning Approach.*

This study discusses the value of implementing culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) within the teaching context of Problem-Based Learning (PBL). By means of a critical review, the study shows that PBL is difficult to be implemented in a uniform way across the globe while becoming culturally responsive during teaching is quite personal. Findings suggest the needs for the development of possible departmental CRP training sessions for teachers. The evaluation of such training is suggested to determine the extent to which such an initiative could be part of a departmental pedagogy of internationalization policy development at micro level.

Neshay S. Mall & Cindy Payne, Northern Arizona University, USA. *"It's not a level playing field": Exploring International Students of Color's Challenges and the Impact of Racialized Experiences on the Utilization of Campus Resources during COVID-19*

This article uses a phenomenological study to examine the racialized experiences on the utilization of campus resources among international students of color (ISOC) during the COVID-19 pandemic at a predominantly white institution (PWI). Often viewed as having "double-invisibility" - both racially minoritized and foreign status - international students of color face unique challenges. Five theme emerge from international students of color: 1) feel university resources lack a basic understanding of their needs, 2) seek international staff and/or staff of color, 3) view faculty and/or classrooms as their primary supportive resources and, 4) deem past encounters create psychological barriers to utilizing resources, based on 5) a common perception of disadvantaged positionality due to their intersecting identities.

Hugo M. Gonzales COPE Centre, Australia, **Ke Ni Chai** Murdoch University, Australia, & **Deanne Mary King** Murdoch University, Australia. *Racial Microaggressions: Experiences Among International Students in Australia and its Impact on Stress and Psychological Wellbeing*

This article examines the prevalence of racial microaggressions among international students and its impact on stress and psychological well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia that contributed to anti-Asian racism. Using the Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (REMS), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and the Perceived General Wellbeing Indicator (PGWBI), participant responses were measured. All participants reported experiencing racial microaggression in the last six months, and significant correlations and regression models were found between REMS, certain elements of the PSS scale and time in Australia.

ESSAY

Gian-Louis Hernandez University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands**.** *Anationality: Identifying with neither here nor there*

This article examines researcher identity by proposing the theoretical possibility of "anationality": a disavowal of national identity as a possible subject position from which to negotiate local, regional, national, and global processes. Drawing on experienced gained while

researching international students and later as a Ph.D. student, both in countries where the author was marked as foreign, this essay follows feminist theorizing of gender, particularly gender non-binary identities, to potentially illuminate the opportunities and limitations of critiquing nationality. This work further highlights the importance of an anti-essentialist stance in conducting research. Anationality is an attempt to question national categorization. This essay productively moves the debate around the nation and nationality beyond normative, essentialistic conceptualizations.

Michael Woolf. CAPA: The Global Education Network. *Chasing Shadows: Myths of Engagement in American Education Abroad.*

This essay counters the argument for the centrality of community engagement in education abroad because it does not recognize the dynamics of urban change. In the fractured nature of contemporary reality, communities, where and if they exist, tend to be less visible and, often, less accessible. Discovering community may more realistically involve a kind of archaeology, digging out versions of constructed memories. It may also involve a search for marginal, sometimes hidden, vestiges of communal consciousness in complex urban spaces. That search may be undertaken in libraries and museums and in obscurer corners of the city. Finding community may be a matter of historical analysis – made in memory. Prioritizing community engagement in education abroad may build unrealistic expectations, sending students out to chase shadows.

JCIHE Support

I want to thank several individuals who were instrumental in the publication of this issue. First, I want to thank the Higher Education SIG of the Comparative and International Education Society who continue to support JCIHE throughout the years. Past chairs, Dr. Anatoly Oleksiyenko and Dr. Pilar Mendoza and the current chairs, Dr. Dante Salto and Dr. Maia Chankseliani. Second, I want to thank the JCIHE Senior Associate Editors, Dr. Hayes Tang and Dr. Berhnard Streitwieser, who have been supporting JICHE for the past eight years with their support, insight, and creativity. Third, I want to thank several individuals on the JCIHE management team who were instrumental in the publication of this issue:

Associate Editor, Dr. Yovana Parmeswaree Soobrayen Veerasamy,
Book Review Editor: Dr. Radomir Ray Mitic
Social Media Director: Dr. Peter G. Ghazarian
Communications Editor: Dr. Angel Oi Yee Cheng
Copy-Editor: Dr. Prashanti Chennamsetti,
Assistant to the Editor: Dr. Hannah (Minghui) Hou
Associate Editorial Coordinator: Mohammadali Dabiri
Production Editor team: Senior Production Editors: Marisa Lally, Dr. Hannah (Mingui) Hou and Assistant Production Editors: Dr. Yadu Gyawali, Kristin Lab, Kyunghee Ma, and Adeline De Angelis.

It is their dedication that helps keep the standards and integrity for the journal.
Fourth, JCIHE is dependent on the volunteer efforts of many scholars in the field of comparative and international higher education. I want to give special thanks to the JCIHE Peer Reviewers for the 15(1) Issue: Mark A. Ashwill, Prashanti Chennamsetti, Tessa DeLaquil, Ryan Deuel, Morgan

Keller, and Sami Merji. Thank you all for the time you give to making sure that the articles are publication ready.

Editor in Chief, Rosalind Latiner Raby
March 2023

OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION

Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 7-32

Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education

Online | https://ojed.org/jcihe

JCIHE Annual Report 2022

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Keywords: Comparative Research; COVID-19; critical internationalization; Internationalization of Higher Education; race; student voices

Dear Readers –

The *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education* celebrates its 14th year in publishing articles that make a statement about current and future thinking in comparative and international higher education. JCIHE aims to showcase new and diverse international research that uses rigorous methodology to focus on theory, policy, practice, critical analysis, and development analysis of issues that influence and advance the field of comparative and

international higher education. To do this, JCIHE publishes high-quality empirical, theoretically framed scholarship that challenges the way things have been within traditional constructs and with the intent to move forward discussions on comparative and international higher education.

JCIHE is an open access, independent, double-masked 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 (HE-SIG).* JCIHE has as its core principles: a) comparative and international research; b) engagement with theory and practice; and c) bringing diverse voices in terms of authorship. JCIHE supports these core principles by providing a professional forum for the development, analysis, and dissemination of theory-, policy-, and practice-related issues that influence comparative and international higher education. In meeting the JCIHE mission to bring in diverse perspectives, JCIHE is proud to share that it has notably increased the number of authors from around the world and specifically from countries located in the "Global South". Combined JCIHE publishes research that helps to advance current understanding of topics that frame and re-frame the study of comparative and international higher education. JCIHE publishes a mix of Empirical Articles, Scholarly Research-Based Review/Essays, Emerging Scholars Research Summaries, and Book Reviews. Please visit the JCIHE website for guidelines: https://www.ojed.org/index.php/jcihe/about

In 2022, Volume 14 included seven issues, including three Special Issues. The Summer Special Issue included a double issue 14(3.a) and 14(3.b) on COVID-19: *International and Comparative Impact of COVID-19 on Institutions of Education,* edited by Sowmya Ghosh and Linsay A. DeMartino. The Winter Special Issue 14(5) focused on an extremely important issue for our times, *Foreign Interference in Higher Education*, edited by Kyle A. Long. Finally, the *Emerging Scholars Issue* 14(5S) shares topics of interest framed by a new generation of scholars Within all seven issues of Volume 14, articles and essays help to advance discourse on comparative and international higher education.

2022 Annual Summary of JCIHE Article Themes

For the past 14 years, the *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education* has published articles that make a statement about current and future thinking in comparative and international higher education. As an important research tool, these articles include cutting-edge theoretical constructs, detailed literature reviews, and many of the articles engage in critical and de-colonial frameworks. Six themes are found in publications in Volume 14: Internationalization of Higher Education, Comparative Research, Institutional Issues, Study Abroad, International Students, and COVID-19.

Internationalization of Higher Education

Eight articles explore Internationalization of Higher Education in country-specific studies of Azerbaijan, Canada, China, New Zealand, Taiwan, Turkey, United States, and Vietnam. The topics include the entrepreneurial university as an alternative revenue source for HEIs using increased revenue to rejuvenate HEIs, national policies to impact educational experiences, longitudinal study of net tuition revenue and international undergraduate enrollment, career-oriented programs, university experiences of youth with imprisoned parents, educational policies and change, and global justice lens that includes religious understanding within diversity initiatives. Articles in the Winter Special issue show how foreign interferences influence Internationalization of Higher Education. These articles examine the role of governments in university practices and programs, foreign donations and foreign interference that influence HEIs, public perception from media that frames national policies, and federal racist and indiscriminate investigation of under-reporting of foreign donations.

Comparative Research

The impact of COVID-19 on international students is compared between Japan and US, Canadian and Iranian international students, Arab and US students, leadership perspectives of international students in the US, New Zealand, Italy, South Korea, and China, and the experiences of degree-mobile students in 32 countries in EU and UK. Faculty are the focus of comparisons between US & Turkey, Iraq & Tajikistan, and MotherScholars in United States and Australia. National policies are compared between China, South Korea, and Japan, between different United States associations at the national level, between Hungary and China prioritizing of international student mobility to enhance country competitiveness, and two colleges information and communication technology programs in Nepal. De-colonialism lens is used in comparison of distance learning in Barbados and Canada to examine dynamics of colonized and former colonizers student learning experiences, and in a comparison of language in decolonial studies that influence academic mobility between EU and Brazil.

Institutional Issues

Institutional Internationalization Policies

Policies are interpreted through national, institutional, and programmatic level lenses. Articles examine English language acquisition policies in Mozambique universities, funding policies that foster student access in South Africa and Ghana, academic freedom policies in United States and India, and university press policies that contributed to the closure of a Confucius Institute in the United States. Another article uses cost-benefit analysis to find a positive correlation between net tuition revenue and international undergraduate student

enrollment numbers at public doctoral universities An additional three articles examine changing infrastructure and leadership practices.

Institution Pedagogical and Curricular Changes

Several articles explore the impact of internationalizing curricular on students. Articles examine Chinese undergraduate student sensemaking of learning about other cultures, local Canadian students' intercultural experiences with international students, liberal education in Nigeria, international students in Taiwan online activities to develop a sense of community and self, intercultural relationships via US virtual classes between domestic and international students, intercultural communication competence of Chinese foreign language learners who participate in COIL at a regional US university, US education abroad programming designed to impact student learning, diversity initiatives in UK, and examination of IHE programs in the US.

International Scholars and Teaching Assistants

The satisfaction of international scholars in the US is explored in relation to professional development. Three articles examine teaching assistants in terms of US pre-service training courses, complications to gaining international scholarship due to English language barriers in Mozambique, and experiences in the US training prior to becoming an instructor.

Institutional Services

Three articles explore institutional service programs. These focus on writing centers as for international students in the US, program offerings in Vietnam universities, adoption of Global Certificate programs in United States community colleges, and adoption of clinical training programs in pharmacy education in the United Arab Emirates.

Staff/Student Perspectives

One article examines the voices of university presidents on international students during COVID-19. Three articles examine faculty perspectives as connected to capacity building. These articles identify women scholars' intellectual leadership in Hong Kong, faculty professional development in Vietnam and Australia, and faculty satisfaction in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Study Abroad

The experiences of out-bound students (e.g., study abroad) is a focus of seven articles. Articles examine US students studying in Cuba and Brazil, Japanese students studying in New Zealand in a program designed to mirror the Japanese experience, EU students studying worldwide, and Taiwan students studying abroad and their use of social media. Focus on specific program components include a US program that duplicates experiences of in-coming students

studying in health sciences, critical pedagogy influences experiential-community-based learning, and critical analysis of website images to promote US study abroad to Africa.

International Students

Several articles document international student experiences in a specific country. This includes international students studying in Australia, Brazil, Canada, EU, and Taiwan. Articles explore East Africans in Norway, Chinese doctoral students in the US, Turkish students in the US, Koreans in Canada; Malaysians in UK; Asian graduates in Taiwan, self-determination of international students studying in the US, and experiences of Chinese students studying in US.

Student Experiences

One article depicts South-Asian non-English dominate students and their sense of belonging while in the US; students from developing Asian countries where English is their 2nd language who are marginalized when attending English dominate HEIs, Chinese undergraduate student sensemaking in learning about other cultures using non-western perspectives, sense of belonging of Asian students in Taiwan, Chinese international graduates' employability in Australia using a capitals-based approach, self-determination of Turkish international students and their well-being while studying in the US, and mental health of international students in Australia. Other related topics include mentor and peer impact on academic goals and emotional intelligence skills advanced by writing centers, by participation in US sports programs to increase student success, use of Facebook to facilitate acculturation and emotional intelligence to cope with everyday life, and the use of support services to overcomes challenges. One article examines the perspective of local students in Canada their experiences in multicultural and multilingual programs.

Race and Gender

One article specifically talks about race and international students. This article examines how race shapes academic performance and achievement of black African international students in UK. Other articles examine issues of religions/cultural identity and gender with examination of female Chinese students studying in Canada, female Muslim students studying in UK, and gendered experiences of Iranian International Students in Canada.

Student Voices

Articles share the voices of students in terms of their opinions on employability, career readiness, and student engagement. The topics of employability, career readiness, and social justice dominated the articles in the 2022 Emerging Scholar issue. Articles examine how learning abroad impacts career choices of Indonesian students studying in Australia, mining engineering student's employability in South Africa, employability from enrolling in a binational university

(Turkish-German) in Turkey, employability of Lao graduates who study in Chinese universities and then returned home, and employability of transgender & queer international students graduating from Australian and Canadian institutions. Finally, student engagement is a focus on articles that examine how refugees from five countries used community cultural wealth to get into and through universities.

COVID-19 Impact

Articles in all issues, but especially in the JCIHE 2022 Summer special double issue focus on the impact of COVID-19 on higher education.

Institutional Policies and Programs

Institutional policies during the COVID-19 are explored at a Chinese university assisting international students waiting for-entry, reallocation of institutional resources in US community colleges, institutional changes made by international affairs office in a Mexican university, effectiveness of Vietnamese government's educational policies aimed at controlling virus spread, effects on Vietnam's unequal access to higher education, creation of a college learning environment for Chinese students enrolled in other countries, and impact of internationalization in Mexico. Other articles compare how flagship universities in the United States use institutional websites to share information about changing institutional practices during COVID-19, Turkish faculty teaching experiences, comparison of US institutional websites to assess advanced internationalization, and comparisons of a US and Shanghai co-curricular program offered in Shanghai to serve first-year Chinese students who lived in China during COVID-19.

Recruiters

Two articles focus on the recruiter experience. The first examines different and extreme experiences that faculty, students, and recruiters have in accessing and maintaining their higher education. The second article details Chinese recruiters' experiences during COVID.

International Students

The articles on COVID-19 primarily focus on the experiences of Chinese students. Articles examine experiences of how social-political-institutional environment impacts academic experiences of Chinese doctoral students who study in the US, how Chinese doctoral students studying in US deal with stressors, academic and non-academic challenges faced by international students at a particular US university and their use of support services to overcome challenges, and mental health of international students in Australia. A comparative study examines how students in 10 countries deal with accumulative stress while studying in the US.

Gender

Two articles focused on the experience of women during COVID. The first introduces MotherScholars and compares their experiences in United States and Australia. The second examines the scholarly productivity of multinational women graduate students during COVID.

Comparative Study

Four articles compare student experiences during COVID-19. These articles compare Indonesian and Vietnamese student perceptions on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, ways in which students from universities in the US, New Zealand, Italy, South Korea, and China engage in activities to respond to the pandemic, how University Presidents in eight counties perceive the needs of international students during COVID-19, and comparison of experiences of international students in Japan and in the US during COVID-19 and differences in these experiences and in responses from the universities.

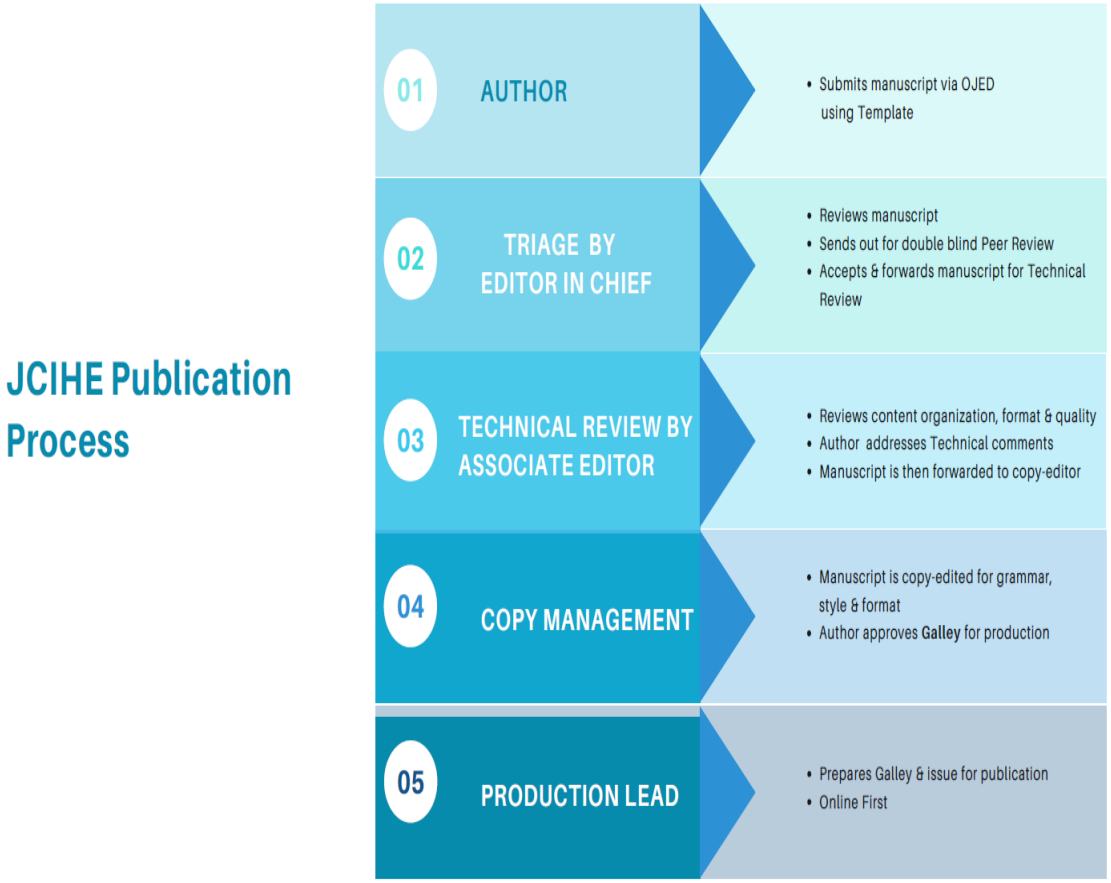
JCIHE State of the Field: 2022

The JCIHE State of the Field includes production and accomplishments for 2022, and showcases the Journal's impact and reach.

JCIHE Publication Process

To pursue the JCIHE fair, ethical, and transparent review process, the visual below clearly explains the publication process from submission to publication. JCIHE strives to review and publish scholarship in a timely manner. While some decisions take longer for a variety of reasons, the average time from submission to acceptance is generally 175 days. During COVID, many of our volunteer peer reviewers were challenged and thus the review time took substantially longer. The average time from acceptance to publication is 131 days.

Figure 1: JCIHE Publication Process



Article Statistics

In 2022, JCIHE published 63 Empirical Articles, 8 Essay, 7 Emerging Scholar Summaries, and 2 Book Reviews.

Submission Statistics: Volume 14: January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022

Submissions Received	160	
Submissions Accepted	81	
Submissions Declined	75	
Submissions Declined (Desk Reject)	47	(37%)
Submissions Declined (After Review)	28	(9%)
Submissions Published	80	
Days to First Editorial Decision Description for Days to First Editorial Decision	36	
Days to Accept	180	
Days to Reject	153	

Acceptance Rate 54% **Rejection Rate 46%**

JCIHE Metrics, Impact, and Reach

The *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education* (JCIHE) is listed in Cabells Scholarly Analytics, CiteFactor, EBSCOhost, ERIC, and GoogleScholar. GoogleScholar rankings index examines articles published in the last 5 years. The GoogleScholar Rankings show the impressive growth in downloads of JCIHE articles in 2022. The calculation is based on the largest number h such that h articles published in 2017-2021 have at least h citations each. The h5-median is the number of citations for the articles that make up its h5-index and measures the distribution of citations to the articles in the h-core. The h-core is a set of top cited h articles from the publication and are the articles that the h-index is based on.

Table 1 shows that the h-5 index went up this year with an 85% increase in citations in one year!

Table 1: GoogleScholar h5-index and h5-median

GoogleScholar	2020	2021	2022-Jan-June
H5-index	4	5	8
H5-median	7	7	13

According to Publish or Perish, which includes reports from ERIC, Crossreft, and GoogleScholar JCIHE published articles: 2017-2022 – JCIHE had 35,019 Abstract and Article Downloads and 154 citations. The ERIC Report from June 1 – December 31, 2022 shows 2,577 downloads. Table 2 and 3 share the top cited or downloaded in each category.

Table 2: Citations Noted in Publish or Perish

Cite	Author	Title	Year	Google Scholar Rank
11	M Hailu, L Collins, A Stanton	Inclusion and Safe-Spaces for Dialogue: Analysis of Muslim Students	2018	2
7	HH Tang	Academic Profession, Entrepreneurial Universities and Scholarship of Application: The Imperative of Impact	2018	4
7	R Al-Haque	University Internationalization, Immigration, and the Canadian Dream: How Federal Citizenship Immigration Legislation Marginalizes International Graduate Students	2018	15
5	M Beard	Language as Currency: Perpetuating and Contesting Notions of English as Power in Globalized Korean Contexts	2018	8
5	KM Johnson	You Learn How to Experience Yourself": A Photo-Cued Investigation of Empowerment in Study Abroad	2018	10
4	CÃŠLD Mangue, J Gonondo	Academic Culture and Talent Cultivation: The Chinese Experience	2021	1
4	A Yamada	Japanese Higher Education: The Need for STEAM in Society 5.0, an Era of Societal and Technological Fusion	2021	3
4	C Nonaka, S Phillips	Higher Education Reforms in Japan	2017	14
3	AT Johnson, MF Mbah	(Un) subjugating indigenous knowledge for sustainable development: considerations for community-based research in African higher education	2021	6
3	C Dailey-Strand, H Collins, D Callaghan	'Those First Few Months Were Horrible': Cross-Cultural Adaptation and the J-Curve in the International Student Experience in the UK and Norway	2021	7
3	MS Jeon	New Mission for New Time in Korean Higher Education	2018	11
2	RY Chan	Understanding International Joint and Dual Degree Programs: Opportunities and Challenges during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic	2021	9
2	KP Paudel	Level of Academic Performance among Faculty Members in the Context of Nepali Higher Educational Institution	2021	26
2	YS Veerasamy	Emerging direction of us national higher education internationalization policy efforts between 2000 and 2019	2021	27

Downloads

Various networks track articles viewed and those downloaded. Previously the JCIHE downloads averaged 500-600. In 2022, the average range is 600 – 1500. JCIHE is honored by all of our readers who downloaded our articles.

Table 3: Downloads Tracked by OJED

Author	Title	Abstract Views	PDF Views	Total
Ritter	Singapore's Search for National Identity: Building a Nation through Education	370	1176	1546
Maravillas	Filipino and American Teachers: Their Differences in Psychological Needs, Performance, and Culture	582	753	1335
Liu et al.	The Smell, the Emotion, and the Lebowski Shock: What Virtual Education Abroad Can Not Do?	752	301	1053
Ballo et al.	Applying Student Development Theories: Enhancing International Student Academic Success and Integration	534	511	1045
Sperduti	Internationalization as Westernization in Higher Education	575	637	1021
Chan	Understanding International Joint and Dual Degree Programs: Opportunities and Challenges during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic	558	283	841
Ahmed	#RhodesMustFall: Decolonization, Praxis and Disruption	327	492	813
Zhang	A Comparison between Pedagogical Approaches in UK and China	481	237	718
Ghosh et al.	Understanding the Attraction of the Microcampus: A Quantitative Investigation of Students' Motivations to Enroll in Transnational Education	526	188	714
Martel et al.	The Future of International Educational Exchange is Bright	263	450	713
Djita	The Impacts of The COVID-19 Pandemic On First-Generation, Low-Income And Rural Students In Indonesia And Vietnam: A Cross-Cultural Comparative Study	416	268	684
Streitwiesser et al.,	"The Entrepreneurial University": A Catalyst for the Redevelopment of the Azerbaijani Higher Education System	256	404	660
Tavares	Theoretical Perspectives on International Student Identity	435	202	637
Xu	Examining Neocolonialism in International Branch Campuses in China: A Case Study of Mimicry	417	201	618
Adams et al.	Reimagining Global Partnerships in Higher Education through Open Systems Theory	399	218	617
Collins et al.	'Those First Few Months Were Horrible': Cross-Cultural Adaptation And The J-Curve In The International Student Experience In The UK And Norway	498	180	678

Cai et al.	Sexual Harassment on International Branch Campuses : An Institutional Case Study of Awareness, Perception, and Prevention	418	146	564
Hanada	Higher Education Partnerships between the Global North and Global South: Mutuality, Rather than Aid	397	161	558
Chance	Exploring the Disparity of Minority Women in Senior Leadership Positions in Higher Education in the United States and Peru	344	179	523

TWITTER REPORT

JCIHD has had a solid, steady growth across our social media -- especially our twitter presence. JCIHE gained over 100 followers in 2022 and tweet impressions increased significantly.

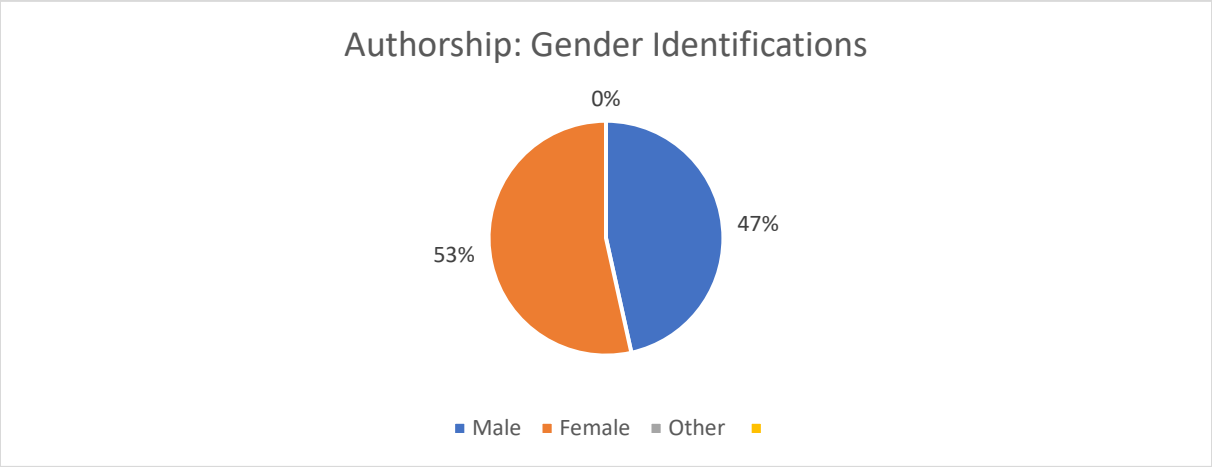
Table 4: Social Media Presence

	Followers	New Followers	Tweets	Impressions	Mentions
September	546	16	2	1257	2
October	562	9	2	739	1
November	571	15	2	524	1
December	586	5	2	591	1
January	591	1	4	794	3
February	592	8	1	667	0
March	600	2	1	825	3
April	602	8	6	1705	6
May	610	7	5	1264	4
June	617	15	3	1027	20
July	632	9	5	2378	8
August	639	7	4	1129	4

Authorship and Article Details

This section provides information on the authors published in JCIHE Issue 14, 2022. Gender of authors, author academic and professional positions, and institutional affiliations show diversity in authorship. Graph 1 shows that 53% of authors were women and 47% men.

Graph 1 Authorship Gender Identifications



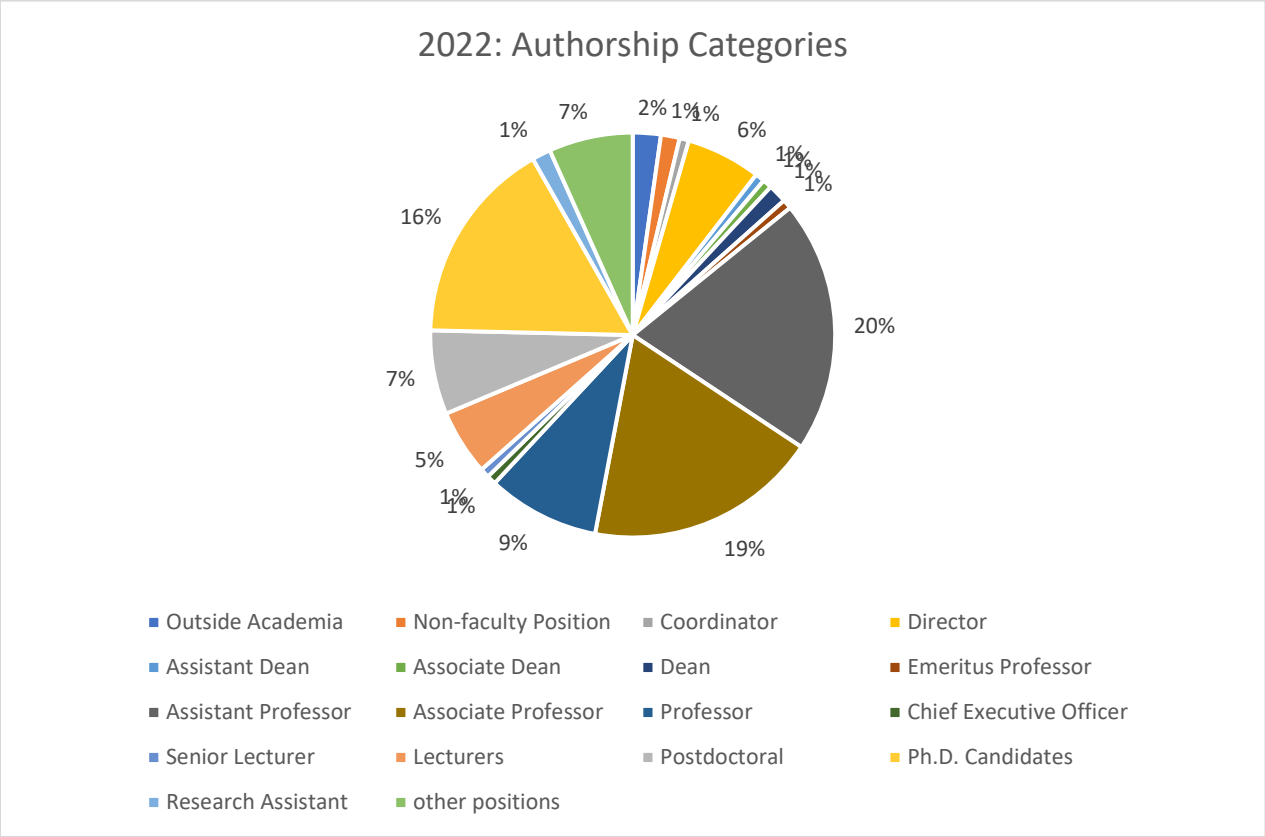
Author Academic and Professional Positions

Graph 2 and Table 5 show that authors, at the time of publication, held various positions.

Table 5. Author Rank at the time of publication

Academia		**Outside Academia**	
Assistant Dean	1	Senior Education Technologist	1
Associate Dean	2	Research coordinator	1
Master's student	1	Legislative Policy Fellow	1
Ph.D. Candidate	22	Nurse	1
Doctoral scholar	1	Evaluation Specialist	1
Postdoctoral researcher	2	Head of Research, Evaluation & Learning	1
Postdoctoral research associate	2	Research & Evaluation Associate	1
Postdoctoral Fellow	9	Associate Director	2
Scholar-Practitioner	2	Director	9
Visiting Researcher	1	Senior Analysist	2
Part-time lecturer	1	Chief Executive Officer	1
Senior Lecturer	1	Research Assistant	1
Lecturer	7	Assistant Specialist	2
Assistant professor	27	Social Worker	1
Associate professor	25	Multilingual Coordinator	1
Professor	13	Academic librarian	1
Emeritus Professor	1		

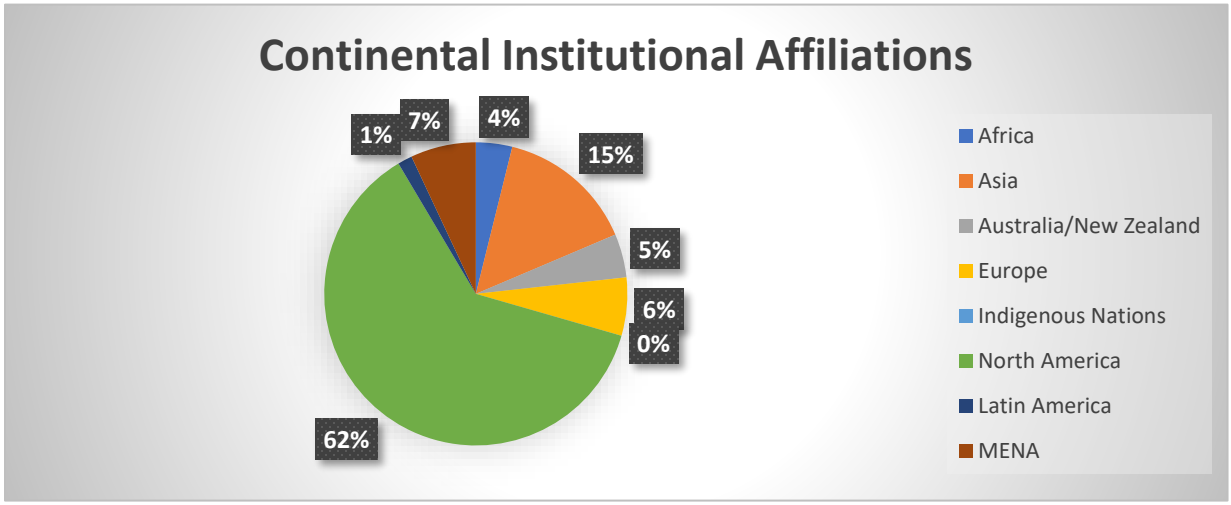
Graph 2: 2022 Authorship Categories



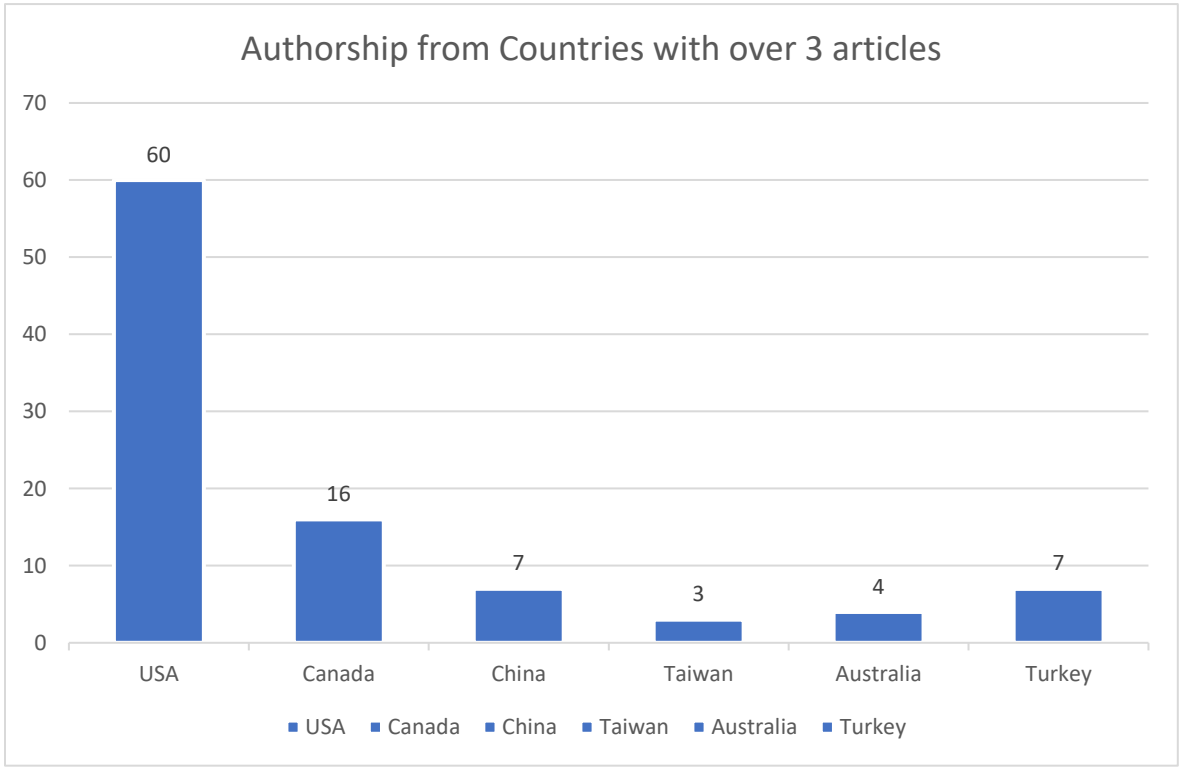
Author Institutional Affiliations by Continent and Country

Being a journal that is international in scope and purpose, JCIHE is pleased to share that in 2022, 40 authors have institutional affiliations outside of the United States, representing 25 countries. Graph 3 shows institutional affiliations by continents, Graph 4 by three or more authors, Graph 5 by less than three authors, Graph 6 all countries, and Graph 7 a multi-year Comparison.

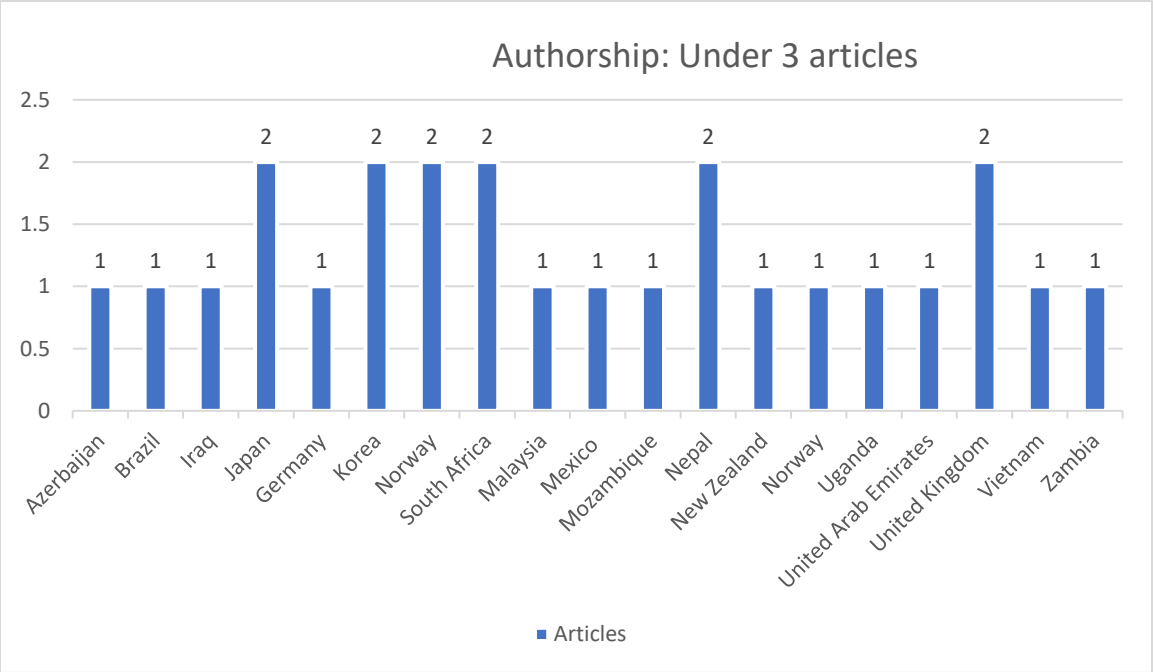
Graph 2: JCIHE Author Institutional Affiliations by World Regions



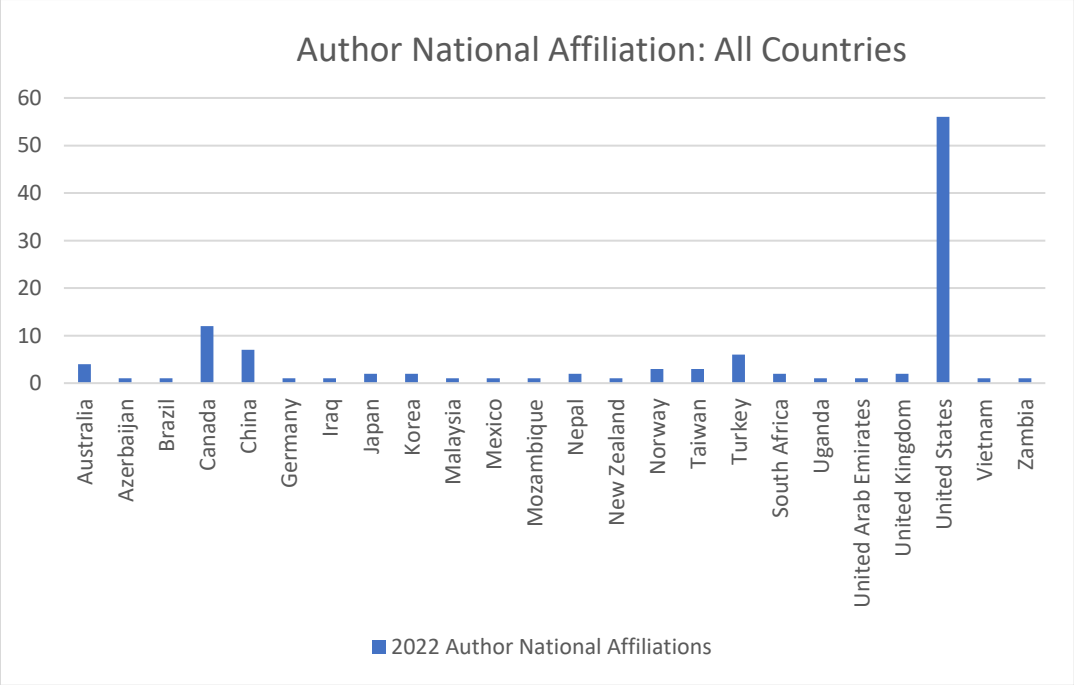
Graph 3: Authorship from Countries with over 3 articles



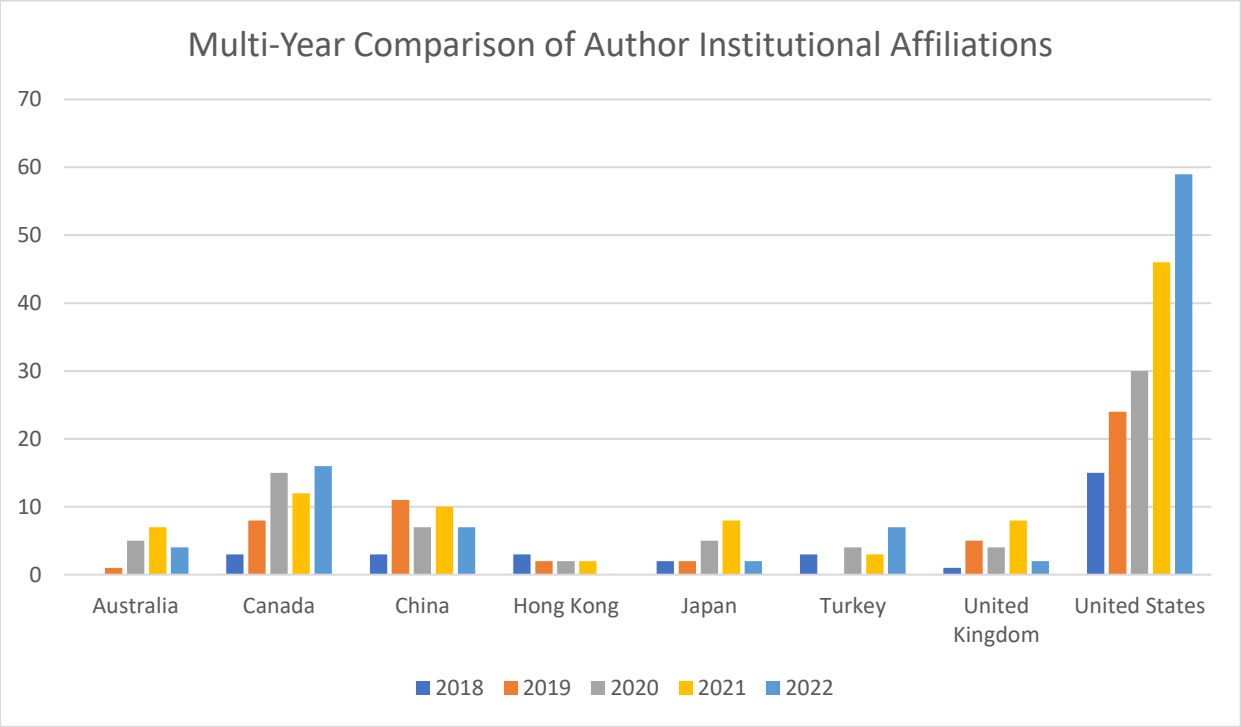
Graph 4: Authorship from countries with under 3 articles:



Graph 5: Authorship from all countries



Graph 6: Multi-year Comparison of Author Institutional Affiliations – 2018 - 2022



JCIHE 2022 Article Methodology, Keywords, and Themes

Methodologies

In 2022, authors used 70 qualitative and 24 quantitative research methodologies. Table 6 details these methodologies.

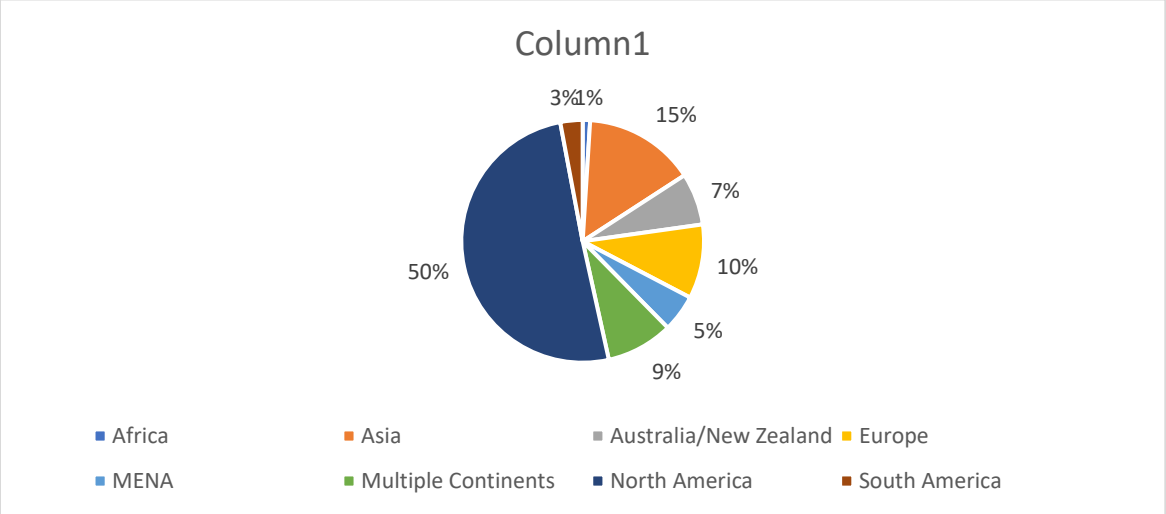
Table 4. Methodologies Used

Quantitative	**#**	**Qualitative**	**#**
Mixed Methods	7	Interviews	18
Statistics	7	Comparisons	10
Survey	4	Case study: single	9
Q systematic	1	Case study: Multiple & Comparative	6
Regression analysis comparative	1	Content Analysis	5
Comparative Thematic analysis	1	Ethnography	4
Survey & aptitude test	1	Interpretive with survey/focus groups/interviews & reflection papers	4
Mega-statistics	1	Survey/Questionnaire	3
Bibliometric Analysis	1	Literature Review: Critical Analysis	3
		Case study with survey	2
		Discourse Analysis	2
		Focus Group	2
		Narrative Inquiry	2
		Integrative Policy Review	1
		Participatory Action Research Case Study	1
		Self-Authorship	1

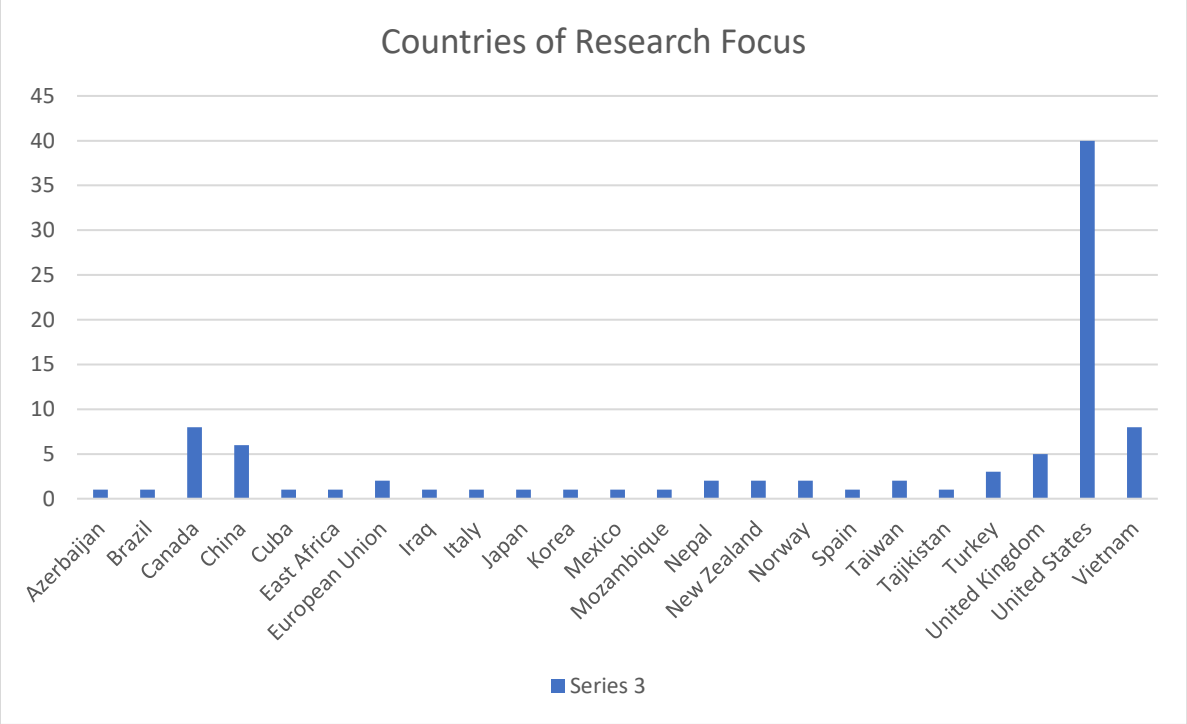
Areas of Research

Graph 7 shows that the focus of half of JCIHE 2022 articles were not on North America and Graph 8 that lists the countries of research focus.

Graph 7: Focus of Articles: Continents



Graph 8: Countries of Research Focus 2022



Keywords in Articles

Keywords provide a picture of what research is focusing on in a particular time period. Table 7 shows keywords with 4 or more mentions and Table 8 shows all keywords in Volume 14. It is not surprising that variations on COVID dominated the 2022 issue since it was the focus of a two-part Summer Special Issue and has a presence in subsequent issues.

Table 7. Keywords Over 4 mentions

Keywords	**#**	**Keywords**	**#**
academic support	4	Europe	4
agency	4	higher education	20
auto-ethnography	4	identity	4
Canada	4	internationalization	10
Chinese students	4	internationalization of higher education	5
comparative	9	international graduate-doctoral students	7
COVID-19 (Pandemic)	34	international students	51
decolonialism	4	international students and gender	4
COVID-19 stressors	5	online learning	5
COVID-19 institutional policies	4	student mobility	4
COVID-19 institutional resources	4	study abroad	6
COVID-19 student challenges	4	United States	5
educational policies	5		

Table 8. All Keywords

Keyword	#	Keyword	#	Keyword	#	Keyword	#
abroad	1	academic challenges	1	academic mobility	1	academic performance	3
academic support	3	access to HE	1	acculturation	1	acculturative stress	1
Africa	1	agency	4	American university	1	anti-Asian racism	1
Anti-Deficit theory	1	aspiration	1	assessment	1	Australia	1
auto-ethnography	3	authoritarianism	2	Barbados	1	belonging	1
Berry Acculturation Model	1	black Africans employability	1	Bologna	2	boundary making	1
Bourdieu	2	Canada	4	Canadian students	1	career-oriented programs	1
capital	1	Case study	1	censorship	1	challenges	2
China	2	China Initiative	1	China, recruitment	1	Chinese female graduate student	1
Chinese international doctoral students	1	Chinese international graduate students	1	Chinese international students	1	Chinese language	1
Chinese students	4	co-curricular program	2	Co-Curricular Theory	1	collaborative online international learning	1
collaborative research	1	coloniality	1	Commonwealth of learning	1	communication	1
community-based learning	1	Communication Accommodation Theory	1	community colleges	1	comparative	9
consultation	1	Coping	1	crisis leadership	1	crisis management	1
COVID-institutional resources	4	COVID-institutional policies	4	COVID-19 (Pandemic)	34	COVID- student challenges	4
COVID- student perceptions	2	COVID-19 stressors	9	COVID-19 university president	1	critical internationalization	1
culture	2	cultural learning	2	cultural perspectives	1	curriculum planning	1
decolonialism	4	degree/long-term mobility	2	developing countries	1	diplomacy	1
disadvantaged	1	dissertation	1	distance education	1	distance learning / ICE	2
diversity	2	doctoral students	2	East Africa	1	education abroad	2
education abroad programming	1	education as second language (ESL)	2	education reform	1	educational policies	5
emotional intelligence	1	employment	1	employability	1	English language barrier	1
English language embodied learning	1	environment	1	entrepreneurial university	1	espionage	3
ethnography	1	Europe	4	European higher education	2	European integration	2
European university	1	experience	1	experiential learning	2	facebook	1
faculty development	1	faculty experiences	3	financial adjustment	1	first generation	1
foreign donations	1	foreign funding	2	foreign influence	2	foreign interference	2
gender	1	geopolitics	1	global citizenship	1	global leadership	1
graduate students	1	Global South leadership	1	graduate employability	2	global liberal arts	1
health education	1	higher education	20	higher education policy	2	home replication	1

host students	1	identity	4	immersion	1	imperial tongue	1
in-person/virtual learning	1	institutional diversity initiatives	2	institutional policy	1	institutional programs	1
Intercultural behavior	2	institutional scholarship	1	Intercollegiate athletics	1	intercultural competence	2
Keyword	**#**	**Keyword**	**#**	**Keyword**	**#**	**Keyword**	**#**
intercultural learning	2	intercultural communication	1	interdisciplinary research	1	international cooperation	1
international education	3	international experiences	1	international faculty	1	international lecturers	1
international partnership	2	international higher education	1	international graduate / doctoral students	2	International recruitment	1
international student race	3	international student mobility	2	international teaching assistants	3	International undergraduate student	1
internationalization	10	internationalization of higher education	6	internationalization impact	2	internationalizing curricula	1
investment	1	Iran	2	Iraq	1	J-1 exchange programs	1
Japan	1	Japanese international students	1	job security	1	job stress	1
knowledge economy	1	language of the middle-class	1	language skills	1	local students	1
low-income	1	malign influence	1	Malaysian students	2	mental health	2
mental toughness	1	Mexican universities	1	migration	1	mixed methods	1
mobility	1	MotherScholar	1	Mozambique	1	multicultural(ism)	4
multilingual programs	3	national security	1	narrative research	1	neo-colonialism	1
non-academic challenges	1	non-traditional locations	1	Norway	1	online / virtual learning	3
oppression	1	pandemic research	1	part-time job	1	pedagogy perspectives	2
peer interaction	1	perceived roles	1	personality traits	1	photovoice methodology	1
policy	1	post-colonial	1	post-conflict	1	post-Soviet	1
Positioning Theory	1	pre-service ITA	1	presidential perspectives	1	programs: raise status	1
program satisfaction	2	propaganda	1	psychological needs	1	psychological well-being	2
public diplomacy	1	public health	1	race	1	recruiter's experiences	1
recruitment	1	regional university	1	religious diversity	1	remote education	1
remote teaching	1	reputation	1	role strain theory	1	representation	1
rural	1	scholarship	1	second language acquisition	1	self-determination theory	2
self-perceived employability	1	sensemaking	1	sense of belonging	2	small culture	1
social identity	1	social interaction	1	social media	1	social network sites	1
Socio-Cultural Theory	1	social-political	1	sociolinguistics	1	soft power	1
student emotional intelligence for coping	2	student experiences	3	student mobility	4	student social media use	1
student support	1	study abroad	6	stress coping	1	sustainability	1
synergistic knowledge production	1	Taiwan	1	Tajikistan	1	team identification	1
technology	2	Theory of Social Practice	1	transforming / transformative	2	Turkish international student	1

Turkey	2	undergraduate student	2	United Kingdom	1	United States	5
university leadership	1	U.S. higher education institutions	1	university-business partnership	1	university students	1
Vietnam	1	virtual classrooms	1	virtual exchange	2	virtual learning	2
vulnerability	1	websites	1	website Review	1	wellness	3
women academics	1	writing centers	1	worldview	2		

Conclusion

The *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education* celebrates the authors who were published in 2022 Volume 14. JCIHE is looking forward to our 2023 Volume 15 articles as well as those that will be published in three special issues:

Summer Issue 3: The Road Towards UNESCO's Sustainable Goals Amidst the Pandemic of Covid -19 in Latin America and the Caribbean Higher Education. Guest Editors: Pilar Mendoza, and Santiago Castiello-Gutiérrez.

Fall Issue 4: Liberal Education: Conference proceedings from 7TH Global Higher Education Forum 2021. Guest Editor Hans Schultz

Winter Issue 5: Inhabiting the Otherwise in International Academic: Critiques, Complexities, Struggles and Re-Existences. Guest Editors Jhuliane Evelyn da Silva, Juliana Zeggio Martinez, and Roxana Baros Chiappa

Support Acknowledgments

JCIHE is indebted to our exceptional technical, editorial, and production teams for their considerable efforts in getting the manuscripts in each issue ready for publication. Together these volunteer teams help to strengthen the JCIHE organization system and to keep the publication process running smoothly. The 2022 JCIHE management team includes

Dante Salto, Executive Editor, 2022-2024

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Production Editor Assistants: Adeline De Angelis, Yadu Gyawali, Kristin Labs, and Kyunghee Ma.

In addition, we thank the OJED systems team lead by Krishna Bista and Chris Glass. JCIHE is proud to be part of the OJED and STAR networks.

Tremendous teamwork is required throughout the editorial and production pipeline. JCIHE recognizes our expert reviewers who give their time and expertise to review and sometime double review articles. It is your work that maintains the high quality of our accepted manuscripts. **JCIHE extends sincere thanks to our 2022 peer reviewers**

Ashenafi Aboye; Alsaeed Alshamy; Pranit Anand; Mila Arden; Nicolas Arizaga; Sara Bano; Bradley K. Beecher; Kristian Blias; Gerardo Blanco; Miss Budahepst; Xi Cao; Danielle M. Carrier; Charlie; Nuchelle Chance; Angel Oi Yee Cheng; Pallavi Chhabra; Angel Choi; Christine Cress; Natalie Cruz; Shasha Cui; Kun Dai; Rudy Fernandez Daling; Beatrice Dang; Tchetchet Digbohou; Jessi Hanson DeFusco; Fabiola P. Ehlers-Zavala; Daniel K. Gakunga, Sowmya Ghosh; Sreeramulu Gosikonda; Jean Gonodo; Ahdi Hassin; Xuewei He; Brian Heuser; Anh-Duc Hoang; Tylor Hough; Dr. Idrus; Moon Jeung; Elliott Karetny; Dear Keun; Stephanie Kim; Matthew Kitching; Christopher Kohler; Crystal Sunjung Lee; Natalia Leskina; Li Li; Oleg Legusov; Brandon Stewart McLeod; Ying Ma; Jennifer Maldrech; Keenan Daniel Manning; Mart Andrew Maravillas; Carmen Martinez-Vargas; Dorothy Mayne; Pilar Mendoza; Joe Miller; Leping Mou; Muftahu; Benjaminin Mulvely; Pushpa Asia Neupane; Antigoni Papadimitrio; Jerry Parker; Sonia Pavlenko; Dr. Qom; Dana Rad; Namrata Rao; Dante Salto;Sara Maria Schiffecker; Sandro Serpa; Berhnard Streitwiser; Nicholas R. Stroup; Vander Tavares; Ann Margaret Themistocleous; Samantha Thompson; Bich Tran; Rachel Walsh; Rong (Lotus) Wang; Holly Wheeler; Ayenachew Woldegiyorgis; Allison Yasukawa; Melissa Yeung; Leaf Zhang; Stephanie Zuilkowsik

JCIHE also recognizes our volunteer copyeditors who are essential in maintaining strong academic quality of the journals, and most importantly, to getting articles published in a timely manner. **JICHE extends sincere thanks to our 2022 Copy-Editors**

Joanna Abdallah; Lul Admasachew; Javaria (Jia) Akaff; Maylia Pramono Ari; Nazgul Bayetova; Bob Cermak; Prashanti Chennamsetti; Ricardo Covele; Solomon Arulraj David; Ryan Deuel; William Federer; Morgan Keller; Michael Lanford; Rachel McGee; Gregory Malveaux; Yovana Soobrayen-Veerasamy; Vutha Ros; Nian Ruan; Sarah Schiffecker; and Samantha Thompson.

JCIHE thanks our Regional Editors who reach out to their colleagues around the world and lend their expertise to the peer reviewing and copy-editing process. **JCIHE extends sincere thanks to our 2022 Regional Editors**

Mary Ann Bodine Al-Sharif; Pranit Anand; Ayenachew Aseffa; Naif Daifullah Asualmi; Nazgul Bayetova; Teklu A. Bekele; Lilian Butungi; Indra Dedze; Al Dabiri, University of Missouri; John Dennis; Addam El-Ghali; Jean Gonondo; Duc Hoang; Mohd Muzhafar Idrus; Arburim Iseni; Grace McMahon, The George Washington University Moon Jeong; Morgan Keller; Jeevan Khanal; Matthew Kitching; Aliya Kuzhabekova; Michael Lanford; Jungmin Lee; Natalia Leskina; Barbara Thornton Lewis; Benjamin Mulvey; Tahira Naushahi; Asia Neupane; Nelson Nkhoma; Antigoni Papadimitriou; Yurgos Politis; Oytun Sözüdo; Sonia Pavlenko; Manar Sabry; Marta Shaw; Richard JM Smith; Samantha Thompson; Juliette Torabian; Sukardi Weda

Finally, JICHE would like to sincerely than the Advisory Board which is comprise of renown scholars whose task is to provide instrumental recommendations to the editorial team. **JCIHE extends sincere thanks to our 2022 Advisory Board Members**

Mark Ashwill (CapestoneVietnam); Yeow-Tong Chia (University of Sydney); Christopher Collins (Azusa Pacific University); Omolabake Fakunle (University of Edinburgh); Ali Said Ali Ibrahim (United Arab Emirates University); Dilrabo Jonbekova (Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan); Mei Li (East China Normal University); Ka Ho Mok (Joshua) (University of Hong Kong); Mousumi Mukherjee (O.P. Jindal Global University, India); Daniela Perotta (University of Buenos Aires); Dante J Salto (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee); Sharon Stein (University of British Colombia)

Finally, I also want to thank our authors for choosing to publish in JCIHE and to help advance scholarship in the field of Comparative and International Higher Education. Finally, I want to thank our readers for finding relevant and innovative articles in each issue. I especially want to thank the JCIHE Executive Editors Pilar Mendoza and Anatoly Oleksiyenko who for the past few years served as the co-chairs of the CIES HE-SIG and helped transform JCIHE. Finally, I want to extend my sincerest thanks to the JCIHE Associate Editor, Hei-hang Hayes Tang who supports the journal in improving quality and focus.

Editor in Chief, Rosalind Latiner Raby, 2022

Empirical Article

OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION

Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 33-44
Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education
DOI: 10.32674/jcihe.v15i1.4437 | https://ojed.org/jcihe

"It can be chaos here" International student experiences of U.S. higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically altered life at higher education institutions in the US. International students were particularly affected because they lack the community and support structures upon which other stakeholder groups could rely. International student experiences of the pandemic may have been further exacerbated by uncertain immigration policies, their perceptions of more successful containment of the virus abroad, and xenophobia in the public discourse. This phenomenological study documents the experiences of international students in US higher education during the pandemic to determine how they adapted, how they were shaped, and how their attitudes toward study abroad in the US may have changed. It seeks to introduce the voices of these students to the scholarly literature. The findings reveal a sense of chaos, an aversion to online instruction, a lack of non-academic support form institutions, and a tarnished, but still attractive image of the US as a destination for study abroad.

Keywords: Higher education, COVID-19, international student experiences, United States

Received November 4, 2021; Revised February 23, 2022, Accepted March 4, 2022

Globalization has led to increasing numbers of students leaving their native countries to study abroad. Students pursuing higher education degrees outside their home countries more than doubled from 2 million in 2000 to 5.3 million in 2017 (UNESCO, 2019). The U.S. hosts many of the highest-ranked higher education institutions (HEIs) globally, driving demand for higher education as an important export sector of the U.S. economy. Higher education policy in the U.S. has tended to equate internationalization with international student recruitment, focusing on the economic benefits that international students bring to HEIs (Veerasamy, 2021). International students created 44 billion U.S. dollars in export income in 2019, nearly equal to the sum of soybean, corn, and textile exports (Bound et al., 2021; Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2020). International student participation in U.S. higher education helps foster global connections and provides university-educated workers to the U.S. and global labor markets. These international students help meet U.S. demand for human resources for engineers, chemists, mathematicians, geologists, computer experts, and other scientific and technical specialists (Gold, 2016). Furthermore, recent activities of private HEIs demonstrate their growing financial dependence on international students (Whatley & Castiello-Gutiérrez, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically altered life at HEIs in the U.S. and around the world. As a result of the pandemic caused by COVID-19, thousands of schools around the world have canceled classes and closed schools. As of April 6, 2020, UNESCO (2020) reported that out of 91.3% of the total registered learners of all learning levels in 188 countries, a total of 1,576,021,818 learners, have been affected. As a result, international students were particularly affected because they lack the community and support structures upon which other groups can rely. Their experiences of the pandemic could impact sentiment towards the U.S. as a suitable destination for study abroad.

This phenomenological study explores international students' lived experiences in US higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic. It seeks to capture and present the voices of international students within the literature. The study provides evidence on their experiences with online teaching, changes in their lifestyles, and sources and barriers to support. The findings reveal how these experiences impacted their views of U.S. higher education and its suitability as a destination for study abroad. The results provide insight into steps that policymakers and higher education leaders might take to meet the needs of international students and mitigate the impact of future uncertainty on their participation in U.S. higher education.

Literature Review

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted our social lives, economies, formal learning, psychological well-being, and culture (Sá & Serpa, 2020). Countries and organizations sought to establish safety practices like work or study from home, social distancing measures, and mask mandates to allow for business and education to continue. The pandemic has had a huge impact on higher education and student experiences at an individual, organizational, and societal levels. 1.5 billion students in 165 countries worldwide lost access to face-to-face instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Souza et al., 2020). In higher education, sudden campus closures forced students to move off-campus leading to housing insecurity and inequitable access to technology, space, time, and living conditions that could have negatively impacted learning during remote instruction (Bolumole, 2020; Gomes et al., 2021). The psychological ramifications of grief, loneliness, lack of productivity, difficulty concentrating, career impact due to lack of job leads, stress, anxiety had an enormous impact on mental health and well-being (Bolumole, 2020, Son et al., 2020). These changes in higher education presented a struggle for all students, however international students, in particular, are a vulnerable population in the U.S.. International students often must adapt to a new culture, lack sufficient support, struggle with English language, and face indifference from faculty and administrators, alike (Agostinelli, 2021; Haan et al., 2017). International students struggled deciding whether to stay in the U.S. or return to their home country during the pandemic (Wang, 2021). Many international students suffered in terms of their mental health and sense of well being (Koo, 2021).

At the organizational level, questions remain regarding the transition to online instruction within higher education. Students have expressed concern over the lack of digital competencies, lower productivity, decreased quality of teaching, and higher workload as major challenges during the transition (Blue Brazelton & Buford, 2021; Aristonvik et al., 2020; Sá & Serpa, 2020, Souza, 2020). Further support is needed to foster digital literacy and enhanced infrastructure in higher education for new delivery methods, digital teaching, and learning tools, and flexible and renewed curriculum (Sá & Serpa, 2020). This support will allow higher education to retain its place and purpose in our society as we work through the changes to our way of life rooted in our shared experience of the pandemic (Bolumole, 2020).

The larger societal impact of the pandemic has made the international student community even more vulnerable. Growing xenophobia and negative sentiment towards internationalism in the U.S. may further impact international students' sense of comfort and belonging there. The Trump presidency led to political discourse, cultural climate, and a series of policies viewed as hostile to international students (Laws & Ammigan, 2020; Pottie-Sherman, 2018). Research suggests growing neo-nationalism (Lee, 2016) and prejudices against international students (Charles-Toussant & Crowson, 2010) already may serve as a barrier to a positive experience in U.S. higher education for international students. These influences are likely to disrupt the processes of self-formation and identity development experienced by many international students during their time abroad (Marginson, 2014). Further, these concerns will compound with any additional stress emerging from the pandemic.

Higher education institutions (HEIs) from major destination countries, such as the US, the UK, and Australia have anticipated a considerable decrease in incoming international students as a result of these disruptions (Mok et al., 2021). HEIs struggle with internationalization due to a lack of consensus and shared vision among stakeholders (Ghazarian, 2020). The barriers for students to pursue their further degrees overseas from the pandemic include travel bans, visa restrictions, and campus lockdowns in destination countries, including students and their families' worries on health and safety (Mok et al., 2021), adversely impacting access to international higher education (Souza et al., 2020). The anti-globalization trend associated with the COVID-19 pandemic has had many negative effects on international higher education. Policymakers, institutional administrators, and educators know that individual HEIs or even countries cannot single-handedly deal with this concern (Mok et al., 2021).

Conceptual Framework

In the effort to determine how international students' experiences of COVID-19 in U.S. higher education might impact the attractiveness of the U.S. as a destination choice for study abroad, this study adopts Fakunle's (2020) framework for international students' rationales for studying abroad. Faunkle (2020) divides international student motivations for studying abroad into four major categories: educational, aspirational, experiential, and economic rationales. The educational component includes academic experiences and outcomes, the experiential component includes new and intercultural exposures, the aspirational covers personal and professional development, and the economic rationale includes cost consciousness and expected returns for earning a degree while abroad. This framework for understanding international students' rationale for studying abroad will help inform what implications may be drawn from the findings of this study.

Research Method

This study describes the lived experiences of international students in U.S. higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the study worked to identify the issues related to personal change, host institutions, relationships, modified instruction, and health concerns as described by the international students.

Design

This study was conducted on the ontological foundation of critical realism, acknowledging the existence of an external, structured reality independent from individuals, but within which knowledge is a social product (Bhaskar, 2010). It is rooted in a constructivist (Piaget, 1967) epistemological perspective, positing that individuals construct knowledge and form meaning through their experiences and interactions. The study employed phenomenology, a paradigm for qualitative research that concentrates on describing, understanding, and explaining the meaning of lived experiences (Patton, 2015). The researchers sought to explore the experiences of international students in US higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic. We aimed to capture the essence or essences of that shared lived experience (Patton, 2015) through participants' reflective description of their world (Roche, 1973; Ricoeur, 1976). These findings are reported in terms of the key issues raised by participants as determined through inductive, cross-case pattern analysis (Patton, 2015).

Positionality

The researchers approached this study from a mixed insider/outsider perspective. All the researchers have experience living and studying abroad, albeit at different times, in different contexts, and under different circumstances. Two of the researchers have experience studying in the US during the COVID-19 pandemic. These shared experiences with participants may better allow the researchers to empathize with participants and their experiences. However, within the international student community, a wide variety of experiences exist across subgroups, and so while some experiences may be shared across those groups, others will be specific to particular individuals relative to which the researchers will be outsiders.

Sampling & Participants

Maximum variation sampling (Patton, 2015) was used to capture and describe themes that exist across the variation of international student experiences. Information about the study was initially spread through international student organizations and social media. Following the initial round of interviews, snowball sampling was used to pursue further cases of participants who adapted particularly well and those who struggled. Snowball sampling was used with these individuals to identify other potential participants. The study was approved by the local Human Subjects Research Board and informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to inclusion in the study and recording of the interviews. A total of eleven individuals took part in the study. Their demographic information is provided below in Table 1.

Table 1.
Participants

Psuedonym	Age	Nationality	Level
Lara	24	Germany	Undergraduate
Abhas	19	India	Undergraduate
Rui	24	China	Graduate
Elias	32	Nigeria	Graduate
Linlin	42	China	Graduate
Badri	23	India	Graduate
Rongjia	29	China	Graduate
Saxe	23	Netherlands	Undergraduate
Weifeng	29	China	Graduate
Lukshan	26	Nepal	Undergraduate
Xiu	26	China	Graduate

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews of 30-40 minutes were conducted with participants via video conference between February and May of 2021. Due to the ongoing effects of the pandemic, there were no face-to-face interviews. The interviews were video recorded to allow for the coding of both verbal and non-verbal communication. An interview guide was used to prompt participants about their pandemic story, feelings of personal change, views on their host institution, thoughts on modified instruction, health care concerns, and their current feelings. Two pilot interviews were conducted with a non-participant to trial the interview guide. The researchers studied video recordings of the pilot interviews and made revisions to the interview guide based on their observations. Interviews were conducted in English or Mandarin, according to participants' preferences. A native Mandarin speaker conducted the three Mandarin language interviews, transcribed them, and translated them into English for coding.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed continuously during the study. All researchers maintained regular, independent reflections on incoming interview recordings and transcriptions and results from the social media search and analysis. Each transcript was read to ensure immersion in the data and embed interpretation within participants' stories. Content analysis (Patton, 2015) was used to identify patterns and themes within the data. The researchers made use of investigator triangulation to compare, combine, and refine their analyses. Findings are reported in terms of the key issues raised by participants as determined through this inductive, cross-case pattern analysis (Patton, 2015).

Limitations

We acknowledge that the sample size of 11 participants is low compared to the population of international students in the U.S.. However, we achieved data saturation (Patton, 2015) in our discussions with participants and that these interviews provide important documentation of the experiences of international students in U.S. higher education during the pandemic.

Results

Five themes emerged from the interviews. These included: (1) chaos of the pandemic in the U.S., (2) online instruction, (3) the personal impact of the pandemic, (4) support: sources & barriers, and (5) perception of the US as a destination for study abroad.

Chaos of the Pandemic in the U.S.

As international students in US higher education, the participants described a sense of disorder and confusion around their experience of the pandemic. They felt that no one was reaching out to them and they were left to figure things on their own.

One participant put it especially succinctly: "sometimes it can be-- it can be chaos here." (Rongjia, China).

Respondents' families expressed mixed emotions about them being in the U.S. during the pandemic. Initially they believed that being in the U.S. was safer when other countries were dealing with the pandemic. These responses often changed as the situation in the U.S. worsened. The decision about whether to return home was a major choice for participants. The university email to shut down was a shock for most students as they were asked to vacate the university housing at very short notice. They were left to figure out for themselves. Most of them were fortunate enough to be able to move-in with their friends till they got tickets to fly back home. Some left almost immediately, but most chose to stay. Others who wanted to return home for a greater sense of stability and safety were reluctant to leave out of fear of being unable to return due to visa or political situations.

Many participants worked on campus and the COVID-19 closure had an impact on their jobs. International students relied on the campus jobs for financial stability, which immediately became a challenge as soon as the campus closed. In some cases, it also created work opportunities for them.

"At the time, I also used to work, in, uh, Minnesota as an assistant, nursing assistant. And, uh, uh a lot of our coworkers got scared and they didn't come and uh, I was an international student, I had to go because there was no one to look after the people, so yeah it made me like-- it gave me good working hours." (Lukshan, Nepal).

So, while some were able to benefit from the circumstances, most struggled with unexpected loss of income. In the case of Lukshan, the chance to work more could be understood as an opportunity, as he presented it. However, it also could be seen as exploitation of a vulnerable individual. His remarks suggest that as an international student, he felt obligated to go into work when his American peers deemed it unsafe to continue.

In addition to their experiences of housing insecurity, the participants also described experiences of financial insecurity and food insecurity during the pandemic. Since most countries were suffering from the pandemic, some were concerned that if situation worsens in their home country, it would impact the source of income and it would get difficult for them to be able to pay their tuitions. Loss of campus jobs worsened their worries and some of them became dependent on local residents or church.

"the Church, they dropped.. a grocery and food package for me at my-- my door" (Elias, Nigeria)

Ultimately, the experience of the pandemic for international students in US higher education was confusing and stressful. While there were also some opportunities, the participants shared a consistent sense of insecurity.

Online Instruction

The participants felt that the shift to online instruction required more preparation, and that though some instructors were able to make that adjustment as the pandemic progressed, others struggled with the transition. The respondents mentioned lack of technical skills in the professors, ability to manage online assignment, encouragment of online discussions, ability to use breakout rooms for group participation, etc. as some of the challenges. Students were frustrated by the transition and found that overall, it was detrimental to the quality of their education. Specifically, the participants pointed to the lack of opportunities for informal communication with instructors and engagement during online instruction.

The perceived decline in communication was a major drawback associated with online teaching for many of the participants. They reported disconnect and lack of belonging. Furthermore, participants felt that increased flexibility in online instruction came at the detriment of rigor and that they needed to supplement the instruction they received. Reduced quality of instruction, attitude of students, seriousness of exams, and leniency in scoring, all led to inferior teaching standards, hence impacting learning. Participants confessed that they learnt more by themselves than by attending classes. The perceived decline in rigor was due to the nature of the online learning environment, but also due to a perceived shift in the attitudes of instructors.

These experiences of online instruction varied according to the discipline, with participants pointing out particular courses they felt needed face-to-face instruction. They agreed, pointing out that in certain fields, a physical presence is necessary to have the full learning experience around particular skills.

"I think for some courses, it was just annoying-- like I was taking an anatomy class and we were doing Cat dissections and all of a sudden it's like oh no they're just stay in the fridge for the rest of the semester" (Lisa, Germany).

Although most of their comments related to online instruction were negative, some participants did identify a few benefits. Some found it easier to focus and others appreciated the ability to record and rewatch their lessons.

"I still would prefer in-person, but I think this is-- this is something I noticed that um, online, where you're just sitting at home, looking at your laptop, you're able to see what the professor is talking about. So you don't have to look up at the board, take notes, look up at the board, take notes. Because you again, you have recordings so you don't have to take notes, you can go back and watch the lecture again and then you also have the ability to just focus on the lecture constantly" (Badri, India)

Overall, however, the participants reported mostly negative experiences with online instruction.

Personal Impact of the Pandemic

Participants reported changes in their lifestyle, friendships, personal motivation, and for many, the onset of depression. Some participants described how their lifestyle changed in some positive ways as a result of COVID-19.

"Uh, I feel like I started eating more healthier, like more healthy options. Yeah, and I-- I just focus on my health point of view, like as-- like I didn't focus on my health before the pandemic" (Abhas, India)

The impact on friendship and socializing differed. For most, it meant isolation, but for others it continued with contact among a bubble of close friends. Some of the participants shared that they continued to meet with close friends, even though the frequency was quite reduced. Those that completely isolated themselves also felt the greatest impact of the pandemic on their sense of well- being. This impacted the degree of motivation among participants and for some it led to depression. They mentioned that isolation and depression started to impact their interest in studies and the amount of effort they put into assignments. Some were impacted to such an extent that they considered seeking medical help.

Those who fared best tended to be those participants who felt connected to their host community during the pandemic. For instance, Rongjia (China) explained, “I personally didn't feel, uh... depressed because I live with an American family, so I have some people to talk with, socialize.”

Even as the situation improved, that sense of fear and panic lingered. Participants described continued concern for the help and remorse that they would never be able to return back to pre-pandemic life.

"The fear of getting sick, um, is always there, was always there. I've, uh, I had COVID in November so also, just, I'm scared that things never will be back to normal, uh, like the things we used to and I think that changes me as a person as well, just the fear and longing of something that we have that seems so normal that isn't there." (Saxe, Netherlands)

Support: Sources & Barriers

Participants revealed that they experienced varied levels of support from the university and their professors. They shared concerns about the fear of contracting the virus, being alone in this country, lack of clarity about medical support, and the financial implication of the treatment. They felt like their concerns

were not addressed by the administrative staff. Some of them did mention that the university health services were supportive and prioritized student well-being over assignments, but in general most of them reported lack of concern. While the participants felt that many of their questions and concerns were left unanswered, there were supports in place to ensure they could continue their studies even if they were to contract COVID-19.

Students reported very different levels of support from their instructors. Some seemed to have close personal relationships with some of their instructors, while others felt they got no support at all. The only students who did report a close, supportive personal relationship with an instructor was a white, male student from the Netherlands. None of the other participants shared having had that type of relationship or support from instructors. Some participants were upset by different treatment of international and domestic students that prevented them from getting a similar level of support. They reported that they got more support from local residents and church than their own university.

Some participants saw this as evidence of racism in US culture. The respondents reported that they felt that Asians in general were treated differently than others.

"At the beginning, the pandemic broke out in China, but since President Trump started to use the germ 'Chinese virus,' I feel like everyone has been brainwashed." (Weifeng, China)

“Um... the Asian crime. [laughs] Yeah, the crime against Asian is, uh, I'm starting to notice it's really unbelievable” (Rui, China).

"I feel that the trust between people has decreased. Maybe because I am Asian, I feel that everyone will unconsciously stay away from me. I feel very oppressed psychologically" (Weifeng, China).

This experience contrasts sharply with that of those coming to the U.S. to study from Europe.

“people are so welcoming, uh at no point I thought oh no what if I don't have friends? Um, just because you're from a different place, people are interested in you and interested in your story and inside of no time you almost feel like a local, like you belong there" (Saxe, Netherlands).

Perception of the U.S. as a Destination for Study Abroad

Participants described concerns about healthcare in the U.S., whether they would recommend the U.S. as a destination for other international students, and a sense that they were deprived of an experience they traveled great distances to pursue. Concern about the cost of healthcare fed into concern about the pandemic.

Views on the U.S. response to the pandemic varied. Some saw it is an important lesson in uncertainty for the U.S. Others were disappointed with the U.S. response. They felt that the leaders did not do enough to control the pandemic or support the people. They mentioned that the international students come so far not only for learning in-class but also to learn from the surrounding environment. They felt that many international students started to consider other countries as an option for higher education. In the case of those international students originating from China, the broader tensions with the U.S. involving the politics around the origin of COVID-19 and the ongoing trade war also seem to contribute to a growing negative sentiment.

Some felt the recommendation of the U.S. as a destination for study abroad would be conditional on the focus of studies and individual personality. For many, though, the benefits were greater than the disadvantages. A number of participants spoke of the U.S. as a place that helped them to fulfill their dreams.

"Yeah, it's definitely a good experience, but it depends on the personality. Like, if you are used to the out-outgoing and very enthusiastic lifestyle, like, oh, doing the best to enjoy the life there-- here. Um... then it will be suitable for you. But if you are a person that is,um, a little quiet and prefer to be alone, then it might not be a very good experience for you." (Rui, China)

Discussion

The most striking finding from the interviews was the sense of chaos or disorder that the international students sensed in the U.S. during the pandemic. This feeling of confusion and panic that came at the outset of the pandemic in the spring of 2020 shifted into a general sense of fear and anxiety over the subsequent year. The combination of housing insecurity, food insecurity, and financial insecurity brought on by the pandemic clearly contributed to this initial panic and subsequent anxiety among the participants. A part of this sense of chaos and emotional disruption may also be rooted in the disruption of international students' process of adjustment and acculturation to life in the U.S. (Bochner, 1972; Marginson, 2014). International students working through the complex and difficult process of negotiating a new identity to suit their new cultural environment were suddenly confronted with insecurity at some of the most basic levels: shelter, foods, and access to resources. As a result, their sense of chaos or disorder may have been sensed externally in the response to the pandemic they experienced, as well as internally in their own disruption.

Overall, the participants reported dissatisfaction with online instruction in U.S. higher education, though they did note some benefits. These observations about the international students' experiences in U.S. higher education echo the findings of work done in other contexts. Students observed a lack of digital competency in some of their instructors, a decreased pace of instruction, impaired quality of teaching, and a greater personal responsibility for learning that felt burdensome that has also been observed in prior work (Aristonvik et al., 2020; Blue Brazelton & Buford, 2021; Sá & Serpa, 2020, Souza, 2020). Even so, some of the participants did note that having recorded lectures was a benefit that allowed them to focus more during their class meetings and some found the greater sense of personal responsibility for their learning to be helpful. Others found the experience to be demotivating.

Another concerning finding from the study was the perceived lack of support from HEIs and instructors during the pandemic. All of the international students who took part in the study had to rely on external sources of support such as other international students, American friends, or external organizations such as churches to provide them with the support that they needed. The international students described the email communication that they received as impersonal and insufficient and felt they were unable to find answers to the questions that they had. Some services, such as a 24-hour psychological support hotline were praised. However, the overall consensus was that without the aid from outside groups, the consequences of the pandemic on international students at U.S. HEIs could have been even more severe. It is likely that there were individual international students who lacked access to that informal social safety net. A number of participants shared their mental health struggles due to their lifestyle during the pandemic, a finding supporting past research work (Koo, 2021).

Many of the participants from Asian countries also described a growing sense of being unwelcome in the U.S. as a result of anti-Asian discourse, crime, and prejudice. Students linked a sense of alienation and isolation directly back to the political discourse and media coverage of the pandemic. Rising neo-nationalism leads to prejudicial treatment of individuals based on their nationality rather than their race (Lee, 2016) and dissimilarity to peers from the host country reduces receptivity towards international students of color (Katz et al, 2021). The findings from this study suggest that while there is certainly a sense of growing anti-Chinese sentiment, there is also a racialized component felt by individuals from East and

Southeast Asian countries. Their experiences contrast sharply with the participants from Europe who described the U.S. as an extremely welcoming place where they felt accepted and formed quick relationships with locals.

Finally, the findings suggest that while participants' view of the U.S. may have been tarnished as a result of their experiences of the pandemic in U.S. higher education, the vast majority would still recommend the U.S. as a destination for study abroad. Through the lens of Fakunle's (2020) conceptual framework, participants' remarks suggested that while the educational and experiential rationale for studying abroad in U.S. higher education may have been disrupted by the pandemic, their aspirational and economic rationales remained, for the most part, intact. Participants were clear that they felt the quality of the education and experiences of U.S. culture that they received as a result of their study at a U.S. HEI suffered as a result of the pandemic. However, participants were also confident that the experience would empower them to pursue their personal and professional goals and ultimately provide a good economic return on the cost. That said, some expressed concern that the pandemic would dampen their ability to find employment after completing their programs of study. Further, others felt that their host institutions should be sensitive to the reality of a decrease in the quality of the education and experiences for international students that should be reflected in the cost of their study.

The researchers recommend that schools provide more financial support to the nation's students during the pandemic, as all housing insecurity, food insecurity, and financial insecurity anxiety stems from student financial strain. In addition, colleges and universities can consider reducing or waiving some tuition fees as appropriate because, during the pandemic, online teaching methods did not meet the teaching commitments of in-person courses when international students were initially admitted. Universities should also cooperate more with external organizations. External resource support can be considered an additional supplement to the lack of college support services, and groups of the same race or faith are more likely to be trusted and accepted by international students.

Overall, participants expressed the belief that a U.S. education remains a valued commodity around the world and that studying in the U.S. provided one with great opportunities. Participants from China were the most hesitant to profess their recommendation of the U.S. for study abroad, often citing the deteriorating Sino-American relationship. This seems to support Ghazarian's (2016) finding that country-level relationships may be more important than the personal perception of country image in predicting the destination choice of international students in higher education.

Conclusion

This study documented the experiences of international students in U.S. higher education during the COVID-19 pandemic. We sought to capture the voices of these students to ensure that they enter into the research literature and are heard as a source of evidence for policymakers and university leaders for policymaking and planning. As U.S. HEIs continue to deal with population aging and subsequent declines in local students, international students present an opportunity for growth. The flow of international student revenue and human resources contributes to the development of U.S higher education and the economy (Bound et al., 2021). Unfortunately, these students often report having felt underserved or even betrayed by their host institutions during their experiences of COVID-19 in U.S. higher education and had to rely on outside sources of support. Furthermore, deteriorating country-level relationships between the U.S. and other countries and subsequent immigration and policy barriers will likely further damage interest in the U.S. as a destination for study abroad. Policymakers and HEI leaders will need to carefully consider how they might better support international students to sustain this important source of students for U.S. higher education.

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Empirical Article

OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION

Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 45-60
Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education
DOI: 10.32674/jcihe.v15i1.4028 | https://ojed.org/jcihe

Youth, Training and Labor Insertion in Sudan: Lessons from the INSO Project

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Abstract

The article deals with the relation between higher education and employment in Sudan. It evaluates the efficiency of a training project realized in collaboration between international and local private and government partners that aimed to provide university graduates with employment opportunities. The INSO Project (Innovation in society: Training paths and human capital enhancement in Sudan) took place from 2017 to 2019. The research methodology consists of a questionnaire survey among the project participants to collect data on their employment achievements after almost two years of their graduation and a series of interviews about their professional integration. The collected data are analyzed in the context of the Sudanese socio-economic environment, higher education, and development. The study reveals a significant rate of employment for the graduates of this training project and a positive impact of specific training related to job search techniques.

Received July 22, 2021; revised October 21, 2021; accepted June 6, 2022

Keywords: employability, higher education, human capital, labor insertion, sustainable development

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Labor insertion of university graduates is a challenge everywhere in the world. This challenge is particularly blatant in African countries due to their rapid demographic growth and the limitations of their higher education systems.

This research project aims at understanding how a specific training program can provide university graduates with employment opportunities in an African country like Sudan. It does so by analyzing the outcomes of the INSO project (Innovation in society: Training paths and human capital enhancement in Sudan), that was realized via international cooperation between 2017 and 2019. The INSO project included various training activities with the objectives of facilitating the professional insertion of 138 university students of technological undergraduate programs, job creation and digital transformation in the framework of the sustainable development of the country.

In their conference paper, A. Fornasari and colleagues (2019) have already thoroughly illustrated the above mentioned project objectives and its methodology. Two years after the completion of the project, a short study was designed to look at the results of the program in terms of employability and employment. This article presents the empirical evidence produced by this study as well as a simple analysis in relation to the actual context of Sudan, which has considerably evolved since the end of the INSO project.

The Sudanese Context

In 2010, Sudan was considered the 17th fastest-growing economy in the world given the rapid development of the country – largely due to oil profits, despite international sanctions. However, the secession of the Republic of South Sudan in 2011 gravely affected the Sudanese economy as more than 75 percent of the oil fields exist in the southern part of the country. The heyday of the oil economy ended abruptly and "growth slowed in 2016 to an estimated 3 percent" (Darbo&Eltahir, 2017, p. 2). At the same time, these diminished resources were mainly used to ensure the stability of the ruling system.

The 2016 budget had officially destined 25 percent of state expenditures for the security apparatus and some sources suggest that percentage may have risen up to 70 percent (Nuba Reports, 2016), while "spending on education and health combined amounted to a mere 3.3 percent of that year's budget" (Hassan& Kodouda, 2019, p. 92).

This economic deterioration alongside the international trade embargo and the corruption of the Islamist-military rule of Omar Al-Bashir (Casciarri et al., 2015*)* caused a highly stressful financial situation for the people and a great sense of frustration and wrath among the youth. In a desperate attempt to tackle the situation, Al-Bashir reduced the number of ministerial positions from 49 to 21 by September 2018, which left some members of the privileged elite without a share in power.

Previous revolutionary ventures in 2011 during the Arab Spring, in June 2012 and in September 2013 were repressed by the security system. Nonetheless, on December 19, 2018, the rising prices and the lifting of subsidies on basic goods sparked a new series of protests and demonstrations demanding a civil government and democracy. But this time the revolutionaries learned from past failed experiences and found new strategies for a non-violent revolution which successfully overthrew the regime of Omar El-Bashir on April 11, 2019. This marked the beginning of a very troublesome transition towards a democratic system.

The 3 year process of transition still ongoing that started in August 2019 is led by a Sovereign Council composed of military members appointed by the Transitional Military Council (TMC) and some civilians proposed by "the opposition umbrella group that had emerged over the months of protest, the

Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC)" (Hassan & Kodouda, 2019, p. 90). These two parties signed a constitutional declaration that defined a transitional period that should have led to multiparty elections in 2022. This process was altered by the unilateral seizure of power by the President of the Sovereign Council the General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan in October 2021. Negotiations between the different stakeholders are still in progress without any agreement as for February 2023.

The demographic factor also contributed to the revolution. Sudan's population has increased from 10 million in 1956 to almost 45 million inhabitants today. The Population Division of UN predicts a population of 55 million inhabitants in Sudan in 2030. According to this forecast, Sudan will become the 23rd most populated country in the world by 2050. This increase, also present in other countries of the region, already has an impact on the incapacity of the labor market to absorb such rapid growing workforce (African Development Bank Group, 2020; International Labour Organization, 2016; Yeboah & Jayne, 2016).

In fact, the distribution of the population in Sudan according to age shows that 61.5 percent of the population are under 25 years old (Challenge Fund for Youth Employment [CFYE], 2021). Within this age group, none have experienced democracy as they were born during the Bashir regime. Nonetheless, these young people were the backbone of the revolution. However, after three years of transitional government, they "are still largely excluded" (Aalen, 2020) and are unable to find signs of financial recuperation in their country – indeed, the Sudanese pound (SDG) exchange rate to the US dollar (USD) has increased from 47.5 SDG on December 18, 2018 to 628.5 SDG on February 2, 2023 (Bank of Khartoum, 2023).

The case of Sudan is little different from situations in other countries that have recently experienced similar social uprisings, such as Algeria, Chile, Colombia, Lebanon or Senegal. Beyond local political grievances, it is possible to identify a combination of factors behind these reactions related to youth, tertiary education, bad employment conditions and gender imbalances (Bennarosh, 2020).

Literature Review

Higher Education and Labor Insertion in Sudan

From the above mentioned demographic distribution and related socio-economic context, one can understand the great demand for education, and the subsequent difficulty of absorbing such numbers of young people after completion of university studies into the labor market, particularly in the metropolitan area of Khartoum (Denis, 2006).

To these factors it is necessary to add: (i) the presence in Sudan of almost one million refugees (mainly youth) from the neighboring countries (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2023); (ii) the characteristics of the university system; (iii) the large-scale shifts of the population from rural to urban areas due to the search for better conditions; (iv) the progress of desertification; and (v) the presence of unresolved armed conflicts that caused the displacement of more than three million persons (Denis, 2006; UNHCR, 2023).

Since the arrival to power of Omar El-Bashir, the fast-paced development of the university system in Sudan resulted in an increase in the number of vacancies for university students by a factor of 70 – from admitting 6,080 new students in 1989 to 437,462 for the 2018-2019 academic year, the last one under Bashir´s regime (registration at Sudanese universities is centralized through the Ministry of Higher Education [MOHE], which sets the number of students that every university can register in each academic program, i.e., the number of "vacancies"). In a similar period, the Algeria higher education system, for instance, multiplied the number of university students by 7.5.

In 1989 just 6 percent of graduates with a secondary school leaving certificate (83,388 students) could find vacancies in Sudanese universities, and those few opportunities were only granted in the capital (MOHE, 2016). Whereas in 2016, there were 82 institutions of higher education in Khartoum state and 42 in other states of the country. From then on the number of available vacancies has continued to

grow (with 451,957 vacancies available in Sudanese universities for first year students for the 2019-2020 academic year), while demand appears to have stagnated (Hussein, 2021).

In this way, higher education in Sudan seems to have met the quantitative challenge. The overall tertiary education gross enrollment rate is higher than other Sub-Saharan countries (17 percent in Sudan vs. 9 percent in other countries of the region), though still inferior to the global average (36 percent). Female participation in the student population is also relatively high, around 52.6 percent (MOHE, 2019), while in the Sub-Saharan African region the percentage of female university students is around 40 percent. Therefore, from the gender perspective, Sudan is more in line with the worldwide trend of feminization of higher education than its neighboring countries (Meyer et al., 2020).

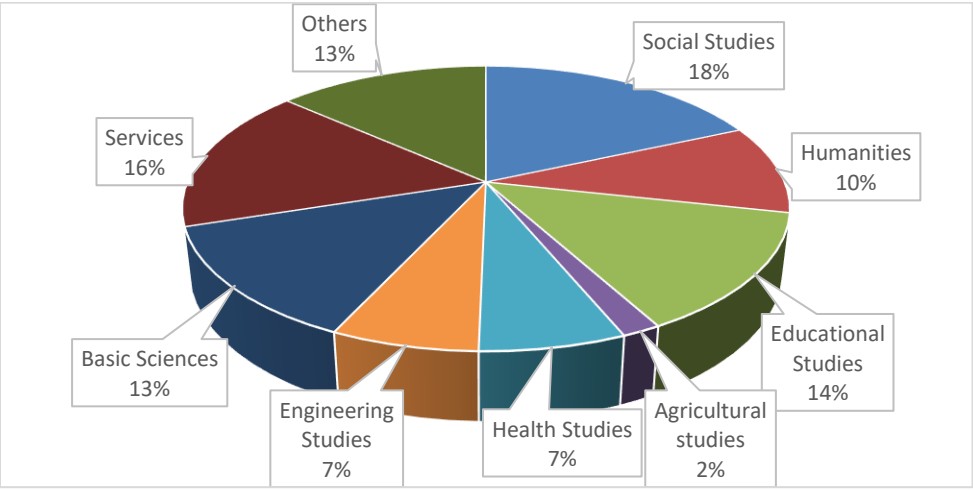
In 2014, M. Imad Al-Din published a self-evaluation carried out by the main university of Sudan, the University of Khartoum. The SWOT analysis of the university underscored the inadequacy of their academic programs in relation to the real needs of the labor market and the lack of "provision to the graduates… the necessary skills and knowledge to render them competitive" (Imad Al-Din, 2014, p. 25).

These two points of weakness become still more challenging when we consider them along with the strong demographic growth. They risk to transform universities into a factory producing unemployed people.

Table 1: Distribution of students enrolled in Sudanese universities according to degree and major specialities (2015/2016) excluding students of university Colleges (Ismail, 2017)

Specialization	Bachelor Students			Diploma Students			Total number
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Social Studies	72,956	58,617	131,573	5,183	5,560	10,743	142,316
Humanities	28,693	31,418	60,111	7,838	10,429	18,267	78,378
Educational Studies	34,386	67,670	102,056	1,169	1,845	3,014	105,070
Agricultural studies	5,547	8,039	13,586	39	28	67	13,653
Health Studies	13,530	34,965	48,495	754	1,785	2,539	51,034
Engineering Studies	32,342	12,799	45,141	4,571	1,767	6,338	51,479
Basic Sciences	24,705	29,683	54,388	29,550	17,657	47,207	101,595
Services	0	0	0	62	66	128	128
Others	32,705	23,811	56,516	30,930	17,071	48,001	104,517
Total	244,864	267,002	511,866	80,096	56,208	136,304	648,170

Figure 1: Proportion of students enrolled in Sudanese universities according to major specialities (2015/2016) excluding students of university colleges (Ismail, 2017).



Imad al-Din (2014) also points that "the role of higher education institutions in the socio-economic development of Sudan is weak and much inferior to what it was supposed to be" (p. 72). We find that the interaction between the deficient educational system caused by the low quality of education – at the macro level – and the high incidence of unskilled workers – at the micro level – leads to low skill and technology levels, severe skills mismatch, low transfer of knowledge, high dependence on foreign technologies at the macro and micro levels and poor industrial performance at the micro level. This situation generates a lot of unemployment, which is considered the second main problem according to 32

percent of Sudanese respondents to a survey carried out by the Sudan Polling and Statistics Centre (2018). Indeed, in the Arab world, the phenomenon of unemployment among university graduates has been thoroughly examined (Bennarosh, 2019). However, the primary problem according to the Afrobarometer is the management of the economy (Isbell &Elawad, 2019).

Another element that hinders Sudanese youth from finding employment opportunities is the exaggerated development of the public sector. The policy focus on the public sector has created a non-conducive eco-system for the promotion of private business. In fact, from 2007 to 2016, the public sector's share in GDP increased from 6 to nearly 40 percent (United Nations [UN], 2016). Part of this phenomenon related to Bashir´s policy to reward those who were to be pillars for the stability of the regime, especially after 2011, in particular, the Sudan Army Forces (Hassan& Kodouda, 2019).

The problems for the private sector to make business independently from the regime network were reflected by the World Bank report entitled *"Doing Business" (World Bank, 2017)*. Darbo&Eltahir quote the same report, that describes the Sudanese business environment, to point that "Sudan's overall ranking fell over the year by four points, down to 168th out of 190 countries" (2017, p. 9). While the 45,823 interviews conducted by Afrobarometer in 34 African countries between 2016 and 2018 gave an average of 62 percent self-employed workers, 24 percent in the private sector and 12 percent in government institutions, the results for Sudan were 56 percent, 15 percent and 28 percent respectively (Makanga&Msafiri, 2020).

In 2018, the unemployment rate in Sudan was not extraordinarily high at 18.6 percent (International Monetary Fund, as quoted by British Council Sudan, 2020, p. 16), although, the percentage of vulnerable employment was 40 percent for that same year according to United Nations Development Program ([UNDP], 2019). The category "vulnerable employment," refers to the "percentage of employed people engaged as unpaid family workers and non-account workers" (UNDP, 2019, p. 327).

The difficulty of finding employment affects women in a particular way. The female to male ratio of youth unemployment for the population age group 15 to 24 was 2.16 while the total unemployment female to male rate was 2.51 (UNDP, 2019). The negative bias towards young women's employment has been further investigated by local research teams (Assad et al., 2018). Among the factors that explain the high rate of vulnerable employment is the low percentage of skilled labor force at 22.8 percent (UNDP, 2019). Another important fact that defines the structure of the labor market in Sudan is the migration of highly skilled professionals to Arab Gulf countries (Samia, 2011). By the end of 2014, there were around 500,000 Sudanese economic migrants working in the Gulf States (Strachan, 2016).

The way to address the inability of the economy to create job opportunities that may match the growth in the population and the workforce necessarily involves the capacity to create a more conducive environment for private investments, and to set policies that facilitate the creation of income-earning opportunities for the unemployed (United Nations [UN], 2016). The economic future of Sudan relies on the development of agriculture. This sector represents 42 percent of employment activities in Sudan (Pedrò& Watanabe, 2017). Public services and trade each represent 19 percent, but most Sudanese students are enrolled in academic programs of humanities (cf.

Table 1). This fact, and the lack of relevant skills already mentioned, may produce unemployment or lead university graduates to work in jobs that require lower qualifications and are located in the informal sector. In fact, 21 percent of private employers in Khartoum´s formal sector prefer foreign workers because of their efficiency and skills, according to a survey carried out by the Ministry of Labor (Pedrò& Watanabe, 2017).

The mismatch between educational output (supply) and labor market requirements (demand) explains the need "to upgrade skill levels and encourage the development of local technologies to narrow the technological gap and achieve economic development in Sudan" (Samia, 2011, p. 283). Such a mismatch is challenging for policy design as there is no simple, ready-made answer. All developing and emerging countries face this type of skills-jobs adequacy issue. The reliance upon strategies based on improvement of domestic production for a better international position on the global value chain is seriously questionable (Schwalje, 2012). In fact, it is the very concept of a knowledge based-economy which must be reconsidered, no longer in terms of highly competitive activities but rather with regards to sustainable development issues (Meyer, 2019).

The INSO Project

The Regional Development and Protection Program for North Africa of the European Union (RDPP NA) officially aims to strengthen the protection of migrants by offering alternatives to irregular migration along the route of the central Mediterranean basin, and to support the development of local job opportunities that generate profit in the regions of origin and transit of migrants (International Organization of Migrations [IOM], 2021). In 2017, the program included Sudan since it is located in a strategic position along one of the main migratory routes between Africa and Europe. Sudan is a country of transit, destination, and origin of migrants (Greco, 2012). In fact, 15 percent of migrants who attempted to cross the Mediterranean Sea through Libya between January and February 2021 were Sudanese (IOM, 2021b).

Since Italy was responsible for the RDPP NA and Trust Fund Africa, the Ministry of Interior, through its Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration-International Relations Unit, opened the call for projects. The National Research Council of Italy-Institute for Research on Innovation and Services for Development (CNR-IRISS) got funding for the project "Innovation in Society: Training paths and human capital enhancement in Sudan" (INSO), that was executed from the end of 2017 to the beginning of 2019 in partnership with a Sudanese university, Comboni College of Science and Technology (CCST), the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Sudan (MOHE) and the Life Long Education Centre of the Aldo Moro University of Bari (Centro per l'Apprendimento Permanente in Italian, CAP-UNIBA) (Fornasari et al. 2019).

The project had the patronage of the Embassies of Italy to Sudan and the Republic of the Sudan to Italy and it aimed at:

a) Developing the necessary skills for the insertion of university students in the labor market;

b) Empowering their capacity to transform their graduation projects into workable initiatives that generate work opportunities;

c) Contributing to the modernization and the digitalization of administration (Fornasari et al., 2019).

The Beneficiaries

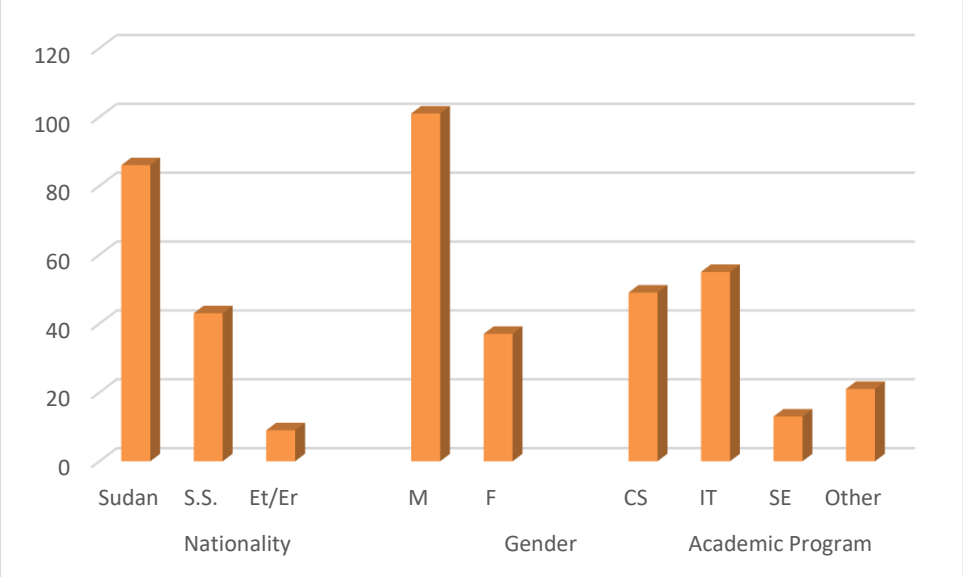
The targeted beneficiaries of the training were 138 university students, 2 university lecturers and 4 senior staff members of the MOHE. In a country that is still struggling to introduce ICT in the

administration of government and private institutions, university students of Computer Science (CS), Information Technology (IT), Software Engineering (SE) or Management Information Systems seemed to be the most suitable participants for the INSO Project, as they could play a paramount role in the process of modernization of the Sudanese labor market and were better equipped to follow an online program.

Since knowledge of the English language is a key element in ICT studies as well as in the transition process of a country called to open itself to the globalized world, placement tests were carried out by CCST to select university students for the project.

A total of 235 applicants sat for the selection tests evaluating English proficiency: 118 from CCST and 117 from other 16 different universities. The selected students, 65 from CCST and 73 from 15 different universities, were in the second-last year of their respective university programs. In this way, they were supposed to complete the project training before their final graduation.

Figure 2: INSO Project students according to nationality, gender and academic program.



(S.S. = South Sudanese; Et. = Ethiopian; Er. = Eritrean; M. = Male; F. = Female; CS = Bachelor´s Science in Computer Science; IT: Intermediate Diploma in Information Technology; SE. = Bachelor´s Science in Software Engineering).

86 students of the INSO Project were Sudanese (62 percent), 43 (31 percent) were South Sudanese and 9 (7 percent) were Ethiopian and Eritrean. In Sudanese universities, 52.6 percent of the student population are female students (MOHE, 2019). Nonetheless, technical studies like these are frequented more by male students, as in this case (73 percent). CCST also selected two lecturers who were already involved in the organization of internships for university students as beneficiaries of the training program while MOHE selected four senior staff members.

Learning Content and Methodology

The training content focused on disciplines dealing with the concept of sustainability, the creation of micro-enterprises and the development of project proposals for the students along with a training course for university lecturers and MOHE officials that aimed at creating a network of "Departments of Professional Orientation in Universities," leveraging the analysis and responsible management of the territory, pedagogical innovation and international scientific cooperation. The learning activities for the

university students of the project were delivered through a blended approach that combined place-based workshops and internships in Sudan and a Learning Management System (LMS), Moodle, administered by CAP-UNIBA.

Student Engagement

The average participation for 72 training hours of place-based workshops was 78 percent. Since the skewness of the respective frequency distribution is negative (-1.30), we can state that most of the 138 students grouped around the maximum time of participation. In fact, 98 students took part in more than 75 percent of the total time of the workshops while 29 completed them totally. Just 13 students took part in less than 50 percent of the learning hours. A problem arose when it was found that 35 of the project students did not have a personal e-mail address and were unable to access the Learning Management System for the online training. Consequently, only 103 students were able to continue the online training stage (73.6 percent of the original number of students). Among them, 16 students never accessed the platform and did not benefit from the training provided. Therefore, the online training activities were carried out by only 87 students. Seventy-three video lectures were uploaded on the platform. They registered an average of 217.19 views per video lesson. Individual study was also supported by in-depth material in PDF formats and conceptual maps. A total of 102 resources were uploaded, each of which was displayed 197.72 times on average. There were 257 written interactions and 4,215 views either inside the forums or through the chat application of the LMS (CAP, 2019, p. 5).

First Assessment and Immediate Outputs

50 students out of the 87 active students (57.5 percent) completed the assessment questionnaire. The performance of 28 students was excellent (13-18 correct answers) and 22 students performed well (7-12 correct answers) (CAP, 2019; Fornasari et al., 2019). The two lecturers of CCST trained by the project in Naples (CNR-IRISS) and Bari (CAP-UNIBA) were in charge of organizing another element of the program – the internships for the 67 students who studied at the College. These students were distributed among 13 private and government institutions including the MOHE. CAP-UNIBA distributed another questionnaire through "Google Forms" to evaluate the effectiveness of the online training comparing the expected objectives with the results obtained. The three evaluation criteria were:

1. Students' satisfaction with the usefulness of the course;
2. Evaluation of the learning process in terms of self-perception;
3. Transferability-impact on working career.

From the analysis of the results, it was possible to conclude that the module on "job search techniques" got the best score as it was considered the one where the objectives were best achieved and the most useful in relation to students' studies and job search. The module on "marketing management" was the second best, considered in terms of achieved objectives, and the one on "social networks and relational dynamics," in terms of usefulness in relation to studies and job search. The students expressed their satisfaction with the contribution of the online training to their previous knowledge and affirmed that they improved their working efficiency "a lot" after the course (71 percent) and that they already "had the opportunity to use the knowledge learned in their university tests or in their professional experience" (19/34) (CAP, 2019, p. 18). As project outputs, CCST signed conventions with companies for students' internships and for further collaboration; created a new BSc in Information Technology whose curriculum design benefitted from the project experience; and established an ICT Start-ups Incubator, the Comboni Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center, registered in April 2021 as C-Hub Limited Company by Guarantee.

After the completion of the project, CCST sent a questionnaire to the project students in which 77 percent expressed their desire to start their own business but they felt blocked by obstacles like lack of capital (95 percent), lack of know how (13 percent), fear of the unknown (8 percent) and lack of self-confidence (5 percent). These results were based on the self-perception of the students. Nonetheless,

experience suggests that they are less aware of their lack of know how. All those elements justified the need to create the Start-ups Incubator that could help university graduates or students to transform their business ideas into reality and give continuity to the project.

Research Method

After almost two years from the end of the project training, a study has been carried out in order to understand how a specific training program can provide the students with employment opportunities after their university graduation in a country like Sudan. The research has been designed to obtain representative data from the involved population and in-depth information about the factors of employability. Thus the study combines quantitative and qualitative approaches. A questionnaire survey provides quantitative data and a series of interviews provides qualitative data.

A Questionnaire Survey for a General Picture

The objective of the survey is to a get a picture as complete as possible of the employment achievements of the university students who followed the training course provided by the INSO project two years after the project conclusion. In other words, the research aims to test the validity and transferability of the INSO Project as a model for the enhancement of human capital in Sudan.

The 138 students who followed the project between 2017 and 2019 were not reachable through digital media. In fact, the survey population was made of the 103 university graduates who had an e-mail address at the time of the project execution and who could benefit from both the face-to-face and the online training. Nonetheless, it is necessary to recall that 16 students had never entered the LMS during the project training and therefore the real population was made up of 87 graduates. The questionnaire was built with the major aim of maximizing the answer rate in order to ensure credible interpretations. Thus, few and simple questions were proposed.

The invitation to participate in the research and the link to the questionnaire were sent through e-mail, Messenger and the Whatsapp group of the project. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of socio-demographic data such as age, gender, residence and citizenship. The second set of information had to do with the academic background, institutional affiliation, graduation status and major field of study of the respondents. The third section contained questions about their employment status, the date of beginning professional activities and the impact of the INSO training course on their job achievements. The questionnaire ended with a request to interview the respondent and to provide contact data for such purpose in case of a positive answer.

The questionnaire was prepared on Google Forms and the link was sent on August 10, 2020. Answers were collected until August 30, 2020. The answers were displayed and processed in an Excel file in September 2020. 42 responses were eventually received out of the 87 above mentioned. Considering the volatility of the population concerned and the digital limitations of the context, a 48 percent rate of answering is very satisfactory. It allows significant descriptions and relevant interpretations. However, it does not open the door for sophisticated statistical analysis, with groups too small within the subdivisions.

Personal Interviews to Investigate Professional Achievements

For the respondents with employment at the time of the survey, further information about their professional integration was needed. The majority of them accepted the invitation to meet with the team for an interview. The members of the research team decided to conduct these interviews through the intermediary support of assistant researchers. This constituted an opportunity to train university students through fieldwork experience.

The interviews' guidelines were designed by the authors of this research along the following axes:

- Description of job position (company, tasks, sector, size, etc.);

- Type of contract;
- Satisfaction and feelings;
- Future plans;
- The way they applied for the job and got it;
- Whether the INSO training helped in getting their position or not.

Aspects of major interest were networking, soft skills, formal or informal labor market, and how an institutional program such as INSO could interact with these data. The assistant researchers trained by the authors of this study got precise indications in a preparatory session before going into the field. They were split in pairs of interviewers, in order to make it easier for them to conduct the discussion while recording it at the same time. They managed to complete these interviews and produce 16 reports by the end of January 2021. The reports were written in English even though the interviews took place in Arabic.

Results

This section presents the data collected from the 42 students who responded to the explorative questionnaire and the 16 personal interviews.

Professional Integration after the INSO Project.

The following table provides a picture of the labor insertion of the Project graduates after almost two years of its conclusion:

Table 2: Professional Integration After Almost Two Years of the Project Conclusion

The INSO Project	helped find a job	"I work in the internship place"	"I work but not due to INSO"	"I worked before starting INSO"	No answer	Total	%
Full time job	11	2	8			21	50
Part-time work	1		3			4	9.5
Occasional work	2			1	2	5	12
I do not work					12	12	28.5
TOTAL	14	2	11	1	14	42	
%	33	5	26	2	33		

29 out of 42 surveyed graduates found jobs within the two consecutive years after the end of the project training. 16 of them expressed a positive link between the specific training received through the INSO project and their job achievement. This link is particularly direct in the case of 2 students who are working in the place where they carried out their internships. The field interviews revealed that in meeting the challenge to find a job, the preparation for job search, CV writing and self-presentation were the aspects of the Project that helped them more, compared to their technical abilities and direct qualifications. In the same line, the interviewees mentioned other supportive elements like the awareness of the environment, the ability for interpersonal communication, soft skills (working in team, problem solving and diversity management) and the capacity to understand labor market conditions. Several of them mentioned that they are interested in pursuing a career abroad, either through master degree programs and beyond, or by obtaining a working position in a foreign country. Three of them actually held such a job already, in particular in South-Sudan, Egypt and Canada. Some of them work for foreign companies and institutions in Sudan. Three interviewees were optimistic about the future of Sudan. Nonetheless, the wish expressed by most interviewees with regards to opportunities abroad was a sign of

the difficult challenges the country is facing and the uncertainties about the possibilities of an improvement of the socio-economic situation in Sudan.

The internal push factors or the external attractiveness were referred to by young men more than women though women may also be sensitive to job prospects abroad. Most of the interviewed people, women and men, expressed their satisfaction with the job they had. They mainly worked in the fields in which they qualified: computer and information sciences. They worked as technicians, engineers or even teaching staff. In spite of their satisfaction, they mentioned that they would take other job options if good opportunities became available. Several of them also referred to an entrepreneurial project down the line, once they acquired more experience. They valued the training received through the INSO project in this regard. As for the job search process, diversity prevails. Some found the position thanks to their connections and others sent their CV to different institutions until they were contacted. As already mentioned, 2 project students transformed their internship into a professional position. Most of them went through trial periods of some weeks to a few months.

Factors Influencing Job Prospects

About half of the students who answered the explorative questionnaire (22/42) are graduates of Comboni College of Science and Technology (CCST) while the others (20/42) studied in 5 different universities ("Other" on Table 3). Slightly more than half of them are Sudanese (23/42) and 19 come from refugee families (2 from Eritrea and 17 from South Sudan). It is worth mentioning that most students of CCST who responded the questionnaire are from refugee families (18/22). Among the refugee graduates, 8/10 were born between 1984 and 1993 (2 students did not declare their date of birth).

Table 3: Demographics of the Questionnaire Respondents

	Nationality		Gender		University		Date of Birth	
Work	Sud.	Foreig.	Male	Female	CCST	Other	1984-1993	1994-1998
Full time job	14	7	12	9	8	13	5	14
Part time	2	2	3	1	2	2	1	3
Occasional	3	2	4	1	2	3	0	5
I do not work	4	8	8	4	10	2	4	6
TOTAL	23	19	27	15	22	20	10	28

The results show that refugee students find it more challenging to insert themselves in the Sudanese labor market. They are in a foreign country and therefore their network of contacts is weaker than the Sudanese young people. Moreover, since they come from conflict areas, they missed some school years and consequently they finish university studies later than other students.

The majority of the respondents to the survey pretend to have a "full time regular job" while only 9 of them declare having either part time or occasional ones. However, the interviews clarify very much this point. Most of those with full time positions have short term renewable contracts. Their status is rather precarious and some have obtained the position through a couple of months of volunteer or temporary work. This is not a surprise in a country with an important informal labor market, where even qualified jobs may be highly flexible. It also has to do with the young age of the job candidates (below 25 years old, in average) as their employers want to test them in early stages or the beginning of their career.

Results Discussion

The research results confirm that the sector of knowledge of the selected students – computer and information sciences – is one that offers good job opportunities though it demands some additional skills to the strictly academic ones. The project did strengthen them. The research shows, indeed, that university students in Sudan make good use of specific training related to job search techniques such as CV writing or self-presentation. This conclusion, two years after the completion of the INSO project, is coherent with the assessment done by the students immediately at the end of the project. The most appreciated training module then had been "Job search techniques" (CAP, 2019, p. 15). This is meaningful, particularly if we acknowledge that economic growth over the past two decades, even if more remarkable in other countries of the continent, has failed to be translated into sustained employment gains and poverty reduction in Africa (Baah-Boateng, 2016).

Even if the study is not quantitatively meaningful, it is worth placing its data in the African context. In a survey carried out by Afrobarometer with 45,823 interviews, completed between September 2016 and September 2018, "on average across 34 countries, about one-third of respondents said they were employed full-time (22%) or part time (12%), while 27% were unemployed and 39% were not active in the labor market" (Makanga&Msafiri, 2020, p. 1). The same survey asked: "Do you have a job that pays a cash income? [If yes:] Is it full time or part time? [If no:] Are you currently looking for a job?" (Makanga&Msafiri, 2020, p. 4). 39 percent of Sudanese respondents declared that they did not have a job. The study published by the CFYE (2021) also states that youth unemployment in urban areas of Sudan grew between 2009 and 2014 from 19.7 percent to 39.3 percent (p. 5). The same study even mentions that "50% of the women with tertiary education degrees is unemployed" (CFYE, 2021, p. 6).

Moreover, the Sudanese environment looks much too challenging to have university graduates starting their own business within a short period after their graduation in spite of their wishes. The Entrepreneurial Intention Rate is about 30 percent in Sudan (Innovation and Entrepreneurship Community [IEC], 2017). The process to register a company is too complex and expensive and "it is not yet possible to register venture capital firms, digital enterprises or social enterprises" (CFYE, 2021, p. 7). The weakness of the entrepreneurship ecosystem and the lack of connection between academia, start-ups and end users justify the creation of specific structures such a Start-ups Incubator to support those graduates who have the capacity and the wish to start their own companies.

Conclusion

The study on the impact of a specific training program, the one provided through the INSO project, to support the employability of young graduates in Sudan has some limitations, mainly related to the size of the sample and also the lack of comparison of the data collected from the INSO graduates with data from similar students who did not benefit from the project training. Another limitation is the impossibility of having access to reliable data on the number of university students since 1989 up to the present. This is the reason why the study presents data on the development of university vacancies instead of the above mentioned number. But in spite of these limitations, the evidence does reveal a significant rate of employment for the graduates of this training course (29/42) and a positive impact of specific training related to job search techniques like CV writing and self-presentation.

These conclusions are also valid for university graduates coming from refugee families. In their case, in addition to the challenges Sudanese youth face, it is necessary to consider the weakness of the lack of a network necessary to start a business or to insert oneself into the labor market. With regards to international cooperation, if such a project as INSO confirms the potential improvement of local labor market conditions for the youth, it also points at the frailty of the working conditions. Moreover, the skills upgrading and social openness provided by the training program is no deterrent for mobility.

A basic reflection about the articulation of international cooperation and socio-environmental needs remains crucial. Such analysis should be nurtured by other complementary research projects. In the

current situation, with social difficulties exacerbated by the aftermath of the pandemic and the 2019 Revolution, evidence based analysis should directly feed decision making.

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Acknowledgements

The research team thanks the group of students of Comboni College of Science and Technology who collaborated in the field interviews.

Scholarly Essay

OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION

Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 61-75
Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education
DOI: 10.32674/jcihe.v15i1.4506 | https://ojed.org/jcihe

Global Liberal Arts Colleges and Universities: A Source of Critical Hope

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Abstract

Global liberal arts colleges and universities are an understudied trend in international education. This scholarly essay incorporates practitioner knowledge and scholarship to explore what, who, and where these global liberal arts colleges and universities are. Moreover, these institutions are situated within wider competing internationalization ideologies. The author applies a critical internationalization studies lens and a mapping framework to analyze their underlying motivations and discover whether global liberal arts colleges and universities might present a source of critical hope.

Keywords: critical hope, global liberal arts, internationalization, motivations, trend

Received December 23, 2021; revised March 20, 2022; accepted May 25, 2022

"All the benefits of a liberal arts college: small discussion-based classes, getting to know your professors, the freedom to mix subjects, in a community with other international students. At half the cost of a U.S. degree!" I heard the first part of this pitch repeatedly from visiting admission colleagues, but within the past decade I increasingly heard the latter refrain as well. Colleges and universities from non-Western contexts marketed their own version of the liberal arts, highlighting their multiculturalism, lower fees, and proximity to students' home countries. As a college counselor working in an international school in Asia, I bore witness to the proliferation, popularity, and competition of global liberal arts colleges and universities in the decade 2010-2020. My practitioner knowledge motivated me to recount

the rise of global liberal arts colleges and universities and to situate them within competing narratives of higher education internationalization. I propose global liberal arts colleges and universities are a trend that offers a source of critical hope for imagining new possibilities for the internationalization of higher education.

The liberal arts education on which global liberal arts campuses are modeled is attributed to a Western tradition rooted in Greek philosophy (Nussbaum, 2002). This tradition focused on interdisciplinary, holistic education and personal development underpinned the historic universities of Europe where privileged elites studied culture, the arts, and languages (Rothblatt, 2003; van der Wende, 2017). Today, the liberal arts tradition is associated primarily with U.S. campuses (Godwin, 2015b) that blend a commitment to undergraduate multidisciplinary general education with subject specialization (Peterson, 2012), and emphasize critical thinking and holistic views of the curriculum and co-curricular experiences (Mou, 2021). Recent authors, however, have demonstrated innovative (Jung et al., 2016; Nishimura & Sasao, 2019; Yang, 2016) and historically-rooted approaches similar to the liberal arts (Godwin, 2017; Godwin & Altbach, 2016) originating from the non-Western world. Liberal arts education has become a transnational (Rothblatt, 2003) philosophy with the potential to "both reinforce and resist neoliberal practices" (Godwin, 2015a, p. 223).

Global liberal arts colleges and universities (GLAC&U) embrace an interdisciplinary curriculum and are committed to developing internationally-minded students, often for stated purposes of education for peace, global citizenship, or solving global problems. They are established in countries with historic academic reputations such as the Netherlands and Germany and in emerging higher education markets across the world including South Korea and India (Godwin & Altbach, 2016). Some are affiliated with national universities, such as Yuanpei College of Peking University, China, (Sharma, 2017) and Mahidol University International College of Mahidol University, Thailand (Jianvittayakit, 2012), while others were founded independently to increase access or contribute to sustainability, such as Ashesi University in Ghana (Maguire, 2010) and Ashoka University in India (Chakraborty et al., 2021).

It surprised me to discover that the GLAC&U I understood to be common practitioner knowledge in international counseling and admission are nearly absent from the literature, unlike other forms of internationalization such as international branch campuses (IBCs), joint universities, and American Universities Abroad (Altbach et al., 2019; Escriva-Beltran et al., 2019; Knight, 2020; Long, 2018; Wilkins, 2021; Wilkins & He, 2020).

Categorizations of international higher education that focus on delivery methods and structures (Knight, 2020) miss commonalities of ethos, pedagogy, and curricula shared across institutional types that are the core characteristics of global liberal arts institutions (Boyle, 2022). GLAC&U are thus overlooked in the literature as an approach to higher education that spans across delivery methods. Much of their expansion is taking place in the Global South without Western partners (Godwin, 2017), which I suggest is another reason for the observed gap in scholarship: Western scholars may be unaware of the growth of the phenomenon in practice. This complicated my guiding question of how GLAC&U fit into broader ideological conversations around internationalization.

Yet global liberal arts programs outside of North America expanded by 59% in the preceding decade (Godwin, 2015b) and practitioners confirm continued expansion. Though an understudied and relatively small minority within international higher education (Boyle, 2022), higher education ministries, national universities, and private enterprise have all demonstrated interest in this approach to

internationalization. I intend to demonstrate that GLAC&U in Non-Western contexts merit attention by scholars probing the means and goals of internationalization and particularly by educators and administrators interested in advancing epistemic justice and decolonial approaches. I ground my analysis of this trend in practitioner knowledge buttressed by emerging scholarship to provide a snapshot of what, who, and where global liberal arts colleges and universities are located geographically. I discuss how this trend interacts with competing motivations, the "why" of internationalization, and probe whether GLAC&U might serve as a source for critical hope.

What, Who, and Where

Global liberal arts colleges and universities offer an internationally-minded and composed undergraduate education that is intentionally liberal arts in nature. While campuses worldwide may be either domestic or international in focus, this analysis centers those located outside of the U.S., the region typically associated with liberal arts education, that share a focus on global liberal arts education. Many of these campuses have 30% or greater international student bodies (Times Higher Education, 2022). Being international is foundational to their recruitment, their mission, and their curricula, and it is critical to their reputations. While global liberal arts campuses share common characteristics, they represent more of a philosophical approach than "a prescriptive model" (Boyle, 2022, p. 14).

Curricular breadth has long been observed to be the hallmark of a liberal education (Rothblatt, 2003) via exposure to diverse perspectives (Godwin & Altbach, 2016) and by combining general study with specialization (Peterson, 2012). The liberal arts tradition is historically attributed to the West, specifically the U.S. expression of liberal arts colleges (Godwin & Altbach, 2016), "despite historical roots in Greek, Chinese, Indian, and Egyptian traditions" (Godwin, 2017, p. 88).

In contrast to research universities, GLAC&U prioritize an interdisciplinary undergraduate education that fosters fluidity between quantitative skills, the social sciences, and humanities (Nishimura & Sasao, 2019). These campuses are characterized by student-centered pedagogies, high-quality student-faculty interaction, small class sizes (Mou, 2021), and the development of critical thinking skills (Boyle, 2022). English is their dominant language of instruction (Godwin, 2015b). Curricula are conceptualized holistically, often encompassing residence life and incorporating high impact practices (Kuh, 2018) such as first-year seminars (Nishimura & Sasao, 2019) around global themes. Degree lengths vary and programs are typically recognized by national education ministries (Van der Wende, 2017). Boyle (2022) noted that global liberal arts institutions are marked by both convergence to regional patterns and by differentiation of pedagogies, emphases, and institutional types. Their function within international higher education is to provide tertiary education focused on the multidisciplinary education and development of undergraduates, not to climb the world-class university rankings charts through a focus on graduate research. Their missions are global in the sense of being intentionally international in their faculty and admissions, the internationalization of their curricula, and the development of intercultural competencies and global problem-solving skills in their graduates.

Who and where are these universities? The difficulty in answering precisely lies in the absence of well-defined boundaries. Global liberal arts campuses are self-labelling: they assert their global composition, mission, and curricula. They have existed underneath the structure of historic "research universities (Hong Kong, the Netherlands), emerged as a pilot project within existing state structures (Argentina, China), grew out of religious traditions (Indonesia, Israel), or began independently (Ghana,

Italy)" (Boyle, 2022, p. 14). Independent examples include Franklin University, Switzerland, Universidad San Francisco de Quito, Ecuador, Al Akhawayn University, Morrocco, Quest University, Canada, and FLAME University, India, which began as the Foundation for Liberal and Management Education but has since abandoned its acronym and joined the Global Liberal Arts Alliance (GLAA, n.d.). Unlike university types externally defined by Carnegie classifications or global rankings (Estera & Shahjahan, 2019), GLAC&U are in constant need of reputation maintenance to remain both global and liberal arts in the public's perception, particularly in the shadow of research universities (McCormick & Zhao, 2005). An example is New York University's Abu Dhabi campus styling itself as "the world's honors college" (Redden, 2010, para. 3), foregrounding its liberal arts undergraduate college identity over its parent's classification as a doctoral research university (Shulman, 2001).

In 2013, the Global Liberal Education Inventory (GLEI; Godwin, 2013) represented the first scholarly effort to create a comprehensive database of global liberal arts programs located outside of the United States. The count is now over 200 schools and programs in over 60 countries (Boyle, 2022), half of which were established since 2000 (Godwin, 2013). All regions have experienced growth since then with Asia in the lead (Boyle, 2022, Godwin, 2015b). The programs are equally as likely to be found at public or private institutions (Godwin, 2015b) and the vast majority are located near urban centers (Godwin, 2017). Two-thirds are affiliated with an existing university which may include IBCs, joint university or degree programs, and semi-autonomous undergraduate colleges, but fewer than half exemplify the international program and provider mobility (Knight & Motala-Timol, 2021) characterized by multinationalization (Altbach, 2016, p. 84), where an institution from one country begins offering its programs or qualifications in another country. Most partnerships are domestic, and only one-third of global liberal arts programs partner with a U.S. college (Godwin, 2017). Some programs affiliated to research universities refer to themselves "university colleges", such as Underwood International College of Yonsei University, Korea, and Leiden University College The Hague, Netherlands. The GLEI is, to date, the only existing database of non-U.S. global liberal arts programs, not all of which exist as their own college or university campus. While not currently publicly accessible, the GLEI is due for updating, which will be a significant undertaking given the rise in liberal arts programs in the interim.

Authors lament a scarcity of research (Godwin, 2013; Peterson, 2012; Van der Wende, 2012), noting that liberal arts campuses are marginalized due to their much smaller enrollment and relative impact in contrast to world-class universities in comparative international scholarship. In practice, however, school counselors increasingly distinguish between worldwide categories of liberal arts and research universities as a heuristic in our work with students (NACAC, 2021). In recent years, case study compilations of global liberal arts colleges have appeared (Chakraborty et al., 2021; Jung et al., 2016; Nishimura & Sasao, 2019) that highlight examples in and connections between the Global South. These dynamics suggest that GLAC&U fall within the new transnationalism (Altbach, 2016) characterized by South-South and South-North patterns of transmission.

In summary, global liberal arts colleges and universities are found throughout the world. They may be supported by governments, private investors, or university partners. Despite their proliferation, GLAC&U remain an understudied approach to internationalization in tension with isomorphic pressures to conform to the research university model (Altbach et al., 2009; Godwin, 2017; Peterson, 2012). The massification of higher education requires differentiation of university types and missions (Altbach et al., 2009) and can lead to a diversity of structures such as the observed emergence of undergraduate-focused

colleges (Teichler, 1998). Many regions now experiment with liberal arts education (Peterson, 2012), and in the next section I introduce conceptual frameworks to explore their reasons why.

Critically Framing Internationalization

Internationalization as Westernization has been written about extensively including in this publication (Sperduti, 2017) as linguistic dominance, privileging Western epistemologies, and reinforcing an inequitable pattern of global centers and peripheries (Altbach, 2016). Scholars have aptly called attention to the depoliticization and romanticization (Buckner & Stein, 2020; Stein, 2021) of internationalization rhetoric that contrasts with practice (Tight, 2021). Internationalization's public good is no longer assumed. It is now questioned (Fabricius et al., 2017; Tight, 2021) by critical perspectives increasingly accepted in the mainstream (Stein, 2021).

Stein (2021) credits Dr. Amy Metcalfe with coining *critical internationalization studies* as an umbrella term for the study of ethics and power dynamics involved in internationalization from critical perspectives. I adopt this lens for its relevance to contemporary internationalization and alignment with my paradigm as a critical realist (Maxwell, 2012). In doing so, I assume that internationalization efforts including GLAC&U engage with power both as products of and contributors to globalization narratives (Tight, 2021; Zapp & Lerch, 2020) and that they are embedded in global policyscapes (Carney, 2009) and geopolitical contexts.

My concern is thus not only with the power between individuals but also within systems and structures, which includes epistemic injustice. *Epistemic injustice* was introduced by contemporary philosopher Fricker (2007) to refer to injustices that relate to ways of knowing. These can be hermeneutical, such as when a group's ways of knowing have historically been excluded or underrepresented (Anderson, 2012; Fricker, 2007). The privileging of Western epistemologies in the internationalization of higher education is an example of epistemic injustice. Anderson (2012), writing on the ethical duties of social institutions, famously commented, "structural injustices call for structural remedies" (p. 171), which in our field may involve seeking approaches to internationalization that can serve as systemic correctives.

I apply a critical internationalization lens in search of sources of critical hope for international education. *Critical hope* pairs the "realistic appraisal of conditions grounded in an equity and justice lens" (Dugan & Humbles, 2018, p. 18) with "envisioning the possibility of a better future" (Bishundat et al., 2018, p. 91). Critical hope is neither wishful thinking nor a denial of reality; it is an imaginative ability equity-minded leaders cultivate to create and sustain social justice in practice (Dugan & Humbles, 2018). Bishundat (2018) described the values of "love, anger, community, and struggle" (p. 94) as allies of critical hope that can be developed and leveraged to motivate social justice work.

Organizing Frameworks

GLAC&U fall within broader competing global imaginaries (Stein, 2017, 2021). A critical international studies lens prompts me to interrogate the ideological underpinnings of internationalization instead of its structures or practices (George Mwangi & Yao, 2020). Several scholars have attempted to organize the competing motivations for internationalization (de Wit & Altbach, 2021; Stein, 2021; Tight, 2021). Van der Wende (2012) identified the main drivers as epistemological, economic, and moral/social, while Stein (2021) introduced a social cartography matrix that framed multiple theories of

internationalization. These range from the neoconservative and neoliberal to the liberal, anti-oppressive, and decolonial, with layers of intervention at the methodological, epistemological, and ontological levels. Her framework captured the drivers Van der Wende identified and the prominent global imaginaries vying for the future of internationalization. Additionally, it drew attention to how each vantage point conceptualizes the public good differently. What is at stake is the future of higher education internationalization in the process of being created and reproduced in the present (Shahjahan & Edwards, 2021).

Internationalization Embodied

Practitioners like myself in the field of international education are inextricably embedded in these ideologies. Our involvement is complicated, in a way that we who are part of the systems should sit with and interrogate. As a White American administrator working transnationally, I call attention to my shifting positionality, privilege (Torres-Olave & Lee, 2020), and complicity in systems that uphold Western supremacy even as I seek to raise awareness of and decenter them.

As a school counselor, I wrestled with my role representing Western education, unequal access to it, and its perceived superiority over other higher education options. I worked to make college counseling more globally inclusive and accessible, decentering the West from guidance curricula, counseling, college fairs, and counselor training, hiring, and promotion. As an IB Theory of Knowledge teacher, I also challenged my students to critically examine the IB curriculum and the Western ways of knowing enshrined in it. Often, these efforts felt too small to stem the tide of coloniality inherent in international schools, something that students (ODIS, 2022) and a recent Bloomberg article (Obiko Pearson, 2022) have drawn attention to.

Stein (2021) reminds us that a victim/villain/victor understanding is too simplistic: humility is required. For me, this looks like a practice of ongoing learning, faith practice, self-reflexivity, and dialogue through reading, engagement in critical professional networks, and autoethnographic examination of my own work. I am more reformer than revolutionary, which informs how I show up and work for change within systems. The construct of critical hope resonates with me as I seek to cultivate and sustain more equitable international education. It reminds me to view injustices and my own role in them realistically but with hope and agency.

Why Global Liberal Arts Colleges & Universities

I am interested in the broader stories we tell about internationalization and how non-Western global liberal arts colleges and universities fit into them. I analyze the public good implications of the economic, moral/social, and epistemological motivations identified by Van der Wende (2012) as mapped to Stein's (2021) framework, to explore possible sources of critical hope.

Economic Drivers: Neoconservative and Neoliberal Motivations

These motivations prioritize national interests from an interstate view (Zapp & Lerch, 2020) of a competitive global economy. The dominant neoliberal ideology offers students benefits such as access to expat faculty, the English language, and job markets. The fact that the idea of the liberal arts college has traction globally even absent a Western partner is a testament to its power.

GLAC&U are pitched as preparing students with employable skills for the knowledge economy (Van der Wende, 2012). From this perspective, graduates who are adaptive thinkers with intercultural competencies to lead on a global stage are considered a public good that builds national capacity. Supranational NGOs such as the World Bank began a decade ago to promote liberal arts in the Global South as nation-building (Peterson, 2012), demonstrating that even a relatively small trend has the potential to be promoted as transnational ideology. Widespread neoliberal logics (Shahjahan, 2014), however, run the risk of enshrining the purpose of liberal arts education as national human resource development for competitive advantage. This is in direct opposition to the oft-touted development of students as global citizens. Furthermore, it is unclear how graduates are to be retained locally after being primed for international competitiveness.

In practice, there exists strong pressure to conform to a "West is best" mentality from parents, students, fellow educators, and the education industry. As a college counselor I acknowledged that people come to international education from varied walks of life and with different goals than I do, many seeking opportunities I had by privilege. For high achieving low income students (HALI) who can begin to see and question these dynamics, knowledge is power. I came to view myself as responsible for the opportunities I presented and how I framed them, including the assumptions I kept hidden or exposed, but not for the choices or motivations of others.

Moral and Social Drivers: Anti-Oppressive Motivations

Moral and social drivers, on the other hand, aim to foster global solidarity. Institutions operating primarily from this motivation are more likely to focus on educating collaborative global problem-solvers and on their campus' global social responsibilities (Jones et al., 2021; Marginson, 2011). They seek to instill in students a vision of rooted cosmopolitanism (Appiah, 2006; Nixon, 2011), a mutual sense of belonging locally and globally that leads to collective responsibility for global challenges. International Higher Education for Society (Jones et al., 2021; Leask & de Gayardon, 2021) efforts often rely on this framing. The rise of liberal arts programs at public campuses worldwide which increase access to a liberal arts undergraduate education (Godwin, 2017) signifies the power of this motivation in the current global higher education landscape.

Moral and social motivations have been appealed to throughout the history of internationalization (Stein, 2021), however past efforts have served national interests and reproduced colonial patterns (Altbach, 2016). Unexamined, this rationale can cloak complicity with good intentions. Scholars have critiqued global liberal arts campuses for their coziness with neoliberalism, their potential to spread Western cultural hegemony, and the inequitable power relationships of partnerships (Godwin, 2015b). It is worth asking whether GLAC&U are merely reproducing a legacy of Whiteness (Shahjahan & Edwards, 2021) in global higher education. Absent intentionality to "decenter ourselves in a world of others" (Center for Global Citizenship Education, 2021), the project of developing global citizens runs the risk of developing Western citizens.

Examples include prioritizing individual versus cooperative critical thinking (Tan, 2017) and Western scientific and academic conventions. Historically, there has been thin inclusion and "little effort to adapt...to the needs or traditions of the country in which the programs are offered" (Altbach, 2016, p. 126). However, this need not be the case, and there are emerging case studies from the Global South

which seek to right these historical imbalances. They are examples of critical hope, blending aspiration and imagination with an eyes-wide-open assessment of the legacy of cultural imperialism in education.

Epistemological Drivers: Decolonial Motivations

Decolonial theorists in the traditions of Said (1978) and Bhabha (2012) are interested in "undoing colonialism" (Shahjahan et al., 2021, p. 10). Specifically, authors seek to decenter Western epistemology, cultivate an ecology of knowledges (Santos, 2007; Stein, 2021), and imagine alternatives (Dutta, 2018) to the colonized relations between centers and peripheries (Altbach, 2016; Galtung, 1971). This work seeks to address epistemic injustice, and calls have gone forth to imagine new futures for scholarship and practice "without Global North epistemic dominance" (Takayama et al., 2017, p. S16) A recent JCIHE article on the decolonization of higher education (Lin et al., 2021) exemplifies this lens. The authors introduce an Indigenous Knowledge Model to shift the paradigm in international higher education. A decolonizing perspective suggests it is possible for a global liberal arts approach to not reify Ameri- and Eurocentric ways of knowing, but instead be grounded in indigenous knowledges.

While liberal arts education has "long been considered a distinctly American tradition" (Godwin, 2015b, p. 2), holistic traditions that marry specialization with general education in fact pre-date American liberal arts in China, India, and Africa (Godwin, 2017; Godwin & Altbach, 2016; Jung et al., 2016; Lewis, 2018). Confucian academies integrated subjects, reconciled diverse perspectives through dialogue, and emphasized ethical development for society (Cao, 2016; Yang, 2016). In South Asia, the Buddha taught alongside scholars from other disciplines at Nalanda University (Nussbaum, 2010). The curriculum of the world's "oldest continually operating" (Godwin & Altbach, 2016, p. 10) university, Al-Azhar University in Cairo, included study of the sciences and the arts alongside religion, and in Sub-Saharan Africa, Arab scholars taught language, law, literature, astronomy and mathematics as companion subjects for generations (Lilford, 2017).

Widespread ignorance about global models of holistic learning can be attributed to Ameri- and Eurocentrism in the academy and the romanticization of Western colonial history. Despite nearly all contemporary universities having now patterned themselves on the Western model (Altbach, 2016), a global interdisciplinary program of study that is indigenous in character is not only possible but may, in fact, be rooted in the soil from which global liberal arts campuses spring. Reviving these histories can serve as inspiration for reclaiming and reimagining non-Western global liberal arts traditions.

Counternarratives

Perhaps, then, a global liberal arts college or university could be a decolonizing force. To become so, campus leaders would need to actively resist the "isomorphic tendencies and global neoliberal frames…[that] increase the risk of cultural hegemony and…intellectual imperialism" (Godwin, 2015a, p. 239). Shahjahan (2014) advanced *transformational resistance* as a method for imagining and creating new ways of knowing and being, for which Godwin (2015a) suggested global liberal arts might offer a counternarrative to disrupt neoliberalism. This strategy of telling minority stories to contest dominant ideologies (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002) and "supply alternative sense-making structures" (Kraehe, 2015, p. 201) emerged from critical race theory, a movement grounded in the critical legal studies work of Crenshaw (1994), Bell (2008), Delgado (1989) and others (Crenshaw et al., 1995; West, 1995). Counternarratives illumine experiential knowledge to advance social justice (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002),

as I seek to do by sharing practitioner knowledge of non-Western GLAC&U. Reclaiming these liberal arts traditions is an approach to centering marginalized voices that has the potential to serve as a counternarrative and source of critical hope.

GLAC&U are uniquely positioned to capitalize on their locations and composition, thus creative responses and thought leadership may arise from within the campuses themselves. There has been an attempt (Mou, 2021) to de-center the U.S. as the reference point for liberal arts by exploring the values-based contributions of other regions of the world. Yang (2016) expressed a desire for the fusion of complementary East-West epistemologies and texts in the worldwide liberal arts canon. Jung et al. (2016) drew attention to these curricular experiments at GLAC&U, and to the higher prioritization of internationalization by Asian compared to U.S. liberal arts colleges. They highlighted two key aspects of the task in East Asia as "re-defining the meaning of liberal arts education in the educational and socio-cultural context" and "balancing both excellence and access in liberal arts education" (p. 183). A professor at Ashoka University (Majumdar, 2021) has drawn attention to the need to sustainably integrate liberal arts institutions in local communities and national dialogues to avoid their perception as elite, foreign islands. Increasingly, calls for coherent, integrated cross-cultural frameworks for global liberal arts are being voiced (Jung et al., 2016) with scholars highlighting epistemologies of the South (de Souza Santos & Meneses, 2019; Lin et al., 2021). There are few Western scholars engaging with GLAC&U, perhaps because the West is not centered or a beneficiary of the phenomenon. However, the seeds of critical internationalization studies are being planted amongst a new generation of scholars at a moment when equity and social justice are at the forefront, as evidenced by themes in recent editions of JCIHE.

Some global liberal arts campuses themselves contain the seeds of new imaginaries that may yet come full circle. Case studies of GLAC&U edited by scholars from the Global South (Chakraborty et al., 2021; Jung et al., 2016; Nishimura & Sasao, 2019) are chronicling institutions' innovations and providing the field with early examples. Sunkyunkwan University, a Korean institution founded in the 14th century "with the goal of whole-person development" (Jung et al., 2016, p. 181), is an example of a national university that has reclaimed earlier Confucian ideals by reintroducing a humanities-based liberal arts education for its undergraduates (Nussbaum, 2010). Models such as this which can point to a history of holistic education predating the U.S. liberal arts tradition have a strong foundation for creating a counternarrative.

The imagining of new futures (Shahjahan & Edwards, 2021) in international higher education is an essential ingredient of the critical hope necessary to sustain vision and action. If internationalization presents institutions with a choice between competition and social responsibility (de Wit & Altbach, 2021), some may find a third way. GLAC&U grounded in non-Western onto-epistemologies are poised to serve as a third way. If students can adopt a rooted cosmopolitan outlook, perhaps so, too, may institutions. Certainly, global liberal arts colleges and universities are uniquely situated learning environments from which to explore glonacal agency (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002) and justice. The self-asserted nature of GLAC&U and their prioritization of internationalization present an opportunity to reimagine the liberal arts contextually for a more socially just future. Whether or not they embrace their decolonizing potential depends on leaders' and faculties' willingness to explore their campus' motivations and heritage, and to critically examine their role in the Westernization of international higher education.

Implications for Practice and Scholarship

A relevant question is how GLAC&U might "attend to the complexities and complicities of internationalization, instead of seeking simplistic narratives and solutions" (Stein, 2021, p. 1782). Globally rising nationalisms, refugee displacements, and America's racial reckoning coincident with the COVID-19 pandemic have prompted introspection and conversations on racism, colorism, and Westernization in many international education spaces. True transformation will require courageous, equity-minded leadership and critical hope to imagine and work for a different future.

Administrators are encouraged to begin by learning the history of interdisciplinary education in their region and networking with like-minded colleagues. The allies of hope are often best fostered in community. Discerning the motives and power dynamics at play is critical to inform equity-minded leadership (George Mwangi & Yao, 2020; Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, 2017) that can transform practice (Bystydzienski et al., 2017; Kezar, 2020). Analyses may reveal a lack of alignment between institutions' stated missions and stakeholders' motivations. The Integrated Model of Leadership Development (Dugan & Humbels, 2018) offers a roadmap for leaders wishing to grow in threading equity-minded leadership throughout priorities and operational concerns, and research has shown that a comprehensive approach to internationalization led from the top is most likely to be successful (George Mwangi & Yao, 2020). Depending on workflow constraints, it may make sense to distribute leadership to an interdisciplinary task force or to bring in an international education consultant from a critical internationalization studies perspective who can guide an institutional audit and work with leadership to identify strategic priorities.

Those seeking to lead decolonization efforts may look to Shahjahan et al.'s recent article that summarized the work as "(a) recognizing constraints, (b) disrupting, and (c) making room for alternatives" (2021, p. 13). It described decolonizing curriculum and pedagogy as inclusive work, actively critiquing the positionality of knowledge, and enacted, through collaborative, relational learning that is connected to the community and to wider social and political issues. Practically, this involves reflexivity, interrogating disciplinary assumptions around the universality of knowledge, engaging in decolonizing curriculum work, training faculty in culturally responsive instruction and learner-centered inquiry (Godwin, 2015a), and honoring diverse of ways of knowing and being. Stein et al.'s (2021) decolonizing workbook is an excellent resource for educators wishing to build capacity to engage in this work.

Scholars can support these transformational efforts by continuing to explore how emerging GLAC&U fit within the new transnationalism's (Altbach, 2016) "move away from internationalization as a Western concept" (de Wit & Altbach, 2021, p. 31). Authors can include GLAC&U in internationalization studies and forecasts and work toward updating a public global inventory. Global scholars and practitioners are particularly welcome to help determine the future of internationalization. Those whose positionality affords them perspective on the complexities and complicities can suggest ways forward for global liberal arts as International Higher Education *for* Society with emphases on global learning, equity, and epistemic justice. These may include recommended practices and next steps, as well as frameworks or rubrics that are contextually adaptable. Editorial teams should prioritize publishing these scholars' research, especially around the areas of emerging GLAC&U models, pedagogies, and curricula that champion Indigenous knowledges. It is time to develop the counternarratives and contextually coherent frameworks Godwin (2015a) and Jung et al. (2016) called for. Western scholars, too, have roles to play amplifying these voices, advocating for an ecology of knowledges (de Souza Santos, 2007), and calling partner institutions toward more equitable partnerships.

Finally, an ethic of minimizing harm epistemically and ontologically might find a home in the public good mission (Marginson, 2011; Shaker & Plater, 2016) of GLAC&U. I can think of no better way to acknowledge complexity than for leaders to invite their learning communities into a reflexive and critical examination of the foundations of the very project itself. It will not be easy for existing institutions to do the self-examination necessary to lead to contextually-based meaningful action, but it is often the hard things that are most worth doing.

A Source of Critical Hope

This analysis has demonstrated that there is merit to examining an internationalization trend on the basis of its motivations. I have introduced global liberal arts campuses as a trend in international higher education and recounted their rise in the past decade according to practitioner knowledge and developments in scholarship. Further studies would do well to further delimit GLAC&U, to update and make public a global inventory, and to provide examples of epistemic justice from the Global South.

While there can be a mix of motivations underlying any endeavor, I echo Godwin (2015a) in advocating for decolonization to become central to the purpose of GLAC&U. These campuses embrace an international mission, stand in relief to world-class research universities, and purport to be agents of International Higher Education *for* Society. They carry the potential to serve as counternarratives to the forces of neoliberalism and Westernization in international higher education. Global liberal arts colleges and universities represent a growing, influential trend of worldwide experimentation with the liberal arts at the undergraduate level and are uniquely positioned to offer a source of critical hope for transformative resistance to dominant internationalization narratives.

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Empirical Article

OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION
Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 76-92
Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education
DOI: 10.32674/jcihe.v15i1.4404 | https://ojed.org/jcihe

Comunidad y Universidad: Spaces of Decoloniality in Boricua Public Higher Education

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Abstract

The multifaceted influences of coloniality in higher education continue to be explored to reshape and transform spaces that can either reproduce structures of coloniality or bring about decoloniality. The University of Puerto Rico, the central higher learning institution of the archipelago, continues to undergo changes that are influenced by its sociopolitical context. The aims of this research included the critical observation of the influence of coloniality in the public university system of Puerto Rico through exploring community engagement by university professors. This research implemented qualitative inquiry through document analysis. Pattern analysis was performed through three conceptual frameworks: coloniality, colonial state of exception, and ecologies of knowledge. Findings included both the interruption of coloniality by university professors and the reproduction of coloniality by the university administration. These findings illustrate current spaces of decoloniality in Boricua higher education.

Keywords: coloniality, community engagement, community-university relationships, decoloniality

Received November 14, 2021; revised April 30, 2021; accepted June 1, 2022

> *Beyond the community, there is lo comunitario, which is valid as the place where a psychological feeling of being is achieved: it is those feelings of being able to ser [being yourself], of being able to estar [being in a place], of being able to aportar [contribute]; that reduce or try to reduce anomie, marginalization and allow us a sense of belonging and interaction, participation. It is these psychological feelings that make possible answers about: who am I and what is my place in society? (Hernández & López 2006, p. 19).*

The history of Boricuas on the archipelago is intertwined with the history of the institutions of learning. The future, present, and past of institutions intersect with the trajectory of the Boricua identities and communities in tangible ways. The public university is an institution that is ubiquitous in the media, workplaces, healthcare, K-12 education, and government. Because of the ties with public funding, the people of Puerto Rico watchfully follow the challenges and direction of higher education (HE), especially public higher education (PHE).

In Puerto Rico, PHE faces challenges that include managing the aftermath of natural disasters, a global pandemic, and system-wide budget cuts. While developing strategies to address these challenges, cultural context becomes salient in the ways institutions choose to move forward. The historical origin of the public institutions of higher learning poses a specific challenge to address the continued reproduction or disruption of current structures of coloniality. The reproduction of these structures by HE is not exclusive to Puerto Rico but is rather a global reality. The future of PHE grants a critical analysis of the variety of ways to accomplish the desired educational outcomes. This analysis must consider enacting the mission without upholding structures of coloniality.

This study presents an opportunity to critically explore the complexities of the relationship between contemporary colonial contexts as framed by laws and policies, as well as larger aspects of coloniality within HE. Expanding research and knowledge on this topic can provide policymakers, HE administration, faculty, and staff with further understanding to transform educational practices in the pursuit of social justice. More specifically, this study seeks to address the educational systems that create and perpetuate exploited and those who exploit them or oppressed and oppressors.

Atiles-Osoria (2016) conceptualized the specific dynamics of the colonial laws in Puerto Rico as a *colonial state of exception* (CSE). CSE describes the tools, such as laws, that the United States of America (USA) has utilized to create Puerto Rico's socio-political circumstances, which creates legal subjects. Although many parts of the world exist in what some describe as "post-colonial" realities, in terms of political status, Puerto Rico's reality is that of colonial subjugation. Cruz (2019) argued that post-colonialism is an idea conceived by dominant groups and does not reflect the realities of countries that were once colonized. Coloniality has been defined by Maldonado-Torres (2016) as the logic, metaphysics, ontology, and matrix of power created by the massive processes of colonization that can continue to exist after formal independence and desegregation.

One component of HE, frequently described as outreach, is community engagement. The ideas of community engagement and how it is implemented vary widely among institutions. One common factor between universities is the idea of the community as a laboratory or place where students can polish and practice the knowledge they acquire in the institution. Community engagement approaches that center on the university, and not the community, can intentionally or unintentionally place hierarchies of knowledge in these relationships. Further consideration is needed to evaluate the HE systems in Puerto Rico as part of colonial structures. The purpose of this study was to critically observe the influence of coloniality in higher

education institutions (HEIs) in Puerto Rico. We further explored the disposition of community engagement by university professors as perpetuating or disrupting the effects of coloniality through the ways in which they engaged the local community.

Background

Although previous studies have presented the influence and impact of neoliberalism in higher education in Puerto Rico (Ruiz, 2017), the contributions of their analysis do not address the relationship between colonial laws and coloniality. This study presents an opportunity to critically explore the complexities of the relationship between present colonial contexts as framed by laws and policies, as well as larger aspects of coloniality within higher education. Expanding research and knowledge on this topic can provide policymakers, higher education administration, faculty, students, staff, and the community with further understanding to transform educational practices in the pursuit of social justice. More specifically, this study seeks to address the educational systems that create and perpetuate exploited and those who exploit them or oppressed and oppressors.

Puerto Rico first became a colony, under the rule of Spain, in the 1400s and continues to function under a colonial context, as an unincorporated territory or commonwealth of the USA. Many Latin American countries were first invaded and colonized between the 1400s and the 1500s. After the process of formally existing as European colonies, these colonies started the process of becoming independent countries, or republics around the 1800s. In many cases, more than two centuries later the structures of colonialism and coloniality persist. For this reason, it is imperative to consider the influences of coloniality, specifically in institutions that can potentially serve as hubs for reproduction or disruption of the colonial apparatus.

An institution known worldwide to be founded for the purposes of expanding colonialism was HE (Wilder, 2013). In the case of Puerto Rico, the formalization of HEIs happened after the establishment of the archipelago as a territory of the USA. The origin of the institution shaped its mission and role in Puerto Rico. The outcomes of both colonial laws and coloniality are neither obscure nor mysterious. Fanon (2004) described the reality of the colonized, the *damnés*, as stripped of autonomy and self-determination and their condition as the product of the stripping and deterioration of their land and resources. It is a combination of a suspension of mind, body, and spirit to replace the self with an entity that reproduces and perpetuates the conditions imposed by the colonizer (Fanon, 2004).

The conditions of coloniality, and the current reality of Puerto Rican society, can be met with efforts of decoloniality. Decoloniality can be represented as the reestablishing and reconstructing of what has been taken from the colonized through the dismantling of coloniality (Maldonado-Torres, 2016). For example, through the ecologies of knowledge, Santos (2015) noted that in the global south there are unequal encounters between hegemonic and non-hegemonic pieces of knowledge. Non-Hegemonic knowledges are then "mobilized to organize resistance against the unequal relations caused by capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy" (Santos, 2015, p. 199). Although there are many approaches to decoloniality this research centered exploring the idea of reestablishing mechanisms or structures utilized in ways that can return what was taken by coloniality.

In the case of PHE, engaging with a wider range of socio-political and ideological influences can guide practitioners towards re-envisioning the pursuit of the current mission. For the University of Puerto Rico (UPR), a part of the PHE system in Puerto Rico, the mission includes objectives that emphasize the

transmission and creation of knowledge at the service of the and the continued development of culture (Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2021). In general, the pursuit to serve public and private good while serving the community can (a) establish pathways between the community and the institution, (b) center community, and (c) center ways of knowing that are from the community in ways that value local needs.

Literature Review

This section highlights three areas in the attempt to deepen the understanding of the context of the relationship of the UPR and community relationships. This includes a brief introduction to fundamental colonial laws, the role of the UPR and community-university relationships.

Colonial Laws and Higher Education in Puerto Rico

In 1898 the United States of America (USA) invaded Puerto Rico and began changes in the ways they acquired territories. Atiles-Osoria (2018) described the context of the laws Puerto Rico has been subjected to since 1898 as functioning under a state of exception. There is a series of acts and laws that would further frame the relationship between the USA and Puerto Rico, the archipelago's economic development, thus HE in Puerto Rico. These include the Foraker Act, the Jones Act of 1916, Operation Bootstrap, Act 600 of 1950, the Act of 1954, and the PROMESA law of 2016. The colonial laws provide the context of the political circumstances where the UPR is situated and its role in the archipelago. The context created by the history of the archipelago, its government, and institutions frame the unique role of the public university and its relationship to Puerto Rican communities.

Role of the Public University in the Archipelago

The public university is one capable of transcending partial interests and collaborating in a nationwide project of aspiring to diversify the elites, creating an environment where all points of view can be expressed and debated with each other (Brunner & Pena, 2011). In general, the functions of the public university can include creating and disseminating knowledge, and public service (Budd, 2009; Kerr, 2001; Maurrasse, 2001; Ortega y Gasset, 1992). The UPR has served the archipelago of Puerto Rico in evolving capacities that have been delineated by its development as well as the changing global and regional socio-political conditions. The SoS Plan developed by the UPR faculty captured five services that represent the social role of the system of the UPR in the benefit of the archipelago (a) health care in the institution's medical-hospital facilities, (b) the custody and promotion of the socio-cultural, artistic, historical, scientific, and natural heritage of Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, and the world, (c) the promotion of entrepreneurship, cooperativism, and development of businesses in the context of sustainable and equitable development for the archipelago, (d) scientific and socio-humanistic research and innovation in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, and (e) strengthening relationships and connections with all social sectors of the archipelago (PROTESTAmos, 2018).

These five services provide an overview of the current role of the UPR system in service to Puerto Rican society. These services are an extension of the mission as established by the institution and reflect what the faculty have gathered are the most relevant pillars of the relationship between the UPR and its surrounding communities.

Community-University Relationships

The present role of the UPR as established by the services they provide to Puerto Rican society reveals direct relationships with the local community. The stated mission of the UPR is currently based on Act No. 1 of January 20, 1966, "Law of the University of Puerto Rico" ("Act No. 1"), which declares that the UPR as a public institution of HE, is mandated to serve the people of Puerto Rico (UPR, 2020). PROTESTAmos (2018), presented the ways in which the institution articulates the enactment of its mission and includes multiple ways of establishing and maintaining relationships with the Puerto Rican community. These include stewarding cultural values, developing intellectual and cultural wealth, collaborating with agencies, all centering on the ideals of life in Puerto Rico.

Land-grant universities are known for having duties or pillars that include teaching, research, and extension (Croft, 2019). Collins (2012) noted that the extension pillar of the land-grant institutions connects the knowledge produced through the institution's research with the surrounding community. Community-university relationships can be defined under the umbrella of community engagement. Oftentimes these definitions center on terms on colonial interests or legacies, the extraction of knowledge, transactions, and self-serving individualistic interests designed to hold the university as a beneficiary. This research stems from the idea that universities, especially land grants, are indebted to their communities. First and foremost, because of the ways in which the land they sit on was acquired, but also because of the role and responsibility of universities that proclaim that their mission, as well as their funds, are tied to the local community.

In the USA, state universities across the 50 states and also the USA territories, are largely funded by local and federal funds. In Puerto Rico, PHE was funded up to 40% until 2021. Extending the benefits of turning the community into a learning and research laboratory can replicate attitudes and behaviors that serve more as a parasitic relationship, rather than a symbiotic relationship that exhibits at least mutualism.

Theoretical Framework

The first framework used in this study was Atiles-Osoria's (2018) colonial state of exception which provided a legal base for the colonial relationship between Puerto Rico and the USA. Second, were coloniality perspectives and frameworks presented by Cruz (2019), Smith (2013), and Maldonado-Torres (2016) which guided the aims of the study from a political framework of dissolving the colony as a matter of political status, to addressing the ideological realities that can exist independently of political status and condition. Lastly, ecologies of knowledge (Santos, 2015) which provided an outlook that can expand the possibilities of community self-sufficiency by addressing the power hierarchies that exist by placing value on specific types of knowledges.

Colonial State of Exception

Atiles-Osoria (2018) described previous assertions of what a state of exception means outside of colonial paradigms. For example, a non-permanent, or temporary suspension of state law to address a specific period where there is a circumstance of political violence, economic crisis, or natural disaster. This suspension of law occurs under what can be known as a state of emergency and utilizes specific situations that are deemed as a crisis. When these crises occur alternative pathways to what is established as law can

occur to manage the specific circumstance. The critical issue in this suspension is that instead of being used infrequently, it becomes the norm and a tool for colonial domination in colonial territories. The colonial state of exception entails the enactment of legal systems that create a socio-political reality of the creation of colonial subjects by the colonial government (Atiles-Osoria, 2016).

One recent example of a colonial state of exception is the establishment of the Puerto Rico Oversight Management, and Economic Stability Act or PROMESA (S. 2328, 2015-2016) by the U.S. government to manage the economic crisis (US Congress, 2016). The word *promesa* in Spanish means promise which was carefully selected to give notions to the people of Puerto Rico of prosperity. This law will be in place for years until their mission of handling the local economic crisis is resolved. The repercussions produced by the mechanisms imposed to redefine the local economic, political, and legal structures are not exclusive to one institution. Furthermore, PROMESA, as well as other colonial laws and acts, are the frame that defines the power and hierarchies that influence relationships that guide the functioning of institutions on the archipelago, including HE.

Coloniality

Cruz (2019) presented the historical background of structures of coloniality and their impact on current Bolivian society. It is important to note that although similarities persist throughout countries with a history of colonization, their contexts are unique. The act of colonization itself is based on the idea of power. Because of the political independence of Latin American countries, and globally, there is tangible proof that the structures put in place by colonialism that harmed both colonized and colonizer, as Fanon (2004) described are still present.

For this reason, to better understand these relationships of power in this study the context of Puerto Rico that will be expounded on the decoloniality framework incorporates the notions described by Maldonado-Torres (2016). Previous descriptions and work on coloniality include scholars such as the Argentinian Walter Mignolo, and Peruvian Anibal Quijano. This concept began to be described by these scholars in terms of power in different sectors of society (Quijano, 2007). The way they framed this idea was that the coloniality of power had impacted several areas that include authority, sexuality, knowledge, and the economy. These relationships have an impact on how the world works, in direct relationships with others, but one of the key aspects is our relationship to ourselves, the general understanding of being (Maldonado, 2007).

Maldonado-Torres (2007) presented three elements of coloniality: coloniality of knowledge, coloniality of being, and coloniality of power. Later, Maldonado-Torres (2017) presented ten theses on coloniality and decoloniality. Both their elements of coloniality, as well as the ten theses delineated were considered in this study to deepen our understanding of the influence of coloniality on community-university relationships.

As previously noted, Maldonado-Torres anchored coloniality in the coloniality of knowledge, coloniality of being, and coloniality of power. The coloniality and decoloniality framework utilized throughout this research is a result of weaving the ideas of Cruz (2019), who identifies as an Aymara from Bolivia, Smith (212) who identifies as Māori from New Zealand, Maldonado-Torres (2016) a Boricua from Puerto Rico, and Fanon (1974) an Afro-Martinican. The application of these frameworks stems from the reality of power hierarchies impacting the functioning of institutions and society at large through power imbalances and oppression.

Ecologies of Knowledge

In many ways, these hierarchies of power have a close relationship with the production of knowledge, what is deemed and perceived as valid knowledge. Santos' and Cruz present two examples of knowledge hierarchies. Santos's *ecologies of knowledge* (2015) presented the relevance of understanding and implementing the concept of multiple knowledges and cognitive justice. The idea of the imbalance in the value of indigenous ideas as the supposed lack of knowledge from *pueblos originarios,* or indigenous peoples, is merely the lack of a presence of ideas and ways of thinking that emulate how the *elite blancoide* did (Cruz, 2019).

Methodology

The purpose of this document analysis, as part of a case study research, was to explore community engagement in the socio-political context of the USA coloniality in the archipelago of Puerto Rico. This project aimed to explore the research question: How does coloniality in Puerto Rico influence community engagement by university professors? Using a document analysis methodology, the following sections include the rationale for the research design, the site and document selection, data collection processes and organization, data analysis, matters of trustworthiness in the study, the researchers' role, limitations, and conclusions.

Study Design

This document analysis engaged a qualitative methodological approach to provide a humanistic focus (Gephart, 2004) that centered and valued the voice of the researched and was sensitive to its context by providing detail within the research setting (Bell et al., 2018). Qualitative research methods were utilized to reframe narratives that are dominant to consider a perspective that incorporates not only individual strengths but also those strengths and resources at a community level (Brodsky et al., 2016). The community-level lens provided the opportunity to search for responses to systemic issues, as well as served to develop thick descriptions of systems, theories, and processes in a holistic manner that engaged the identification of the factors and hypotheses that elicit deeper research (Brodsky et al., 2016). The qualitative tool used in this study was document analysis, but it will expand into a full case study utilizing observations and interviews in the future.

The UPR has a total of 11 campuses from where the Humacao campus is a 4-year associate and bachelor's degree-granting public institution with 3,218 undergraduate students enrolled in 2021 (NCES, 2021). This institution was established in 1962 as the inaugural regional college of the UPR system (Alvarez & Raffucci, 2005). The UPRH hosts the social sciences bachelors focused on social action research, locally known for their acronym INAS/ITIAS. This program engages in participatory action research (PAR) through horizontal relationships and deep reflections of how the university engager in power structures. INAS/ITIAS aims to collaborate with the communities in the development of non-governmental initiatives to address poverty and inequity. The INAS/ITIAS program states that the social function of the UPR is to form a part of a system of collaboration that includes the government, local institutions, the private sector, non-governmental agencies, and communities (UPRH, 2020). The program's mission is that this collaboration will guide the solving of the common problems faced by Puerto Rican society (UPRH, 2020).

Another important part of the study, in addition to the selection of the study site, is the delimitation of the documents analyzed in the study.

Site Selection

The scope of this study focused on the context of the public system of HE in the archipelago of Puerto Rico. To better understand the impact of coloniality on community engagement we selected a range of sources elaborated by faculty to explore the research question. This approach allowed to enrich the exploration of the research question through documents that can frame the research questions through the different nature of these documents, For example, government-generated documents and the faculty response to such documents; faculty essays; syllabi; institutional strategic plans; and papers. These documents were directly related to the UPR through budget materials and system-wide faculty-generated documents. Specific documents were analyzed from the UPR Humacao (UPRH) campus as well as from the Social Sciences Social Action Research bachelor's degree program offered in the Humacao campus located in the southeast region of Puerto Rico.

Data Collection

Documents were selected from a range of sources to follow Flyvbjerg's (2011) concept of falsification. This process was included as a part of the critical reflexivity which engages deviant cases or observations, those not in harmony with the researcher's propositions and are intentionally sought by the researcher to increase the rigor of the methodology (Flybjerg, 2011). Thus, seeking falsification not confirmation of the researcher's preconceived notions forms a central part of understanding the perceptions, ideas, and behaviors of the social actors of the case study (Diamond, 1996; Flybjerg, 2011).

Document Analysis

Documents have been described as "ready-made sources or materials" that can include public records, personal documents, and physical materials (Merriam, 1998, p. 112). Documents are relevant to this case study because of their potential to reflect the interest of their authors (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007*)*, as well as a source of the ideas and values represented by the document (Hitchcock, et al. 1995). Document analysis was utilized to gain a deeper understanding of the case from multiple sources. An important piece of information to evaluate was the fiscal plan (FP-UPR) of *la junta*, government, and university strategic plans. Lastly, specific public records from the CISO-INAS program included the documents on their official webpage and documents that record the program projects.

The initial approach to document analysis follows the guiding questions by Merriam (1998), as well as Saldaña and Omasta (2016). These guiding questions interrogate and explore (a) the history of the production and use of the document, (b) how we gained access to the document, (c) the authenticity of the document, (d) the identity of the author of the document, © the perspective of the document, (f) how it draws the attention of the intended audience, and (g) the existence of documents related to the one being analyzed that can assist in a greater understanding.

The documents were evaluated for basic descriptive categories as well as using a systematic approach to describe the content and possible meaning of the communications (Merriam, 1998). The goal of the analysis of documents for this case study was to include perspectives that will assist in the critical exploration of the phenomenon being studied.

Codes and Themes

The coding of the documents was done by mixing the use of qualitative analysis software, Dedoose, and manual coding. This strategy was implemented considering Smith's (2013) consideration of research as a social, intellectual, and imaginative activity. The process of data analysis, specifically in the context of coloniality, engaged disparate, fragmented pieces of a larger puzzle (Smith, 2013). Thus, approaching research as an imaginative activity permitted it to transcend the material, empirical realities and resist the placement within a dehumanizing world and the creation of new possibilities beyond coloniality (Smith, 2013). In addition to utilizing codes as a strategy for categorizing the data (Maxwell, 2013), groupings of the data according to the meaning and pattern as it relates to the phenomenon under study, were compiled into categories (Saldaña & Omasta, 2016).

Role of the Researcher

Within the notions of decoloniality approaches, it is crucial to state the role of the researchers that engaged in this document analysis. With two authors in this paper, we sought to increase self-awareness through the reflection of the impact of our lens as they relate to our identities. The first author on this project is from Puerto Rico and is intricately connected to the data collection and expansion of the case study. The second author is White and from the US and contributed to the design of the study and the analysis. Korstjens and Moser (2017) proposed that the perception of a context and circumstance is constructed by the individual's social, cultural, historical, and personal context. In sum, we acknowledge the influence of the researcher in the research process, as well as the possible consequences of speaking for, and speaking out, in matters of qualitative research that engage social injustices (Smith, 2013).

Findings

The influence of coloniality as imposed power hierarchies permeates the history and present of the university. The documents that we analyzed in this study represented different sectors that engage directly with the university such as *la junta*, UPR administration, and faculty members. The mention, emphasis, and approach to similar aspects of the university are represented by discourses. Three main findings were (a) the creation, definition, and preservation of *la cultura puertorriqueña*, (b) the return of investment of government funds, and (c) service to the community.

Creation, Definition, and Preservation of *la Cultura Puertorriqueña*

Universities in general are known for their legacies of power. For example, as instruments of colonization (González & Hsu, 2014; la paperson, 2017; Livsey, 2016; Wilder, 2013). What can be known as having a powerful impact on social mobility in some universities and communities can be in other types of universities as the continued reproduction of elites and economic inequalities. Alvarez and Raffuci (2005) captured an important fact about how faculty was viewed that we can interrogate.

La cultura puertorriqueña, Puerto Rican cultura is not defined by the UPR. For the context of these findings, we will consider the definition brought forth by Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña (2021), "...national culture as the product of the integration that in the course of four and a half centuries had taken place in Puerto Rico, between the respective cultures of the Taino Indians that populated the Island at the

time of the Discovery, of the Spaniards who conquered and colonized it, and African blacks who, as early as the first decades of the 16th century, began to join our population."

The diverse documents that were a part of the document analysis included a strong presence of the concept of preservation of the cultura puertorriqueña. Santory, a member of the faculty at UPR Rio Piedras, which wrote an essay for La Torre, a part of the collection of faculty essays edited by Alvarez and Raffucci (2005), reiterated the promotion and custody of cultural property as an assigned social function of the UPR (PROTESTAmos & APRUM, 2018). This notion is echoed in a diversity of documents including the collection of faculty essays in the book La Torre which recounts the history of the UPR from its origins to 2005 (Alvarez & Raffucci, 2005), the SOS Plan a data-driven and research-based document elaborated by faculty as a reaction to la juntas fiscal plan for the UPR (PROTESTAmos2018), the strategic development plan of UPRH (2013), and la junta's fiscal plan for the UPR (FOMB, 2020). La Torre captured from past to present the development of the UPR as a current "cultural center of the country" (Alvarez & Raffucci 2005, p. XIV). As part of the structure of the university, one of the areas that were mentioned to draw attention due to the need to focus on Puerto Rican culture and identity was the UPR's curriculum during the early development of the university. Picó, a faculty member at UPR-RP stated that what was known to be Puerto Rico was unclear, but it was clear that "the claim is that the university studies Puerto Rico more and the West less." (Alvarez & Raffucci 2005, p. 8). Picó also addressed:

> Today it seems absurd to us that in the past we tried to repress Puerto Rican expressions of identity, but with less ease, we admit that alternative ways of defining Puerto Ricanness or the lack of it must coexist. It is easy to criticize today the Eurocentric dogmatism that tied us to The Iliad, The Prince and Faust, but it is less easy to admit that perhaps the classic authors of the Puerto Rican literary canon manifested limiting visions of the African, the feminine, and the culturally hybrid in our Caribbean. (Alvarez & Raffucci 2005, p. 19).

Now retired professor Magali García Ramís, described the marginalization of the Puerto Rican culture and identity in the UPR in the 1910s: "The omission of Puerto Ricans from the university curriculum is an accurate indicator of how everything that concerns the island, and its identity was marginalized from the educational and cultural sphere of the institution in those years." (Alvarez & Raffucci 2005, p. 65). Another example of the development of Puerto Rican culture through the university in the first half of the century after the invasion is provided by architect and professor Enrique Vivoni Farague in their description of the construction of *la Torre*. Vinoni shared that the main tower at the UPR-RP campus in the 1930s was "the most dignified example of our Spanish heritage: it embodied the Puerto Rican cultural project." (Alvarez & Raffucci 2005, p. 127). Professor Malena Rodríguez Castro shared the struggle in the 1940s to include as part of the academic offering at UPR a course about Puerto Rican culture (Alvarez & Raffucci, 2005). Dra. Castro emphasized the absence in these debates of the reality that (Alvarez & Raffucci 2005, p. 165):

> ...it established the lineages and practices of the culture in a filial account of roots and continuities in Western Europe, and the Puerto Ricanists who, in a similar way, backbone it nationally, was to obliterate other positions that were not recognized in such distension or they take refuge in other thresholds, of ignoring the potential of porosity and exchange of knowledge, of its constant renewal and emergence, of its renunciation of being confined to binary locations, even those with the strength and prestige of traditions.

In relation to more recent times in the history of the university, the 2020 FP-UPR includes a small reference in the annex that describes the institutional background that the law that supports the creation of the UPR system includes in its mission the "development and enjoyment of the fundamental, ethical, and esthetic values of Puerto Rican culture…" (FOMB 2020, p. 54). Lastly, the strategic development plan for UPRH makes mentions "the need to redefine the reaffirmation of Puerto Rican culture in a comprehensive framework." (UPRH 2020, p. 7).

Return of Investment for Government Funds

The origin of the UPR responded to a societal need of forming teachers. Later it developed into a land grant which was intended by the SMA to engage societal needs and economic growth of local communities. The 2020 FP-UPR includes the trajectory of the largest budget cuts in its history. This document summarizes la junta's priorities for the UPR. Increasing tuition, increasing external funds, reducing operational expenses, all with the purpose of making the transition from an institution that was greatly supported by local law, Law 1 of 1966, as a government institution to a model that mimics the institutions in the continental USA. The immediate goals presented by la junta establish a bottom line for UPR and be profitable for the government to stabilize the economy by reducing government appropriations for the institution. For example, "...the Oversight Board affords the UPR an opportunity to review carefully its finances and operations...to put in motion the major operating model changes that will allow it to achieve the financial targets set for the period from 2020 to 2025" (FOMB 2020, p. 11).

One prominent argument in the report is the comparison to "mainland" universities. Which establishes a power dynamic of "the rest" or "the other". The plan proposes tuition increases by stating "...reasonable increases in both undergraduate and graduate tuition to move UPR more in line with the tuition receipts generated by its mainland peers without putting accessibility for low-income students at risk." (FOMB, 2020, p. 22). The FP-UPR decenters the mission and goal of the UPR to serve the Puerto Rican community and heavily positions the UPR on a path to seek profit as a return of investment.

The SOS plan is a report created by UPR faculty members originally in 2017 and updated in 2018 as a response to la junta's 2017 decision to declare the UPR as a non-essential government service to begin massive budget cuts to the institution. The faculty made a clear argument against the budget cuts by presenting their analysis of the impact of the UPR on the local economy. "The UPR ensures a multiplier economic effect in various sectors of economic activity, at a rate of $1.56 for every dollar invested in it." (PROTESTAmos, 2018, p. 3). In 2019, PROTESTAmos (2019, p.1) developed a policy brief that summarizes key aspects of their analysis and includes that the UPR "provides a 20% return of investment in human capital".

Service to the Community

The origin of PHE in Puerto Rico and the possible reason for the prevalence of a strong sense of responsibility to serve the community can be traced to the land grant past and present of the UPR. Documents generated by the campuses, including the mission, or faculty-generated documents, such as the SOS plan present the role of the university as one embedded in its local community. The current UPRH strategic plan for 2021 states that the university has an obligation to be in service to the people of Puerto Rico (UPRH, 2013). Documents that address earlier times in the UPR, the 1930s, state that the community manifested criticism towards the University because of their alienation from Puerto Rican life (Alvarez &

Raffucci, 2005, p. 108). Despite these notes by professor Vivoni in La Torre, professor Santory expressed in the SOS plan that "the UPR is backed by a history of more than one hundred years as a beacon of civic participation, critical thinking and community service in and for the country" (PROTESTAmos, 2018, p. 6).

From the general aspects of the idea of serving the community through statements in the mission, a more specific approach is presented in documents with ties to the UPRH. These documents include the strategic plan for UPRH, INAS syllabi, and faculty-generated documents. The INAS program stated in a presentation of a PAR project that the program is characterized by "looking to support the process of community empowerment that can facilitate a community and a society that are sustainable, happy, collaborative, empathetic, and safe in all of Puerto Rico" (Cruz-McDougall & Millan, 2016). In this collaborative study, student researchers, faculty, community, and local government worked together to address a specific need. The methodological approach led by UPRH faculty provides a vision of transformative leadership development, community development, and multisector alliances. The document clearly delineates the purpose of INAS as upholding the mission of forming citizens that contribute mainly to Puerto Rico.

López (2011) described the relationship between communities and universities from the perspective of faculty as one that could be falsely confused with one that requires a focus on doing and not on knowing or creating knowledge. They proceed to emphasize that for the university to be a part of that doing it must be vulnerable to feeling the world. This refers to reconnecting with its relevance to society through the creation of links with local projects and communities that are generated in the country. López describes PAR as one of the tools for the university to engage in reconnecting with relevance. Hernández and López (2006) presented that university-community relationships involving academia take on the challenge to focus on *de lo comunitario*, which stems from, belongs to, or is from the community. The professors propose seeking horizontal relationships between communities and universities where knowledges are for both and from both. The aim of their approach is to transform both spaces, the university from the community and the community from the university (Hernández & López, 2006). This notion is illustrated in a street mural that reads: there is no university without community (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Mural in the urban area of Río Piedras, blocks away from the UPR-Río Piedras campus. Photo by the authors.

Discussion

Three sources of power are presented in the findings. The first is the establishment of a dominant culture. The second is a colonial, political power hierarchy that is visible through establishing a university focused on the return on investment. Thirdly, the struggle to establish decoloniality approaches such as horizontal relationships between communities and the university.

¿La Cultura de Quién?

The origin of the UPR coincides with the early years of the USA colonization. Puerto Rico's history is characterized by double colonization. The first inhabitants of the archipelago were the Taínos who were later invaded by Spain who brought enslaved Africans. As expressed in the Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña's (2021) definition still today la cultura puertorriqueña is locally known and defined by these three main groups. In 1898 the USA began to impose certain measures that in the university were met with resistance. Faculty members then advocated for the definition and preservation of Puerto Rican culture through at least language, representation, curriculum, and architecture. Faculty expressed in *La Torre* that although these efforts were being put forward, there wasn't clarity about which culture was being centered (Alvarez & Raffucci, 2005).

Although the origin of the struggle to define and protect local culture was questionable, its evolution has become central to resisting the colonial interest in extracting everything that Puerto Ricans are, including the capacity to solve problems and contribute to the development of sustainable and functioning communities. In the past, as documented in Alvarez & Raffucci (2005) faculty engaged in the defense of curricular development that reflected the ethnic and national identity of the majority. Currently, the faculty lead these efforts through the implementation of practices that lead students to have accountability and responsibility to solve local problems, think locally, serve, and develop a sensibility to be a part of a collective Faculty and administration from the UPRH acknowledge the relevance of this part of the mission, but express the need to evaluate this notion and create a framework to integrate it

(UPRH, 2013). The notion of destabilizing the current cultural hegemony is a direct way faculty and administration at UPRH position themselves toward decoloniality.

Money is Power

The UPR has been funded at both federal and local levels for more than half a century. Local funding was formalized through Act number 1 of 1966 where 9.6% of government appropriations were to be provided for the UPR to be cemented as a local institution dedicated to the betterment of Puerto Rican society. In 2017 a non-elected board was appointed, la junta, and exceptions in law began under the budget crisis they were tasked to solve. One of the targets to collect the debt, one of the reasons for the crisis, was to begin millionaire budget cuts to the UPR. La junta's main argument is that UPR is not following the steps of HEIs in the continental USA. These institutions follow a market approach where the institution is mainly supported by tuition.

After the release of la junta's 2017 FP-UPR, the UPR's faculty published an economic analysis, and a wealth of suggestions to avoid these budget cuts. In 2019, the faculty contributed to publishing a policy brief that will continue to expand on the effects of the budget cuts in the archipelago of Puerto Rico (PROTESTAmos, 2019). The effect of la junta on the UPR's present and the influence on the focus of the institution's resources in this case the faculty's wellbeing, time, effort, and morale is a power struggle between a formal colonial structure and the UPR. The documents produced by this entity are highly publicized and although the impact of this image, profit-making, is not the focus of our study we can ponder on the effects of community-university relationships as a product of the newly imposed measures.

The FP-UPR makes a strong case for the power hierarchy between la junta and the UPR. The UPR is described by la junta as an engine of social mobility and social change in the fiscal plan "... [the UPR] required to preserve the Island's critical engine of economic and social mobility…" (FOMB 2020, p. 11). Despite being described as a powerful tool for the well-being of Puerto Rico, la junta's actions and plans presented in the plan provide hierarchical measures that do not accurately consider the socio-political context and implications of the plan. This approach is a stark contrast to the community approach of faculty at UPRH.

A university is a place of power and oppression, its origins, legacy, and structures. As la paperson (2017) stated, the university is an assemblage that will be influenced by the work of internal entities, which they call *scyborgs*, disturbances that are constructed in the assemblage.

¿Les de Abajo o les de al Lado?

Maldonado-Torres (2016) and Cruz (2019) presented power struggles in relation to hierarchies. We have evaluated thus far two hierarchical relationships, culture, and money. The third struggle was presented in the findings as service to the community and we are going to expand this through the idea of relationships. In the context of the work at UPRH's INAS/ITIAS, this approach is in harmony with their purpose of creating horizontal relationships with all members of the community. This approach expands the notions of service to the community as established in the mission or mentioned by government institutions as an assigned role for the UPR. Considering the destabilization of coloniality, the questioning of the invisible power structures, such as the physical structure of *la torre* at UPR-RP, in this case through relationships in itself an act towards decoloniality.

Power and coloniality are characterized by hierarchies and the imposition of a way of being onto other groups. The university is a place of power, despite this reality, UPRH's INAS/ITIAS presents methodologies that permeate the university that center on interrogating this power, centering this self-awareness on their students, and approaching the community in ways that position the community as decision-makers. "The student will reflect upon the concepts of power, ideology, conscientization, participative community, and citizen participation based on their experience at the communities." (p1. CISO-INAS, n.d.). This is how Maldonado-Torres' presents the final tenants of decoloniality. The *damné* is in a position where they emerge as creators, agents of social change, and part of a collective project. "*Actuar porque ya se está actuando, ...hacer porque ya se está haciendo, ...transformar porque ya se está transformando*" (López, 2011). Professor López described as documented in the transcription of their presentation about PAR the ways in which knowledges, communities, institutions, scholars, and faculty are intertwined in social action. This action is not spearheaded by the university, it is already in motion and the sensitized university responds to this social reality by becoming a part of it to transform the country, Puerto Rico.

Implications and Conclusion

Through the documents and discourses that were analyzed, we can observe the distinct instruments of coloniality and their influence on community-university relationships. La junta, is not the exclusive colonial machinery, but one of the instruments that elaborates rules, and "guidelines" and suspends law as is well described by Atiles-Osoria (2016). This suspension of law and legal authority reinforces the power hierarchy between the USA and PR by eliminating local voices and autonomy. The direction of the university is set by la junta. This external force restricts and shapes the actions of institutional agents such as the faculty which can be observed and evaluated from faculty-generated documents such as the SOS plan and the policy briefs.

The documents that were analyzed provided context and voice to explore the presence and influence of coloniality in the UPR. We sought falsification and a general overview of the UPR through documents such as the FP-UPR and the SOS plan, to the UPRH specific documents. Maldonado-Torres (2017) emphasizes as one of the tenants of decoloniality the action of destabilizing power through the centering of the collective. The focus of INAS/ITIAS includes the development of "promoting, facilitating, and protecting citizen participation, equity, pluralism, collective, collaborative, participative, and democratic processes and products."; "social responsibility with matters that affect the country, beyond individual or work responsibilities" (UPRH, 2021). In conclusion, one of the most salient ways of advancing decoloniality explored through this analysis was the pursuit of the decoloniality of power, knowledge, and being. Restoring in the community what has been taken by the colonizer.

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Empirical Article

OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION

Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 93-110
Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education
DOI: 10.32674/jcihe.v15i1.4436 | https://ojed.org/jcihe

"I Thought We Were Friends": International Students Challenges in Navigating Basic Academic Regulations at a Private Canadian University

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Abstract

Misunderstandings about how the academic world operates are common among international students. This research investigated international students' understandings of academic regulations. Qualitative content analysis of 3,438 email messages indicate international students used a constellation of arguments to make academic requests/complaints to professors. They seemed to be unaware that their requests/complaints should be guided by the university's formal regulations. Analysis of requests/complaints showed that students perceive the academic environment to be governed by a complex set of informal understandings rather than being regulated by a straightforward set of institutional rules. International students' cultural transition process should be seen as a path from a complex constellation of arguments when making requests/complaints to a more limited set of behaviors governed by institutional regulations. Meeting the needs of international students is the responsibility of academic institutions. Curriculum re-design and a progressive learning strategy can play a central role in reducing complexity by communicating academic regulations clearly and consistently and by giving students pedagogical opportunities to develop the required skills.

***Keywords*:** Canada, international students, academic regulations, consciousness of rules, cultural changes

Received October 6, 2021; revised March 12, 2022; revised March 28, 2022 3/28/22; accepted April 1, 2022

Canada is a significant destination for international students. According to Global Affairs Canada, in 2018, a total of 721,205 international students studied at all levels in Canada; this is the largest number ever recorded (Global Affairs Canada, 2019). As the global movement of university students seems to be a feature of our time, more emphasis needs to be placed on understanding who these students are, how their cultural transition process takes place, and how academic institutions should respond to international students' needs.

The population of international students in Canada at the post-secondary level represents 16.02% of the total number of post-secondary students in Canada. In 2019 and 2020, 344,430 and 388,782 international students – respectively – enrolled in post-secondary institutions in Canada (Statista, 2022). In the last 10 years, a significant increase has occurred: "Between 2014 and 2018, the number of international students in Canada increased by 68%" (Global Affairs Canada, 2019) and by 98% in Ontario (Parkin, 2019).

The importance of Canada's international students derives not only for their large population but for their potential as future immigrants (Global Affairs Canada, 2019; Merli et al., 2020; Sharma, 2020; Trilokekar & Kizilbash, 2013). In 2014, the Minister of International Trade announced Canada's first-ever international education strategy: *Harnessing Our Knowledge Advantage to Drive Innovation and Prosperity*. According to Trilokekar (2015), one of the most important priorities of the policy is to increase the number of international students who choose to remain in Canada as permanent residents after graduation.

From the perspective of policy makers, international students are "ideal immigrants" to Canada since their Canadian educational credentials make them very employable, and their Canadian academic experience represents an opportunity to understand and ease the integration process both into the Canadian workforce and into Canadian society in general (Scott et al., 2015; Sharma, 2020). Given these advantages, it is not surprising that 53,700 international students became permanent residents of Canada in 2018, contributing as productive and valued members of Canadian society (Global Affairs Canada, 2019).

The process of welcoming international students with the purpose of offering them a real option to stay in the country should focus on understanding what international students expect when they arrive in Canada, what their needs are, and how they understand their new academic environment. By expanding our understanding of these areas, we can give shape and content to immigration policy that considers international students a significant addition to the future of Canadian society. The present research was conducted in a private university in Toronto, Ontario, where international students represent a high percentage of the student population. This study was based on the premise that analyzing students' communications with their professors, and more specifically, looking at students' supporting arguments when make a request or a complaint, provides an extraordinary opportunity to study international students' understanding of their new academic environment.

The main question I asked was, how do international students understand Canadian academic regulations? Further, how do they expect regulations to be applied? Students' arguments in support of requests/complaints in their everyday communication via emails with their instructors were analyzed. I looked at these communications as a source of meanings that allowed us access to a significant set of values and beliefs that international students draw on to make sense of their new academic reality.

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Literature Review

International students in Canada come mainly from two countries, India and China (students from these two countries comprise more than 50% of the international student population) (Global Affairs Canada, 2019). These students attend a wide range of public and private academic institutions, including colleges and universities. Sharing the same national origin does not necessarily make international students homogeneous; both China and India contain culturally and linguistically diverse populations, and students can also be highly diverse in terms of their academic background, family support, and economic resources (Marom, 2022). What international students have in common is the fact that they all face, to differing extents, significant challenges (Berry, 2005) that affect their adaptation process (Scott et al., 2015; Smith & Khawaja, 2011; (Bascaramurty et al., 2021). The trends that are currently defining the international student population in community colleges and universities in Canada are the constant increments in numbers, the fact that they are predominately from India and China, and the fact that Vancouver and Toronto are their preferred destinations (Buckner et al., 2021).

To understand the characteristics of international students in Canada, it is helpful to note that academic institutions, through their admission criteria (e.g., English language tests such as IELTS and TOEFL, as well as academic records), define the international students to be admitted. Public institutions are characterized by a competitive selection process, while private institutions provide greater flexibility in their admission criteria, and frequently use recruitment agents to attract students (Legusov & Jafar, 2012).

Undoubtedly, Canadian academic institutions should acknowledge international students' diversity, not as a challenge but as an asset from where we can support their special needs. Canadian academic institutions need research-based, responsive learning solutions that enable them to effectively scaffold and support international students' rich diversity to facilitate their transition to become "ideal immigrants" (Global Affairs Canada, 2019). Academic institutions that receive a significant number of international students should constantly review their policies, curriculum offerings, and student services. The policies of Canadian post-secondary institutions should be broad enough to support the diversity of international students; making their diversity visible to policy makers, especially for those students who may be aiming to call Canada "home." For the federal vision of international students as "ideal immigrants" to become a reality, the immigration policy needs to involve close partnership with academic institutions.

International Students' Understanding of Basic Academic Regulations

- "Professor … how much percentage of plagiarism is admitted?"

Academic rules or regulations (e.g., those that govern due dates, grade review, citation, and plagiarism) that are common in Western academia are not necessarily shared by all academic traditions (Garwood, 2022). This separation is illustrated by a question that international students frequently ask about the percentage of plagiarism that is acceptable. This question reveals that their understanding of plagiarism is not the same as that of Canadian teachers and educational institutions. Academic institutions cannot assume that students entering college or university in Canada come with an understanding of the Western conventions of academic writing and research (Beasley, 2016; Gullifer & Tyson, 2010). The complexity of academic integrity in Canada has been well studied and documented and, given that the number of international students in Canada has increased significantly, it is essential to study the cultural dimensions of academic integrity (Christensen Hughes & Eaton, 2022). To explain why students from different cultures plagiarize when studying abroad, several authors have stated that for many students from the East, the

approach to learning in the West is contrary to their experiences in their own country. As Hayes and Introna (2005) showed, for Chinese students, using another author's words is a form of respect. James et al. (2019) observe that, for Chinese students, imitating the work of experts and providing standard answers is an important way to demonstrate their learning.

Kaur's (2019) study found that Indian international students in the U.S. were greatly concerned with the code of academic integrity. In India, these students mostly referred to their textbooks to do their assignments and did not have to worry about citations because they were tested more on their knowledge of the content of their textbooks rather than on the originality of their thinking (Kaur, 2019).

International students' academic background is not the only factor relevant to their experience studying in Canada. The set of cultural meanings that they attach to different types of academic requests and complaints is also relevant. In this context, they frequently encounter conflicts between what they consider to be their duty based on their culture of origin, such as helping their friends when asked to do so, no matter the consequences, and the regulations of their Canadian academic institution. In other words, the experience of international students in Canadian educational institutions is characterized by a conflict in values and beliefs, with two competing ethical orders: the duties-based order characteristic of the students' culture of origin and the right-based order of the new culture (Dworkin, 1977). This conflict must be understood not as a lack of knowledge on the part of the students but as a cultural difference that requires appropriate attention and guidance from teachers and administrators.

In the past, the University examined in this study made its academic integrity regulations available to students using various channels, such as providing students with the information during the admission process, on its library's website, and through the Student Centre. Recently, the approach to making these regulations accessible to international students has changed; instead of expecting students to look up the regulations and take responsibility for informing themselves, guidance is being presented by teachers in the classroom as part of the curriculum of a newly created introductory course and in workshops and information sessions for advanced courses.

Academic Regulations as a Sociocultural Stressor

− "Professor, I thought we were friends ..."

According to Berry (2005), "Acculturation is the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members (p. 698 " Decoding a new culture can be complicated and implies undergoing experiences that can be perceived as pleasant or unpleasant. The acculturation process involves what Berry (2005) terms "acculturative stress," which arises when the interactions between two cultures create events that vary from positive (eustress) to negative (dis-stress). The degree of social connectedness and English proficiency have been identified as indicators of acculturative stress among international students (Koo et al., 2021). In addition, the expectations that international students quickly understand the academic regulations in their new environment can also be a source of acculturative stress. Not understanding why the rules are applied represents another source of acculturative stress that may introduce misunderstandings that make academic adjustment a significant challenge (Oyeniyi et al., 2021). To reduce the stress experienced by international students that originates from their lack of understanding of academic regulations, educators are obligated to make sure these regulations and the reasons for them are clearly explained.

Theoretical Construct

In this study, international students' interactions with their professors were investigated from a socio-legal perspective by adapting Sally Engle Merry's (1990) definition of "legal consciousness." I propose that the ways international students use academic regulations, their actions, and the arguments they use to explain and support an academic request or complaint, can be defined as international students' consciousness of academic regulations. Studies of legal consciousness have proven to be a useful theoretical approach to understanding how individuals interact in society (Ewick & Silbey, 1998), and this approach is applicable to understanding international students' experience in their new academic culture. Research on international students' consciousness of academic regulations represents a rich opportunity to decode how their process of adapting to the new academic environment takes place. Looking at international students' experiences from the perspective of their consciousness of academic regulations provides a framework to answer the following questions: a) how do international students understand academic regulations? and b) how do they expect academic regulations to be applied?

Research Methodology

A qualitative research methodology was applied in the study using content analysis, based on Creswell's guidelines (2017). The data sources were originally designed to be diverse. We expected to be able to conduct interviews and focus groups; however, the COVID-19 pandemic required us to redesign the data collection procedures. As all the classes at the University turned to the Zoom platform, the primary way to contact undergraduate students was by e-meetings. When undergraduate students were invited to participate in the research during a Zoom session, only six out of 160 students agreed to participate, which would have provided a very limited sample.

The reasons that the students refused to participate in the research could be myriad and likely were related to a lack of experience in research participation (Heine, 2012). Moreover, given the invitation to participate was extended in April 2020, just when the pandemic crisis was unfolding, could also have contributed to the students' reluctance. We decided to use a single, but robust source of data: undergraduate students' historical communications (emails) sent between January 2018 and December 2019 to their teachers in 45 different courses; of the 3,438 student emails examined, 718 expressed either a complaint or a request. Utilizing content analysis as our central method granted us access to the world of meaning behind each request or complaint (Lü, 2018). What could have been seen as a methodological constraint caused by the COVID-19 pandemic became a strength of the research.

The 3,438 emails were anonymized by a third party, following the criteria of the University's Research Ethics Committee (REB), and categorized by email sender and type of request and complaint. Each type of request and complaint was assigned a unique code, which resulted in the following number and percentage of communications per category (see Table1).

Table 1

Types and Number (%) of Requests/complaints

Type of request/complaint	Code	Number (%) of requests/complaints
Assignment re-submission	1	189 (26.3%)
Due date exception	2	202 (28.13%)
Due date extension	3	82 (11.42%)
Grade review	4	196 (27.29%)
Plagiarism assessment	5	49 (6.82%)
Total number of requests/complaints		718 (100%)

To identify the arguments made in support of each type of request and complaint, our research team (two research assistants and I) worked in groups of two to validate the patterns of meaning that were identified and to establish the argument's category based on an interpretation of how students understood the regulations (Heine, 2012) and the moral beliefs behind these understandings (Shweder, 1991). The five types of requests/complaints were selected based on their high frequency of occurrence. The codification process followed three main steps: a) each request/complaint was codified based on their five types selected for the study (e.g., Code 1 "Assignment re-submission"), b) the requests/complaints were organized by code and c) patterns of the argument were identified. The analysis was based on the premise that "… ordinary talk means far more than it says and carries information about cultural beliefs and knowledge system that transcends the grammatical and referential aspects of languages" (Longacre, 1983 as cited in Shweder, 1991, p. 196).

Results

A multiplicity of arguments were found to be regularly used by students when they submitted requests/complaints to their teacher. A close analysis of each type of request/complaint argument allowed us to identify the following specific features:

Assignment Re-Submission

Assignment re-submissions are not regulated by the University, and thus belong to the sphere of informal regulations; however, assignment re-submission is a very frequent practice among students and professors. In this study, 26% of the students requested the opportunity to re-submit their assignment. The most common arguments that students used when requesting permission to re-submit an assignment were the following:

a) No explanation offered
b) Improve grades
c) Financial difficulties
d) The respawn logic argument (a.k.a. video game logic)
e) Wrong submission
f) "Treat me as your family"
g) Health problems
h) Technical issues

a) No explanation offered: Some students appear to believe they do not need to ask if they can re-submit an assignment; they just re-submit their assignment and assume the professor will accept it as the version to be evaluated. Flexibility is assumed to be part of the submission process. Whether "re-submission" is regulated or not is irrelevant. Flexibility is perceived as a sign of the professor's "humaneness." The following is an example of "no argument offered":

> "…Madam i submitted my assignment I know it is too late. Sorry for the delay. Kindly grade my assignment I mailed to you…" (Case N-212)

b) Improve grades. Students regard re-submission as a way to improve their grade. Since re-submission is not regulated by the University, professors have the flexibility to accept or not accept a re-submission. The following is an example of the "improve grades" argument:

> "… I feel really embarrassed is there anything I can do to boost my mark? … let me know if I can submit the previous assignment or is it possible to increase the weight factor of the final exam?..." (Case N-15)

c) Financial difficulties. For many students, failing a course is a significan issue since the financial support comes from their families or from their own work. The following is an example of the "financial difficulties" argument:

> "…give me one chance i can again send assignment with correct references with apa format… if i will fail this course i have to pay … fee this is very difficult for me…" (Case N-142)

d) The respawn logic argument (a.k.a. video game logic). From the perspective of students, submission and re-submission are options that seem to be always available. If an assignment has been identified as having a high percentage of similarities, students expect that by submitting a new deliverable, the previous academic misconduct will disappear. If a previous assignment is given a low grade, they expect the new deliverable they submit will erase their previous poor academic performance. The following is an example of the "respawn logic (a.k.a. video game logic)" argument:

> " I don't know who did identical work i submitted my work 3 days earlier. Im soo soo depressed now u may ask the other person who's paper is identical to me. I have another one I need to be graded professor please because i worked so hard for this assignment" (Case N-30)

e) Wrong submission. A wrong submission is any assignment that received a low mark or, based on Turnitin (the University's document assessment software), shows a high percentage of similarities. The student argues that the submission was made in error. The following is an example of the "wrong submission" argument:

> "… I did submit wrong file and u said that was the plagiarism … can u give me one chance for submit assignments again for pass the course?" (Case N-37)

f) Treat me as your family. Making reference to family relationship is a way to ask not for the application of the regulation but for special treatment. Not receiving special treatment by their professor is understood as a rejection behaviour or not being accepted. The following is an example of the "treat me as your family" argument:

> "… I was not well … EVEN IF YOU GRADE ME 22% marks than i will be passing … please help me i am like your son, i don't even have my family here…" (Case N-570)

g) Health problems. Students frequently report health problems, like having fever, stomach pain, or being sad. For some international students this is the first time that they are abroad, without family support; thus, addressing a health issue could be a significant issue. The following is an example of the "health problems" argument:

> "… i did not complete my assignment because i am ill from two days..." (Case N-138)

h) Technical issues. Having access to a laptop is, for some international students, a privilege they got from their parents when they were admitted; thus, they are not fully familiarized with it. The following is an example of the "technical issues" argument:

> "… my laptop stop working … i will submit it through email …" (Case N-313)

The students' expectation is that they have the right to re-submit their assignment, especially if the resubmission would allow them to improve their grades. They view assignment submission as a process that should be flexible and not time-bound with deadlines.

The "respawn logic argument" seems to illustrate well the logic behind a resubmission request. For the international students in this study, no matter how they perform on an assignment, their email requests/arguments indicate they believe they have the right to resubmit that assignment.

Due Date Exception

A due date exception can be granted under university regulations in extenuating circumstances; major illness, a death in the family, or similar extenuating circumstances are valid reasons for requesting a due date exception, and documentation may be required. In this study, 28% of the international students requested a due date exception. Based on the arguments that were identified, the students are facing significant struggles; nevertheless, very few cases could be considered valid requests. Among the most common arguments students used to request a due date exception were the following:

a) No explanations offered
b) Wrong submission
c) Health problems
d) Technical issues
e) Due date as a suggestion
f) Not understanding the assignment/no clear instructions

g) Personal challenges
h) Moodle account blocked

a) ***No explanations offered***. The following is an example of a "no arguments offered" type request:

> "I just noticed the quizzes i he missed. would i possibly be able to make up this oversite by taking them now. ive missed 1,2, and 3." (Case N-123)

b) Wrong submission. The following is an example of the "wrong submission" argument:

> "Actually my friend used my computer to make her assignment. That's why by mistake I uploaded her work." (Case N-107)

c) Health problems. The following is an example of the "health problems" argument:

> " … can u give me half percent for that bcz i did send medical notes to u …*"* (Case N-37)

d) Technical issues. The following is an example of the "technical issues" argument:

> "I was having problem with my computer … if you can give me one week then i will surely submit it." (Case N-151)

e) Due date as a suggestion. Students appeared to consider or understand due dates not as a fixed period of time; instead, they regarded the due date as a frame time which has no clear thresholds, so assignments are due but non-dated. The following is an example of the "due date as a suggestion" argument:

> "… i am not able to submit my second assignment there is no add submission option in the moodle and it is showing that it is overdue… change the time in moodle." (Case N-5)

f) Not understanding the assignment/no clear instructions. Students face a significant challenge understanding an assignment when a step-by-step set of instructions is not included. The following is an example of the "not understanding the assignment" argument:

> "I thought there should be clear instructions concerning the rules … I can write the whole essays or reflections without a contribution." (Case N-23)

g) Personal challenges. For some international students, the opportunity to study abroad represents a significant family sacrifice. To study, knowing that your family is homeless because of the educational investment they are making, is a concern that is not easy to manage. The following is an example of the "personal challenges" argument:

> "My parents are already paying too much fee for me they sold our house in … to pay my university fee. i can't ask them to send me more money. I PROMISE YOU I WONT DO THIS MISTAKE AGAIN." (Case N-570)

h) Moodle account blocked. Academic platforms (e.g., Moodle) represent a real challenge for students not used to administering their academic activities through software solutions. The following is an example of the "Moodle account blocked" argument:

> "I am unable to submit the assignment 1 because my account is blocked." (Case N-101)

Due Date Extension

The University's regulations regarding due date extensions state that submissions which are more than three days late will not be accepted unless the student makes an arrangement with the instructor. Even though due date extensions are part of the University's formal procedures, students do not seem to understand or follow these procedures.

Only 11% of the international students in this study asked for a due date extension. The most common arguments students used to request a due date extension were the following:

a) Every teacher gives an extension for wrong submissions
b) Formal request for an extension

a) ***Every teacher gives an extension for wrong submissions*****.** Students frequently submit the wrong file as the assignment. Providing a relevant name to the file and locating it in folders does not seem to be a common practice. The following is an example of the wrong submission's argument:

> "… i did not copy from a one that was mine … last term same thing happen with me … every teacher give extension for wrong submissions … i do not want to be fail. so you should give extension … " (Case N-37)

b) ***Formal request for an extension***. Asking for an extension, before to the due date, is considered a formal request which could – or not – include the reason why the extension is requested. The following is an example of the formal request for an extension argument based on fact that the student was not feeling well:

> "… ask u to give me extension for assignment 1 as I am not well." (Case N-24)

Grade Review

The University's regulations regarding grade reviews are clearly established. Grade appeals and academic assessments are based on the assignment's rubric. However, through this study, the resarch team learned that international students rarely understand grades as an assessment of their academic performance. On the contrary, they perceive grades as an "act of mercy" for which they can beg. Students who ask for a grade review based on the rubric are the exception. In this research, 27% of the students asked for a grade review. The most common arguments students used to request a grade review were the following:

a) Give me a passing grade

b) Grades as an act of mercy
c) Give me grades. . . I am not talking about the rubric
d) Is Moodle decreasing my marks?

a) "Give me a passing grade." Failing a course is an option many international students cannot afford. It represents not only a financial problem but also a delay on graduation time. If they need to beg for a passing grade, they will do it. The following is an example of the "give me a passing grade" argument:

> " … try to understand the problem and just give me passing. I will be thankful to you." (Case N-28)

b) Grades as an act of mercy. Even when students did an extraordinary assignment and obtained excellent grades, they tend to attribute their academic success to the professor's mercy. The following is an example of the "grades as an act of mercy" argument:

> "God will help you for your success. I will pray. Now u become one of my four professor… recheck my assignment ... To need to pass. Please help me." (Case N-11)

c) "Give me grades … I am not talking about the rubric." Grade appeals and assignments review is often perceived as an opportunity to not review the assignment, based on the rubric, but as an opportunity to ask for a grade improvement regardless of the feedback provided on the assignments. The following is an example of the "give me grades … I am not talking about the rubric" argument:

> "I wanted to tell you that i am going through some personal problems … help me in improving my grade. Thanks." (Case N–152)

d) "Is Moodle decreasing my marks?" The setup of the academic platforms introduce an unwanted set of challenges for international students who find difficult to access their grades and feedback on assignments. The following is an example of the "Is Moodle decreasing my marks?" argument:

> "… you marked my 5 assignment and … my marks was 59 instead of increasing my marks and decreased to 42 … it is due moodle or you decreased my marks." (Case N–291)

Plagiarism Assessment

Under the University's regulations, plagiarism is identified as a serious academic offence that could lead to being dismissed from the University or even losing the student-visa to stay in Canada. Based on the data obtained in the present research (see Table 1), almost 7% of the international students who submitted email requests/complaints in this study were involved in academic misconduct. Among the most common arguments that students used to explain plagiarism are the following:

a) The respawn logic argument (a.k.a. video game logic)
b) "Wrong submission … I have another one"
c) "I submitted first …"

d) Health problems
e) The help-each-other argument
f) "I had no choice …"
g) "I copied the ideas but the words are mine …"
h) "How much plagiarism is acceptable?"

a) The respawn logic argument (a.k.a. video game logic). The following is an example of the respawn logic (a.k.a. video game logic) argument:

> " … I am attach an entirely new assignment with a new perspective … It was my bad … is my first mistake ever on Turnitin I understand the pattern more now after this incident. Honestly, I didn't mean to cheat on my own assignment  , would I still pass in that assignment and as a whole course or should I resubmit but correcting the similarities from the existing essay?" (Case N-474)

b) "Wrong submission … I have another one." The following is an example of the "wrong submission… I have another one" argument:

> " … i he been reported for plazarism. The assignment which was submited, was submitted by mistaken … from my friend laptop in my course paortal that was i not known." (Case N–214)

c) "I submitted first …" Regardless of the origin of the assignment, copied or completely paraphrased, the student that first submitted on Moodle assumed the right to be recognized as the first to submit; therefore, with the right to use it. The following is an example of the "I submitted first …" argument:

> "Trust me …, this is my own idea i dont know who ever had this or not. But trust me i wrote this assignment by my own and i and the first in the class who submit it on the moodle." (Case N-93)

d) Health problems. The following is an example of the "health problems" argument:

> "I have something to confess. I submitted the same paper like someone else on the 2nd assignment.i am extremely sorry … I was also sic .so …" (Case N-16)

e) Help each other. A significant number of international students come from collectivistic societies where friends and family mean the same. Helping a friend in need is considered a moral obligation. The following is an example of the "help each other" argument:

> "… you give me plagiarism in assignment I … was in shock because I submit you wrong one … I lost my sense on that because of shoulder pain … But there was shuffling in assignment. But I make another … Even my friend don't know … please don't give us punishment … please don't cut my friend marks and please give me permission to submit it again." (Case N-411)

f) ***"I had no choice …"*** Some international students are the main source of income for their family back home which force them to place more effort in working extra shifts instead of being able to complete their assignments. The following is an example of the "I had no choice…" argument:

> "This is my first and last mistake ... next time this will not happen...please give me at least one chance…that assignment was submitted by mistake because...there was a huge problem in my family and my time for submitting assignment is almost over...but i he another one assignment which is written by me…please don't fail me..." (Case N-136)

g) ***"I copied the ideas, but the words are mine …"*** Students appear to believe that by typing/writing an assignment, this act itself makes the assignment content their own; regardless of where the ideas come from. The authorship right seems to be based on the writing/typing behaviour and not in the sources of the ideas. The following is an example of the "I copied the ideas, but the words are mine…" argument:

> "i dont know how it is showing plagiarism i did not copy from a other person plz can u give me one opportunity … i was taking ideas from internet buy i did not copy all assignment pardon me …" (Case N-37)

h) "How much plagiarism is acceptable?" Students talk about plagiarism in terms of "*how much is acceptable*" as a percentage problem instead of looking at it as a source appropriation without following citation requirements. The following is an example of the "How much plagiarism is acceptable?" argument:

> "hello mam how much plagiarism acceptable in assignment?" (Case N–60)

Based on the nature of the arguments that were made by the international students, it can be concluded that plagiarism is a much more complex issue than "just" a dishonest behavior (Adhikari, 2018; Adiningrum & Kutieleh, 2011; Baird & Dooey, 2014; Doss et al., 2016). Plagiarism should be understood as a conflict of cultural values where, on the one hand, the institution has a set of rules to be followed, and on the other hand, international students in many cases have a common cultural background, share the same computer, live together, and understand that helping a friend in need by sharing an assignment is not only acceptable but is in fact the right thing to do.

What has been defined as dishonest behavior may, in many cases, simply represent a conflict of values. Students, even if they perceive themselves to be honest, are faced with decisions in which they must consider values other than honesty. For example, a student could risk losing a friendship if they refuse to share their work with a friend (Bretag et al., 2014; Vandehey et al., 2007; Adam et al., 2017). Within higher education, the "helping-each-other" value and academic misconduct regulations collide in a complex dynamic with international students often believing their own moral code is the correct way of proceeding. In 2008, McCabe et al. conducted a study to examine students' perceptions of academic cheating in a collectivistic society. The study took place in Lebanon, and the results supports the conclusion that there is a higher level of cheating among Lebanese students. However, viewed through a collectivistic lens, one

could argue that the Lebanese students are behaving exactly the way they were raised to behave—working together to navigate a difficult task (p. 464).

International students in western institutions are often asked to work together, yet they are penalized if their work shows a high percentage of similarities; for international students, this can be difficult to understand. Self-reported collaborative cheating seems to be increasing, which is proof that the message is inconsistent, and students find themselves not knowing what is permitted and what is an academic integrity violation (McCabe et al., 2012, p. 38–39). Collaboration could mean different things to students from individualist and collectivistic societies. Moreover, collaboration, solidarity, and sharing can hardly be distinguished for someone with a collectivistic cultural background. Instead, these contradictory messages set the stage for misunderstanding and the construction of sociocultural dilemmas around plagiarism.

Discussion

The constellation of arguments that international students make when making requests and complaints to their professors illuminates the intercultural complexity they must navigate when studying abroad. They are either unaware of formal university regulations or believe that their requests and complaints need not adhere to these rules. On the contrary, a set of informal regulations that the students believe to be in place seems to define the academic dynamic. The nature of international students' understanding of academic regulations as evidenced by their email requests and complaints to their professors in this study can be summarized as follows:

a) Existing regulations were rarely referred to by the students.
b) When students referred to existing regulations, it often seemed to be with a purpose not related to the mandate of the rule.
c) Students frequently referred to informal understandings that impacted the way they made complaints/request.

The significant number and type of arguments that were identified constitute evidence that an understanding of basic academic regulations is not shared by international students. Informal agreements/negotiations between professors and students are not unusual, and sometimes they are needed to achieve balance. However, when students' behavior seems not to be based on a common set of meanings, a significant number of misunderstandings (and assumptions) can take place.

An analysis of international students' arguments in support of their requests/complaints indicates that many students expect that the application of academic regulations will be based not on the written regulations but on the relationships they have with the professors and staff. In consequence, if a student's relationship with their professor is considered a positive one, the student will not expect a low mark, an assignment rejection, or an academic misconduct report. Based on this expectation, international students clearly display what Conley and O'Barr (1990) identify as a relational orientation toward academic regulations instead of a rule orientation. Unfortunately, when students' requests are denied or their complaints are rejected, they are at risk of experiencing a significant amount of acculturative stress (Berry, 2005).

Finally, plagiarism needs to be addressed as it represents for the Western academic community an offense, a dishonest behavior; however, it is likely that a lack of knowledge about how to use sources and to cite and reference them also contributes to rates of plagiarism. As McCulloch states, "The difficulties

faced by international students in relation to plagiarism are said to often be more pedagogical than moral" (2012). Undoubtedly, some cases of plagiarism are dishonest behaviors, but not all cases of plagiarism can be defined as intentionally dishonest. The student whose paper was taken by another student without their authorization or who was pressured to share an assignment as proof of their loyalty cannot truly be considered dishonest or lacking in integrity. The conflicting situations that some international students face can place them in a position where right and wrong cannot be easily distinguished.

Implications and Conclusion

International students' cultural transition process in academic institutions should be seen as a path from a complex constellation of arguments when making requests/complaints to a more limited set of behaviors governed by institutional rules and regulations.

A curriculum re-design could play a central role in reducing complexity by creating content and regulations that are clear, specific, and consistently applied. A progressive learning strategy should aim to create among international students a consciousness of academic regulations in a non-punitive environment.

Reducing the complexity of students' arguments should be understood as a key element in social integration. In our study, the international students sometimes felt betrayed when their grade for an assignment—based on the rubric—was not what they were expecting, when missing the due date resulted in an assignment rejection, or when they were accused of plagiarism. They perceived that their arguments in support of their requests/complaints were considered "excuses" and were thus invalid, and this made them feel hopeless.

A strategy to reduce the complexity of students' arguments could be to expose international students to the Canadian environment to familiarize them with Canadian norms and values in the community and the workplace, as suggested by Scott et al. (2015). One of the most significant ways to support international students is by helping them understand that complaints, in any context, should be based on valid grounds and that an academic request should be seen as an exercise of a student's right and not as a plea for mercy.

Rules and regulations can be understood in different ways (Ewick & Silbey, 1998; Merry, 1990). International students' consciousness of academic rules tells us that they need help to recognize the intersection of cultures, relationships and rules. The cultural decoding process that needs to take place for students to be fully conscious of the new rules should not compromise international students' cultural heritage (Berry & Hou, 2016; Berry & Sam, 2013). On the contrary, any misunderstanding should be seen as an opportunity to help students re-formulate their constellation of arguments to a limited set of options that help them make sense of the norms of their academic institution. When academic institutions accomplish this task, international students who have identified Canada as "a place to stay" will be better equipped to join Canadian society.

The central question that we need to answer is *how can academic institutions help international students successfully decode their new culture?* These research findings have made international students' beliefs and needs visible and have been used as the basis for implementing several recent initiatives at Yorkville University to address the needs of international students, including a) improving the career and wellness services offered by the Student Success Centre b) designing a specific course to help international students successfully navigate the expectations of Canadian post-secondary institutions, and c) amending the institution's academic integrity policy to reflect a pedagogical instead of a punitive approach. For example, students who run afoul of the academic integrity regulations now have an opportunity to receive explicit instruction, either in a face-to-face or an online workshop, on how to cite and reference sources and how to

generally follow academic integrity guidelines. After successfully completing this workshop, the student is permitted to resubmit their assignment.

Academic institutions in Canada should offer international students opportunities to decode their new culture. It is not enough to make information available to students; universities need to ensure that they have a range of hands-on courses specifically created for international students to develop the sociocultural understandings and communication skills needed to navigate the Canadian academic environment. The skills-based sociocultural program called ExcelL™ (Excellence in Cultural Experiential Learning and Leadership), created by Mak, Westwood, Barker, and Ishiyama (Mak & Buckingham, 2007; Mak et al., 1999), could be used to guide curriculum design efforts. Offering international students a series of skills-based, competency training courses as part of their academic program could help to reduce the complexity of students' interaction with their new academic environment by easing the path from "Prof, I thought we were friends" to a less complex sociocultural interaction.

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Empirical Article

OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION
Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 111-130
Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education
DOI: 10.32674/jcihe.v15i1.4864| https://ojed.org/jcihe

Reconceptualizing pedagogy within the context of an Internationalized Problem-Based Learning Approach

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Abstract

In every university's endeavor to promote internationalization, pedagogy is vital and there is a need to research internationalization at different pedagogical levels within different learning approaches (Katsara & De Witte, 2020). This paper discusses the value of implementing culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) within the teaching context of Problem-Based Learning (PBL). By means of a critical review, it is revealed that little is known on specific classroom internationalized pedagogies, for example PBL appears difficult to be implemented in a uniform way across the globe while becoming culturally responsive during teaching seems quite personal. Some future lines of research on students' support to PBL learning within teaching are offered providing the rationale for the development of possible departmental CRP training sessions for teachers. The evaluation of such training is suggested to determine the extent to which such an initiative could be part of a departmental pedagogy of internationalization policy development at the micro level.

Keywords: culturally responsive pedagogy, higher education, internationalization; problem-based learning

Received November 24, 2021; revised April 1, 2022; revised May 20, 2022; accepted May 31, 2022

In a comprehensive literature review, Katsara and De Witte (2020) summarized relevant research within the context of internationalization in universities. Two main implications were drawn. Firstly, despite the fact that implementing internationalization is multidimensional depending on various contexts, policy development appears to be vital. It is important to devise a way so that policy making might be formed at different distinct levels with the mutual goal of providing quality education. Secondly, the pedagogical dimension is vital in every university's endeavor to promote internationalization. Key issues refer to students' engagement in maximizing the effects on their learning and implementing teachers' intercultural training and involvement in the internationalization process.

Katsara and De Witte (op.cit) argued that pedagogical dimensions are inter-linked with internationalization highlighting the tenets of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). They argued that even though there is evidence in the literature that there are ways of implementing CRP, national bodies of students might perceive teaching methods differently (Katsara, 2014). Referring on Signorini et al. (2009) who argue in favor of examining micro-cultures, for example one specific learning setting in HE in combination with individuals' relevant experience, Katsara and De Witte (op.cit) maintained that the relationship between internationalization and culture implies that there is a need to research internationalization at different pedagogical levels within different learning approaches.

Within the context analyzed in the review by Katsara and De Witte (op.cit), the case of one student-centered learning approach (PBL) will be analyzed in this paper. PBL is an interesting case to be examined because the opportunities provided by its international problem-based environment are difficult to implement uniformly across the globe, for example in Asian countries (Hallinger & Lu, 2011). This is further enforced by a systematic literature review conducted by Acton (2019) on evaluation methods assessing the effectiveness of problem-oriented and inquiry-based pedagogies implemented in universities. The review revealed that current research is often limited in scale and scope, demonstrating performativity rather than highlighting the aim to facilitate continuous improvement in teaching and learning. A significant number of studies demonstrated confusion between pedagogic strategies and educational research methods while studies lack evidence on participatory methods of evaluating students' experience and perceptions. Adding more on this, due to this limited research on students' involvement in evaluation for PBL, few studies articulate a commitment to pedagogic improvement and professional accountability to promote quality assurance processes in universities.

This chapter aims to summarize and reflect on earlier work to evaluate and reformulate correlations with regard to the relationship between internationalization, CRP and PBL practices. Some preliminary thoughts in relation to what extent CRP could be included in any discussion on institutional pedagogy of internationalization policy development in PBL practices are offered. The article unfolds as follows: First, a section describing the methodology used to search the literature is offered. Second, sections on how internationalization is conceptualized and an examination of the characteristics of culturally responsive teachers are given. Third, PBL's internationalized nature and its relationship to CRP is discussed. Finally, some key reflections drawn from the review and future research are noted.

Methodology

The search for the review used Educational Resource Information Centre-ERIC, web of science and the following search engines (Google, google scholar, altavista). It was decided to gather literature to build on Katsara & De Witte (2020) who highlighted the need to research the intersection between internationalization and intercultural pedagogy within diverse learning approaches. This implies that the topic of internationalization matures and its knowledge base seems to expand and as a consequence it would seem logical to assess literature and reconceptualize the topic. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was not to cover all articles published on the topic but to combine perspectives to create new theoretical frameworks or models reflecting thus an integrative review approach (Torraco, 2005). Within an integrative review approach, the critical review, one of the fourteen literature review types discussed by Grant and Booth (2009) appears to be the most appropriate. In their typology, Grant and Booth (ibid) argue that a critical review presents, analyses and synthesizes material from diverse sources assessing what is of value from earlier work while its final product typically manifests a hypothesis or a model for a new phase of conceptual development and subsequent testing rather than an answer. Critical reviews are either selective or representative and rarely involve a comprehensive search of all relevant literature or an assessment of the quality of the selected studies. Additionally, there is no formal requirement to explicitly present methods of the search, synthesis and analysis (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006; Grant & Booth, ibid).

Specifically, the element of criticality is helpful in the current study since it helps to deconstruct the topic into its basic characteristics, that is its history and origin, main concepts and key relationships through which concepts interact. This deconstruction helps the reviewer reconstruct conceptually the topic assessing how it is represented in the literature (Torraco, op.cit). In addition, the synthetical element helps to integrate new ideas to create a new formulation of the topic. As Torraco (op.cit) argues one of the four forms of synthesis refers to alternative models or conceptual frameworks which means new ways of thinking about the topic addressed in the integrative review. A targeted search was conducted using the terms internationalization, problem-based learning, and CRP to evaluate each item's conceptual contribution and their relationship. The search yielded many hits, and the first step was to determine which articles were relevant to the search. Following Torraco's (op.cit) and Grand and Booth's (op.cit) argumentation, the current review scanned abstracts to determine inclusion criteria. The review would be selective where chosen articles had to concentrate on higher education, excluding primary or secondary education focusing on articles analyzing how basic characteristics of each of the three terms are specified by academia.

Halpern (1998) identified certain components of critical thinking: understanding how cause is determined, recognizing and criticizing assumptions, analyzing means-goals relationships, giving reasons to support a conclusion, assessing degrees of likelihood and uncertainty, incorporating isolated data into a wider framework, and using analogies to solve problems. These components were used as a basis to select articles discussing for example how rationales for internationalization influence universities' choice of international strategies, how actualizing CRP impacts students' learning and performance, how challenging appears to implement PBL in different cultural settings etc. Secondly, articles were further narrowed by focusing on certain variables such as document type, dates, languages, etc. (Hammerstrem & Jorgensen,

2010, p. 27). The articles selected must have been written in English and published in peer-reviewed documents while priority was given to the most recent ones.

Literature Review

Internationalization

Conceptualization of Internationalization

Internationalization involves incorporating global, international, and intercultural dimensions into goals, objectives, content and delivery of higher education (Knight, 2015). However, universities are increasingly being seen as commercial ventures and internationalization is a source of funding and income for them (Altbach, 2015). Buckner and Stein (2019) analyzed the approaches of three leading higher education professional associations, that is the Association of International Educators (NAFSA), the international Association of Universities and the European Association of International Education where it was revealed that all three associations conceptualize internationalization in terms of coverage of regions, languages, programs and the quantity of international activities.

de Wit and Altbach (2021) argue that there is an impact of global trends in tertiary education on internationalization. They assert that higher education has experienced a massive expansion while the global knowledge economy has transformed tertiary education and research into a key player in the economic realm. In addition, they refer to other aspects that influence internationalization, i.e., autonomy and academic freedom, reputation rankings/excellence programs, and the changing economic and political climate. Consequently, they believe that internationalization is constantly evolving, which changes in response to local, national, regional, and global environments. As they assert, universities are still the main agents driving internationalization. A description of recent trends in institutional strategies, student and academic staff mobility, online mobility, internationalization at home and internationalization of research indicates that internationalization in HE is evolving where linking the global to the local seems imperative. They argue that internationalization has become a priority of a university's reform agenda asserting that this needs to be intentional, not as a goal in itself but must contribute to quality improvement for the benefit of all.

The above ideas are reflected, for example, in a survey by Ledger and Kawalilak (2020), who investigated how internationalization was defined, interpreted and applied in two Schools of Education in Canada and Australia by the use of the five policy threads: people, philosophy, place, processes and power [5Ps] (Ledger et al. 2015). In both institutions in both countries, internationalization was driven by economic rationalism, power inequities and neo-liberal process rather than focusing on people and place. Based on their results, the researchers argue that:

> the intent (philosophy) of institutions (place) to internationalize (process) are impacted by interests (power) of individuals and institutions (people) and are often in conflict with internationalization descriptions presented by key scholars in the field (p. 663).

Thus, Ledger and Kawalilak (ibid) stress the importance of the underpinning philosophy of "conscientious internationalization" which focuses on human needs and puts in the center people being agents of international-mindedness, practices and pedagogies. The focus is shifted from quantity to quality of relationships, ethical practices and pedagogically informed programs.

The quality of relationships is also discussed by Byram (2018) who argues that using the concept of internationalism and its moral dimension could give direction to internationalization processes. Byram (ibid, p. 153) argues that a normative view of internationalism involves a) the recognition of the benefits of globalization because it provides the conditions for societal cooperation, b) the pursuit through cooperation of understanding, peace and prosperity for all in equal terms, c) the implementation of democratic processes based on human rights through which equality in cooperation is assured.

Byram (op.cit) argues that at curriculum level internationalism among other things involves the development of intercultural competence helping academic staff, students, administrators and support staff understand each other and each other's academic cultures and the implementation of teaching and research processes which gives equal voice to all involved and a democratic approach to solving problems.

Intercultural competence is also discussed by Leask (2015) who develops her argument by asserting that it is useful to distinguish between the process of internationalization of the curriculum (IoC) and its product, an internationalized curriculum. She argues that this distinction helps to scrutinize the means and the end. As Leask (ibid) argues, one of the components of an internationalized curriculum involves organization of learning activities referring for example to Race (2010, as cited in Leask, 2015, p. 82) who maintains that "making sense of things" is a factor that underpins successful learning for students since it enforces learning through feedback. Leask (ibid) suggests that teachers are advised to provide opportunities to learners to engage in learning about intercultural learning through a series of meta-conversations that focus on how they and others have learned in intercultural situations. She discusses an example of an activity where students in small groups share stories of occasions when they did not behave properly in a cross-cultural situation.

In addition, Marantz-Gal & Leask's (2021) work reflects the tenets of internationalism concerning the implementation of teaching and research processes as delineated by Byram (op.cit). They analyzed the results of IoC case studies conducted in universities in Australia and Israel at different times over 10 years. It was found that IoC is best facilitated when institutions recognize faculty members' agency, leadership and differentiated needs in the process and respect their authentic experiences and motivations.

Internationalization strategy at universities

A key issue refers to the complexity of the university's internationalization strategy. Han and Zhong (2015, pp. 37-42) studied 50 top research universities worldwide by comparing their publicly stated mission statements and international strategies. The researchers offered a typological analysis of international strategy at macro, meso and micro level referring to specific university cases. They state that at macro level, university international strategy focuses on whether the university's international elements focus on input or output. Inputting of international elements relates to international students, faculty, teaching methods and materials whereas outputting international elements refers to the spread of a university's international strategy at macro, meso and micro levels, for example publishing research, promoting student and faculty mobility, setting joint degree programs etc. Macro level focuses on whether international efforts focus on internal building or external extension being put under introversion, extraversion, expansion and proactivity.

Introversion focuses on the input of international elements and internal internationalization development: e.g., by emphasizing internationalization of the curriculum through for instance, an incorporation of more majors on global issues or recruitment of international academics. Expansion refers to cases where universities focus on the input of international elements and external extension of internationalization development: e.g., by emphasizing on attracting both international students and faculty. Extraversion refers to cases where universities focus on the output of international elements and internal building of internationalization development: e.g., by promoting student mobility such as overseas exchanges and summer internships. Finally, proactivity refers to cases where universities focus on the output of international elements and external expansion: e.g., by promoting outbound international experiences through for instance funding and administrative support and by encouraging external cooperation through for instance joint -degree programs (pp. 37-39).

At the meso level, implementing international strategy focus on whether it is institutional/policy oriented or individual/activity oriented being put under comprehensive, top-down, bottom-up and intermittent. Comprehensive refer to cases where both the institution and the individuals own their own international development being supported by sustainable policy and continuous activities. Top-down refers to cases when internationalization is implemented by institutional policies and support, for example development of strategic partnerships enabling international cooperation. Bottom-up refer to cases where internationalization is implemented by individuals or through certain activities, for example scholar-initiated international research projects or co-authored publication. Therefore, particular programs or activities can be developed encouraging the engagement of both students and faculty. However, this strategy may lack sustainable organizational support since it depends on individuals' resources and network. Intermittent refer to cases where neither the institution nor the individual initiates a university's internationalization often taking place at the beginning of a university's internationalization development with no continuous policy and activity (Han & Zhong, 2015, pp. 39-41).

Finally at the micro level, international strategy is based on the scale of their impact and the difficulty of their implementation. Thus, specific strategies used can be viewed and evaluated as ideal use, limited use or shelved use. Strategies as ideal use refer to those with more impact and less difficulty to implement, for example internationalization of the curriculum which has the potential of being beneficial for all students and this can be done with few additional resources when compared to mobility programs. Strategies as limited use refer to those with less impact and less difficulty or more impact but more difficulty, for example encouraging staff to participate in conferences requires less input from the university but the impact relies on the relevant individuals and on their discipline. On the other hand, encouraging students to participate in mobility programs can be developed as a mechanism that could benefit all students but it requires significant financial and human resources being somewhat difficult to implement. Shelved use refers to strategies with relatively smaller impact but larger difficulty, for example the creation of a research center linking universities all over the world could be complicated due to research and legal jurisdictions without necessarily increasing productivity or international impact (Han & Zhong, (2015, pp. 41-42).

Han and Zhong (ibid) argued that irrespective of the route(s) a university chooses to use, internationalization should be related to whether a university can undertake teaching and research based on

international standards and whether the world can be positively influenced by its output, graduates and service.

Another large-scale study was conducted by Crăciun (2019) who reconceptualized higher education internationalization by building a typology of university internationalization strategies employed across the globe. The researcher conducted computer-assisted content analysis and qualitative interviewing of policy documents, that is qualitative analysis with a specific list of questions pointed out by the literature. The sample included 189 countries included in the World Higher Education Database (WHED) built by the International Association of Universities (IAU) which gathers systematic information about higher education systems, institutions and credentials around the world (International Associations of Universities, 2015, as cited in Crăciun, ibid p. 66). Another 10 countries from UN members which were not included in the WHED list because they were small island states without fully fledged higher education systems and no higher education policy per se were also examined.

It was found that internationalization is not an end in itself but a means to a wider goal while countries pursue different goals and priorities in relation to the process. Two types of national higher education internationalization approaches were found to be pursued by countries a) inward internationalization focusing on international student mobility and the internationalization of universities and study programs/courses offered and b) outward internationalization focusing on international student mobility and the internationalization of research innovation and development through international cooperation.

Specifically, (Crăciun, ibid, pp 153-154) found that the on the one hand countries that embrace an inward-looking approach to internationalization tend to focus on developing internationalization at institutional level by offering new study programs with an intercultural/international focus, for example developing a diverse and flexible innovative education and training system offering innovative education products and services (Australia) or establishing international classrooms (Netherlands).

On the other hand, countries that are characterized by an outward-looking approach to internationalization tend to focus on research innovation and development via cooperation with other countries, for example providing access to research environment of elite international caliber (Denmark) or providing top researchers with the very best research equipment (Switzerland).

These findings lend support to conceptualizing internationalization as a) a planned process b) that covers a variety of measures that change the purposes, functions and delivery of higher education c) with a specific goal in mind (Crăciun, op.cit, p.171). It is argued that this typology helps to clarify the priorities of national higher education internationalization strategies revealing that in all contexts, internationalization is concerned with international mobility leading to homogenization of measures undertaken to promote internationalization.

Crăciun's (op.cit) findings reflect the argumentation put forward by Soliman, Anchor and Taylor (2019) who refer to Mintzberg and Waters' (1985) "deliberate or emergent typology" (as cited in Soliman, Anchor & Taylor, 2019, pp. 1415-1416) dictating that deliberate strategies aim to achieve long-term goal considering intended behaviors, analytical processes and action plans. Soliman, Anchor and Taylor (ibid) argue that the application of the concept of deliberate strategy at university implies that adopted international strategies define key international issues, analyze and assess internal and external

circumstances (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats), and takes into consideration an organization's values and its corporate social responsibility towards the community (Ansoff, 1980, as cited in Soliman, Anchor & Taylor, 2019, p.1415). The researchers further argue that upon completion of this analysis action plans to achieve goals are articulated.

Pedagogy of internationalization

Despite its complicated nature what needs to be kept in mind is that internationalization of higher education is not something new since as Brown (1950, cited in Knight & de Wit, 1995, p. 6) argues, universities have always been international in character in terms of "the universality of knowledge". Since universities by nature are committed to advance human knowledge being thus international, the pedagogical dimension within an internationalization context needs to be scrutinized.

However, there is scarce evidence on empirical research on pedagogical issues in classroom settings within an internationalization context. Wihlborg (2009) argued that there is a lack in the literature on teachers' and students' experiences of internationalization concerning their own educational contexts from a pedagogical perspective. Her research findings imply that teachers' lack of pedagogical awareness influences students' learning outcomes, therefore the shift in research perspective should be switched from an external one to a relational context-based one in order to understand how internationalization in HE is developed in practice.

Lomer and Mittelmeier (2021) conducted a systematic literature review of research from 2013-2019 regarding specific pedagogies relating to international students in the UK. Their work revealed that pedagogies of internationalization is not yet an established field of research. It was found that there is limited evidence on specific classroom pedagogies. The review indicated that there was a lack of evidence in the categorization of international students disregarding diversity present within international student groups, especially concerning their cultures, histories, and prior experiences. There was a tendency to categorize international students' experience in a homogeneous way ignoring intersectionalities which in other cases would be applied to home students, e.g., impacts of race, gender or socioeconomic background on pedagogic experiences.

Tannock (2018, p. 190) also refers to the problem of a homogeneous approach about international students arguing that there is a fragmentation of equality in the internationalized university referring to a recognized matter in academic literature on global justice known as the "metric objection- the concern that simply measuring what equality is and should be can become increasingly difficult at a global as opposed to national level" (Armstrong 2009, as cited in Tannock, ibid, p. 84). Tannock (ibid) asserts that in the UK, there is scarce detailed and comparable data on student background and prior levels of attainment for international than for home students. It is suggested that universities need to "construct" the international student attainment gap as an educational and social problem by collecting and reporting ethnicity attainment data.

Ethnicity attainment data can be gathered by various ways, for example Jin and Cortazzi (2017) discuss the use of the concept of "cultures of learning" which means learning about learning and focuses on different cultural ways of learning brought to international contexts. Attitudes and beliefs about how to learn, and expectations in classrooms regarding roles and relationships learned through socializing in

previous schooling need to be examined. The researchers argue that there are tensions between recruiting international students and meeting their specific educational, social, psychological and intercultural needs. As they argue, there is a need to include "cultures of learning" in policies and practices to sustain internationalization in higher education. Teachers' professional development and training on the development of student-centered concepts of learning to engage systematically with "cultures of learning" (Jin & Cortazzi 1993, 2002, 2013, as cited in Jin & Cortazzi, ibid, p. 241) is strongly suggested.

Wimpenny et al. (2020) carried out a literature review responding to the work by Barometer of the European Association for International Education (Sandström & Hudson, 2019, as cited in Wimpenny, Beelen & King, 2020, p 229) where it was found that there is a correlation between offering "training" for and perceiving progress in internationalization. The Barometer report (Sandström & Hudson, p. 20, as cited in Wimpenny, Beelen & King, 2020, p. 229) states that the correlation includes training on "international learning outcomes, internationalization of the curriculum and teaching methods". Wimpenny et al. (ibid) found that currently little is known regrading actions by universities for teachers' professional development for teaching to foster internationalization and support internationalization of the curriculum initiatives and to what extent, a systemic approach to internationalization is followed.

Culturally responsive pedagogy

CRP is an approach to teaching and learning that uses students' cultural orientations, background experiences and ethnic identities as paths to facilitate teaching and learning (Gay, 2000). Gay (2002) explains that CRP is about teaching practices that consider cultural characteristics such as values, traditions, language, communication, learning styles, and relationship norms. As Sleeter (2012) asserts, CRP is broadly converged with a variety of theories and practices of multicultural teaching, equity pedagogy, sociocultural teaching, and social justice teaching. More recently, Kieran and Anderson (2019) argue that CRP refers to a technique where teachers are committed to cultural competence, establish high expectations and position themselves both as facilitators and learners. It should be noted that there is a distinction between CRP and multicultural education. The former must respond to the cultures actually present in the classroom whereas the latter can be delivered to a classroom comprising students from the same culture where the content presented is representative of various cultural perspectives. It can be argued therefore that CRP is one means to the ultimate objective of multicultural education for all (Rychly & Graves, 2012).

Many scholars have developed frameworks to describe the nature and characteristics of culturally responsive teachers as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Frameworks for CRP (adapted from Brown, 2007, p. 59)

Author	*Framework*
Ladson-Billings (1995a)	• support students to experience academic success • support students to develop and/or maintain cultural competence • support students to develop a critical consciousness
Wlodowski &Ginsberg (1995)	• create learning atmospheres in which students and teachers feel respected by and connected to one another • create favorable dispositions toward the learning experience through personal relevance and choice • create challenging, thoughtful learning experiences that include student perspectives and values • create an understanding that students are effective in learning something they value
Gay (2002)	• develop a cultural diversity knowledge base • design culturally relevant curricula • demonstrate cultural caring, and build a learning community • establish cross-cultural communications • establish cultural congruity in classroom instruction
Villegas & Lucas (2002)	• are socio-culturally conscious • have affirming attitudes toward students from culturally diverse backgrounds • have the commitment and skills to act as agents of change • have constructivist views of learning • know about the lives of their students and use that knowledge to give them access to learning

However, a critical issue refers to assessing degrees of likelihood and uncertainty (Halpern (1998) when bringing CRP into effect. Rychly and Graves (op.cit) argue that becoming culturally responsive is quite personal. In their literature review, culturally responsive teachers a) need to be empathetic and caring; b) reflective about their beliefs about people from other cultures; c) reflective about their own cultural frames of reference; d) knowledgeable about other cultures (Gay, 2002; Dalton, 1998; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Nieto, 2004, as cited in Rychly & Graves, 2012, p 45). It is indicated that it is probably best for teachers to engage with reflection as a process getting training in using a structured way to provide constructive feedback for reflections. Similarly, Han et al. (2014) found in their survey that teachers experienced difficulty defining CRP in higher education while the importance of building relationships with students when enacting CRP was identified since, for example, they encountered several different tensions

with students when trying to actualize CRP. The researchers suggested that based on findings, universities need to offer support and professional development for teachers to become culturally responsive.

Adding more on this, Milner (2019) moreover discusses the connected construct culturally responsive classroom management indicating that teachers should work on equitable practices responding to the particulars of the context. Referring to Milner (2010, as cited in Milner, 2019, p. 2) he argues that homogeneous communities do not exist and institutions should provide teaching in ways that are perceivable to learners. This implies that students are experts of their experiences and should be placed at the center of teaching and learning in a classroom (Milner, 2007, as cited in Milner, 2019, p. 2).

The Internationalized Nature of PBL

PBL and its relationship to institutional policy

Literature on PBL practices all over the world indicate that the "original" model has been adapted in a variety of forms across fields of study (Scholkmann, 2020). Scholkmann (ibid) explains that the original PBL was developed during the 1960s and 1970s at McMaster University in Canada while early most known adoptions were implemented in Maastricht University in Netherlands and Aalborg University in Denmark. In her work, she explains that the Maastricht model which was refined based on the original McMaster template used a "seven jumps" method which uses several short-time sequence pre-defined cases during a semester and close supervision of group tutorials (Wijnia et al., 2019 as cited in Scholkmann, 2020,p. 3), The Aalborg model, on the other hand, uses students' self-selected problems in long projects during a semester encouraging students to engage in self-organization (Kolmos et al., 2019 as cited in Scholkmann, 2020,p. 3) More recently, PBL variations include the short-timing Maastricht model of the "One Day-One Problem" approach (O'Grady et al., 2012, as cited in Scholkmann, 2020, p.3) and the "Flipped PBL" model in the Australian context (Hendry et al., 2017, as cited in Scholkmann, 2020, p. 3).

It is useful to frame PBL within institutional policies. Codd (1988, p. 235) argues that policy includes but extends beyond formal policy documents where ''Policy is taken here to be any course of action (or inaction) relating to the selection of goals, the definition of values or the allocation of resources". Bouhuijs argues (2011) that there are certain implementation PBL problems within institutional policies. Specifically, he argues that PBL demands a minimum of changes in the organizational structure and culture. The implementation management is dependent on strategic decisions, educational objectives, and very much on the resources available. Bouhuijs (ibid) clarifies his arguments by referring to an epistemological controversy about what knowledge is and what students should learn. He asserts that traditional universities are committed to "true knowledge" which clashes with the constructivist background of PBL where students are allowed to deal with imprecise ideas developed as they work with real-life events considering various theories. In PBL students are not corrected on their imprecise ideas about certain issues but instead they are guided to develop new knowledge using available epistemological tools.

Bouhuijs (op.cit) moreover refers to the culture of professionalism arguing that modern academia indicates that academics are highly individualistic and independent, putting their discipline as more important than the organization in which they work. PBL on the other hand presupposes co-operation across disciplines in order to deliver an integrated curriculum requiring common goals and teamwork in order support student learning. He asserts that faculty development is needed in order to introduce the teaching

implications of PBL, noting that opportunities should be created for the teacher to understand and become motivated about the advantages of PBL and the nature of teaching skills required.

Responding to Bouhuijs (op. cit), Scholkmann (2020, p. 4) refers to cases where individual teachers implemented PBL in a single course creating thus PBL variations which embraced the PBL idea under specific local and cultural conditions, for example incorporating classical PBL casework into a series of lectures (Scholkmann, 2017). As she notes, these individual variations were not implemented within an official institutional PBL strategy as individuals were interested in using PBL as an opportunity for educational change and therefore led to the formation of hybridized forms of PBL practice. It is stressed that since these variations were implemented under a non-official institutional policy, it is possible that when they appear, they would likely change from curricular demands, for example assessment practices or specific pedagogical requirements.

Frambach et al. (2019) discussed representative examples of published empirical studies relating to PBL's perceived implementation problems. It is argued that PBL needs to be adapted to the local and institutional socio-cultural context, for example with regard to tutors' approaches when guiding PBL tutorials. The researchers assert that within a globalization context, since cultural factors shape PBL processes, experiences and outcomes, PBL cannot be analyzed from a universalist discourse since PBL as a "singular" concept ideally should be implemented anywhere in more or less similar ways. Instead, the culturalist discourse operationalizes PBL as a "plural" concept reflecting values and principles of the context where it was developed and thus should be adapted to contexts being implemented. They conclude that PBL globally can only be discussed in the plural sense by emphasizing the use of plural expressions such as "PBL approaches" or "PBL strategies". It is argued that institutions might consider useful to define PBL and focus on how they interpret it and shape and implement it locally.

PBL and its relationship to culturally responsive pedagogyz

PBL involves a small group of students analyzing a problem, identifying relevant facts, and applying existing knowledge and experiences to solve a problem. Miner-Romanoff et al. (2019) argue that a PBL activity should be a typical work-related issue or situation that includes missing information or unclear answers, such as ill-structured case studies. Ill-structured case scenarios ask students to explore resources and engage in self-directed information-seeking.

PBL is characterized by using "real world" authentic problems as a context for students to learn critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Barrows, 1996). Barker (2011) argued that internationalization of the course content and design is achieved through real-life or simulated case studies, which examine cross-cultural communication, negotiation and conflict resolution. Teaching embraces a more informal rapport. Tutors participate in the tutorial groups guiding the group process by asking critical questions and by sharing their knowledge. The nature of this approach shows that PBL reflects internationalization as a didactical approach since as Maurer and Neuhold (2012) argued in PBL there are preconditions and challenges on three levels: on the level of curriculum planning, on the level of course planning (course assignment and other forms of preparation) and on the level of implementation (role of tutors, students' performance and group dynamics). The researchers recognized that the skills

dimension and group dynamics are very important and tutors need training on switching their role from lecturer to facilitator.

Ju et al. (2016) investigated challenges experienced by Korean medical students and tutors during their PBL sessions from a cultural framework using Hofstede's cultural dimensions (1986, 1996). Ju et al. (2016) also offered a discussion where they explain how Hofstede's cultural dimensions (1986) correspond to the PBL approach clarifying how these dimensions fit in a cultural profile promoted by the PBL system. Specifically, Ju et al. (2016, p. 4) argued that in PBL, the cultural dimension power distance is small since the educational process is student-centered and teachers expect students to take the initiative in communication. The cultural dimension uncertainty avoidance is low since students expect open-ended situations and teachers are allowed to say "I don't know". The cultural dimension individualism vs collectivism appears to be a combination of individualism with collectivism since students are expected to speak up in class in response to a general invitation by the teachers, conflicts can be salutary, and formal harmony should be maintained (collectivism). The cultural dimension femininity vs masculinity shows that PBL promotes femininity since students' social adaptation is regarded as important and the quality of learning and intrinsic interests are stressed. Finally, the cultural dimension long-term vs. short term normative orientation indicates that PBL encourages the long -term since long-term virtues (e.g., perseverance) are important since students may be patient with the results of their learning. It was thus found that Korean students and teachers had a learning culture which is the exact opposite of the type of culture that might facilitate PBL (large power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, collectivism with minor individualism, masculinity, and short-term orientation). The researchers suggested that the promised benefits of PBL could be increased by implementing culturally responsive learning strategies in order to counterbalance the inherited cultural characteristics of the learners.

Muller and Henning (2017) discussed PBL in the German context. They researched the implementation of a project at the University of Applied Sciences in Bremen, Germany, aiming to foster PBL. Selected instructional and pedagogical difficulties, for example an issue related to the practice of facilitating students' work in PBL were discussed. It was observed that German students did not dedicate proper time to define the problem but instead they started producing solutions. Students even got confused with the logic of the seven very detailed steps of PBL while there was lack of proper questioning strategies which according to the researchers' interpretation was attributed to the German traditional explaining culture. As a result, the researchers decided to facilitate students by providing a research question instead of a problem statement in order to offer a proper guide to students helping them search for answers. After doing so, it was observed that students improved in their discussions focusing more on content and arguments than on PBL steps becoming thus more self-sufficient. The main implication is that adjusting some PBL elements seems to help students improve their performance.

Coelen and Geitz (2016) argued that the impact of cultural diversity on collaborative learning in PBL is critical. It was argued that in PBL, it is crucial to consider the extent to which students in intercultural settings are able to work together as an effective team underlining that cultural diversity can both enhance team effort and decrease it. This was identified in surveys by Skinner et al. (2016) and Jiang et al. (2021). Skinner et al. (ibid) found that there is a dual nature of silence during PBL in two dental schools in Australia and Ireland. Students' comments showed that they were sometimes dissatisfied with

being quiet explaining that this silence has been imposed on them. They noted that some were silent because they felt their contributions were rejected and thus gave up. Others reported that group practices such as speaking loudly and quickly resulted in prohibiting any entry point for others while using slang English and humor was not understood by everyone. The researchers recognized that there is a need to look for deeper cultural and social reasons for classroom behaviors wondering whether the quiet people's behavior is due to a possible view of politeness of not interrupting while for others it might be considered acceptable to jump into the conversation. Jiang et al. (ibid) interviewed Chinese engineering master students without prior knowledge and experience in PBL enrolled in the fall of 2020 at Aalborg University, Denmark. The Chinese students reported challenges concerning teamwork. It was found that the Chinese got frustrated during teamwork experiencing differences from their group mates in ways of thinking and views towards PBL. For example, it was reported by the Chinese that the Danish had a narrow-minded interpretation of the nature of PBL while the Chinese regarded it as a flexible learning method to gain knowledge. As a result, the Chinese working in a group of Danish students reported that they had to accept their way of completing the project.

Some Reflections and Future Research

Based on the discussion in the previous sections, it seems that the complexity of PBL implementation reflects Kerr's (1994) argument which dictates that what reigns in tertiary education is the tension between a university's universal nature and its embedding in national and regional contexts. I argue that a careful examination of the nature of PBL reaffirms its commitment to the design of appropriate pedagogy of internationalization within its practice. I specifically suggest that since PBL's nature appears to be internationalized, universities should implement research policies justifying the need to design a specific pedagogy of internationalization. The literature discussed in this paper highlights the value of CRP and I suggest that it can be used as a pedagogy of internationalization that needs to be officially researched and used if effective at local contexts during PBL practices. Within the context of CRP, each teacher is encouraged to design appropriate strategies that suit the institution's educational policies and their students' needs responding thus to Frambach et al. (2019) who suggested using PBL approaches or strategies.

For example, Katsara and De Witte (2019) suggested Socratic questioning as a reinforcing strategy to set the scene for a successful PBL tutorial in the Dutch context. The researchers built their argument by referring to earlier work by Rogal and Snider (2008) and Banning (2005). The former argue that Socratic questioning is inherent in PBL learning since students question their knowledge when confronting new knowledge, while the latter argues that through Socratic questioning, teachers without revealing information to students, elicit responses from them with the aim to encourage them deconstruct knowledge. Within this theoretical context, Katsara and De Witte (ibid) found that during a Socratic seminar, a sample of postgraduate Dutch students in University of Maastricht appeared to struggle criticizing knowledge from well cited authors in the literature experiencing thus some difficulty in conditioning self-directed learning. Students appeared to be in favor of a mutual relationship between the learner and the educator in managing the learning process. The researchers suggested that Socratic

questioning could be used as a strategy prior PBL tutorials where students would benefit from activities, for example, discussions on literature reviews on debatable issues helping them comprehend "transformative academic knowledge" which challenges some key assumptions about the nature of knowledge and some of their major paradigms, theories or findings (Banks, 1996).

Future research on students' experiences during PBL practices would prove useful for teachers wishing to become more culturally responsive. The use of The Student Voice Pedagogy Instrument within PBL practices might be helpful where students are invited to participate in a survey, researching how one aspect of appropriate implementation of internationalization, that is how their support to learning within teaching at university is developed in practice. The suggested research encourages students to respond and express their perceptions and feelings of the learning and teaching process of the PBL model used in their department and institution. Their stories of experience will be shaped through discussions with teachers in a dialogue acting thus as collaborators rather than informants guided by the researcher's agenda (Altork, 1998, as cited in Moen, 2006, p. 61). Moen (2006) situated the narrative research approach within the framework of sociocultural theory. He argued that in narratives, the complexity of teaching and the classroom is not divided into elements but instead it occurs as an integrated part of the whole enabling us to understand a human being's action by examining the social, cultural, and institutional context in which the particular individual operates.

Students thus contribute to forming specific variables that might be valuable for teachers to consider when designing the appropriate instructional delivery. It encourages both parties to engage with reflection as a process, which is a crucial step in CRP. All in all, this research structure embraces the value of "conscientious internationalization" and the related use of the concept of internationalism since it encourages all to act as agents of international-mindedness (Ledger & Kawalilak, 2020) having an equal and democratic voice to solve problems (Byram, 2018, Marantz-Gal & Leask, 2021).

The results of this survey can be used to produce a confidential report helping departments improve teaching that covers their students' needs. I recommend the publication of selected- relevant to the readers' interests -insights of this report, to become part of a portfolio of a series of such studies carried out over the years. This information will be helpful in providing the rationale for the development of possible departmental CRP training sessions for teachers. Positive or negative evaluation of such training will determine the extent to which such an initiative could be part of a departmental pedagogy of internationalization policy development within PBL practices. Therefore, these training sessions would appear to promote the application of the concept of "deliberate strategy" (Soliman, Anchor & Taylor, 2019) implementing international strategy at micro level under ideal use, which refer to strategies with more impact and less difficulty to implement (Han & Zhong, 2015). Specifically, PBL implementation could be more effective by reconceptualizing its pedagogical approach having the potential to be beneficial for all students and this could be achieved through teachers' training on CRP.

Acknowledgements

The author of this paper would like to express deep appreciation and gratitude to Kristof De Witte, who is a Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business at KU Leuven, Belgium and holds the chair

in 'Effectiveness and Efficiency of Educational Innovations' at United Nations University (UNU-MERIT) at Maastricht University, the Netherlands for his constructive comments and suggestions

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Empirical Article

OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION

Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 131-147
Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education
DOI: 10.32674/jcihe.v15i1.4461 Online | https://ojed.org/jcihe

"It's not a level playing field": Exploring International Students of Color's Challenges and the Impact of Racialized Experiences on the Utilization of Campus Resources during COVID-19

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Abstract

This phenomenological study examined the racialized experiences on the utilization of campus resources among international students of color (ISOC)
during the COVID-19 pandemic at a predominantly white institution (PWI). Often viewed as having "double-invisibility" - both racially minoritized and foreign status - international students of color face unique challenges. The objective focused on the role neo-racism played in the experiences of using campus resources and understanding their unique needs during a pandemic. Personal narratives from 20 international students of color revealed five significant themes where ISOC (1) feel university resources lack a basic understanding of their needs, (2) seek international staff and/or staff of color, (3) view faculty and/or classrooms as their primary supportive resources and, (4) deem past encounters create psychological barriers to utilizing resources, based on (5) a common perception of disadvantaged positionality due to their intersecting identities. Implications and recommendations for higher education professionals are discussed.

Received December 4, 2021; revised February 27, 2022; accepted March 3, 2022

Keywords: campus resources, COVID-19, international students of color, psychosocial well-being, racism

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The COVID-19 pandemic has deeply impacted and transformed U.S. higher education institutions and systems negatively impacting students' lives with uncertainty, social isolation, racial discrimination, deteriorating mental health and financial hardships (Berger, 2020; Karalis, 2020; Koo, 2021b; Koo et al., 2021b) While COVID-19 has severely transformed college campuses, international students in the United States (U.S.) have faced unique difficulties during this time. International students bring in a wealth of curricular and cocurricular skills and knowledge, increasing cultural awareness, diversity, globalization, and intellectual capital among college students that substantially aid in the achievement of U.S. institutional goals (Koo, 2018; Lee, 2007; Zhang et al., 2016). During the 2019-2020 academic year alone, international students significantly contributed over $38 billion to the U.S. economy while supporting over 400,000 jobs (NAFSA, 2020). However, a survey by the Institute of International Education (2020) found that the number of international students studying at U.S. universities dropped by 16 percent in the fall 2020 due to the pandemic, notably impacting higher education institutions.

Scholars have explored the effects of racism and discrimination on international students in the United States (Glass & Westmont, 2014; Lee & Rice, 2007), drawing attention to racial identities and their impact on student experiences (Fries-Britt et al., 2014; Glass, 2012; Lee and Rice, 2007). Koo and colleagues (2021b) highlighted the racial experiences of explicit discrimination, fear, isolation, and feelings of being unwelcomed among international students of color (ISOC) during the pandemic. While researchers have studied racialized experiences of ISOC during the pandemic (Koo et al., 2021b), academic motivations of international students of color in STEM (Mwangi et al., 2016), experiences of learning U.S. concepts of race, and racism among international students (Mitchell et al., 2017) and among foreign-born students of color, the impact of racialized experiences of ISOC on the utilization of campus support systems has received little attention. As we face two crises—the COVID-19 pandemic and systemic racism - the need to understand the intersectionality of identities of ISOC, their racialized experiences, and the effects on how they utilize campus resources is crucial as colleges and universities shape themselves around social justice, inclusion, and equality.

For this research study, an ISOC is defined as an individual, not of White or European background, studying in the United States on a non-immigrant, temporary student visa enrolled as a full-time student at an institution. They are students who are not citizens or permanent residents of the United States. Prior literature indicates international students who come from predominately non-Western, non-English speaking countries experience negative and racial interactions mainly due to nationality during their time in the U.S. (George Mwangi, 2016; Mitchell et al., 2017; Yao et al., 2019). Similarly, Lee (2007) provided a framework for the hardship that international students experience through the concept of neo-racism, highlighting participants from Western/English-speaking countries faced minimal to no discrimination compared to students from other regions. Campus resources are defined as those campus-wide support services, departments, and programs offered to contribute towards the academic, professional, and personal development of college student success (Patton et al., 2016). This qualitative study aimed to explore ISOC

racialized experiences impacting the utilization of campus resources during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the study seeks to answer: (1) What role does neo-racism play when it comes to international students of color seeking support or resources on campus?; (2) How do past experiences of racism or discrimination affect the way international students of color utilize resources and how do they make sense of their identity having experienced these racist encounters through utilization/non-utilization of resources/services on campus?; and (3) What themes are present in the decision-making process of this student group utilizing on-campus resources during a global pandemic and widespread systemic racism? Current studies share little about the impacts of racial encounters on the utilization of resources by ISOC during the pandemic.

Literature Review

Racialized Experiences of ISOC During COVID-19

Some groundwork research has been laid focusing on issues related to international students and their experiences with racism (Fries-Britt et al., 2014; Koo, 2021a; Lee & Rice, 2007; Mwangi et al., 2016). Lee & Rice (2007) revealed the difficulties from verbal insults to confrontations that international students face by peers, faculty, and the local community. Additionally, Yao (2018) described how negative experiences in a racialized campus culture led international students to feel isolated, othered and viewed as an outsider. This illustrates the added severity of racist experiences that international students who identify as students of color may face. Specifically, ISOC come to the U.S. with various country-specific racial and cultural orientations. Scholars have found that ISOC from Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America experience discrimination as well as systemic racism based on their skin color, ethnicity, and nationality from on-campus faculty and students within the U.S, often experiencing more discrimination than their international White peers (Boafo-Arthur, 2014; Constantine et al., 2005; Fries-Britt et al., 2014; Hanassab 2006; Heggins & Jackson, 2003; Lee, 2007; Lee & Rice, 2007). A study by Yao et al. (2020) described how ISOC make sense of campus climate when faced with a racialized incident in the United States as first-year students. Their findings highlighted the unique needs of ISOC often viewed as having "double-invisibility", having both racially minoritized and international student status within U.S. contexts, reimagining how to support this group of students.

During COVID-19, college students generally faced anxiety symptoms and suffered from depression (Koo, 2021; Wang et al., 2020). Studies show ways in which race-related encounters become secondary traumatic experiences and generate psychological stress for students of color (Cheng, 2020; Koo, 2021a; Misra et al., 2020). Koo (2021b) found that racism negatively impacts the mental health and psychological well-being of international students with additional challenges during COVID-19. To support ISOC during the pandemic, it is necessary to understand their unique experiences of racism and its impact on how they seek campus resources.

Theoretical Framework

This study uses Fries-Britt, Mwangi & Peralta's (2014) Learning Race in a U.S. Context (LRUSC) model, that highlights how international students of color make sense of race and racism while studying in the U.S., as a guiding framework to better understand the effects of racialized experiences. Fries-Britt & colleagues (2014) addressed emerging themes into three categories, "Unexamined U.S Racial-Ethnic

Identity, Moving Towards Racial-Ethnic Identity Examination, or Integrative Awareness in the U.S." (Fries-Britt, et al., 2014, p. 11) regarding the experiences of foreign-born students of color including international students and how it impacted their identity through critical elements in the LRUSC framework. This study applied the LRUSC framework to ISOC specifically as a basis to discern the impact of racialized experiences and discrimination on ISOC in the way they use resources for success at a PWI. To situate any racial experiences of ISOC, the conceptual framework of neo-racism, a notion of 'new racism' (Lee & Rice, 2007) that discriminates based on culture and national order, was utilized. The frameworks focus on foreign students' status and cultural experiences where Lee & Rice (2007) theorized verbal and nonverbal insults, negative stereotypes and ignorance faced by international students as neo-racism. Using neo-racism as one of the frameworks allows for exploring institutional racism in the context of immigration among race, culture, and nationality (Cantwell & Lee, 2010) during the pandemic.

Method

Data from international students of color at a large public university in the United States were collected and analyzed. A phenomenological research method chosen for this study captured the essence and uniqueness of participants through personal perspective and interpretations (Moustakas, 1994) as it focuses on understanding the unspoken personal views of individuals and their shared experiences (Patton, 1990). As the study examined students' perceptions and reflections of their academic and identity development, it became essential to understand the unspoken experiences of students of color in general who are marginalized (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012). Understanding the experiences of ISOC has the potential to influence positive changes in structural and systemic biases to improve the environment at higher education institutions.

Participants and Setting

All participants were international students enrolled at a university in the Southwestern United States. This institution enrolled approximately 22,000 students at the time of the study including roughly 600 international students enrolled from 80 different countries, representing around 2.7% of the total student body. The student body comprises 72% White and 28% students of color. ISOC were invited through an international student listserv during spring 2021 to participate in an online survey and an optional follow-up interview.

Twenty ISOC served as participants and were invited to complete an interview to discuss their experiences of racism and utilization of resources at the university in more depth. Participant profiles comprised a range of diverse academic fields and cultural backgrounds. From the sample of participants, eight (40%) identified as female and twelve (60%) identified as male. Students' countries of origin were Belize, China, El Salvador, Ghana, Honduras, India, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. Of these, fifteen (75%) identified as Asian, three (15%) as Latina/o, one (5%) as Arab/Middle Eastern, one (5%) as Black. Fifteen of the twenty students were from the Asian countries of China, India, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam. Participants were asked to choose a pseudonym keeping identifiable information confidential.

Table 1: Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Gender	Country of Origin	Level of Study	Years in the U.S.
Angel	Female	Honduras	Doctorate	6
Anon	Male	Sri Lanka	Masters	4.5
Damian	Male	El Salvador	Doctorate	7
Fred	Male	Saudi Arabia	Bachelors	5
Gary	Male	India	Bachelors	2
Harvey	Male	India	Doctorate	6
Helen	Female	China	Bachelors	2
Hope	Female	India	Masters	2.5
Jack	Male	India	Doctorate	5
Kingsley	Male	Ghana	Masters	1.5
Maria	Female	Belize	Masters	6
Mat	Male	Sri Lanka	Bachelors	3.5
Rachel	Female	India	Bachelors	3.5
Regina	Female	Vietnam	Masters	8
Sarah	Female	Sri Lanka	Masters	2.5
Sean	Male	Sri Lanka	Bachelors	4
Seth	Male	India	Doctorate	4
SJ	Female	Sri Lanka	Bachelors	4
Theo	Male	China	Bachelors	1.5
Tyler	Male	India	Masters	1.5

Data Collection & Analysis

To gain insight into their past racial experiences and its effect on utilizing campus resources, participants were selected through purposeful sampling. Patton (1990) describes purposeful sampling that allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of the study as "information-rich cases" (p. 169). After receiving university Institutional Research Board approval, participants were recruited through an email invitation sent by the university's International Students' office with permission and support from the director. Recruitment through snowball sampling (Merriam, 2014) was engaged wherein participants informed other ISOC to send an email to the primary researcher if they wanted to participate. Participants were informed of the nature and time commitment of the study. All terms of the study were disclosed and accepted by the participants, and compensation was not offered.

Data were collected from recorded, one-on-one, semi-structured interviews. Individual interviews ran 30 - 40 minutes in length. Participants initially completed a quantitative survey that collected self-reported demographic information. Participants were then invited to an in-depth, semi-structured Zoom

interview with the primary researcher. The semi-structured interview protocols included questions focused on past racist and discrimination experiences during their time in the United States as an ISOC. Additional questions explored the ways participants learned about race and racism in the United States. Furthermore, to get a sense of the environmental context, the researcher asked students to describe their challenges during the pandemic related to those racialized experiences found at campus resources.

All individual interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and imported into a computer-assisted qualitative analysis software, Delve, that allowed the development of codes to identify themes from the data. The transcripts were reviewed to analyze the data through open and axial coding. The coding process of this study included highlighting detailed and prominent quotes related to racism and the thought process of utilizing on-campus resources, and then grouping those codes into themes (Merriam, 2014). To ensure accuracy, transcripts were matched with the audio recordings. Researchers conducted member checks, data triangulation and peer debriefing to enhance trustworthiness.

Researcher Positionality

As researchers, we must demonstrate awareness of the impact of personal experiences, social identities, beliefs and biases on research studies. Both researchers work in university settings. The primary researcher, an Asian international doctoral student of color, facilitated all individual interviews. This intentional research design offered a comfortable environment in which participants could share racial experiences and challenges at the university with an international person of color. Sharing similar cultural backgrounds and experiences as an ISOC allowed them to build rapport and trust with interviewees quickly. The second researcher who identifies as a White, American national has worked in higher education for 30 years. She routinely works with international students as a student affairs practitioner and faculty member. She brought in a unique perspective with expertise in student of color experiences during data collection, data analysis and writing process.

Findings

The findings revealed the following five themes in participant's decision-making: (1) a disadvantaged positionality as a guiding framework for (2) a lack of understanding of needs and challenges, (3) faculty and/or classroom perceived as a resource, (4) the need for international staff and staff of color, and (5) psychological barriers. Additionally, findings expose the role of neo-racism, the impact of past experiences, and the ways participants make sense of their identity, answering the research questions. The first, second, fourth and fifth themes reflect the role of neo-racism for students seeking support on campus and students' decision-making process to use campus resources during the pandemic. The first and third themes reflect how students make sense of their identity having experienced racist encounters through the utilization of campus resources. Thus, perceptions of being disadvantaged serve as a basis for understanding all three research questions, exposing the role of neo-racism, how participants make sense of their identity, and their decision-making process in utilizing resources during the pandemic. All participants have been studying in the U.S. for at least 18 months. Participants encountered some form of racism, discrimination, or microaggressions in one or more instances, on and off-campus, based on color or ethnicity and race as an international student in the U.S.

Disadvantaged Positionality for International Students of Color: "It's not a level-playing field"

Most participants expressed feelings of disadvantage as a person of color at a PWI with the additional layer of international student status. Seth (India), a doctoral student in Applied Physics noted "I am cognizant of that…it is not really a level-playing field…" (2021), that the university environment was unequal, constantly feeling the need and expectation to work harder than domestic counterparts. Almost all participants felt it was important for ISOC to use the resources available as they believed their international student status hindered their ability and knowledge of the higher education system compared to domestic peers. Jack (India), a Mechanical Engineering doctoral student shared the experience of being an ISOC as an added hindrance to understanding and utilizing resources on campus.

…as an international student I am already at a disadvantage. I am in a new country, culturally shocked…so I am already behind in understanding the available resources or getting the full picture of the available resources to me….and then this is just a further setback in that process because now I know these resources are available but I am just afraid to use them. (Jack, 2021)

To utilize campus resources, students noted having to blend in and adapt their cultural identity, often stopping to scan the room before going into those spaces. This was prevalent even among participants who lived in the U.S. for over five years who could be considered as reaching 'integrative awareness' (Fries-Britt et al., 2014), the highest stage within the LRUSC model. These students reflected on the experience of regressing a phase in the LRUSC model when they thought about using resources in these spaces. Maria (Belize) shared such an experience from graduate school when she struggled with a feeling of being unwanted at these resources as an international student of color while also working as a graduate assistant in these student affairs spaces.

You fall short of what you could have, you know, um,…and if I don't feel welcome in these spaces, then it's kind of like that privilege you know. The other students having the privilege of being welcome in those spaces and having those things and I don't have that privilege and it discourages me so then I don't use it. (Maria, 2021)

Participants in the study felt the need and expectation to outperform their domestic counterparts and described they learn the hard way that international students often have much to lose and play a different game where the stakes are high with "no safety net" as Seth described.

University Resource Personnel Lack Understanding of ISOC Needs: "It's important for us to feel that there are people who are looking out for us"

A salient theme reflected amongst several participants revealed that university resources failed to understand the unique needs and unexpected challenges experienced by ISOC during the pandemic. Jack (India) expressed the importance of support from university resources during the pandemic when he stated,

I think it is extremely important to feel supported at [university] because we definitely contribute a lot to the university to the system. Even as graduate students and undergraduate students contribute in a

different way and the least you can expect is to be supported by the system and obviously when you see different protests you can kind of relate to them, oh hey I experienced something like that, and I totally understand what people around me are protesting because this was definitely it was not something I was expecting to happen to me or was totally unfair. (Jack, 2021)

While participants reflected upon and drew connections between their past racial experiences and seeking campus resources, students like Tyler (India), a master's student, expressed the lack of support towards ISOC during the pandemic and how it would make a difference to him,

I think it is highly important to feel supported because these kinds of incidents create a sense of fear that…sometime and somewhere we might also have to face such kind of situations…so if I feel if there is any separate body at [university] to give support and give awareness about such kind of situation…people would feel relaxed, confident and work relaxed at their field of study or work whatever they are doing at [university]. (Tyler, 2021)

A significant number of students described their perceptions of the lack of awareness and consideration of challenges and needs of on-campus services, particularly during unprecedented pandemic times. Nearly all the participants described facing financial challenges during the pandemic and expressed the need for emotional support during *and* after the pandemic. Mat (Sri Lanka), a Mechanical Engineering undergraduate student described frustrations with a lack of financial support from university resources during the pandemic.

...and through [University] Care [Act] they made an issue to offer…they offered $400 and $800 some money to [domestic] people but clearly mentioned that we are not offering for any international students…and that is something I was really worried about because I am representing here…I am here right now…I could go…when Trump administration says okay "I am going to kick out all international students"…I would go to my country but I can't go because I have to participate in my senior capstone…I have free healthcare I do not have to worry at all…but here I am sick because I am not citizen…if I get something, I am at the end of the queue…end of the line… (Mat, 2021)

Most participants hoped to get pandemic support from the university in the areas of COVID vaccine availability, faculty support of racism faced by students, counseling accessibility, offering support groups, and involving international students in university decision-making policies. Multiple participants noted the need to include ISOC in campus conversations such as residential housing during the pandemic, to talk about injustices and spread awareness and accessibility of resources among this underrepresented group. Participants placed emphasis on the presence of ISOC involvement in campus-wide university resources to show ISOC are also "normal people". It is important to note that participants did not mention that the number of resources was insufficient or unavailable, but rather confirmed that the excellent resources that existed were not supportive or understanding of their needs. Maria (Belize) defined "support" as,

...knowing that they too have people that want them to be successful or know that they have people who care. Because I think the university has these resources that scream so loudly at domestic students, that you know – we have all these things but then what do we international students have? (Maria, 2021)

Similar to Maria's experience, S.J. (Sri Lanka), an undergraduate student expressed uncertainty whether or not the personnel involved in the resources being offered understood her needs. She began second-guessing her use of on-campus resources after personally facing racism in those spaces.

I think it is very important to tell international students of color that there are people who are looking out for them but personally I haven't felt that from [university] so I am not sure what kind of feeling I should expect. I guess it is more like a reassurance...like we are here for you… (S.J., 2021)

Faculty and/or Classroom Identified as a Resource: "Support from my professors made a world of difference"

Participants were asked about who or what they identified as resources and how these resources contributed to their development. Fifty percent of participants saw faculty and the academic classroom as primary supportive academic resources, along with the International Office, Counseling Services, and the library. Study findings indicated that faculty support and awareness of ISOC experiences were crucial, especially during the pandemic. Participants shared they did not seek campus-wide support services as much as they relied on faculty and graduate program department personnel for support. This was particularly true for graduate students. Participants stated that faculty were helpful in providing the support they needed, addressed COVID-19 issues, and navigated systemic racism during that time. Helen (China) expressed a sense of belongingness with her faculty who stood as strong support for her when racism against Asians was at its peak during COVID-19.

I also think it is because my professor said they also really care about their student's mental health especially for international students. My professors are very nice persons. When the pandemic just started at the very beginning there were many hatred (issues) towards Asians and Chinese students and my professors ask all the Chinese students to stay after the class ended and she just talked to us if you experienced any racial issues or discrimination and you can talk to me and I can report it to our colleague and find a solution, which was helpful. (Helen, 2021)

Kingsley (Ghana), a master's student, elaborated on the unique challenges he faced while distant from home and family and not being able to return due to the pandemic. He expressed the need to feel supported by the university through faculty support in addition to seeking funding opportunities, safety, and awareness of needs.

I think it is really important because the pandemic and anti-racism…that is like for some students we are still choosing to stay on campus even during the pandemic that is we are living far away from our families and sometimes we feel lonely especially when our friends also go back to our home country and

live alone here…that is why I think it is quite important to feel the support from the campus, such as from our professors (Kingsley, 2021)

Angel (Honduras), a doctoral student, conveyed similar opinions of faculty being key in contributing to ISOC feeling supported when faced with microaggressions. Angel drew attention to international faculty who were able to relate to her unique experiences and serve as a guide in her field of study. She explained,

I think in my undergrad my professors did a great job of supporting me, however they didn't understand what it meant for me to be an international student. At [university] I actually have a professor who is on a work visa at [university], and it's just been, it's just made like a world of difference to be able to sit with him and talk with him about some of the challenges that I face that some of my classmates don't understand and that other professors aren't really aware of… (Angel, 2021)

Urgency to Hire International Staff and Staff of Color: "I need someone who looks like me"

Participants in the study reported they were more likely to seek resources from staff who look like them. Students described the importance of hiring faculty and staff from underserved and underrepresented communities such as international communities and communities of color to connect with those from similar backgrounds. Several students recounted their experiences of walking into a room on campus and "scanning the room" to guess how they would be treated. Participants recommended that hiring international faculty and staff in these spaces was essential because those with a diverse, international background were more likely to recognize and serve their needs. These students primarily faced racism based on their international student status more so than being a person of color. This shows how participants were concerned about staff having neo-racist attitudes, discouraging them from approaching resources for assistance. For example, Helen (China) reflected on her fear of facing discrimination across campus. She intentionally seeks out international faculty/staff in these spaces to avoid facing embarrassing situations.

I will take Writing Commons as an example, I go through the list and try to find someone who has an international background because they can kind of, help me or understand me to better help me... I think maybe for most international students, we are trying to find someone who share similarities like Writing Common issues like for Chinese students they are more willing to find Chinese writing assistants to help them. (Helen, 2021)

Prior racist encounters create a psychological barrier to use campus resources: "I became more cautious and guarded"

When asked how past experiences of racism and discrimination affect their use of campus resources, participants described the fear and stress of reliving the racialized experiences and avoided using campus resources unless absolutely necessary. Jack (India) described his feelings of distrust which led to nervousness to use resources to avoid "embarrassing situations". He stated,

…it leaves me mentally second-guessing every resource I want to use so, this would not be my first prompt action to use these resources, I would check online and do as much research I can and find out myself just to avoid that in-person contact and trying to find it hard to face an embarrassing situation…, little bit of distrust, even there could be situations of misunderstanding, I am trying to convey a different message and person helping me takes it in a different sense. (Jack, 2021)

Theo (China), an undergraduate student, harbored worries about the ways past racist experiences affected conversations with peers at campus resources. He experienced a loss of self-confidence and increased feelings of stress and anxiety during the pandemic. He mentioned,

...you lose the courage or confidence to talk with other U.S. people, especially in those branches [campus resources]…it will become a barrier…for us so again as I included situations this branches [campus resources] should just move actively to try to just break the barriers…

But for this year, most of my friends returned to our home country but I am still in [U.S. city] but this year I am concerned if I can wear my traditional clothes and go outside because I see many negative news about Asians being attacked by the Whites or by someone who very frustrated with the pandemic… one thing I need to hide my identity but not to direct my culture and avoid developing the cultural things; just to avoid raising any troubles. (Theo, 2021)

Seth (India) described himself as more "cautious and guarded" when seeking campus resources after experiencing instances of racism. Kingsley (Ghana) expressed constant fear and uncertainty of what the university might do if he stood up for himself, having faced racism at these campus resources. He explained,

…so I think experiencing such situations in places like this…on campus even at the [university] library…may let them create a kind of cage…a wall around them…where they will not be able to open up…there was an issue with a friend and that led to her being taken out of campus…and as a result of that we became very conscious…and asking for help from authorities was very difficult…I personally became very closed to myself…everything I am going through I just keep it to myself…even though they say "If you need anything, come to us!" "if you need anything, come to us" but I feel like those were just protocol. (Kingsley, 2021)

Discussion

The findings highlight the unique and distinct experiences of ISOC seeking on-campus resources due to prior racial encounters experienced on campus. While ISOC benefit from utilizing campus resources academically and socially once they use them (Kuh et al., 2011; Webber et al., 2013), these resources often go unused due to their significant barriers.

The study revealed the role that neo-racism plays for ISOC in resources on college campuses specifically on the intersecting identities of ISOC and impacts on their racial and social identity when accessing campus resources. Interviews revealed that discrimination at these campus resources based on international student status was more prevalent than discrimination based on skin color which support

previous studies (Lee, 2007; Lee & Rice, 2007) Students shared fears about staff and other individuals within those resources having neo-racist attitudes towards them and indicating they were more likely to feel welcomed and explore campus resources when they see staff of color or international background. This aligns with the findings by Zhang et al. (2020), of increasing underrepresented and underserved identities among university populations of faculty and staff where students feel safer connecting with those from similar backgrounds and experiences. Increasing representation from minoritized populations allows for deconstructing oppressive hierarchies in the United States and higher education institutions (Zhang et al., 2020). ISOC perceive faculty and staff of color with an international background to understand their unique challenges and seek support for their needs, thus considering faculty as their top resource. Consistent with the implications of the LRUSC framework, faculty and staff can act as a crucial guide for students during that painful time of encountering racism while students make meaning of those events (Fries-Britt et al., 2014; Mitchell et al., 2017). Additionally, the findings indicated ISOC viewed faculty as a crucial support, particularly during the COVID-19 challenges. This highlights the need to recruit, train, and educate international faculty and staff of color to build trust and rapport with ISOC, particularly during the pandemic.

Regarding the decision-making process of ISOC in utilizing campus support systems, almost all participants felt that it was essential for ISOC to use the resources available to them. However, they believed their international student status hindered their ability and knowledge of the higher education system compared to their domestic peers (Lee & Rice, 2007) depriving them of resources to succeed in U.S. higher education. Although ISOC seem to need to leverage their academic preparedness to establish themselves as competent in their academic fields (Mwangi et al, 2016), these students reported disadvantage facing inequalities in the academic system and accessibility of resources. Students also described navigating discrimination in academic settings (such as their graduate assistantship workplace, on-campus workplace, class) and how challenging it was for them to discuss their awareness of racism (Mitchell et al., 2017; Mwangi et al., 2016). The study illustrated that some graduate students who found themselves at a disadvantage claimed their performance was affected due to fear of discrimination by their faculty advisors and supervisors. Future studies could explore these experiences in-depth examining relationships with faculty advisors and supervisors and various contributing factors of stress over time.

It is important to note that ISOC cannot be stereotyped under one group when it comes to intersecting racial and cultural identities. The participants spent a significant amount of time connecting their racialized experiences to their culture and status to how they sought campus resources during COVID-19. For most of the students, ethnicity was a key aspect of their identity development as a person of color, and they were actively engaged and connected with their ethnic groups on campus (Maramba & Velasquez, 2012). Asian ISOC expressed their need to hide their own cultural identity when using campus resources and services, and adapt to the dominant culture, especially after hate crimes rose in the nation during the pandemic (Koo et al., 2021b; Tessler et al., 2020). This aligns with research that shows international students who faced discriminatory experiences were negatively impacted regarding their sense of belongingness at a PWI (Mwangi, 2016). ISOC expressed fears of reliving racial experiences along with feelings of embarrassment which lowered their self-esteem and self-confidence in seeking resources. While self-esteem contributes to psychological well-being, healthy behaviors, and sociocultural adjustment (Wei et al., 2008), international students generally suffer from low self-esteem, negatively impacting physical

and mental health (Koo et al., 2021a). This further negatively affects their academic development (inability to ask for help), mental development (creates unwanted stress), and social development (building peer relationships) which pose as barriers to success. Considering ISOC were more cautious about using campus resources, the connection between the lack of utilization due to fear and feeling disadvantaged compared to their peers is concerning and indicates a need to provide support systems that positively contribute to their psychosocial well-being.

Findings support previous research indicating the gaps in support from campus resources where international students found university resources not very relevant or helpful (Koo & Nyunt, 2020) and where participants questioned the support, they would receive. Participants hoped to receive university support during the pandemic along faculty support, culturally centered mental health resources (Koo et al., 2021), various support groups and systems, and spaces on campus to openly discuss inequalities and be included in university decision-making around COVID-19 policies.

Finally, this study parallels previous research on international students of color (Fries-Britt et al., 2014) where participants appear to best reflect the LRUSC framework in which emerging themes were addressed as to how racial experiences impact their racial-ethnic identity (Fries-Britt et al., 2014). When participants discussed their racial experiences in utilizing campus resources during the pandemic, they aligned with one of the three LRUSC frameworks. Twenty percent of participants experienced racial encounters and microaggressions in the past but reflected race did not affect them or were race-blind "Unexamined U.S. Racial-Ethnic Identity" phase (Fries-Britt et al., 2014, p. 4; Mitchell et al., 2017). Eighty percent shared ways in which race caught up to them, moving them further toward examining their racial-ethnic identity "Moving Towards Racial-Ethnic Identity Examination" phase (Fries-Britt et al., 2014, p. 7). Twenty percent of participants demonstrated commitment to action "Integrative Awareness" phase, similar to Fries-Britt and colleagues' study (2014, p. 8). The findings for this study reveal four ISOC in the integrative awareness stage of their racial-ethnic identity examination exhibiting confidence and commitment to their racial identity (Fries-Britt et al., 2014). However, these four ISOC moved back to the previous phase when faced with neoracist experiences during the pandemic (Koo et al., 2021b) when utilizing campus resources, contrary to the LRUSC framework. Findings illustrate perceptions of being disadvantaged, having outsider status, and lacking inclusivity and support in campus resources decision-making, forcing these ISOC, unlike other foreign-born students of color, to move back to contemplating the complexity of their racial identity in the U.S. Additionally, this study shows that having a strong connection to their racial/cultural identity and community on campus, acknowledging racial experiences in ways that motivated them to succeed and serving as support to other peers, cost ISOC their mental health with added stress during the COVID-19 pandemic (Koo et al., 2021b), particularly when deciding to seek campus resources, although they may seem to be progressing in their racial-ethnic identity stages.

Implications and Recommendations

Results from the study offer practical insights that strengthen the case that higher education institutions must focus on building connections with ISOC. On-campus offices, including student affairs departments, must consider increasing the number of employees of color and diverse international backgrounds. Universities must also consider hiring more international faculty allowing students to connect with someone who looks like them. Hiring ISOC themselves in these spaces creates feelings of comfort and

inclusivity. This invites students who are now part of these resources to use them and encourages other students to as well.

Additionally, there must be a more concerted effort to leverage campus resources that serve as a gateway to other resources for ISOC to feel supported. To aid identity development and the holistic success of ISOC, university staff must actively break down barriers of support that increase accessibility. Participants portrayed their nationality to be a significant aspect of their identity, a theme commonly found in Black immigrant literature (Mwangi, 2016). This resulted in conflicting feelings when students faced racism based on color, race, or international student status. Efforts to eliminate accessibility barriers centered around cultural beliefs and values would help build an advocacy network for this minoritized group of students. Including ISOC in the decision-making process, hiring more international faculty and staff of color, or having photos of ISOC on the walls of these spaces invites inclusion. Understanding and taking action to diminish barriers, inclusivity in institutional decision making and governance, and engaging advocacy efforts cultivate a sense of belonging and trust among ISOC.

Finally, institutions must encourage collaboration to create support groups and spaces across campus addressing the double-burden ISOC face during the COVID-19 pandemic (Koo et al., 2021b; Yao et al., 2017; Yao et al., 2020). Moreover, we recommend university resources not just focus on culturally responsive (Koo & Nyunt, 2020) but culturally centered practices grounding their efforts around the individual student voices, their cultural roots, and their communities with humility to decolonize university systems. Resources staff must collaborate to invite academic units with higher numbers of international students and graduate assistants of color into culturally centered dialogue spaces. Empirical studies describe how international students learn about race and racism as innocent bystanders in the United States culture (Fries-Britt et al., 2014; Mitchell et al. 2017). Creating spaces for intergroup dialogues and academic curricula (Mitchell et al., 2017) can empower ISOC.

Limitations and future areas of study

While this study provides meaningful insights regarding racial experiences among ISOC during the pandemic, several limitations must be addressed. The generalizability of data is limited since the surveying and interviewing of students occurred at one point in time rather than longitudinally, during the COVID-19 pandemic. All participants in the study were from one single institution and did not capture ISOC experiences across multiple PWIs in the U.S. Future research should replicate the study among ISOC at different institutions in the U.S during the COVID-19 pandemic. The present study had a small sample size that may limit the significance of data analysis but within the prescribed limits for phenomenological studies (Creswell, 1998), however, future studies could be conducted on larger sample sizes over a more extended period to achieve an in-depth understanding of the grounded experiences of this group. The study solely looked at ISOC in the U.S. but included a more significant number of participants from Asian countries in the sample. The study did not capture differences in culture, background, language, and cultures from students from multiple countries to avoid disaggregating students by country or ethnicity (Koo, 2016). Studies considering the length of time spent studying in the U.S and its impact on the utilization of campus resources which in turn affect psychosocial factors of ISOC could be crucial to understanding among the long-term effects of COVID-19.

Acknowledgements

We thank Courtney Luque Jacobson at the Center for International Education, Northern Arizona University for providing the knowledge, support, and inspiration for this work.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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Empirical Article

OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION

Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 148-168

Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education

DOI: 10.32674/jcihe.v15i1.4264 | https://ojed.org/jcihe

Racial Microaggressions: Experiences Among International Students in Australia and its Impact on Stress and Psychological Wellbeing

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Abstract

International students are underrepresented in Australian health literature, and this population is especially vulnerable to the well-documented negative impacts associated with racial microaggressions in their adjustment to settling in the new society, as well as to the many challenges they already face as international students. This study investigated the prevalence of racial microaggressions among international students and its impact on stress and psychological well-being. This research was

Received October 6, 2021; revised March 12, 2022; revised March 28, 2022; accepted April 1, 2022

conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic which has been documented to contribute to anti-Asian racism. Participants included 54 international students, of which 72% were Asian. The Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (REMS), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and the Perceived General Wellbeing Indicator (PGWBI) were used to measure the participants' responses. All participants reported experiencing racial microaggression in the last six months, and significant correlations and regression models were found between REMS, certain elements of the PSS scale and time in Australia. Despite the small sample size, this research corroborated outcomes from recent studies and provided insight into the prevalence and impact of racial microaggressions among such populations, highlighting the need for further exploration.

Keywords*:* racial microaggressions, international students, racism, REMS, microaggressions in Australia, stress, psychological wellbeing

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The Australian Government (2020) reported that there were 664,219 international students enrolled in academic institutions in Australia as of August 2020. International students as a cohort experience greater stress compared to domestic students due to the many additional challenges they face, including but not limited to, dealing with cultural differences, adjustment to living in an alien land, problems with verbal and non-verbal communication, loneliness and disconnectedness, heavier repercussions of academic failure due to visa implications, and homesickness (Liamputtong, 2011; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007; Sakurai, et al., 2010). Furthermore, international students in Australia are subjected to racism and race-related crimes (Graycar, 2010).

With the pandemic of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) that has contributed to xenophobia and anti-Asian racism, there has been an increase in racism incidents targeted towards Asians and people who are of Asian descent worldwide (Human Rights Watch, 2020). The Australian Government (2020) reported that the majority of the international students (57%) are from Asian countries – China (28%), India (17%), Nepal (8%), and Vietnam (4%). With a large number of Asian students in Australia, and prevalent anti-Asian sentiment in the media there might be an increase in racism incidents targeted towards them. In Australia, over 410 COVID-19-related racism incidents were reported by Asians and Asian Australians between April to June 2020 (Asian Australian Alliance & Chiu, 2020).

Sakurai and colleagues (2010) found that interactions and relationships between international students and native students have remained low, where 66% of the 436 participants in their sample reported having issues mixing with local students after 6 months of living in Australia. With the majority of international students in Australia being from Asian countries where group-related values and social support are sources of comfort, such students who experience lower levels of embeddedness into Australia society are more likely to experience loneliness and social isolation (Heu et al., 2018).

With the greater stresses that international students already experience, they could be especially vulnerable to the well-documented negative impact of racism on physical and mental health (Franklin et al., 2006; Poyrazli & Lopez, 2007). Commonly referred to as the "changing face of racism" (Li, 2019, p. 554), expressions of racism in recent times have shifted from blatant and overt forms of discrimination to more subtle and covert forms (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004). Pierce and colleagues (1977) coined the term *microaggressions* to name such subtle and covert forms of exchanges.

Neo-Racism

Neo-racism is associated with current perspectives on racism, where people from certain regions of the world and race are negatively perceived and discriminated. Traditional racism is based on biology while neo-racism is associated to acculturation within a particular ethnic group (Lee et al., 2017). This is particularly relevant in the current COVID pandemic where certain cultures are linked to the pandemic's origins and consequently are perceived as inferior in the receiving culture. Neo-racism is the new approaches to discrimination where skin colour, culture where people come from, national origin and the interaction between countries play a role in the levels of discrimination (Lee, 2007).

Defining Racial Microaggressions

In modern times, it has become increasingly unacceptable for individuals to be openly or explicitly racist or discriminatory to others (Nadal et al., 2014). This societal shift does not necessarily equate to a decrease in racist ideas or beliefs within society, instead, it suggests that minorities are experiencing discrimination in more discrete, unconscious, and subtle forms (Sue et al., 2007). These less obvious forms of discrimination are called racial microaggressions and can cause emotional distress and feelings of difference that differs from covert racism (Wang et al., 2011).

Dr. Derald Wing Sue has conducted extensive research and contributed largely to microaggressions literature, in which he further defined microaggressions as “brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership” (Sue, 2010). Racial microaggressions are defined as (1) brief and daily exchanges, (2) intentional or unintentional, (3) verbal, behavioural, and environmental indignities that communicate negative, hostile, or derogatory racial insults and slights (Nadal et al., 2014).

According to Dr. Derald Wing Sue and his colleagues (2007), racial microaggressions can occur in three forms: Microassaults (explicit verbal or nonverbal attacks), Microinsults (communications that convey insensitivity and rudeness), and Microinvalidations (communications that nullify and negate the experiential realities of people of colour). In addition, Sue and colleagues (2007) have identified six types of racial microaggression including assumption of inferiority, second-class citizen, and assumptions of criminality, microinvalidations, exoticisation and assumptions of similarity, environmental microaggressions, workplace and school microaggressions. Their model of racial microaggressions assumes commonalities of themes across racial groups.

Although research conducted by Sue and colleagues was based in America, their research has provided important theoretical and empirical bases to understand the experiences of racial microaggressions, especially in countries with White cultural dominance such as Australia. Furthermore, there has been no research conducted to investigate such experiences specific to the Australian population. The model by Sue and colleagues (2007) serves as the basis of understanding this phenomenon, allowing researchers to test the assertion of racial microaggressions among international students in Australia, as well as enabling the investigation of its impacts.

Impact of Racial Microaggressions

Sue and colleagues (2007) noted that racial microaggressions have more profound negative impacts on physical and mental well-being than traditional overt forms of racism because of its invisible and ambiguous nature, making it difficult for victims to call them out in an attempt to address it.

Furthermore, racial microaggressions leave victims with a vague sense of being mistreated, leading them to question their own perceptions, as the verbal messages are technically free of bias but delivered nonverbally in a dismissive or hostile manner (Johnson et al., 2018). Racial microaggressions are harmful as they are chronic stressors that cause a cumulative significant and negative impact on physical and psychological well-being (Torres-Harding et al., 2012).

Using the Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (REMS) to measure experiences of racial microaggressions, Nadal and colleagues (2017) found that racial microaggressions were significantly linked to worsened physical health conditions such as pain, fatigue, and general health problems. The authors also reported that such experiences were significantly associated with poorer social functioning and emotional well-being (Nadal et al., 2017). Furthermore, among the different types of racial microaggressions in REMS, the authors found that environmental invalidations, as well as school and workplace microaggressions were significant predictors of specific issues including emotional difficulties, impaired social functioning, general health problems, pain and lower energy levels (Nadal et al., 2017). This research is substantial as not only did it find the associations between racial microaggressions and poorer outcomes, but it also found the specific types of microaggressions associated with such outcomes.

Experiences of microaggressions are linked to daily struggles, which are significantly associated with anxiety among college students (Sue, 2010). Blume and colleagues (2012) reported that higher frequencies of racial microaggressions are associated with higher levels of anxiety and alcohol misuse among students of colour, where the authors suggested that alcohol may be consumed to cope with these stresses. High levels of alcohol use have been found to lead to adverse consequences such as health risks and fatalities, declined academic performance, worsened life satisfaction and emotional wellbeing (Bolin et al., 2019; Hingson et al., 2005; Mohamad et al., 2016). The research by Blume and colleagues (2012) highlighted the use of risky health behaviors by college students to cope with stresses caused by racial microaggressions.

The stress from everyday unfair treatment could accumulate over time to trigger physiological and psychological responses (Molina et al., 2013). In research conducted by Schoulte and colleagues (2011), individuals who experienced racial microaggressions reported traumatic stress symptoms such as avoidance, hyperarousal, and intrusion of thoughts. Additionally, racial microaggressions were found to be significantly and positively correlated to traumatic stress, and traumatic stress was found to be a significant mediator in the relationship between microaggressions and depression (Torres & Taknint, 2015). Such findings provided insight into the underlying mechanisms that could explain the link between racial microaggressions and its adverse physical and psychological impact.

Extensive literature has established the link between racial microaggressions and emotional wellbeing. Nadal and colleagues (2014) found that racial microaggressions were significantly correlated with negative affect. Gibbons and colleagues (2012) reported that among African American adolescents, perceived racial discrimination was associated with reduced self-control, which subsequently predicted increase in substance use. Self-control is defined by the ability to regulate one's own emotions and impulses, especially in difficult situations (Metcalfe & Mischel, 1999). Although the research by Gibbons and colleagues (2012) was not based on racial microaggressions, it is based on perceived discrimination, which is the essence of racial microaggressions as they rely on one's perceptions and appraisals of experiences.

Racial microaggressions have been widely reported to be associated with depressive symptoms.

To name a recent few, studies conducted by Lilly and colleagues (2018), as well as Williams and Lewis (2019) found consistent links between racial microaggressions and depressive symptoms among students of colour. In their research, Lilly and colleagues (2018) found that the use of disengagement coping, such as avoidance, substance use, and denial, was a significant mediator in the relationship between racial microaggressions and depressive symptoms, further highlighting the use of maladaptive coping strategies among those experiencing racial microaggressions, which subsequently lead to an increase in the risk of poorer health outcomes (Gonzales, 2010). Furthermore, in their investigation of the link between racial microaggressions and suicidality, O'Keefe and colleagues (2015) found that racial microaggressions significantly predicted suicidal ideation through depressive symptoms among students of color. This research is important as it is the first study to establish the link between racial microaggressions and suicide risk (O'Keefe et al., 2015). This further highlights the dangers of racial microaggressions – although they are "micro", they could have serious consequences for the victims.

Depending on when and where the individual experiences discrimination, it can significantly impact academic performance (Hernández & Villodas, 2019), job performance, and opportunities (Holder et al., 2015; Lander & Santoro, 2017). As discussed previously, decrease in academic performance has higher repercussions to international students due to visa implications, leaving them even more vulnerable to increased stress and the adverse effects on physical and mental health that come with stress. Such discriminatory experiences are also found to decrease the likelihood of an individual reaching out for mental health support (Johnson et al., 2018), leaving the victims feeling alone in their struggles, further worsening their mental health.

The literature reviewed above are largely based on students of colour who are citizens of their respective countries of residence. Although limited, there is research available that focuses on the experiences of racial microaggressions among international students. Houshmand and colleagues (2014) conducted qualitative research to examine the experiences of racial microaggressions among Asian international students in Canada and were able to identify six themes common in this cohort, such as excluded and avoided, environmental microaggressions, and disregarded values and needs. Additionally, international students in America were often racialized and socialized using stereotypes of a racial group ascribed to them by others, and it was also found that international students are highly prone to experiences of overt racism and racial microaggressions (Yeo et al., 2019).

Aims of The Present Research

Currently, there is little research driving understanding on the commonality of the experience of racial microaggressions in Australia and given the importance of its impact, this research hopes to add to this growing body of knowledge. Furthermore, possibly due to their relative short time of residency in Australia, the population of international students tend to be underrepresented in Australian health literature. It is also possible that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated microaggressions towards international students. Given the significant presence of international students in Australia and the rise in racism incidents, the gap in Australian literature investigating experiences of racial microaggressions among international students, and the well-documented detrimental impact of racial microaggressions, research efforts are necessary to investigate the prevalence and impact of such experiences in Australia.

In the present study we aimed to investigate:

1. The prevalence of experiences of racial microaggressions among international students studying in Australia, and
2. The impact of microaggression on stress and wellbeing for international students The impact of such experiences on the students' stress levels and psychological wellbeing.

Research Questions

1. What is the effect of microaggression in the wellbeing of non-white international students?
2. Is there a negative correlation between microaggression and wellbeing?

Methodology

Design

As no research has been done on racial microaggressions among international students in Australia, this research adopted a purely quantitative design to ascertain the correlation between the Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (REMS) with wellbeing of international students. Quantitative data was collected via online survey to investigate the prevalence of racial microaggressions, as well as the correlations between these variables: racial microaggressions, stress and psychological wellbeing. The online survey comprised of 88 questions that collected self-reported responses. The design of this study was cross-sectional, where data on past experiences of racial microaggressions and current levels of stress and psychological wellbeing were collected.

Ethics

This research was approved by the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee. The researchers adhered to the ethical guidelines stated on the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), updated as of 2018 and established by the National Health and Medical Research Council of the Australian Government.

An informational letter of the research was included as the first page in the online survey. This letter clearly explained the aims and purposes of this research, required tasks in participation, voluntary participation and rights to withdrawal, privacy of participation, benefits and risks of participation, as well as contact information of the researchers and their supervisor. As racial microaggression is a sensitive issue that may result in psychological distress, ways of seeking support were provided in the information letter, at the end of the survey, and as a landing page for those who chose to withdraw prior to survey completion.

Participants self-selected to participate in the research and were given rights to withdraw at any time during the completion of survey. Informed consent was obtained prior to participation in the research. No form of compensation was offered for participation. No data was retained for participants who chose to withdraw prior to completion.

Participants

Participants were recruited via third party recruitment. The researchers approached a total of 68 organizations and associations that represent international students across Australia via email. In the email, a recruitment flyer and research information letter were included as recruitment materials to be

disseminated to the target population.

To be included in this study, participants were required to be current international students studying at an Australian university with no limit on age. Individuals benefited from participating in the study through having the opportunity to share and feel validated for their experiences and to gain further understanding of the different presentations of racial microaggressions to empower them.

Participants included 54 international students largely from Asian backgrounds students (24 identified as males, 30 identified as females) from Australian institutions. Participants' age ranged from 18 to 39 (M = 23.91, SD = 4.48). Based on the nationality reported, there were 39 Asian participants (72.2%), 25 from Southeast Asia (Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines), 8 from South Asia (Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka), and 6 from East Asia (China, Korea, Hong Kong). Nationalities of the non-Asian participants (n = 15, 27.8%) included 2 from North America, 2 from the UK (England), 6 from Europe (Czech Republic, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden), 4 from Africa (Zimbabwe, Mauritius, South Africa), and 1 from South America (Trinidad). For the optional question of duration of time spent in Australia, 49 participants answered, with duration ranging from 5 months to 5 years (M = 2 years, SD = 1.13).

Table 1: Demographic World Region Information of Survey Participants

	N	%
Southeast Asia	25	46.3
South Asia	8	14.8
East Asia	6	11.1
Africa	4	7.4
Europe	6	11
North America	2	3.7
UK	2	3.7
Caribbean	1	1.9

Materials

Demographics questionnaire. Sample items included age, gender, nationality, and ethnicity. A question asking whether the participant is an international student studying in Australia was included to ensure participants match the inclusion criteria.

Racial and Ethnic Microaggressions Scale (REMS). REMS was developed by Nadal (2011) based on the model of racial microaggressions proposed by Sue and colleagues (2007). With a total of 45 items, REMS comprised of six subscales measuring six types of racial microaggressions: (1) Assumptions of Inferiority, (2) Second-class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality, (3) Microinvalidations, (4) Exoticization and Assumptions of Similarity, (5) Environmental Microaggressions, and (6) Workplace and School Microaggressions. REMS was found to be a reliable measure of racial microaggressions, with Cronbach's alpha of .912 for the overall scale, and subscales ranging from .783 to .873 (Nadal, 2011). Concurrent validity of REMS was also supported (Nadal, 2011). Participants rated each statement on the scale of 0 to 5 based on the frequencies of occurrence in the past six months, with 0 indicating no occurrence and 5 indicating occurrences of 5 or more times. Higher scores would indicate higher

occurrences of racial microaggressions. REMS was used as it could offer insight into what specific types of racial microaggressions are prevalent among the research population.

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). PSS was used to measure participants' stress levels. Developed by Cohen and colleagues (1983), PSS was found to be a valid and reliable measure of stress, with high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha ranging from .84 to .86) and adequate test-retest reliability (.85 over two days and .55 over six weeks). PSS comprised of 14 items. Participants rated each statement on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) based on how they feel at the present moment. Higher scores would indicate higher levels of stress.

Psychological General Well-being Index (PGWBI). PGWBI was used to measure participants' perception on their psychological well-being. Developed by Dupuy (1984), PGWBI has high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha ranging from .90 to .94). In addition, the scale was cross-culturally validated for use in several countries (Grossi & Compare, 2012). With a total of 22 items, PGWBI comprised of six subscales measuring six dimensions including (1) Anxiety, (2) Depressed Mood, (3) Positive Well-being, (4) Self-control, (5) General Health, and (6) Vitality. Participants rated each statement on a Likert scale of 0 to 5, where the meanings assigned to each rating varied among statements. Higher scores would indicate positive options, hence the meanings for the scores meant differently depending on the dimensions measured. For example, a high score in Subscale 2: Depressed Mood would be interpreted as low in depressed mood; whereas a high score in Subscale 3: Positive Well-being would be interpreted as high in positive well-being.

PGWBI was chosen as it measures the variables consistent to the common negative impacts of racial microaggressions reported by the literature reviewed, including physical health. In PGWBI, sample items in Subscale 5: General Health included "how often were you bothered by any illness, bodily disorder, aches or pains during the past month?" and "did you feel healthy enough to carry out the things you like to do or had to do during the past month?"

Procedure

Upon ethics approval, participants were recruited via third party recruitment. The survey was presented in English and was conducted online via Qualtrics, which lasted 15-20 minutes. After reading the information letter and giving consent, participants proceeded to complete the demographics questionnaire, REMS, PSS and PGWBI in the respective orders.

IBM Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) software was used for data analysis. The researchers excluded responses from those who did not meet the inclusion criteria of international students studying in Australia. The data was cleaned, and various analyses including descriptive analyses, independent samples t-tests, Pearson's correlation coefficients and linear regression analyses were conducted. All data related to this study is stored and available for data verification in a password protected computer at Murdoch University.

Results

Descriptive analyses were performed to investigate the prevalence of racial microaggressions among participants. Independent samples t-tests and correlational tests (Pearson's correlation coefficient)

were further conducted to investigate whether there were significant differences or correlations among different demographic variables and experiences of racial microaggressions.

Correlational tests (Pearson's correlation coefficient) and linear regression analyses were conducted to test the hypotheses: Experiences of racial microaggressions would have a positive relationship with stress levels; and Experiences of racial microaggressions would have a negative relationship with psychological wellbeing.

Prevalence of Experiences of Racial Microaggressions

All participants (N = 54) reported experiencing some form of racial microaggressions in the past six months (M = 1.38, SD = .94*)*. Refer to Table 1 for descriptive findings based on each type of microaggression.

Table 2 also displays descriptive statistics from research conducted by Nadal et al. (2014). Only the means and standard deviations from Asian participants were included in the table as this demographic relates closely to our study demographic. The means in our study for REMS subscales were significantly higher than those found by Nadal et al. (2014).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics Based on Types of Racial Microaggressions

Types of racial microaggressions	*M*	*SD*	*M* from Nadal et al. (2014)	*SD* from Nadal et al. (2014)
Assumptions of inferiority	1.11	1.38	.23	.29
Second-class citizen and assumptions of criminality	.76	.93	.21	.27
Microinvalidations	1.32	1.31	.32	.33
Exoticization and assumptions of similarity	2.04	1.27	.52	.30
Environmental microaggressions	1.69	1.21	.54	.31
Workplace and school microaggressions	1.12	1.18	.24	.30

Note. Descriptive statistics for 137 Asian participants from research by Nadal et al. (2014) have been included to demonstrate our findings compared to similar research.

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to investigate whether experiences of racial microaggressions, including the different types of microaggressions, differed among participants' demographic variables such as gender and nationality groups (Asians versus non-Asians). The findings were not significant, suggesting that there were no gender nor nationality differences in racial microaggression experiences.

Pearson's correlation coefficient was conducted to investigate if such experiences differed among age and duration spent in Australia. The correlation between age and experiences of racial microaggressions was not significant. Duration spent in Australia and total experiences of racial microaggressions were found to be significantly correlated, r (47) = .38, p < .01, suggesting that as international students become familiar with the culture of their new country, racial microaggressions become more evident and recognisable.

Racial Microaggressions and Stress

Pearson's correlation coefficient was conducted to test the hypothesis that experiencing racial microaggressions would have a positive relationship with stress levels. Further correlational tests were conducted to investigate the correlations between each subscale of REMS and total PSS. Though positive in direction (except for Environmental Microaggressions where the correlation was negative in direction), no significant correlation was found between total experiences of racial microaggressions and stress levels, nor was it found between the different types of microaggressions and stress levels.

Racial Microaggressions and Psychological Wellbeing

Pearson's correlation coefficients were conducted to test the hypothesis that racial microaggressions would have a negative relationship with psychological wellbeing. In addition to investigating the correlation among total REMS and total PGWBI, further correlational tests were conducted to investigate the correlations among all subscales of REMS and all subscales of PGWBI.

Correlation among Total REMS and total PGWBI. There was a negative, but not significant correlation between total REMS scores and total PGWBI scores, r (52) = -.19, p = .18.

Correlation among subscales of REMS and total PGWBI. There were significant and negative correlations among total PGWBI scores and two subscales of REMS scores –Second-class Citizens and Assumptions of Criminality, r (52) = -.32, p < .05; and Workplace and School Microaggressions, r (52) = -.29, p < .05. The interpretations of these results are as follow: as any of these types of racial microaggressions increases, level of psychological wellbeing decreases.

Correlations among Total REMS and subscales of PGWBI. There were significant and negative correlations among total REMS scores and three subscales of PGWBI scores – Depressed Mood, r (52) = -.29, p < .05; Self-control, r (52) = -.29, p < .05; and General Health, r (52) = -.29, p <.05. Note that as the scoring instructions for PGWBI indicated that higher scores meant more positive options and lower scores meant more negative options, the interpretation of results for the significant and negative correlations would be: As REMS increases, Depressed Mood increases; As REMS increases, Self-control decreases; As REMS increases, General Health decreases. The correlations among total REMS scores and the remainder three subscales of PGWBI were not significant.

Correlations among subscales of REMS and subscales of PGWBI. For Subscale 1 of REMS: Assumptions of Inferiority, significant and negative correlations were found with two subscales of PGWBI – Self-control, r (52) = -.28, p < .05; and General Health, r (52) = -.31, p < .05.

For Subscale 2: Second-class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality, significant and negative correlations were found with four subscales of PGWBI – Depressed Mood, r (52) = -.36, p < .01; Self-control, r (52) = -.34, p < .05; General Health, r (52) = -.38, p < .01; and Vitality, r (52) = -.31, p < .05.

For Subscale 3: Microinvalidations, significant and negative correlations were found with two subscales of PGWBI –Depressed Mood, r (52) = -.28, p < .05; and Self-control = -.30, p < .05.

For Subscale 4: Exoticization and Assumptions of Similarity, significant and negative correlation was found with one subscale of PGWBI – General Health, r (52) = -.30, p < .05.

For Subscale 5: Environmental Microaggressions, no significant correlations were found among any of the subscales of PGWBI.

For Subscale 6: Workplace and School Microaggressions, significant and negative correlations were found with three subscales of PGWBI –Depressed Mood, r (52) = -.32, $p < .05$; Self-control, r (52) = -.36, $p < .01$; and General Health, r (52) = -.32, $p < .05$.

Refer to Table 3 for all of the intercorrelations of the REMS and PGWBI.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix for the REMS and PGWBI (N = 54)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Total REMS	–	.87**	.83**	.78**	.84**	.39**	.87**	-.19	-.07	-.29*	.06	-.29*	-.29*	-.18
2. Inferiority		–	.79**	.56**	.68**	.16	.83**	-.16	-.03	-.19	-.01	-.28*	-.31*	-.11
3. Second-class			–	.52**	.57**	.24	.84**	-.32*	-.21	-.36**	-.10	-.34*	-.38**	-.31*
4. Microinvalidations				–	.63**	.12	.56**	-.16	-.03	-.28*	.03	-.30*	-.16	-.19
5. Exoticization					–	.16	.65**	-.10	-.03	-.24	.16	-.20	-.30*	-.06
6. Environment						–	.26	.09	.04	.02	.18	.11	.09	.02
7. Workplace							–	-.29*	-.18	-.32*	-.10	-.36**	-.32*	-.26
8. Total PGWBI								–	.88**	.84**	.86**	.75**	.70**	.89**
9. Anxiety									–	.65**	.70**	.55**	.58**	.71**
10. Depressed										–	.66**	.60**	.53**	.74**
11. Positive wellbeing											–	.62**	.49**	.71**
12. Self-control												–	.37**	.65**
13. General health													–	.57**
14. Vitality														–

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01

Simple linear regression between racial microaggression and wellbeing. A simple linear regression model was used to test whether participants' total REMS scores were significant predictors of PGWBI total scores. Similar to the non-significant correlation between these two variables, the regression analysis found that REMS total scores were not significant predictors of PGWBI total scores. However, further simple linear regression analyses were conducted to determine whether there were significant regressions between total REMS scores and subscales of PGWBI scores. Whereas the total REMS scores were not significant predictors of PGWBI total scores, we found that significant models emerged when the REMS total scores were used to predict PGWBI subscale scores. Depression subscale scores were found to be significantly predicted by REMS total, $F(1,52) = 4.63$, $p < .05$, with an R^2 of .08. Self-control subscale scores were found to be significantly predicted by REMS total, $F(1,52) = 4.69$, $p < .05$, with an R^2 of .08. General Health was also found to be significantly predicted by REMS total, $F(1,51) = 4.41$, $p < .05$, with an R^2 of .08.

Multiple linear regressions between racial microaggressions and well-being. We conducted multiple linear regression analyses using the backward elimination method to investigate whether participants' scores on different REMS subscales predicted PGWBI total or subscale scores, and if so, which REMS subscales were significant predictors for which PGWBI subscales. A significant regression model was found between the Second-Class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality and total PGWBI score, $F(1,52) = 5.86$, $p < .05$, with an R^2 of .10. Vitality was predicted by Second-Class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality, $F(1.52) = 5.41$, $p < .05$, with an R^2 of .94. Depression was found to be predicted by Second-Class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality, $F(1,52) = 7.50$, $p < .05$, with an R^2 of .13. Self-control was found to be predicted by Workplace and School Microaggressions, $F(1,52) = 7.48$, $p < .05$, with an R^2 of .13. General Health was found to be predicted by Second-Class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality, $F(1,51) = 8.15$, $p < .05$, with an R^2 of .14.

Prior studies have confirmed school and workplace microaggression with Asian international students as well as most typical predictive outcomes for second-class citizens and assumption of criminality (Nadal, 2011)

Refer to Table 4 for a summary of the multiple regressions between REMS subscales and PGWBI subscales.

Table 4: Multiple Linear Regression Analyses of Significant Models Between REMS and PGWIB Scales

Predictor Variable	Dependent Variable	Mean Square	SE	R^2	Adjusted R^2	df	*F*	*p*
REMSTotal	DEP	2191	3.18	0.082	0.064	1,52	4.63	0.036
REMSTotal	SC	1604	2.70	0.083	0.065	1,52	4.69	0.035
REMSTotal	GH	1289	2.51	0.080	0.062	1,51	4.41	0.041

SCC	PGWBITotal	1474	2.34	0.101	0.084	1,52	5.86	0.019
SCC	VT	1788	2.68	0.094	0.077	1,52	5.41	0.024
SCC	DEP	3377	3.13	0.126	0.109	1,52	7.50	0.008
WSM	SC	2438	2.09	0.126	0.109	1,52	7.48	0.008
SCC	GH	2233	2.46	0.138	0.121	1,51	8.15	0.006

Note: This table displays only the regression model effects between subscales of REMS and subscales of PGWIB that were significant at the $p < .05$ level.

Discussion

One of the main objectives of this research was to investigate the prevalence of racial microaggressions among international students in Australia. It was found that all participants experienced some form of racial microaggressions in the past six months, with no gender, age or ethnicity differences between experiences. However, it was found that duration spent in Australia was significantly and positively correlated with experiences of racial microaggressions.

The other main objectives of this research were to investigate the impact of racial microaggressions on levels of stress and psychological well-being among international students in Australia. It was hypothesised that experiences of racial microaggressions would be associated positively with stress and negatively with wellbeing. There was no significant association found between racial microaggressions and stress levels. Some significant associations were found among overall and different types of racial microaggressions, and overall and different dimensions of psychological wellbeing. The implications of the research findings followed by the limitations of this research and future directions are discussed in this section.

Prevalence of Racial Microaggressions among Asian International Students in Australia

It is worth noting that all the participants reported experiencing some form of racial microaggressions in the past six months, with an average of 1.38 times in terms of occurrence of microaggressions in this duration. This widespread nature of the experiences is not uncommon and has been shown to span for many years over an individual's life (Johnson et al., 2018)

No significant differences in experiences of racial microaggressions were found between the ethnicities of participants. With the rise of anti-Asian racism in Australia due to the ongoing pandemic, it was expected that racial microaggressions experienced among Asian international students would be higher that non-Asian international students. However, the findings of this research suggested that there were no differences in racial microaggressions experienced by Asian and non-Asian participants. However, the findings may not be representative of the whole population due to the small sample size.

Furthermore, a positive and significant correlation was found between duration spent in Australia and experiences of racial microaggressions, which is supported by the research conducted by Mitchell and colleagues (2017). Using a qualitative approach, Mitchell and colleagues (2017) found that race was not used

as a social construct in many of the participants' countries of origin, and most of the participants reported learning about concepts of race and racism indirectly through media outlets, personal relationships, and lived experiences. Similarly, in research conducted among Asian international students in America, Yeo and colleagues (2019) reported similar interactions between experiences of racial microaggressions and duration spent in America as a result of an increase in understanding of how different their treatment was when compared to native born students.

Furthermore, Australia recognizes that Asian international students are prone to racism, and Australia advocates anti-racism, multiculturalism, and social justice for minority groups (Tran et al., 2020; Australian Human Rights Commission, n.d.). As exposure to concepts of race and racism grew with time spent in Australia, international students may become increasingly aware of racism incidents at the overall community and higher education system levels.

Relationship between Racial Microaggressions and Stress

Although positive in direction, there was no significant correlation between racial microaggressions and stress, as well as other dimensions in psychological wellbeing (i.e., Anxiety and Positive Well-being dimensions). Existing literature found moderating variables that could explain the non-significance of these findings. Hernandez & Villodas (2018) reported the use of collectivistic coping strategies such as social support seeking to successfully cope with stress caused by racial microaggressions. Similarly, adherence to their ethnic identity values, strength of ethnic identity was also found to moderate the experience of stress (Gonzales, 2010). Consistent with Torres & Taknint (2015), the researchers also found that those with stronger ethnic identities were less at risk to the negative consequences (i.e., academic persistence attitudes). Self-efficacy was also reported to be a moderator in the relationship between racial microaggressions and traumatic stress (Torres & Taknint, 2015), and anxiety (Blume et al., 2012).

Relationship between Racial Microaggressions and Wellbeing

While no significant relationship was found between overall racial microaggression and overall wellbeing, significant effects were found between specific types of racial microaggressions and specific wellbeing subtests, which indicates that relationships do exist between particular types of racial microaggressions and psychological wellbeing measurements.

Types of racial microaggressions and psychological wellbeing. Second-class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality and Workplace and School Microaggressions were significantly and negatively correlated with overall psychological wellbeing. Overall wellbeing was further found to be significantly predicted by experiences of Second-class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality. Workplace and School Microaggressions were found to significantly predict Self-control, and Second-class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality were found to significantly predict Vitality, General Health and Depression.

The findings of Second-class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality could be attributed to the larger percentage of Asian participants in this research and the ongoing pandemic. Tran and colleagues (2020) reported that Asian international students, especially those of Chinese descendants, experienced an increase in racism incidents related to Assumptions of Criminality, as these students were often associated with COVID-19 through connotations such as "coronavirus, Chinese virus" and "you brought the virus". Their findings were consistent with the COVID-19 anti-Asian racism incident report provided by Asian Australian Alliance & Chiu (2020). Due to the pandemic, these students are also experiencing heightened levels of anxiety, insecurity, and discrimination (Tran et al., 2020).

The findings of Workplace and School Microaggressions could be attributed to the nature of racial microaggressions embedded in everyday practices in various contexts including hospitals, campuses, sports

settings, and in everyday interactions (Li, 2019). This research population consisted of mainly Asian only international students where their everyday interactions primarily take place in school and workplace settings. Interactions in such settings are crucial for students as they could affect students' self-efficacy, sense of acceptance and belonging to a community, as well as social support (Osterman, 2000). Therefore, experiencing high levels of microaggressions in workplace and school settings could lead to worsened psychological wellbeing.

Racial microaggressions and different dimensions of psychological wellbeing. Three dimensions of psychological wellbeing were found to be significantly and negatively correlated to total racial microaggressions experienced (as well as three or more types of racial microaggressions): Depressed Mood, Self-control, and General Health. Furthermore, total racial microaggression experiences were found to predict subsequent Depression, Self-control and General Health. These findings are consistent with the literature reviewed. To offer further possible explanations in relation to these findings, the following section includes some notable research conducted.

In relation to Depressed Mood, Wang and colleagues (2011) suggested that the relationship between racial microaggression experiences and depressive symptoms could be attributed to heightened internalization of such experiences. Furthermore, Asian international students could be perceiving such discriminatory incidents as a natural predisposition of living in a foreign country and hence perceiving the situation as unchangeable, leading to feelings of helplessness (Tran et al., 2020).

In relation to Self-control, this finding could be attributed to the types of coping strategies used among students to cope with distress. Bonazzo and Wong (2007) found that Asian international students frequently used avoidance as a coping mechanism to deal with racism and discrimination. For many groups of international students, emotional restrain, distraction, ethnic identity and spiritual coping are forms of self-control that influence their transactions with the mainstreaming society (Gonzales, 2010). Furthermore, Asian students may also be using substances to cope with the stresses associated with racial microaggressions (Blume et al., 2012; Gibbons et al., 2012). Prior studies (Gonzales, 2010) found that local students were more amenable to denial, substance abuse than Asian international students. It was reported that the use of unhealthy coping strategies such as avoidance and substance use is associated with lower self-control, which in turn leads to worsened physical and mental health (Boals et al., 2011).

In relation to General health, Pascoe and Richman (2009) reported that this link could be attributed to increased participation in unhealthy behaviours and decreased participation in healthy behaviours. In relation to the current research, this could mean that Asian international students who reported more racial microaggressions experiences may be more likely to engage in unhealthy behaviours such as using substance use to avoid negative cognition and affect, and less likely to engage in healthy behaviours such as taking part in sports events and going to the gym/doctor (could be due to the lack in sense of community and belonging, or to avoid experiencing microaggressions in social settings).

Environmental microaggressions. Though not significant, Environmental Microaggressions yielded a positive correlation with racial microaggressions. This subscale was designed to measure the exposure to microaggressions and how these microaggressions were perceived (Nadal, 2011). The present findings could be explained by the qualitative research conducted by Li (2019) on perceptions of and reactions to racial microaggressions among Chinese migrant workers in Australia. Li (2019) found that most of the migrant workers were either not fully aware of microaggressions or did not feel strongly offended. In some scenarios of microaggressions, for example, someone being surprised that their English is good, microaggressions were even interpreted positively as compliments (Li, 2019). Although this research was done on migrant workers, their residency statuses are similar to international students, which could explain

the positive correlation between Environmental Microaggressions and psychological well-being in this research.

Limitations and Future Directions

The present research has several notable limitations. Firstly, correlational and regression analyses did not allow for causal conclusions to be drawn, implying the need for future longitudinal studies. Secondly, this research relied solely on self-reported measures which are subjected to social desirability and/or memory biases (Torres & Taknint, 2015). As racial discrimination is a sensitive issue, racial microaggressions are also less likely to be reported among Asian international students as they might be worried about the implications on their visa or academic enrolment status. Moreover, the small sample size (N = 54) suggested that the findings are not representative of the entire target population, hence future quantitative research with larger sample sizes need to be conducted to draw firmer conclusions. However, despite the small sample size, our study is still significant as it contributes to the broader body of similar research findings in Australia on racial microaggressions by Li (2019), Tran, Bui, and Balakrishnan (2020).

Racial microaggression presents itself as a real and difficult challenge that Asian international students have to deal with, necessitating intervention and prevention efforts. The nature of racial microaggressions supplies a limitation as its tendency to be under-reported suggests that the actual experience is greater than what is currently understood (Li, 2019). Furthermore, there is much yet to be known of this phenomenon in Australia, hence rigorous social science studies with extensive and enhanced data collection (both quantitative and qualitative) are needed. As experiences of racial microaggressions differ among racial and ethnic groups, qualitative studies are essential as they allow researchers to open-endedly investigate the experiences of racial microaggressions specific to each group in Australia (Nadal et al., 2014).

Furthermore, REMS is developed based on racial microaggressions experienced by American citizens of colour, and it is important to recognize that experiences of racial microaggressions differ among racial and ethnic groups. REMS was also developed for citizens, whereas this research focused on international students who are not citizens, hence some items in REMS could not be applied to international students. This warrants the need for the development of a racial microaggressions scale specific to international students in Australia.

Nadal and colleagues (2014) highlighted the need of validating experiences of racial microaggressions to enhance the individuals' abilities to cope successfully with such experiences. Although not representative, the findings of this present research asserted the prevalence of racial microaggressions among international students in Australia, and intervention efforts should begin by raising awareness and validation of such experiences.

Though moderating variables could be used to explain the insignificant relationship between racial microaggressions and stress levels as well as other dimensions of psychological wellbeing in this present research, these are merely speculations as no data was collected on moderators found by existing literature. Future studies should aim to identify moderators specific to different ethnic groups of international students in Australia. The investigation on coping mechanisms and other moderators such as self-efficacy could be useful as it may inform individual and institutional efforts to manage the negative impact caused by experiences of racial microaggressions.

Conclusion

Communities have been proactive in challenging racism; however, more subtle means of racism are experienced as microaggressions. The present research aimed to investigate the prevalence of racial microaggressions and its impact on stress levels and psychological well-being among international students in Australia. All participants (N = 54) reported experiencing some form of racial microaggressions in the past six months. This research consisted of participants across Australia, suggesting the common prevalence of

racial microaggressions among international students across Australia.

The relationship between racial microaggressions and stress levels were not significant, suggesting that there could be potential mediating factors such as use of coping strategies, level of self-efficacy and ethnic identities. Second-Class Citizen and Assumptions of Criminality, and Workplace and School Microaggressions were found to have a significant and negative association with overall psychological well-being. Regression analysis also revealed estimated predictability between types of racial microaggressions, such as Second-Class Citizen, Assumptions of Criminality and Workplace and School Microaggressions, and wellbeing indicators, such as Depressed Mood, Self-Control and General Health. Such findings fit the status quo relating to the ongoing pandemic, the ethnic composition of research participants, as well as the nature of everyday interactions of the participants. Among the different dimensions of psychological wellbeing, significant and negative associations were found among microaggressions and these dimensions: Depressed Mood, Self-Control, and General Health, which were consistent with existing literature. This finding is noteworthy as it highlighted that experiences of racial microaggressions not only have implications on mental health but on physical health as well.

Although the research sample was not representative of the target population, this research laid some important groundwork and provided important justifications for future research to investigate this phenomenon. The negative consequences on physical and psychological wellbeing associated with racial microaggressions highlighted the need for further investigation, as well intervention and prevention efforts. Due to the invisible and ambiguous nature of racial microaggressions, validation of experiences of racial microaggressions is crucial in reducing the negative consequences of such experiences. Empowering international students by raising awareness on racial microaggressions and encouraging them to exercise their personal agency may also help to reduce the negative consequences associated with racial microaggressions.

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We acknowledge Murdoch located in the land of Whadjuck and Binjareb Noongar people where this research took place.

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Scholarly Essay

OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION

Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 169-179
Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education
DOI: 10.32674/jcihe.v15i1.3923 | https://ojed.org/jcihe

Anationality: Identifying with neither here nor there

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Abstract

The logics of identity structure and organize interactions on both individual and communal levels. These logics range from how we as researchers interact with our subjects to how we make sense of contexts in which we find ourselves. This essay will further a global dialogue on researcher identity by proposing the theoretical possibility of "anationality": a disavowal of national identity as a possible subject position from which to negotiate local, regional, national, and global processes. Drawing on experienced gained while researching international students for an NGO and later as a Ph.D. student, both in countries where I am marked as foreign, this essay follows feminist theorizing of gender, particularly gender non-binary identities, to potentially illuminate the opportunities and limitations of critiquing nationality. This work further highlights the importance of an anti-essentialist stance in conducting research. Anationality is an attempt to question national categorization. This essay productively moves the debate around the nation and nationality beyond normative, essentialistic conceptualizations.

Keywords: anationality, identity, positionality, research, experience

In this essay, I trace how my research in various contexts across various continents has shaped the evolving process of coming into my own as a researcher. The fieldwork that I have done throughout the early stages of my career has provided several unique, context-specific interactions in which the intersections of my own identity heavily inform how I did the research. As a Queer, Black, Latinx person of immigrant background born in the United States, it was impossible to extricate myself from the complex stories that diverged from, questioned, challenged, and at times, resonated with my own experiences.

Received June 7, 2021; revised November 7, 2021; revised December 26, 2021; accept February 15, 2022

The experiences I have had conducting fieldwork in international education research have led me to challenge the concept of national identity as an organizing principle for research, specifically for internationally mobile subjects and researchers.

I begin with this description to highlight the inextricability of the researcher from the research process. Furthermore, this essay aims to discuss the extent to which one can divest from the concept of national identity and examine the implications of this complex process. Divestment from identities is often a difficult issue. Houdek discusses "symbolic divestment" as a "performative disavowal of one's membership with an institution that has come to represent a set of ideals, beliefs, or political positions that conflict with one's moral worldview."(Houdek, 2016, p. 52). In the German context, this often looks like a disavowal of the German historical identification with the Holocaust. Examples of this divestment range from German-Jewish composer Ludwig Strauss (Seelig, 2013) to the main character of Georg Oswald's novel *Alles was zählt*. (Wells, 2011). For these two figures, "Germanness" becomes a problematic category from which they attempt to distance themselves.

The limitations of essentialism cannot be overstated, particularly within the vein of research that explores identity and (self-) representation. To avoid or exceed these limitations, one must first acknowledge the dangers of reification. Reification asserts common-sense understandings of the social world as natural and fixed. In other words, "we tend to take 'the sense we make of things' to be 'the way things are'" (Crotty, 2020, p. 52). This process affects research by foreclosing other interpretative possibilities for analyzing data, potentially causing researchers to miss the intricacies of their subject of study. To reify means to essentialize inherent complexities of empirical and theoretical research based on notions of a fixed and unchanging essence.

Processes of reification are undergirded by essentialism. Some notions of essentialism rely on reifying the behavioral characteristics of individuals (Gasper, 1996). This 'performative essentialism' is ostensibly more flexible than essentialism based on biological characteristics. It nevertheless attempts to describe cultural practices as inherent to one's essence. More dangerous still, essentialism that reifies based on assumed inherent qualities of individuals is a form of "representation that distorts and silences" (Werbner & Modood, 2015, p. 229), flattening the identity construction process. Examining any identity construct and not acknowledging that it is contingent, conditional, and in a constant state of moving between fixity and fluidity is detrimental to potentially innovative inquiry.

Like many researchers, I strongly believe that, to a certain extent, all research is autobiographical (Aitken & Burman, 1999). My positionality is undoubtedly an integral aspect of approaching concepts of race, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, age, ability status, and other dynamics of difference. There is, however, a tension between aspects I consider integral to myself and other individuals and the aforementioned concept of symbolic divestment. On the one hand, I am deeply critical of notions of taken-for-granted identity; yet, on the other hand, I acknowledge that how I relate to and identify myself is part of my professional practice as a researcher. Similarly, in the German context, conflicts between (not) being identified as German and (not) identifying as German have resulted in impassioned discussions about who can or should align themselves with national identities (Yue, 2000). The tensions between how one identifies and how one is identified by others have led me to consider the differences and similarities between gender and nationality; the concept of anationality is the result of thinking through these intellectual discussions.

I define anationality as the absence of a national identity and the rejection of identification with any particular nationality. The essay argues for the theoretical possibility of anationality as an identity from which researchers can explore, critique, and reflect on positionality. The concept I have introduced here differs from previous conceptions of "anationalism" suggested by, for example, Kostakopoulou or Miller, who link individual disavowal of national identity to a rejection of nationalism (Kostakopoulou, 2012; Miller, 2019). Within this line of thinking, anationality often indicates an adherence to ethnic identity yet a rejection of the political significance of that identity (Karpat, 2002, p. 621). Rather than confirming this "hierarchy of allegiances" based on identity (Anscombe, 2004), my conceptualization of anationality

considers the possibility of rejecting nationality identity as a potential stance from which to conduct research. This definition centers on the individual negotiation of identity construction.

This essay first outlines how positionality within a national context can both challenge and affirm understandings of national identity, using my positionality as an example. I then briefly define how I will be conceptualizing identity and situate this concept within the framework of the nation. Further, I compare national identity with gender identity, drawing insights from post-structural perspectives on gender theory, and show implications for research on international higher education. Finally, I show the limits of both current conceptualizations of the nation and my suggestions for addressing these limitations. I end the essay by suggesting potential future research implications.

My Positionality

To illuminate conceptualizations of identity, I draw on my experience working as a qualitative researcher for an NGO in Berlin, Germany, whose main goal was to promote academic exchange periods for marginalized youth. These youth from eastern Germany, as a rule, attended the lower tiers of the German secondary school system and were often of lower socio-economic class and immigrant background. The project in which I was employed entailed qualitative interviews with various high school and college-aged students who had received funding from the NGO's stipend program. Over a year, I conducted semi-structured interviews during which the topic of identity frequently arose, particularly the cultural and national identity of both interviewer and interviewee.

One anecdote that struck me as an example of how national identity is negotiated and performed was when, after asking an interview subject what he thought of his German identity, he replied, "I know that I am typically German in that I enjoy making people aware of their mistakes." (Hernandez, 2015). I was floored. After almost three years in Germany, it finally made sense to me; this individual demonstrated a classically stereotypical understanding of what it means to be German in a way that resonated with my experiences. I immediately thought of how often I had experienced this exact sentiment without having the vocabulary to name it. However, this moment also allowed me to reflect on my values and beliefs. While this characteristic is certainly not unique to German culture and, of course, not pertinent to every German, the anecdote illuminates how nationality can so subtly rely on an essentialistic understanding of behaviors and ways of being. Here is an example of someone casually and succinctly defining their "German-ness" in a nuanced way that still serves to reinforce a common understanding of national identity defined in essentialist terms.

I mention this anecdote for several reasons. First, it marked a turning point for me in my understanding of how German culture can be represented. As someone who had lived in two cities in Germany for four years, who spoke German fluently, and could have been considered "well-integrated," this information was a remarkable confirmation of how I had experienced "Germanness," both in others and myself. This moment was the beginning of a transformation for me as a cultural citizen and researcher. It marked the beginning of thinking about research differently. For example, I began to question bounded notions of national homogeneity when conceptualizing research categories, which led to nuanced definitions of international/domestic students that acknowledge local, regional, and national heterogeneity.

Secondly, upon hearing this statement, I was simultaneously overcome by amusement, realization, disagreement, and acceptance. For me, it demonstrated the affective relationship between identity representations in a visceral, embodied way, far beyond other interviews that I had conducted. The response to this particular expression of identity was an eruption of laughter, a moment of uncertainty, and a pause to reflect. But for me, the question remained: how true are statements like this about our identities?

Identity

Common-sense understandings of identity refer to an untenable concept and view the categorizations of individuals at a given moment as fixed in time and space (Hall, 1991). I rather focus on

the concept of identification, which emphasizes how the ways individuals identify are constantly shifting, forming part of the narrative of the self (Barker, 2003). However, as Brett St. Louis points out, the paradox of identity as both impossible and necessary in social and political positioning further complicates understanding the myriad ways individuals exist (2009). A postmodern, poststructuralist understanding of identity opens the path towards a more subtle, nuanced interpretation within the research context. This interpretation allowed me to re-consider my research practices.

Situating Identity in the Nation

Identity is often discussed in cultural or social terms regarding the modern nation (Wodak, 2009). Indeed, when discussing one's cultural or social identity, the topic of discussion that arises predominantly is that of national identity. One need only remember the prevalence of the question "where are you from?" to be reminded of the "importance" of the nation in mainstream discourses on identity. Particularly in international education research, discussions of national identity are gaining in importance yet often lack theoretical specificity (Tavares, 2021).

The nation as a theoretical concept has occupied the imagination of scholars since its inception. What constitutes the nation and how national subjects relate to that construct through narratives of nationhood remain the topics of contemporary academic debate. One influential strand of thought on the subject remains the conceptualization of nations as "imagined communities" in which modern nations form a timeless, essentially limited, and sovereign geographic and social territory (Anderson, 1983). This idea of the nation maintains that, even though most members of the nation will never meet all of their co-nationals, there remains an intense "horizontal comradeship" that unites them, forming the basis for a group identity. Education remains an integral aspect in the construction of this comradeship. For example, Singapore's construction of national identity relies on the school as an ideological institution to create a national identity (Koh, 2005; Ritter, 2013). My reflections on research interactions with interview participants of various national identities caused me to question the construction of this sense of comradeship. Surely, I could feel connected to my research participants in ways I cannot with my co-nationals. I also paused to reflect that this might mean divestment from national categories in the conceptualization of students in international higher education research.

The politics of identity within the nation framework are most visible when discussing migration, a key factor of comparative and international higher education. Do international students belong to their university? The nation? Are they 'loyal' to their home countries? Do they even belong here? Identity forms the basis on which claims of belonging are made. In this sense, national identity is contingent upon the inclusion of those who constitute the nation, who are imagined to belong to the polity, and who ascribe to the essential values of the nation. Conversely, claims of excluding foreignness are increasingly articulated in terms of national identity, as in the emergence of right-wing populism and anti-international student sentiment (Indelicato, 2017). This duality, national belonging and national non-belonging, are negotiated according to how the nation is formed.

National identity is a double-edged sword. In certain cases, it can form the basis of belonging within a national border for a historically marginalized group utilizing strategically essentialized identity claims for purposes of political mobilization (Spivak, 1985). Under the right circumstances, these claims can function as an emancipatory identity politics that allow anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-classism, and other forms of seeking equality to emerge within the nation framework (Hall, 1991). At the same time, however, the dichotomy of oppressor/oppressed national identities only exists within the nation framework. This framework provides the battleground for political processes that have the potential to disenfranchise as well as influence the discourses that shape national identity.

The uncertainty, anxiety, and fear around the nation's future and constitution are a driving force in maintaining these inequalities maintaining the structuring logics of the nation. Embracing ideologies of a concrete system in which a national "we" are different from the foreign "them" serves to support beliefs in

the inherent superiority of one's nation (Billig, 1995). The recent examples of anti-Asian racism inherent in responses to the Covid-19 pandemic that has impacted Chinese international students make national and xenophobic divisions all too apparent (Allen & Ye, 2021; Koo, Baker, et al., 2021; Koo, Yao, et al., 2021)

National Identity and Gender

The theoretical innovation of developing anationality can be approached through comparisons with existing theoretical discussions of gender. While there have been several movements over the years to theorize gender in ways that unpack and question our basic assumptions about the concepts associated with masculinity, femininity, and what lies between (Butler, 1990, 2004; Nestle et al., 2002; Yuval-Davis, 1993), nationality has not been theorized in the same way. This undertheorization can be attributed to assumptions about the fixed nature of the Westphalian nation-state. The following section illuminates the similarities and differences between national identity and gender identity. It will discuss the extent to which the anationality allows researchers to critique static conceptualizations of the nation and national identity. Finally, it will offer implications for research in international higher education.

There are several parallels between national identity and gender identity. Both categories have serious repercussions on the person who aligns with any of the various manifestations of those categories. Both entail hierarchies that afford those aligned with hegemonic identities more privilege. These hierarchies can often be heuristically reduced to the binaries that valorize one identity construct over another, i.e., the Global North/South divide or the gender binary between men and women. These binaries are problematic in their conceptualization and implementation.

We can also see binarization in implementing concepts such as "core" and "periphery," referring to the division of labor production in world-systems theory (Wallerstein, 2011). The concepts played an important role in critiquing the unequal distribution of capital globally yet served to reify the Westphalian system that positions nation-states in certain positions within a global hierarchy (Quijano, 2000). This hierarchy is also present in current conceptualizations of "sending" and "receiving" countries of international student migration and influences how education researchers think of "brain drain" and "brain gain" (Zhang & Blachford, 2014). The gendered flow of capital from and to various places influences how we think about those places.

The concept of gender as a fluid construct has been established among many branches of scholarship, including education. Drawing on a postmodern approach, education research must attend to "ethical and methodological challenges of knowing certain lives in their precariousness" (Zembylas, 2016, p. 206). Identity categories like gender, sex, nationality, race, ethnicity, etc., are deeply imbricated in the politics of representation. When speaking of national identity, it is only through the lens of the organizational logics produced by a postmodern understanding of how identity is constructed through discourse that one can begin to understand the limits of national identity categories. Introducing the concept of anationality makes it possible to perform some of the intellectual work of delimiting national identity categories.

Another similarity between national identity and gender identity is the contestability of their material confines. Nationality is governed partly by basic material components and by violent, disciplinary technologies along national lines (i.e., passports, border controls, walls/fences, etc.). These technologies can be contested and resisted on both personal and group levels through, for example, political mobilization and implementation of policy. The technologies that govern gender and its representation are similarly responsible for confining populations, not necessarily in a spatial sense, but rather in terms of how meaning is made of individual categories. These categories are resisted through simultaneously serious and playful queering of gender, and insofar that the constructs of gender and sex are related, through gender-reaffirming medical interventions. Of course, the capacity to resist the confines of national and gender identity is mitigated by many aspects, like agency, privilege, and context. These theoretical and practical

commonalities merely highlight the situatedness of both categories within a structuring framework and the potential to resist and change that framework.

National identity and gender are often imbricated with one another in ways that inform and complicate human relationships. As the basis for a national identity, the construction of the nation is also inherently a gendered project (Wahab, 2008). In the material and discursive construction of the nation, gendered subjectivities come to the fore. This is apparent in several ways, ranging from gendered references to the "motherland" or "fatherland" to the physical labor expended along gendered lines, i.e., male conscription to fight in wars on behalf of the nation. The unseen domestic labor performed by women, particularly socially and/or economically marginalized women, is also an important foundation sustaining the peoples and structures that make up the nation. Far from disregarding the costs at which this labor has been performed to construct the nation, the concept of anationality could provide an opportunity to loosen the grips the nation has on its most vulnerable. For example, identifying anationally could allow us to seek other explanatory factors in describing social phenomena we discover in our research. Comparative and international higher education research has benefitted from a reflexive position when exploring gendered and nationalized subjects (Sriprakash & Mukhopadhyay, 2015). Thinking through anationality would also provide the benefit of nuancing identity categories that are often taken for granted in the field.

Despite the multitude of similarities between gender and national identity, there are some key differences. The regime of opposition to the confines of gender has, in various cultures throughout history, provided creative and dynamic examples of resistance in the global public sphere (McNabb, 2017). However, while "playing with gender" has existed since the beginning of human history (Herdt, 1994), the development of the modern nation has impeded critical thought and individuals' capacities to shape our relationship with the nation, as has been done with gender. Throughout my academic career in various international contexts (Germany, India, the U.S., Switzerland, Canada), I made it a point to try and "play with nationality." For example, when the inevitable question "where are you from?" emerges, I often respond with "try and guess!" which affords me an interesting opportunity to see how I am perceived and typically invites a playful dialogue about national origins. This kind of dialogue could potentially change how we as researchers approach constructing our own identity and allow us to reflect on our research practices.

The relatively recent invention of the nation-state and its attendant structures have only influenced national identity since the Westphalian agreement. The technologies that enforce this construct only emerged in the twentieth century. Passports and national borders as disciplinary tools function to contain and regulate nationals and non-nationals in a physical and material sense. In contrast, the enforcement regime of gender lacks these material trappings. Babies are typically assigned a gender based on their perceived biological sex upon birth. Being "assigned female at birth" or "assigned male at birth" is an outgrowth of the mental schemas reified by medicine, policy, and other structures. These structures take place within the confines of the nation but are not only related to geographic location. In contrast, the process of being "assigned" a nationality is typically dependent upon the location in which one is born.

The physical space or "sovereign territory" in which one develops has less of an effect on one's gender than on one's national identity, highlighting national influences of gender development in various national contexts. While gender functions differently in, for example, Germany and the United States, national identity functions quite similarly. Manifestations of regional gender inequality in Germany, for example, are influenced by historically structured social inequalities (Dirksmeier, 2015; Fuchs et al., 2021).

The divergent histories of Germany and the United States after the Second World War account for systems in which gender is established in culturally specific ways, as in the example of "Rosie the Riveter," a manifest example of how national identity and labor production are deeply gendered (Winkelmann, 2018). This example can be contrasted with the interweaving of gender and the woman's place in the family in creating the German welfare state (Abrams & Harvey, 2018), which resulted in a differentiated

conceptualization of women and mothers as producers of labor. We can see how gender is interwoven within the national system as constitutive of how national members perpetuate the nation.

The logics that structure the nation and those that structure gender function similarly. In both cases, the nation is the organizational principle for constraining, enabling, and legitimating a gendered national identity. This process has consequences for those who seek to move within this system that do not adhere to one geographic location. Discrimination toward international students who do not fit the national system is a well-documented phenomenon (Adegbola et al., 2018; Grayson, 2014; Hanassab, 2006; Lee & Opio, 2011). International students who face discrimination in new national contexts based on racist and xenophobic prejudices are subject to prevailing national ideas of what constitutes difference (Fries-Britt et al., 2014; Mitchell et al., 2017). Additionally, students and researchers alike bring their subjectivities with them when crossing borders to pursue knowledge (Blanco & Saunders, 2019; Metcalfe, 2017). A critical approach to understanding the impact of our positionality also necessitates reflecting on just what we bring to our research.

Methodological Nationalism

In research contexts, the term "methodological nationalism" refers to this "assumption that the nation/state/society/ is the national social and political form of the modern world" (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002, p. 302). However, this assumption is far from being solely a feature of the methodological approach to research. It permeates the contemporary literature of international education and structures how we think of education systems and those included and excluded from them.

A primary variant of methodological nationalism is ignoring the national framing of modernity (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002). The influence of modernity on shaping identity becomes even more powerful by being made invisible, innocuous, and taken for granted. Rather than being seen and thus marked as a potential subject of critique, the nation as a framework for identity formation becomes a structuring absence (Ott et al., 2011). As researchers, we should understand the driving forces behind the contexts we are studying. However, rather than critically exposing nationalistic tendencies in ourselves or our research, this variant of methodological nationalism would have the field reluctant to explain social phenomena regarding the nation's role.

A second variant of methodological nationalism involves uncritically accepting national discourses without problematizing them. The stereotypes mentioned in my anecdote at the beginning of the essay are prime examples. Stereotypes are only a small part of discourses at the national level. However, they are influenced by the national society from which they originate and therefore frequently go uncommented upon and even perpetuated while performing research. This variant of methodological nationalism would have invoked another explanation for the anecdote at the individual level. Had I ascribed to this variant, I would not have even found this description of Germanness remarkable, choosing instead to attribute the national discourses from which it arose as a natural feature of the German social landscape. I recognize that a specific emotional understanding of the German higher education context was also necessary to perceive this form of humor. Adopting an anational focus could have potentially freed me from the confines of thinking in national terms and would have led to a more generative, reflexive conversation around the definition of national stereotypes.

These two aspects of methodological nationalism inhibit understanding the nation and nationality by obfuscating critical aspects of how these constructs are conceptualized. While doing research, it is of utmost importance to account for the role our own identities play in the co-construction of the phenomena we are attempting to explore. Anationality problematizes our relationship with the nation as an overarching principle and allows us as both researchers and individuals to adopt a position to unpack that relationship.

Avoiding methodological nationalism as a researcher is akin to disavowing nationalism in the personal and political sphere. Of course, the personal is political, and the two are interlinked. While this concept has implications for the general public, it is important to note how an anational identity might help

ways of thinking in the research setting. Anationality is also a way to redefine our position within the organizational logics of nationality. As identity is a contingent and contextually dependent, relational position, an anational identity allows us to reflect on the discourses out of which our researcher identity emerges.

Additionally, because of identity's embedded nature in the research context, disidentifying with a particular nation means centering alternative ways of relating to our research subjects. Thinking in anti-essentialist ways about research subjects, contexts, and frames also assists in avoiding a culturalist approach in which culture is a defining factor for behavior (Dirlik, 1987). The theoretical possibility of anationality also makes it possible to eschew certain aspects of our own national identity that might be unhelpful in the research process. Being able to occupy a subject position that more easily allows one to explicate discourses that attempt to fix us in national contexts is a first step towards emancipation from the thinking that reifies those national contexts.

Limitations

Of course, one must acknowledge that it is not easy and often simply impossible to disavow or dissociate from national identity within the confines of the nation. The organizational logics of the nation do not easily loosen their grips on our collective imaginaries of identity. However, the fluid potential of identity in postmodern contexts does allow for anationality as a possible subject position from which to critique extant structures.

As researchers, it is important to acknowledge the unevenness of our various positionalities. It may be easier for a person privileged by their national identity to disavow that identity. Those who are disadvantaged by their national identity in the international context would, of course, seek to distance themselves from that disadvantage. This is exactly why anationality is so potentially liberating: it would equalize a playing field characterized by core/periphery or North/South hierarchies. Those of us who occupy higher positions within these hierarchies should keep in mind the potential of giving up that privilege in the interests of emancipating the more vulnerable. The possibility of disentangling ourselves from national logics represents a worthwhile challenge.

Anationality is not about a general belief in "global citizenship," an uneven and unequal experience that has grown in importance in education research (Pais & Costa, 2020). While previous research has asserted the value of global citizenship in rejecting stereotypes (Dippold et al., 2019) and constructing narratives of cosmopolitanism (Boni & Calabuig, 2017). adopting anationality as a concept aligns with a critical praxis of disavowal of structures that have enabled certain forms of global citizenship over others (de Andreotti, 2014). If we can move away from the current divisive system of identity constructs, as much as present politics would allow, we can begin to think in new ways about ourselves, research, and the world

Future Directions

The application of anationality means reflecting on how the place in which one happens to be born does or does not affect how we navigate the world. Concretely, this has manifested in my research in a focus on local and regional heterogeneities in any given regional context. For example, in my research conducted in Switzerland, I noticed the phenomenon of "affective regional isolation," which governed how students from one linguistic region affectively navigated their surroundings in other linguistic regions in the same country (Hernandez, 2021). While conducting this research, I made sure to attend to the varied cultural and linguistic differences within Switzerland, something I might not have had the foresight to do without the diverse international experiences I have described throughout this essay. Anationality also presents other researchers with several advantages. One such potential advantage could be divesting from the neoliberal assemblage of nationally-based publish or perish practices. In the current academic climate, minimizing the importance of certain nationally-based publishing opportunities viewed with more prestige than others would allow for a more just and democratic distribution within global knowledge production.

Open-source, online journals with editors adopting this anational stance would be an example of where anationality allows for a more equitable starting point in the publication process. Operationalizing anationality could also mean de-emphasizing national affiliations in international collaborations and focusing on the quality of the work rather than its origins.

Another direction for future research could entail identifying research subjects for whom anationality is more (or less) possible and identifying the reasons and implications for this possibility. A researcher could, for example, examine "global citizen" rhetoric among globally mobile populations and examine the extent to which a global citizenry can adopt an anational position.

Anationality as a researcher stance allows us to explore alternative explanations for behavior situated in certain physical time and space without attributing nationality as a sole or predominant explanatory factor. It further allows us to decenter one's national positionality to the extent possible by questioning assumptions based on your national history and the relations of power that constitute a national narrative. It further allows researchers to examine power relations between and amongst various nationalized identities without investing in those relationships from one's particular national stance. Researchers have the possibility and responsibility to unpack social phenomena without relying on national identity as a crux of their argument.

The theoretical framework I have laid out for this construct serves as a basis for researchers to engage in research. Still, it also clarifies an additional subject position that individuals can occupy. As indicated in the opening of this essay, considering our positionality is the first step in examining how we relate to the research context and one another. Perspectives gained by adopting anationality can be a resource for a freer and more open exploration of the self, others, and various contexts.

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Scholarly Essay

OJED
OPEN JOURNALS IN EDUCATION

Volume 15, Issue 1 (2023), pp. 180-191
Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education
Online | https://ojed.org/jcihe

Chasing Shadows: Myths of Engagement in American Education Abroad

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Abstract

The idea that communities host American students is problematic. In the fractured nature of contemporary reality, communities, where and if they exist, tend to be less visible and, often, less accessible. The argument for the centrality of community engagement in education abroad does not recognize the dynamics of urban change. Discovering community may more realistically involve a kind of archaeology, digging out versions of constructed memories. It may also involve a search for marginal, sometimes hidden, vestiges of communal consciousness in complex urban spaces. That search may be undertaken in libraries and museums and in obscurer corners of the city. Finding community may be a matter of historical analysis – made in memory. Most of us belong to associations of interest that transcend geography and are not constrained by national frontiers. Prioritizing community engagement in education abroad may build unrealistic expectations, sending students out to chase shadows.

Keywords: chasing shadows, community engagement, urban space, fractured societies,

> Encounters with the unfamiliar are at the heart of any educational endeavor. Exposure to new ideas and environments beyond the classroom expands consciousness and inculcates new skills. John Dewey's dictum is rooted in experiential education and situational learning. It also offers a rationale for the validity of education abroad: "There is an intimate and necessary relation between the process of actual experience and education" (Dewey, 1938, p.20).

The notion of intimacy creates a significant challenge for students studying abroad. In London, as in many European urban conurbations, they are temporary visitors in complex social and political spaces. Negotiating these environments is no easy matter. In the rhetoric of education abroad, however, we propagate a myth that proximity will empower students to engage with communities.

Received January 4, 2021; revised June 22, 2021; accepted June 28, 2022

Such expectations fail to recognize the fragmentation of the social structures that students will encounter. This essay will examine the concept of community critically and, in so doing, will argue that engagement is, for the most part, a problematic objective.

In education abroad, the location of the student experience is other than home – an alternative version of reality. Students meet new ideas, different assumptions, and diverse people in unfamiliar places; disruptions stimulate those senses through which, as Proust taught us, we construct meaning and memory. Encounters are physical as well as intellectual. The inter-connection of body, mind, and space in situational learning is critical in the discourse of education abroad. Leaving home involves crossing literal and metaphorical frontiers and, at best, involves transcending the most difficult barrier of all: that which separates the self from others.

The impact of encounters with the new is inevitably subject to a number of variables: going beyond inherited stereotypes is no easy matter; there are environments in which foreign visitors may encounter a range of ambiguous attitudes, and so on. These realities suggest that we need to avoid concepts that generate unrealistic expectations.

What students can expect is an opportunity to encounter, not necessarily engage with, the unfamiliar. The term "encounter" is neutral; it makes no presumption about outcomes. In contrast, "engagement" implies some level of participation. The common collocation "community engagement" in the language of education abroad raises problematic and complex questions, most critically what is the nature of community in the contemporary world? Does engagement impose an expectation of untroubled involvement?

In our century, technology has redefined the boundaries of community; voluntary and forced mobilities have disrupted modes of association. A collective implication is that communities are no longer necessarily defined by proximity. For good and ill, globalization, in many ambiguous shapes, has altered how we meet and interact with each other,

Consequently, the notion of engagement is a more complex proposition than our rhetoric may suggest. Search for community better reflects the realities we inhabit. Seeking encounters with individuals is more likely to bring the benefits envisaged. That approach is less likely to enforce reductive stereotypes based upon assumptions that those we meet are representative types. Instead, being open to the complexities of the individuals we encounter will teach us, and our students, to recognize that we, and they, are more than the sum of collective associations.

Maybe it's Because I'm a Londoner

Unreal City,
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.
T. S. Eliot "The Waste Land"

The community in which I was born has evaporated. London has been transformed in my life in ways that would make a good deal of it unrecognizable, even to my father. For my grandfather, much of the city would be alien territory in which familiar landmarks have been hidden or obliterated. They were both taxi drivers with an in-depth knowledge of the city, its alleyways and hidden byways. Were they to return to the neighborhood in which we lived, they would be astonished by the changes in buildings and people. What had been a predominantly White working-class community is now a diverse space in which Black British residents coexist with Muslim and Hassidic families. Simultaneously, young upwardly mobile couples have, because of proximity to the business district, begun to gentrify houses in creeping encroachment.

Areas a little further to the east, bombed heavily in World War II, have been reconstructed as Docklands, a modern glass and concrete metropolis. International capital has been invested to create a space dedicated to transnational corporate life. There are few remnants of the close-knit communities

who lived and worked on the old docks. Commercial shipping no longer brings cargo to this stretch of the River Thames. The boats moored here now are mostly the yachts of the wealthy who come in the summer to avoid the heat of Dubai or other far centers of luxury and commerce.

I am not being nostalgic about the landscapes of my childhood. Many areas of east London were squalid and deprived. Income, for many, was dependent on casual labor. Life could be difficult in many and various ways. Those levels of deprivation are much less visible now, but far from eradicated. Nevertheless, for ill and for good, London is probably the most radically altered city in Europe though similar patterns of transformation can be seen in other urban spaces.

The dynamics of change, driven by globalization and migration, have created, and continue to create, vibrant environments. Money and mobility have, in combination, reshaped the fabric of London life. Traditional communities may exist in the corners of the city, but they are not what the visitor sees in the streets and buildings. London has always been a magnet for tourists and students attracted by, among other things, the lure of tradition and history, iconic representations of the past. They are still there but you may need to look for them rather more closely than before. The Shard is the tallest building in Western Europe. Its needle like structure houses luxury apartments, offices, and restaurants. From most directions it obscures the view of Christopher Wren's masterpiece, St Paul's Cathedral.

Students may find other such obstructions in the search for London's fabled histories and traditions. They are more likely to discover a landscape of conjunction and collision where myths coexist with realities, where civilizations meet, and where diversity in all its manifestations brings creative, intellectual energy, and conflict. Something like 300 languages are spoken in the city. About 37% of the population was born outside of the UK. Circa 40% are categorized as non-white. In 2016, a Muslim, Sadiq Khan, was elected Mayor of London with almost 60% of the final vote. This exposes the fallacy that the city is somehow a "traditional" location in education abroad. Paddington Bear offered a relevant perspective: "In London, everyone is different, and that means anyone can fit in".

In Search of Communities

The city's transformation makes the idea that there are "communities" that "host" American students problematic. In the fractured nature of contemporary reality, communities, where and if they exist, tend to be less visible and, often, less accessible. The argument for the centrality of community engagement in education abroad derives from a largely conservative, static perspective that does not recognize the dynamics of urban change. Mobility of wealth and peoples have altered the fabric of the city. A single building exemplifies the impacts of population changes. In Brick Lane, to the east of London, a fine place of worship was built by Huguenot refugees in 1743. In 1891, in response to Jewish immigration, the same building became the Spitalfields Great Synagogue. In 1976, it reopened as a mosque serving predominantly Bangladeshi residents. London has always been an international city, but post-colonial history and globalization has intensified mobility, created an environment in which social cohesion is fragile.

Nationalists, against all the evidence of history and politics, believe that countries are communities. If so, they are peculiar manifestations. Countries are constructed entities formed by war, colonial interventions, accidents, myths and all the other myriad ways in which we invent our environments. They are rarely logical or coherent spaces built upon shared values. The poet, Benjamin Zephaniah, makes a case for London as a particular kind of community in "The London Breed":

I love dis great polluted place…
The music of the world is here
Dis city can play any song…
Two hundred languages give voice
To fifteen thousand changing years
And all religions can rejoice
With exiled souls and pioneers…
We just keep melting into one…

The people here united will
Create a kind of London breed (Zephaniah, 2001, pp.109- 110).

Zephaniah envisages a paradoxical kind of unity built around diversity which, in an aspirational, optimistic vision, will lead to collective consciousness. The poem posits a utopia in which a new "breed" emerges, defined by proximity.

On a micro level, what we call home may represent a form of community. There the fortunate experience safety, security, and identity. That said, in our age of mobility, home is a place that may not be so simply found. It may be the place in which we currently live or that imagined, remembered space where we were located by human and geographical relationships. An Irish friend, who spent over forty years working in the building trade in London, returned to rural Ireland to die in the house in which he was born. That kind of continuity belongs to pre-modern experience. For most of us, home is as much an idea as it is an address.

I have lived in the same apartment block in London for over fifteen years. There are eight other identical structures on the estate. It was originally built as social housing but is now roughly equally divided between privately owned and publicly provided housing. I could certainly describe the diverse nature of the residents from African British immigrants, to Black British (mostly of Caribbean origin), those of Turkish origin, and White British and so on. What I cannot tell you is the name of many of my neighbors.

This is not at all unusual in London or in many cities that are popular destinations in education abroad. Populations in urban environments tend to be more transient than those in rural areas. Western European cities have been shaped and reconstituted by the impacts of globalization, voluntary or involuntary mobility. One self-evident consequence is that individuals tend to be less connected to particular locations. This reality should modify some of the expectations with which we burden participants in education abroad.

The Problem of Community

The family is a version of community. There was a time when family was extended into clan or tribe. Such concepts may have credibility in some parts of the world, but they mean little in the regions and countries within which most of our students study. Urban life is more often characterized by separation. The architecture is characteristically based upon small units of living designed to accommodate relatively isolated humans. High-rise buildings and tower blocks, particularly in the 1960s and 70s, were based upon the spurious idea of a "vertical village", a concept intended to suggest that social cohesion could be manufactured artificially. The reality is that, in London, at least, the notion is largely discredited. Progressively, it has been recognized that alienation is a common consequence. Metaphorically, and increasingly literally, what remains is rubble: demolished debris of a failed dream.

In contrast, villages and rural environments have tended to retain some sense of communal cohesion. However, most of the world does not live there. What we mean by community frequently crosses borders. The dual impact of technology and enhanced mobility has led to the proliferation of forms of association not constrained by space. This is demonstrably true for international educators. At any session at one of our annual conferences, I will know the names of many colleagues in the room. I will have worked with some of them and have good friends among them. That sense of community is one of the things we have all missed during the restraints arising from the pandemic.

We encourage students to "immerse" themselves in the host community as if immersion was baptism, the first step towards holy enlightenment. We tend not to consider that it may also represent drowning. In any case, seeking to identify and engage with communities is not a simple matter. Community may take many forms depending on perspective, context, and intention. It may be established by its members or imposed by others, sympathetic or hostile.

Communal identity may, for example, be defined by outsiders in terms of deficit, a source of issues and problems for the wider population. Not all people control their own identities. There are marginalized groups defined by the hostility or mistrust of others and invested with negative traits: anti-social. pariah status, criminal tendencies, and so on. Thus, Roma, Muslims, Jews, young Black men,

among many others, bear the burden of imposed identities. Generalizations lead towards prejudicial stereotyping and create the conditions in which discrimination, even persecution, is given spurious legitimacy.

"Pride" is a political response to those negative narratives. Pride in, for example, Black or gay identity asserts a positive collective consciousness as a reaction to negative constructions. Asserting community, we might deduce, is forged in the contested politics of identity.

From another perspective, what we call community may derive from a kind of comforting fantasy that we use to keep unease from intruding into the lives many of us live. This is illustrated historically by popular American TV shows that offered an alternative and seductive narrative against a background of urban riot and disorder from the 1960s onwards. *Taxi* (1978 to 1983), set in New York City, (created by James L. Brooks, Stan Daniels, David Davis, and Ed Weinberger) is an instructive example. Taxi drivers are isolated from their customers by barriers. Communication is limited by topic and duration. Thus, the action of *Taxi* is focused in the base garage where individuals react and bond with each other in significantly supportive ways. *Taxi* offered the viewer a transformation of isolation into community, an urban myth.

The television series *Cheers* (written by Judy Hart Angelo and Gary Portnoy) presented another narrative counter to that of urban isolation and displacement. Set in a bar in Boston, it ran from 1982 to 1993. It drew upon a yearning for a place where we are recognized and valued, a version of "home." The opening theme song precisely defined a place of sanctuary and security alternative to loneliness and anonymity:

Sometimes you want to go
Where everybody knows your name,
and they're always glad you came.
You wanna go where people know,
people are all the same,
You wanna go where everybody knows
your name.

The continuing popularity of the series for over 40 years, and the presence of a number of bars named Cheers in Boston, indicate a persistent myth of community. In contrast to racial marginalization and discrimination, at Cheers, "people are all the same". Social fractures are healed in a secure space protected from disturbing reality. The bar is in a basement. The camera shows viewers the feet of anonymous city dwellers passing hurriedly overhead. The world below is, in contrast, a sanctuary where "everybody knows your name".

Other US comedies carried similar messaging. *The Golden Girls* (Susan Harris, 1985- 1992) was set in Miami, Florida, and constructed a communal place of friendship and safety for aging women. *The Cosby Show* (Bill Cosby, 1984 to 1992 and 1996 to 2000) offered a view of African American experience that intended to undermine racial stereotypes. Bill Cosby's family, living in Brooklyn Heights, are highly successful professionals with a loving family life. It offered a vision of Black America with which White America was very comfortable, far from the angry, destructive shapes of nightmare reflected in news reports of urban disorders.

An interesting contrast was offered by *Hill Street Blues* (Steven Bochco and Michael Kozoll,1981 to 1987). NBC screened 146 episodes in which the police station was an oasis in a desert of disorder. The catch phrase, "be careful out there", established a border between a supportive community and disintegrating urban conditions in which violent criminality was a norm.

However, popular TV programs such as *Cheers* and *The Crosby Show* constructed situations in which communities modify loneliness and alienation. Such environments and relationships, of course, exist, but for most of us they are elusive, not part of the reality of our daily lives. Cities across the world offer enormous potential for education and entertainment but social cohesion is not necessarily the typical experience of residents.

The rural world is different. Farmers have a relationship with land that is physical and intimate. They commonly live and work in the same place. City dwellers rarely experience such integration. The

need to commute between the places in which we live and the places in which we work signifies a disconnection that makes community based upon proximity a less natural process. Communal groups have to be built across distances.

Religious faith clearly establishes connections. However, the only growth in Christian worship in UK churches is associated primarily with Black British populations. *Faith Survey* carried out in July 2021 summarizes a significant number of sources. Key findings were that:

> UK Church membership has declined from 10.6 million in 1930 to 5.5 million in 2010, or as a percentage of the population; from about 30% to 11.2%. By 2013, this had declined further to 5.4 million (10.3%). If current trends continue, membership will fall to 8.4% of the population by 2025…Over the period 2005-2010, the major Christian denominations such as Anglican, Catholic, and Presbyterian all saw falls in membership. Orthodox, Pentecostal and other new churches (Evangelical and Charismatic) on the other hand, saw an increase in membership…For the period 1980-2015 Church attendance has declined from 6,484,300 to 3,081,500 equivalent to a decline from 11.8% to 5.0% of the population (*Faith Survey*, 2021).

What is apparent is that traditional church membership and attendance has seen very significant declines, whereas places of worship remain a significant source of association for more marginalized groups. That is a trend confirmed by the fact that the fastest growing religion in England is Islam (Office of National Statistics, 2015). In terms of access for education abroad students, these statistics confirm that there is a diminishing sense of association in mainstream Christian worship. The religions that are growing may or may not be welcoming to strangers but, in any case, they are not likely to be places in which student engagement is a simple matter of attendance.

The Past is Another Country

Another notion of community derives from nostalgia for a past in which communal values and social cohesion influenced the ways in which people related to each other. These may be based upon folk memory, the recreation of an imagined or re-imagined past, or evidence of social and political change.

The idea of working-class solidarity is exemplified in the struggles conducted over mining in England in the 1980s. Whatever view may be taken of the viability of the industry, miners and the Nation Union of Mineworkers were subject to an unprecedented, planned campaign designed to privatize the industry, close most of the pits, and destroy the unifying influence of the Union. The threat of mine closures provoked The Miners' Strike of 1984-1985 and, as intended, enabled the then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, to conduct what was effectively a class war; a Conservative government mobilized the police to defeat workers through attrition, and through the power of the state.

Thirty years later the testimony of Bruce Wilson, who was 29 years old in 1984, indicates the connections between industry and community:

> In the early 1980's I/we knew it was coming, we were warned enough by our NUM [National Union of Mineworkers] leadership and other sources. Thatcher and her government wanted a showdown. Where I live there were a dozen collieries within a 20 mile radius ... I fought not just for "my pit" but for the mining community next door (Bannock, 2015).

The scale of destruction is apparent in that the number of deep coal mines fell from 174 in 1984 to 15 by 1994. The last deep coal mine in England closed in December 2015.

Mining was and is more than a job. As in Appalachia, mining generates community. Reasonably well-paid jobs supported mining villages as they had done for generations. Traditions and continuity created a sense of social cohesion. Mine workers are, like farmers, necessarily physically close to their work. Such a relationship with the immediate environment is beyond the experience of the urban commuter.

Continuity in mining villages is a theme in Ewan McColl's song "Schooldays Over" (1961). Working in the mines was a primary source of employment for young men in the locality This is indicative of a scarcity of other opportunities, but it also reflects a source of communal cohesion:

> Schooldays over, come on then John

Time to be getting your pit boots on
On with your sack and your moleskin trousers
Time you were on your way
Time you were learning the pitman's job
And earning a pitman's pay.

Following the defeat of the miners' strike, economic stability and social cohesion were destroyed in a remarkably short period of time. Remnants of the traditions of mining villages exist now in museums, monuments, memories, brass bands, tattered flags.

If we prioritize simple notions of community engagement in education abroad, we may be directing our students towards forms of archaeology, digging out versions of constructed memories, or towards marginal vestiges that may be found in urban environments. That is not an invalid exercise as long as the context is clear. Identifying community may be a matter of historical analysis – made in memory and filtered through the kinds of perception exemplified in the recollections of the English comedian Les Dawson (1931- 1993). He recalled the Manchester of his childhood in the 1930s in an interview with Louis Barfe:

> ... nobody locked their doors, old citizens never died for want of caring, no child ever lacked supervision. Every street was a commune. Each one had its amateur midwife, undertaker, judge and medical advisor... If two men fought it was with fists and fair play, and all the policemen were beefy Sons of Erin, who corrected an offender with a judicial clout, not a charge sheet (Barfe, 2012, p. 3).

An element of working-class nostalgia in Britain is for those lost worlds: spaces called home. Emanuel Litvinoff in *Journey through a Small Planet* (1972) describes a sense of loss:

> Until I was sixteen I lived in the East London borough of Bethnal Green, in a small street that is now just a name on the map. Almost every house in it has gone and it exists, if at all, only in the pages of this book (Litvinoff, 1993, p.8).

The search for community may, therefore, directs students towards the library and museum as well as to the buildings and streets beyond.

Community and African American Identity

The lenses of nostalgia and a yearning to belong resonates with an atavistic desire for connection, security, and home. Africa functions in this manner in the construction of African American identities. The collocation of African and American establishes a transaction between myths of origin and life in the present. Africa is both a geographical space (albeit a generalized location that does not distinguish between diverse countries) and a dreamed landscape. In the real worlds we inhabit, home may be a form of imagined community. This is expressed in Maya Angelou's memoir of her return to Ghana, *All God's Children Need Travelling Shoes*:

> We had come home, and if home was not what we had expected, never mind, our need for belonging allowed us to ignore the obvious and to create real places or even illusory places, befitting our imagination (Angelou, 2008, p.19).

In this respect, it parallels the notion of Zion for diaspora Jews: a metaphor for space in which persecuted minorities belong without the need to justify, defend, or hide identity for fear of hostility from the world outside. Angelou summarizes a relationship between biblical origins and the desire for location that contains an implicit recognition of aspiration beyond possibility:

> Our people had always longed for home. For centuries we had sung about a place not built with hands, where the streets were paved with gold, and were washed with honey and milk. There the saints would march around wearing white robes and jeweled crowns. There at last, we would study war no more and, more important, no one would wage war against us again (Angelou, 2008, p.20).

Africa is history, myth, poetry, music, art, origin, and imagined community consciousness. There is an inevitable fracture between dreamed landscapes and realities of place. Barack Obama precisely contemplates this Africa as he prepares to visit Kenya, his father's homeland:

> I had been forced to look inside myself and had found only a great emptiness there…Would this trip to Kenya finally fill that emptiness? The folks back in Chicago thought so. It'll be just like Roots, Will had said at my going-away party. A pilgrimage, Asante had called it. For them, as for me, Africa had become an idea more than an actual place, a new promised land, full of ancient traditions and sweeping vistas, noble struggles and talking drums (Obama, 2004, p. 302).
>
> Thomas Wolfe wrote of his protagonist in *You Can't Go Home Again* (1940):
>
> …he never had the sense of home so much as when he felt that he was going there. It was only when he got there that his homelessness began (Wolfe, 1990, p.50).

If home eludes us, how do we find community?

Community in Geographical Locations

It would, of course, be wrong to argue that it is impossible for students to engage with communities within the countries in which they study. However, it is equally misleading to suggest that access will be a simple matter or that those who students encounter are somehow representative of more than themselves.

Students might anticipate untroubled engagement partly as a consequence of the rhetoric of education abroad, and because they have experience of a kind of constructed community: the campus. They will study at another academic community in another country whether it is a university or a study center. Students may also wear distinctive clothing that declares their membership of a group. However, that membership is temporary and fragile. It derives from accidents of location rather than shared belief or experience. American universities and colleges have stronger alumni associations than are customarily found in Europe but, for the most part, the degree of commitment is uneven and conditional.

What people wear, the college t-shirt and scarf for example, may indicate some form of alignment with a collective identity. This may be enforced by how they adorn and display their bodies. Dark clothing and make- up identify young people as Goths. The zoot suit in the USA in the 1930s and 1940s indicated alliance initially with urban Black males though it was adopted by other ethnic groups. Zoot suit riots in 1943 were the result of a war time prohibition on manufacture because the fashion was felt to be wasteful of cloth required for army uniforms. The passionate confrontations between soldiers in uniform and those wearing zoot suits reflect its importance as a symbol of community. Conflicts between Mods and Rockers in England in the 1950s similarly derived from the fact that a choice of distinctive clothing made alliances visible and excluded others.

In religious contexts, uniform is a common way of signalling community by, for example, some Islamic groups, the Amish, and others. Hassidic clothing reflects eastern European origins and indicates distinction from the norms of the environment. Hassidic men grow beards and side curls while married women cover their hair (or shaven head) with a wig. The hijab or burka similarly locates the female wearer within a Muslim community. These are indicators of both membership of a group and some degree of separation from the rest of society. Encounters with these communities may not be impossible but engagement, if it can be facilitated, will be limited, controlled, and potentially complex.

Marginalized people may also gather together as a response to real or imagined hostility. Geographical proximity may be a consequence of discrimination or segregation, formal or informal, legalized or economic. The transition from Apartheid in South Africa has not, for example, created many truly integrated spaces. Western Europe is not free from communities created by prejudice. Algerian immigration into France has been substantial as a legacy of colonial history. From the 1950s onwards, shantytowns (*bidonvilles*) grew in the suburbs of Paris, Lyons, and Marseilles. Tourists and students rarely visit these sites which are literally and metaphorically peripheral, beyond the archetypal Paris of wide boulevards, quaint streets, and pavement cafes. Roma in Europe are also often excluded from urban centers. They are seen, as they have been for hundreds of years, as anti-social pariahs – a community defined by exclusion.

There are, then, quasi-hidden in many of the cities in which our students study. They may be created by religious faith, distinctive habits or ideologies, desire for protection, the prejudices of others. The common factors are they do not reflect mainstream experiences of most of us in contemporary

reality; access may be problematic or impossible; outsiders may be unwelcome; they may be hidden from the visitor as a matter of choice, perceived necessity, or the actions of hostile authorities.

Exceptional communities are accessible in some contexts. Most places of religious practice will welcome outsiders to a variable degree. Political groups similarly may be open to forms of engagement. Students may join sports clubs assuming they have an appropriate level of skill. Pubs in London or Dublin are informal communities, but it would be irresponsible to encourage students to spend too much time there. In both locations, alcohol has a role in creating group alliances but, for any number of reasons, students may be excluded from access.

Students engage, of course, with the people they meet, and we encourage those encounters. However, these are not engagements with communities except in some limited circumstances. In any case, treating individuals as representative leads towards generalizations in which personal characteristics may be taken as communal traits. Any statement that begins with Americans are, the English like, the French have, the Irish believe, represents a way of not seeing the individual, a simplification that may lead towards harmful stereotyping.

We would do better to ask students to consider what has happened to community instead of assuming that they can engage with something that may or may not be there. The impacts of globalization, in its many manifestations, have led to the fragmentation of traditional modes of association. That focus may give students insights into the social dynamics that have transformed contemporary urban realities.

Host Communities

The concept of "host" raises another set of implications which distort students' experience. There is a body of thoughtful, well-intentioned work that examines the relationships between students from elsewhere and the situations they encounter. What is rarely considered is that the rhetoric itself imposes demands that exceed what might be considered reasonable. A number of thoughtful essays in *the Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education* have analyzed problematic relations between students studying abroad and the communities they encounter (see, for example, Katz, J.et al., 2021, and Asada, S, 2019). Despite the quality of those discussions, a key omission, as in much of the literature, is the degree to which "host" defines relationships unrealistically.

In education abroad, the term host creates a misleading metaphor. Host and guest are voluntarily assumed roles. A host invites you into their home as someone who is welcomed and offered hospitality in one form or another. Host and guest suggest a kind of intimacy in a domestic environment. A host acts with kindness and generosity; a guest is the privileged recipient of those gestures of friendship.

The relationship between host and guest does not describe the manner in which education abroad is constructed. The student may well be welcome, and we hope does not experience hostility or aggression, micro or otherwise. However, the transaction enacted between the foreign country and the education abroad student is not accurately represented in host-guest terms and may generate misleading expectations. Students abroad are individuals who by personality and curiosity might become welcome guests. They may also generate resentment by inappropriate forms of behavior. Welcome and hostility are at the extreme ends of a potential spectrum of response but either, and all points along the spectrum, are conditional upon both the nature of the people encountered and the way the student enters the unfamiliar environment. The collocation of host and community distorts the nature of encounters. Students studying abroad are not exceptional guests entering into space in which they will inevitably enjoy privileges and unconditional welcome.

This is not just an issue relevant to the experience of American students abroad. The ambiguity of welcome for Chinese and other foreign students on US campuses raises related issues. Integrating with American students is sometimes problematic, and any number of explanations and solutions are proposed. Barriers to smooth integration include the obvious: language, exclusionary American behavior, Chinese students remaining in their linguistic and social groups, American campuses do not do enough etc. What is rarely considered is that unrealistic expectations are created by anticipating

interactions based upon host–guest relationships. The consequences are widely discussed, in particular by Quinton (2019), Glass et. al. (2013), and Fischer (2012).

The idea of a host family creates further ambiguities and exacerbates potential misunderstanding. Living with a family in a second-language environment might aid language acquisition. There are mutual benefits from the arrangement, but the relationship is based on a commercial transaction in almost every case. Responsible education abroad organizations will ensure that the family treats the student well and that the environment is clean, safe, and comfortable. The family will, in all likelihood, be friendly as that is both a natural human response and a means of ensuring repeat business. Over time, a friendship may well develop but it is not a requirement on either side of the transaction. The relationship is better thought of as that between landlord/landlady and lodger. However enjoyable and successful the experience is for both parties, it is essentially based on buying and selling services.

Education abroad offers a powerful opportunity to learn about similarities and differences, to engage with unfamiliar places and people, to learn from human contact. Nothing is gained by employing metaphors that impose artificial roles and generate false expectations.

How We Really Live: Conclusion

For most of us, community, where it exists, tends to be defined by function or interest not by geography. The world we inhabit is not characterized by a stable sense of belonging within a single location.

The positive consequence of this is that we move more readily and easily than the generations before us. More unsettlingly, though, an impact of globalization, urbanization, and enhanced technologies have also tended to dislocate rather than locate human experience. This paradox is expressed succinctly by Yuval Noah Harari: “people live ever more lonely lives in an ever more connected planet” (2018, p.103). Myths of community are seductive in so far as they modify our innate fears of individual isolation and collective social disintegration. They resonate with an atavistic desire for identity, security, and home.

Our forebearers worked the land in a fashion that they believed was timeless. The skills they taught their children were passed on through generations. Knowledge was rooted in place. We do not have that surety or security. For us, time is no longer measured by the rising and setting of the sun. The core of the modern, Karl Marx wrote, is that “all that is solid melts into air” (Marx, 1888, p.16). The ways in which we now live and work are fluid and mutable. We do not have the luxury of continuity; the canon of necessary knowledge that the older generation hands on to the younger has become conditional, of fragile utility and limited relevance. We are, like it or not, and in some sense or another, orphaned.

There was a time when the place in which we were born, lived, and died was our community. An important element of working-class nostalgia in Britain is for those lost worlds. In the experience of most urban dwellers, if we have a sense of belonging to something, it tends to be dislocated from place. That process has been intensified by globalization, unprecedented growth in mobility, and the ways in which technologies have reduced the significance of physical distance. Social media ensure that friendship is no longer dependent on physical contact. Even the youngest, or those who never leave their home country, can have any number of “friends” they will never meet in places they will never visit. Virtual communities recall the allegory of Plato’s cave wherein the residents confuse the shadows they see with the world beyond. We do not love the people we never see or touch. We barely notice when they disappear.

We can, however, belong to communities defined not by where you happen to be at a given point in time but by race, gender, profession, sexual preference, religion, interests, accidents, or any of the other ways in which we seek common contact. These transcend geography and are not constrained by frontiers.

It is also possible for international educators to manufacture engagement with some communities in controlled environments. We take students into mosques for example, where they attend talks, ask questions, and learn something of other lives. There is nothing spontaneous about this

encounter which does not mean it is without value. We also ensure that students can gain access to local universities, but proximity does not make interactions inevitable. Education abroad students enter an environment where relationships are formed, communities of interest are well-established. Our students are temporary visitors with limited time. Access is by no means easy. It requires special effort and commitment beyond the norm.

Engagement with host communities is embedded as an aspiration and intended outcome in education abroad. Problematic issues raised by this objective rarely trouble practitioners but can be a cause of student frustration. Students may anticipate unproblematic engagements with groups who, in practice, are not easily found and/or who may not be open to outsiders. The concept of "host" also raises misleading expectations of a specially elevated welcome.

It is not unusual for students to express some disappointment at what they perceive as their "failure" to "immerse" themselves in overseas spaces. It is not their failure; it is ours. We have not explained that education abroad students are privileged visitors (unlike immigrants or refugees). They are the fortunate beneficiaries of a combination of relative wealth, political freedom to travel, and a national identity that bestows some privilege. We have not taught them to understand that communities may have eroded or disintegrated through a combination of urban development, globalization, secularization, and other social alterations. What they seek to find may reside predominantly in history, memory and myth, libraries, and images that have begun to fade. They may be chasing shadows.

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