

JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

VOLUME 10, FALL 2018

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SIG

FEATURED ARTICLES

- | | | |
|------------------------------|----|--|
| Rosalind Latiner Raby | 1 | Introduction to the Fall 2018 Issue |
| Kayla M. Johnson | 2 | “You Learn How to Experience Yourself”: A Photo-Cued Investigation of Empowerment in Study Abroad |
| Anna Kosmützky | 14 | International Team Research in Comparative Higher Education: Shedding some Light on its Social Side |
| Peggy Gesing and Chris Glass | 24 | First Generation International Students and the 4Ds Shaping the Future of Global Student Mobility: A Comparative Report Analysis |
| Karen Robson | 28 | Regional Update: Self-Reflections from a Project that Links Education Data from Various Sources in Ontario, Canada |



HIGHER EDUCATION SIG
COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SOCIETY

JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

Philosophy for *Comparative and Int'l Higher Education*

This is the official journal of the Comparative and International Education Society's (CIES) Higher Education Special Interest Group (HESIG), which was created in 2008. HESIG serves as a networking hub for promoting scholarship opportunities, critical dialogue, and linking professionals and academics to the international aspects of higher education. Accordingly, HESIG will serve as a professional forum supporting development, analysis, and dissemination of theory-, policy-, and practice-related issues that influence higher education.

Submission and Review

The Editorial Board invites contributions dealing with the complementary fields of comparative, international, and development education and that relate to one of the areas listed in the Philosophy section above. Contributors may:

- 1) Submit a research article of 1,500 - 3,000 words. All articles will undergo a blind-review peer-editing process.
- 2) Submit a comparative report analysis of 750 - 1,000 words that examines current policies related to higher education institutional policy.
- 3) Submit graduate student research in-progress of 500 - 1,000 words that shares new research that will help to set the tone for current and emerging issues in the field.

Electronic submissions are accepted on an on-going basis and should be sent to jcihe.hesig@gmail.com. Manuscripts are evaluated by the editorial board—with full confidentiality on both sides—and then accepted, returned for further revisions, or rejected.

The style and format of the *Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education* follows the Chicago Manual of Style. Only endnotes are allowed. USA spelling (e.g., center, color, organize) and punctuation are preferred (single quotations within double if needed), and requires a short paragraph of bibliographical details for all contributors.

Copyright

Published by the Higher Education SIG of the Comparative and International Education Society. The findings, interpretations, conclusions, and views expressed in *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education* are entirely those of the authors and should not be attributed in any manner to CIES, HESIG, or the sponsoring universities of the Editorial Staff. These works are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/). Please see jcihe-hesig.org for full copyright information. *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education* is published up to three times a year.

Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education

Volume 10, No. 2 • Fall 2018

Executive Editors

Gerardo Blanco-Ramirez, University of Massachusetts, Boston

Meggan Madden, The George Washington University

Editor-in-Chief

Rosalind Latiner Raby, California State University, Northridge

Senior Editor

Bernhard Streitwieser, The George Washington University

Regional Editors

Africa: John Bonnell, Michigan State University; Lilian Butungi, New York Institute of Technology

Asia/Pacific: Stephanie Kim, University of California at Berkeley; Michael Lanford, University of Southern California; MaryBeath Marklein, George Mason University; Tahira Naushahi, Allama Iqbal Open University; Moon Sook, Korean National University of Education

Europe: Veysel Gökbek, University of Pittsburgh; Marta Shaw, Jagiellonian University in Kraków; Ligia Toutant, University of California at Los Angeles

Latin America and the Caribbean: Paulina Berrios, Universidad de Chile; Dante Salto, National University of Córdoba

Middle East and North Africa: Hana Addam El-Ghali, American University of Beirut; Seungah Lee, Stanford University; Manar Sabry, Binghamton University (SUNY)

United States and Canada: Moon Sook, Korean National University of Education

General: Chris Glass, Old Dominion University; Morgan Keller, Clemson University; Taya Owens, University at Albany (SUNY); Karen Robson, McMaster University

Managing Editor

Nickie Smith, The George Washington University

Contact Information

Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education

Higher Education SIG

Website: jcihe-hesig.org

Email: jcihe.hesig@gmail.com

ISSN 2151-0393 (Print)

ISSN 2151-0407 (Online)

Introduction to Fall 2018 JCIHE

Dear Readers -

I am pleased to share the Fall 2018 issue of the *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education* (JCIHE). JCIHE is the journal of the Higher Education SIG of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES). The JCIHE mission is to promote scholarship opportunities and critical dialogue with the purpose of engaging professionals and academics to the international aspects of higher education. JCIHE includes a combination of peer reviewed journal articles, report analysis, opinion pieces, country focus updates and regional updates. In the future, we will add new book, thesis, and dissertation announcements. Each Winter issue JCIHE includes a special issue as well as graduate student research in-progress. The JCIHE is eager to attract quality research from a range of contexts, perspectives, methodologies, and intersections of disciplines. In so doing, JCIHE advances the widest possible vision of educational research that is being conducted at various stages of development. While we embrace greater diversity in submissions, we will retain the highest standards. Past issues can be accessed at the journal website: www.jcihe-hesig.org. Please visit the web-site to submit manuscripts or register as a peer reviewer.

The Fall 2018 issue includes two articles, a comparative report analysis and a regional update of Ontario, Canada. The two articles have an intersecting theme of exploring new and innovative ways in which to gather and focus data collection. Kayla Johnson from McGill University introduces the process of photo-cued investigation to examine the benefits of studying abroad. Photo-cued investigation is a process by which student self-select photos to build discussions around those photos to understand how meaning is made from experiences. Anna Kosmützky from Leibniz Universität Hannover, LCSS Leibniz Center for Science and Society, writes about the challenges and benefits of international team research both professionally and socially. International teams are increasingly being used for comparative research. Challenges include both distinct methodological differences found in various countries as well as the socio-cultural differences of the team members themselves.

The Fall 2018 issue also includes a comparative report analysis by Peggy Gesing, Old Dominion University, and Chris Glass, Old Dominion University, who write about the impact of first-generation international students on changing international mobility destinations, curricula, and program delivery. The issue also includes a regional update of Ontario, Canada by Karen Robson, McMaster University, Educational Achievement and At-Risk Youth, who shares her own experiences on the complexities of linking different longitudinal data sets. She compares longitudinal data sets that have been collected on birth cohorts in the UK and data-sets that only ran from the 1990s to 2000s in Canada and subsequent creation of a data-set in Ontario.

Finally, JCIHE is pleased to announce the Special Issue for Winter 2018 will have a theme of “Academic Profession, Entrepreneurial Universities and Scholarship of Application: The Imperative of Impact.” Editors are Hei-hang Hayes Tang (University of Hong Kong) and Roger Chao, Jr. (Independent Higher Education Development Consultant). The Winter 2018 issue will also feature profiles of upcoming graduate student research.

I would like to thank all of those who contributed to this edition, including the peer editors. I also want to especially thank Nickie Smith for the copy-editing, maintaining the website, and overall support.

Editor-in-Chief,
Rosalind Latiner Raby
Fall, 2018

“You Learn How to Experience Yourself”: A Photo-Cued Investigation of Empowerment in Study Abroad

Kayla M. Johnson^{a,*}
“McGill University, Canada”

*Corresponding author: Email: kayla.johnson@mcgill.ca Address: McGill University, Quebec, Canada

Introduction

As in broader society, empowerment has become a focal point in the education community. The 2018 March for Our Lives event organized by the students of Stoneman Marjorie Douglas High School and the #NeverAgain movements are clear examples. Founded in Paulo Freire’s (1970) ideas on power and liberation, research on empowerment in education has highlighted the importance of student empowerment as an outcome of schooling. For example, empowered individuals take greater responsibility for their lives, value their passions, recognize their needs and goals, and have the capacity to exercise their power (Zimmerman 1995). They also have a greater sense of self-efficacy and belonging (Hurtado, Alvarado, and Guillermo-Wann 2015). When students feel empowered, they become more engaged in their lives and in their learning, which contributes to positive and improved learning outcomes (You 2016).

Although research suggests the importance of student empowerment in educational contexts, little research exists on how various educational experiences contribute to empowerment of students and what that empowerment looks like. Study abroad is one type of educational experience that warrants investigation. Because empowerment is a critically important outcome of education, research that elucidates the empowering effects of educational experiences, like study abroad, is important (Bryson 2016). This paper uses photo-cued interviewing (PCI; Johnson 2017; 2018) to examine student empowerment resulting from study abroad programs, and responds to the following research question: *How are students empowered through their experiences in study abroad programs?* Secondary questions include: 1) *What does student empowerment look like?* 2) *How does student empowerment occur?* and 3) *In what ways can photo-cued interviewing be useful for understanding student empowerment?* This research has implications for scholarship and practice relating to student learning, empowerment education, outcomes research, and study abroad program design.

Conceptual Framework

Empowerment Theory

Empowerment is a psychological concept and a sociological phenomenon. The way it is defined and enacted is highly context-dependent, relating closely to cultures, circumstances, and individuals (Adams 2008). Empowerment can be viewed as a learning process and as a learning outcome of that process—people can learn to become empowered and people can enact their empowerment. As a process, empowerment involves “the mechanism by which people... gain mastery over their lives” (Rappaport 1984). As an outcome, empowered people have “the capacity...to take control of their circumstances, exercise power and achieve their own goals” (Adams 2008, 6).

Empowerment, whether as a learning process or learning outcome, is understood through the application of empowerment frameworks. Empowerment frameworks generally focus on identifying strengths instead of weaknesses, or competencies as opposed to deficits (Zimmerman 2000). Such positive perspectives are enhanced when individuals or groups “discover or create and give voice to” narratives that positively portray their experiences (Perkins and Zimmerman 1995, 796). This paper views empowerment as both process and outcome; it seeks to address how study abroad empowers students and what their empowerment looks like.

Student Empowerment and Study Abroad

The current body of student empowerment literature focuses heavily on empowerment as a liberating practice; empowering students means to address inequities in power, self-efficacy, capacity, or voice (e.g., Horn 2015; Perez 2015; Seale et al. 2015; Simmons, Graham, and Thomas 2014). Thus, educators play a key role in the empowerment of students. Educators in empowering settings seek to engage students. They promote a sense of community; they collaboratively define goals and make decisions together; and they create quality educational activities centered on exploration, relationship-building, and self-determination (Cargo et al. 2003;

Freire 1970; Jennings et al. 2006; Maton 2008). The relationship between student engagement and student empowerment is reciprocal. In higher education in particular, students who are engaged in class and on campus are often empowered to achieve more positive outcomes (Astin 1993; Pascarella and Terenzini 2005). Likewise, students who are empowered—whether by various forms of capital (Bourdieu 1977) or other “inputs” (Astin 1993)—are often more able to be engaged. This paper assumes the former; the latter is acknowledged and discussed in the limitations section.

Study abroad (an umbrella term used in this paper to refer to many types of international educational travel programs) is a High Impact Practice (Kuh et al. 2010), or an educational experience that makes a “significant difference to student persistence, learning outcomes, and student success” (Lee and Green 2016, 61). Thus, students engaging in study abroad are likely to become empowered in some way. Given the connections between empowerment and learning and well-being, scholars, practitioners, and students would benefit from understanding empowerment in study abroad. However, little research has focused on empowerment as an outcome of study abroad programming. Some studies have examined the empowerment of study abroad host communities (e.g., Fisher and Grettenberger 2015; Scheyvens 1999). Although important, focusing on the empowerment of host communities and not the students enrolled in study abroad programs has left a critical gap in student empowerment literature.

Research on empowerment in study abroad, both the process of empowerment and empowerment as an outcome, can make a significant contribution to higher education and international education scholarship and practice. Empowered individuals take greater responsibility for their actions, value their passions, recognize their needs and goals, and have the capacity to exercise their power (Zimmerman 1995). These are worthwhile skills and behaviors for postsecondary students, as they are associated with greater economic prospects and a better quality of life (Farrugia and Sanger 2017; Pascarella and Terenzini 2005; Renn and Reason 2013). Thus, studies exploring whether and how study abroad can yield student empowerment can contribute to knowledge on practices and programs that support students’ success in, and beyond, formal education.

Methods

This paper is part of a larger study on social-emotional learning in study abroad and uses interpretive qualitative methods.

Sample

In this paper I highlight the experiences of high school and university students who participated in various short-term study abroad programs, including embedded faculty-led courses, adventure-tourism programs, service-learning, and traditional exchanges. My connection with this eclectic group of programs stems from my work as a research consultant in the study abroad field, where I have studied student learning on short-term programs since 2015. I chose to study short-term programs because they have the fastest growing participation rate (Open Doors 2017) and because they have been critiqued for facilitating limited learning (Charbonneau 2013; Marklein 2004).

Sixty-two students (43 high school, 19 university) participated in the larger study. The inclusion of both high school and university students allows for an understanding of how age may impact student learning, but it was also a practical decision; much of my consultant work is with organizations that serve high school students. The students in this study traveled to nine different countries throughout North America, South America, Western Europe, and Southeast Asia, for 7-35 days. They were 16-30 years old, with most students between the ages of 17 and 21, approximately the age of traditional-aged college students (18-24; Renn and Reason 2013). The students represented a mix of demographics, though the vast majority were American, and white, which I discuss in my limitations section. Students’ individual identities have been withheld; all names are pseudonyms.

Method

Participants shared their experiences during a photo-cued interview or focus group (Johnson 2017; 2018). Students who had traveled on the same program were invited to participate in a focus group as opposed to an interview. The use of focus groups was both an analytical and practical decision. Analytically, focus groups allow for participants who travel together to reflect together, elucidating more complex understandings of experiences and meaning making. Practically, focus groups allow me to collect data from more students in a shorter amount of time.

I developed the photo-cued interviewing (PCI) method specifically for studying learning in study abroad (see Johnson 2017 for more on method development). Similar to photo-elicitation (Collier and Collier 1986) and photo-interviewing (Hurworth 2004), PCI uses participants’ photos and discussions around those photos to understand how meaning is made from experiences. Rooted in phenomenology (Van Manen 1990) and ethnography (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Spradley 1980), PCI acknowledges the

subjectivity of experience, the importance of reflection, and the power of photography for stimulating memories. PCI is highly appropriate in the study abroad context; today's students are digital consumers (Levine and Dean 2012) and photo-taking is common when studying abroad. In addition to investigating student learning outcomes abroad (Johnson 2017), the PCI method has been used to investigate power dynamics in assessment practices (Johnson 2018), and is currently being used to explore identity development with marginalized student populations (research forthcoming).

Data Collection

Around one month after the conclusion of their program (which gave students the time to adequately reflect upon their experiences; Van Manen 1990), I asked each student to select three to five photos they took that “represented something meaningful or significant” about their time abroad—something fun, something insightful, something confusing, something intriguing, something moving, etc. This open-ended approach elicited images that represented moments that were meaningful and significant *for the students*, and not necessarily images that represented moments they thought I (an educator/researcher) would be looking for specifically.

I have collected 209 images at the time of this writing, a vast collection that reveals the subjective experiences of the 62 student-participants. The students' photos, which included images of their favorite meals, people they met, objects, events, etc., served as cues, or prompts, during individual interviews and focus groups, which I conducted either in-person or via Skype. The photos helped open dialogue surrounding students' experiences and allowed for discussion and interpretation that was visually grounded in the experience itself (Johnson 2017). Using a semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendices A and B; Spradley 1979) I asked students to reflect upon their experiences, using their photos as prompts, to understand what they found meaningful, the situations through which these experiences arose, and what they learned. Interviews lasted 33-135 minutes (avg. 62). Focus groups lasted 54-151 minutes (avg. 93). Discrepancies in length depended upon student availability and the number of photos shared by each student (e.g., one versus five).

Data Analysis

Interviews and focus groups were transcribed and inductively coded using an open and emergent coding scheme, informed by empowerment literature. A conceptual framework of empowerment-related outcomes of study abroad emerged from my analysis. I

used the constant comparison method of grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss 2015) to construct categories of how students explained feelings of empowerment that arose from their international experience. When necessary and appropriate, I conducted member checks to ensure that my interpretations and conclusions were supported by the students' perspectives, and to identify and limit researcher bias (Maxwell 2013).

Ethical Considerations

Because this study involves human participants and includes photography from and of human subjects, several ethical considerations were taken into account. Student participants were all informed of the study purpose and what their involvement would entail. In the case of students younger than 18, parents were also sent information regarding the study. Informed consent was obtained before any data were collected. Students were asked to avoid sharing photos that showed other people, or their own faces if they wished to remain anonymous. While some students did share photos that included faces, I have blurred them to maintain participant and subject anonymity.

Findings

The experiences detailed below represent the cultivation of student empowerment—which was a term coded *in vivo*—due to experiences on study abroad programs. Three themes emerged, which were also coded *in vivo*: finding strength, letting go, and living in the moment. The stories below are representative of these themes, which were present throughout many interviews and focus groups.

Finding Strength

This theme includes descriptions of experiences that made students feel stronger and more confident in their abilities. For example, Angela, a 28-year-old graduate student from New York who traveled to Sweden on a 10-day university faculty-led embedded program, explained that, as a student who had never before travelled abroad, the experience of navigating a new country was very empowering. Referencing another student's photo of Sweden's southern archipelagoes (Figure 1) Angela started the following conversation with her peers during a focus group:

Angela: Did anyone else leave [Sweden] feeling like a badass? Knowing you can catch trains and busses? And buy your tickets in a different language?!

Kari: Definitely. That was half of my bucket list.

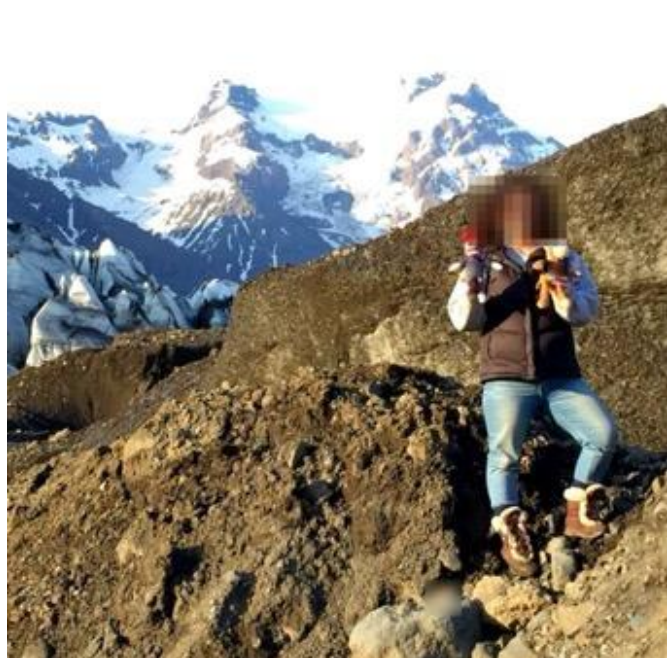
Angela: And if you're from a rural area like me—I've never ridden a public bus, been on a train, a subway, absolutely none of that. Over there—ferries? Hell yeah. Busses? You got it. Metro? Sign me up. It was *empowering*.

FIGURE 1



Later in the focus group, Angela reflected on her photo of herself standing on a mountain (Figure 2) and continued to describe the pride she took in her successful navigation of Sweden on her own, despite the obstacles she encountered along the way:

FIGURE 2



Messing up and figuring out how to get on the right bus or this or that, that's showing all of our parents, and even me at 28, like look at us, we're over here

doing this! If I can handle Stockholm and Gothenburg and fly myself over there, I can surely figure out life in the U.S. when I get home. Aren't you proud mom and dad?

Because of her experiences abroad, Angela feels more confident in her ability to “figure out life” at home.

Catelyn, an 18-year-old from Ohio, traveled to Thailand for a three-week intensive service-learning program that only allowed students to bring a backpack's worth of clothing and supplies. She traveled to three remote villages and completed service projects alongside local community members. In one village in the region of Mae Hong Son, where she helped lay concrete for a primary school, Catelyn slept on wooden planks under a mosquito net. As Catelyn reflected upon her photo of the community toilet (Figure 3, top) and shower (Figure 3, bottom), she explained that it represented the strength that participating in this program cultivated for her:

I picked this program because I was scared of it and I wanted to do something that scared me. I did not think I would be able to do it. This whole trip has been a lot about me proving myself wrong. I'm going to take back that I'm *stronger* than I think I am.

FIGURE 3



Her photo(s) of the toilet and shower represented all of the obstacles—hauling gravel, mixing concrete, shooing away lizards and spiders at night—that she was

afraid of, yet was empowered to overcome throughout her program. She now feels stronger than she felt before.

Letting Go

The theme of “letting go” refers to how students felt able to relieve stress and anxiety and forget about things that usually worry them. Samuel, a 17-year-old student from Florida, travelled on a 15-day service program focused on critical issues in international education development in Cambodia. Samuel shared a picture of the famous temples at Angkor Wat in Siem Reap (Figure 4). He explained that, other than visiting Angkor Wat, the students did not know what they would be doing each day. Samuel talked about how this encouraged him to “let go” more often:

At home, I live by my schedule. Every minute of my day is planned out. But [in Cambodia] I would ask [the program leaders] what we were doing next and they'd just say, “You'll see.” It was really anxiety-inducing, but eventually I learned to just *let go* and see what happens. Hopefully I can start doing that more at home. Not being controlled by my schedule.

FIGURE 4



Rachel, a 21-year-old student from Pennsylvania on the same Sweden program as Angela, explained that the experience of being on her own allowed her to let go of stress that often encumbered her at home. Reflecting on a photo of herself smiling (Figure 5), she said:

I have a lot of family stress sometimes. And I think being on another continent and studying, I felt like I could focus more on my studies and be myself. I just felt safer and more like I could do whatever. I think a lot of it had to do with not having to worry about [things back home].

FIGURE 5



Rachel described her program as a type of escape from her usual stressors; being able to let go of her stress on the program empowered her to be herself.

Living in the Moment

“Living in the moment” refers to students’ descriptions of their newfound ability and desire to take control of their lives and to live as they wish. Reflecting on a picture of a pastry she had purchased while exploring the city of Gothenburg with friends (Figure 6), Kate, a 30-year-old graduate student from Georgia who traveled on the same Sweden program as Angela and Rachel, explained that her main takeaway from the program was the “recenter[ing of her] outlook on life”:

It reinforced how I want to live my life and be in the moment and enjoy things. I was there to learn new things, to have fun, and to enjoy new things. And I think that's what I did, and I didn't hold back on that.

FIGURE 6



Throughout her “downtime” in Sweden, Kate felt empowered by her ability to take control of her life, even in small ways like buying this pastry. She added that this ability to “be in the moment” and indulge herself when she can is something she plans carry with her in every aspect of her professional and personal life.

Discussion

Students’ photos provided visual documentation of empowering experiences and served as a springboard for conversations that elucidated what student empowerment looks like in study abroad. These students’ reflections upon their photos clearly demonstrate notions of empowerment resulting from their experiences. Students described finding strength within themselves, being able to let go of stress and anxiety, and cultivating the ability and desire to take control of their lives and live in the moment. These findings suggest that study abroad programming can be an empowering enterprise. In alignment with Robert Adams’ (2008) definition of empowerment as an outcome, these students demonstrated the ability to free themselves of forms of oppression (Samuel letting go of his rigid schedule), take control of their circumstances (Kate living life her way), and achieve

their goals (Angela navigating her way through a new country).

In addition to sharing what empowerment looked like for them, the students also shared important insights into the process through which empowerment can occur (Rappaport 1984). These particular students were empowered by the obstacles they faced and overcame (Angela and travel, Catelyn and the toilet/shower), and by embracing the freedom and flexibility of their programs (Samuel abandoning his schedule, Rachel leaving her family stress behind). This is valuable information for study abroad scholars and practitioners, as well as curriculum developers more generally. By understanding what student empowerment looks like in certain contexts and how students can come to be empowered, then future curricula can be more purposefully designed to facilitate similar student learning outcomes. These findings suggest that giving students time to navigate and explore cities on their own and designing activities that push students outside of their comfort zones can create potentially empowering spaces. Future studies should continue examining the impacts of such curricular decisions. In addition, reflective, critical, and iterative approaches to program evaluation and curriculum design are important educational practices (Banta and Palomba 2015). Using student-centered methods such as PCI is one way of undergoing this reflective work.

Using students’ photos to understand learning should not be limited to use by researchers; students should be actively encouraged to reflect upon their photos for their own learning as well. As learning requires reflection (Van Manen 1990)—a premise that provides the foundations for PCI—it is important to provide students spaces to reflect upon their experiences and realize their learning. Program designers and facilitators can work to include such reflective spaces in study abroad programs and post-program debriefing sessions, guiding students through the process of using their photos to come to deeper understandings about their own experiences.

It is also important to consider complicating factors to this analysis. For example, students came from different backgrounds. Catelyn, who discussed empowerment through her photo of the toilet/shower in Thailand, had traveled extensively, while Angela, who felt empowered by successfully navigating Sweden’s public transportation, had never been abroad before. This suggests that a student’s previous travel experience may impact how they are empowered when studying abroad. It is also difficult to disentangle the learning outcomes of educational experiences from

other external influences (Banta and Palomba 2015). For example, it is possible that the photos students chose and the ways in which students described or realized their empowerment had been influenced by the way others had perceived their experiences (for example, what family and friends had to say about various activities). However, the fact that students were able to point to specific programmatic experiences as spaces where empowerment was facilitated provides important insights into the impact of program activities.

Finally, it is important to note that not all empowerment is positive. For example, Elizabeth, who had traveled to Myanmar, shared that she felt empowered to “change the lives of poor people” (Figure 7). While Elizabeth’s newfound desire and ability to impact the lives of others is promising, her framing demonstrates a deficit model of thinking that can perpetuate oppressive power dynamics. Thinking about *how* we empower students and *what* we empower them to *believe*, *value*, and *do* must be part of the curriculum design and evaluation process.

FIGURE 7



Limitations

There are a few limitations to this research. First, these findings are context-bound as findings in qualitative research are not meant to be generalized (Denzin and Lincoln 2018; Guba and Lincoln 2005). However, the differences in the students and programs represented in this research highlight that these findings may be transferrable (Tracy 2010) to other study abroad programs and student participants. Future research should continue to investigate the extent to which study abroad can contribute to the empowerment of students, including investigations of student learning processes as well as outcomes.

Second, research suggests that learning outcomes often do not last long-term (Banta and Palomba 2015). This limitation is compounded when we consider that most outcomes research, particularly in study abroad, occurs shortly after the conclusion of programs.

Additionally, as experiences are pre-reflective (Van Manen 1990), efforts to assess learning so close to the conclusion of programs may not give students adequate time to reflect upon their experiences and realize their learning. Future research should include diachronic (Tobin 2014) approaches, examining student learning over space and time. Using PCI and bringing students back to their experiences via photos could prove a promising approach to understanding the lasting impacts of such experiences, or how meaning-making and learning changes over time.

Finally, it is important to note the homogeneity of my sample. National aggregate data (e.g., Luo and Jamieson-Drake 2015) shows that most students who participate in study abroad programming are white, affluent, and female. My sample largely mirrors this representation. So, study abroad can, in itself, also be seen as a problematic enterprise. If we think of empowerment as a way to mitigate inequities (e.g., Horn 2015; Perez 2015; Seale et al. 2015; Simmons et al. 2014), or to empower people to take control of their own lives (Adams 2008), then it is important to acknowledge that the students who might most benefit from these experiences are the least likely to participate. Likewise, some students who traditionally participate in study abroad are, in many ways, already empowered. Being able to engage in certain educational activities, like study abroad, relies upon certain “inputs” (Astin 1993), or kinds of capital (Bourdieu 1977) that make engagement possible. Thus, students without those inputs—resources like social networks, money, time, etc.—may be excluded from engaging in such activities. Future research should take considerable measures to include diverse students’ voices and depict their experiences abroad, and future practice should seek ways to better engage these populations.

Conclusion

This paper presents evidence from photo-cued interviews and focus groups (Johnson 2017) with students who participated in study abroad programs and highlights how students are empowered by their experiences on these programs. It also identifies PCI as a useful method for understanding empowerment—as a process and as an outcome—in study abroad. This research contributes to scholarship and practice relating to student empowerment, program/curriculum design in study abroad and related educational contexts and learning outcomes assessment. By recognizing study abroad as a potentially empowering enterprise, and by understanding what student empowerment looks like in

these contexts and how that empowerment occurs, scholars and practitioners can work to design educational experiences to more purposefully promote student empowerment in the future. At a time when notions of student empowerment are at the forefront of higher education rhetoric, this research provides a small path forward.

References

- Adams, Robert. 2008. *Empowerment, Participation, and Social Work*. New York, NY: Macmillan International Higher Education.
- Astin, Alexander. 1993. *What Matters in College? Four Critical Years Revisited*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Banta, Trudy W., and Catherine Palomba. A. 2015. *Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing, and Improving Assessment in Higher Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction." In *Power and Ideology in Education*, edited by Jerome Karabel and A. H. Halsey, 487-511. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Bryson, Colin. 2016. "Engagement through Partnership: Students as Partners in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education." *International Journal for Academic Development* 21 (1): 84-86.
- Cargo, Margaret, Garry D. Grams, Judith M. Ottoson, Patricia Ward, and Lawrence W. Green. 2003. "Empowerment as Fostering Positive Youth Development and Citizenship." *American Journal of Health Behavior* 27 (1): S66-S79.
- Charbonneau, Léo. March 18, 2013. "The (Ambiguous) Benefits of Short-Term Study Abroad." *University Affairs*. Retrieved from <http://www.universityaffairs.ca/opinion/margin-notes/the-ambiguous-benefits-of-short-term-study-abroad/>
- Collier, John. and Malcolm Collier. 1986. *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method (Revised and Expanded)*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.
- Corbin, Juliet, and Anselm Strauss. 2015. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Denzin, Norman K., and Yvonne S. Lincoln. 2018. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Farrugia, Christine, and Jodi Sanger. 2017. *Gaining an Employment Edge: The Impact of Study Abroad on 21st Century Skills & Career Prospects in the United States*. New York, NY: IIE Center for Academic Mobility Research and Impact.
- Fisher, Colleen M., and Susan E. Grettenberger. 2013. "Community-Based Participatory Study Abroad: A Proposed Model for Social Work Education." *Journal of Social Work Education* 51 (3): 566-582.
- Freire, Paulo. 1970. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York, NY: Herder and Herder.
- Guba, Egon G., and Yvonne S. Lincoln. 2005. "Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences." In *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonne S. Lincoln, 191-216. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Hammersley, Martyn, and Paul Atkinson. 1995. *Ethnography: Principles in Practices (2nd edition)*. London: Routledge.
- Harper, Shaun R. and Stephen J. Quaye. 2014. *Student Engagement in Higher Education: Theoretical Perspectives and Practical Approaches for Diverse Populations*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Horn, Brian R. 2015. "From Knowing to Understanding Student Empowerment: A Narrative Approach to Research in A Middle School." *Networks* 17 (1): 1-8.
- Hurtado, Sylvia, Adriana Ruiz Alvarado, and Chelsea Guillermo-Wann. 2015. "Creating Inclusive Environments: The Mediating Effect of Faculty and Staff Validation on The Relationship of Discrimination/Bias to Students' Sense of Belonging." *Journal Committed to Social Change on Race and Ethnicity* 1 (1): 60-81.
- Hurworth, Rosalind. 2004. "Photo-interviewing." *Qualitative Research Journal* 4 (1): 74-79.

- Jennings, Louise B., Deborah M. Parra-Medina, Deanne K. Hilfinger-Messias, and Kerry McLoughlin. 2006. "Toward a Critical Social Theory of Youth Empowerment." *Journal of Community Practice* 14 (1-2): 31-55.
- Johnson, Kayla. 2018. "Deliberate (Mis)Representations: A Case Study of Teacher Influence on Student Authenticity and Voice in Study Abroad Assessment." *International Journal of Student Voice* 3: 1-58.
- Johnson, Kayla. 2017. "Finding yourself in a foreign country: The Learning Experiences of Students in Embedded Short-Term Study Abroad Programming." Doctoral dissertation, Pennsylvania State University.
- Kuh, George, Jillian Kinzie, John H. Schuh, and Elizabeth J. Whitt. 2010. *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions that Matter*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lee, Jasmine, and Qiana Green. 2016. "Unique Opportunities: Influence of Study Abroad on Black Students." *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* 28: 61-77.
- Levine, Arthur, and Diane R. Dean. 2012. *Generation on a Tightrope: A Portrait of Today's College Students*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Luo, Jiali, and David Jamieson-Drake. 2015. "Predictors of study abroad intent, participation, and college outcomes." *Research in Higher Education* 56 (1): 29-56.
- Marklein, Mary B. February 2004. "Study Abroad, The Short Course: Students Like Quick Studies, But Critics Question Their Direction." *USA Today*.
- Maton, Kenneth I. 2008. "Empowering Community Settings: Agents of Individual Development, Community Betterment, and Positive Social Change." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 41 (1-2): 4-21.
- Maxwell, Joseph. 2013. *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Open Doors. 2017. *A Quick Look at US Study Abroad Students*. New York, NY: IIE.
- Pascarella, Ernest T. and Patrick T. Terenzini. 2005. *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Perez, William. 2015. *Americans By Heart: Undocumented Latino Students and The Promise of Higher Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Perkins, Douglas D., and Marc A. Zimmerman. 1995. "Empowerment Theory, Research, and Application." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 23 (5): 569-579.
- Rappaport, Julian. 1995. "Empowerment Meets Narrative: Listening to Stories and Creating Settings." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 23 (5): 795-807.
- Rappaport, Julian. 1984. "Studies in Empowerment: Introduction to the Issue." *Prevention in Human Services* 3: 1-7.
- Renn, Kristen A., and Robert D. Reason. 2013. *College Students in the United States: Characteristics, Experiences, and Outcomes*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Scheyvens, Regina. 1999. "Ecotourism and the Empowerment of Local Communities." *Tourism Management* 20 (2): 245-249.
- Seale, Jane, Suanne Gibson, Joanna Haynes, and Alice Potter. 2015. "Power and Resistance: Reflections on The Rhetoric and Reality of Using Participatory Methods to Promote Student Engagement in Higher Education." *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 39 (4): 534-552.
- Simmons, Catherine A., Anne Graham, and Nigel Thomas. 2015. "Imagining an Ideal School for Wellbeing: Locating Student Voice." *Journal of Educational Change* 16 (2): 129-144.
- Spradley, James P. 1980. *Participant Observation*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Spradley, James P. 1979. *The Ethnographic Interview*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Tobin, Joseph. 2014. "Comparative, Diachronic, Ethnographic Research on Education." *Current Issues in Comparative Education* 16 (2): 6-13.
- Tracy, Sarah J. 2010. "Qualitative Quality: Eight "Big-Tent" Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research." *Qualitative Inquiry* 16: 837-851.

- Van Manen, Max. 1990. *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action-Sensitive Pedagogy*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- You, Ji Won. 2016. "The Relationship Among College Students' Psychological Capital, Learning Empowerment, and Engagement." *Learning and Individual Differences* 49: 17-24.
- Zimmerman, Marc A. 2000. "Empowerment Theory: Psychological, Organizational and Community Levels of Analysis." In *Handbook of Community Psychology*, edited by J. Rappaport and E. Seidman. Boston, MA: Springer.
- Zimmerman, Marc A. 1995. "Psychological Empowerment: Issues and Illustrations." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 23 (5): 581-599.

APPENDIX A
Sample Interview Protocol

[Show photo]

Q1: Tell me about this picture.

Possible follow-ups:

- What is it of?
- When/where/why was it taken?

Q2: Why did you choose this photo to share?

Possible follow-ups:

- How does it represent what you learned?
- How does it represent what you found meaningful or significant?
- What about this particular experience impacted you, and in what way?

(Repeat for each photo)

Q3: Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience in [location of study abroad program]?

APPENDIX B
Sample Focus Group Protocol

[Show photo]

Q1: Tell me about this picture.

Possible follow-ups:

- Why did you choose this particular moment to share with me?
- What makes this photo significant for you?
- Why is this photo so meaningful?

Q2: In what ways has this experience impacted you?

Q3: [To other participants] What are your thoughts on what [student] just shared?

Possible follow-ups:

- In what ways do you agree? Disagree?
- In what ways did your experience differ?

(Repeat for each participant)

Q4: Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience in [location of study abroad program]?

International Team Research in Comparative Higher Education: Shedding Some Light on its Social Side

Anna Kosmützky^{a,*}

^a*Leibniz Universität Hannover, Germany*

*Corresponding author: Email: anna.kosmuetzky@lcss.uni-hannover.de Address: Leibniz Universität Hannover, Hannover, Germany

Introduction - International Collaboration Rates and International Team Research Are Growing Fast

International comparative studies are one of the field's key methodologies (Tight 2012; Manzon 2011; Cowen and Kazamias 2009). They are important in order to deconstruct narrow and often parochial national perspectives by illuminating intriguing differences and similarities among higher education systems, practices and policies throughout the world. Through comparison, we can furthermore evaluate the position or the performance of a higher education system in relation to other systems. And comparative research also gives us the opportunity to investigate whether empirical relationships and phenomena found in one context can also be observed in other contexts and to analyze empirical regularities of several cases (Bray, Adamson, and Mason 2007; Kosmützky 2018a; Rust, Johnstone and Allaf 2009; Teichler 2014). Although comparative education and international comparative higher education each have specific objects of inquiry (K12/school education vs. tertiary education), they also intersect to a large extent and both study objects in a cross-spatial (e.g., cross-national, cross-cultural, cross-societal etc.) perspective and apply international comparative research designs (Kosmützky 2016). Comparative higher education research has systematically developed only from the 1960s onward, but comparisons of higher education and higher education systems date back to the nineteenth century (Kosmützky 2018a). International comparative studies in general emerged in the nineteenth century, in the era of nation-states, as the "social-scientific equivalent of the natural sciences experiment," with the underlying notion of implementing a methodology as rigorous and precise as that of real experiments (Schriewer 2009). Based on this notion, comparative studies in the social sciences and humanities, among them educational science, prospered in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Up to the 1980s, a so-called "safari approach" or "anthropological approach" of comparative research had been pursued and individual researchers and national research teams traveled abroad for the

fieldwork and ventured into "unknown" territory, collected and analyzed international data, and studied foreign countries (Deville, Guggenheim, and Hrdličková 2016a, Hantrais 2009). From the 1990s onwards, international research teams consisting of geographically spread local research teams have become a more and more common mode of comparative research – in higher education research and beyond. To an increasing degree, today, comparative research is also conducted through international research collaboration and within international teams.

International co-authorship is only a partial indicator for international research collaboration (Laudel 2002), but it easily shows that international collaboration rates are growing. E.g., the rate of internationally co-authored papers, as measured by Science Citation Index data, grew from one percent to four percent in the sciences in the 1970s (Frame and Carpenter 1979) to currently between 20 percent up to almost 50 percent (in earth and space science which are the champion in international collaboration). Although this rate is somewhat lower in the social sciences, around 10 percent, they currently have the highest growth rates in international collaboration and are gradually catching up (Gazni, Sugimoto, and Didegah 2012). For comparative higher education research, bibliometric studies based on a range of international higher education journals have shown that their proportion of international co-authored articles is already nearly twice as large compared to non-comparative higher education research (Kosmützky and Krücken 2014), and that on average one in ten articles that presents results from comparative research stems from international collaborative teams (Kosmützky 2016). Moreover, surveys among academics that define international collaboration not just by co-authorship but in a broader sense by sharing data, mutual exchange, organizing conferences etc., indicate international collaboration rates of 60-75 percent for both the sciences and social sciences (Kwiek 2015). Despite such growth tendencies the micro-level of comparative and international collaborative teams has so far not been examined and is still mostly a black box.

Working with international colleagues has many benefits for international comparative research, because they provide access to knowledge about the context and culture of the countries under investigation as well as to contacts and data on the local ground. But an international research team, spread over different countries and often even time zones, is also a melting pot of cultural, linguistic, institutional, career stage and national contextual differences, and the different perspectives of the team members increase the (social) complexity and make it more difficult to achieve a common ground of understanding (Brew, Boud, Lucas, and Crawford 2013). Thus, international comparative team research has not only benefits, but also some social complications and not every team is successful. Comparative research conducted in international teams often implicates time-consuming and costly communication of methodological issues, theoretical frameworks as well as coordination of field access and data collection. Hence, it is often difficult for such teams to publish journal articles within the usual three-year time span of research projects and even more difficult to stabilize the research network beyond the project duration. Furthermore, as Deville, Guggenheim, and Hrdličková (2016a) put it, “collaborations shape the object of comparison just as the object shapes collaborations” (p. 33). Consequently, scholars reflecting on international comparative team research have described its character as a two-sided medal: “Much to be gained, many ways to get in trouble” (Anderson 2011, p. 7), “exciting but difficult, creative but problematic” (Livingstone 2003, p. 478), or “[a]dvantages are many, but we need to be cautious” (Amarasekera 2013, p. 137) are some characterizations that have been used. Other scholars even warn (and personalize) that international comparative and collaborative research “is not for the fainthearted” (Gardner et al. 2012, p. 253; Teagarden et al. 1995, p. 1262). However, these quotes point to a tension inherent in international comparative team research.

The nature of this tension will be briefly explored in the following to shed some light on its potential causes. The main questions are: How can we conceptually capture the social side of comparative research that is conducted in international teams? To what extent do researchers engaged in international comparative team research perceive social aspects within the team and research process as challenges as opposed to methodological and task-related challenges? Some approximate empirical results of a rating among higher education researchers on the challenges of an international team research mode of comparative investigations will be provided to roughly estimate the

influence of the social dimension. The aim of this exploratory examination of the team dimension of comparative research is to stimulate further research on the increasingly collaborative character of comparative (higher education) research, as well as to inspire reflection of the team research practice within our field.

Comparative (Higher Education) Research – Methodologically More Complex and Socially More Challenging

Comparative research has many benefits that have been extensively reported. But, as argued earlier, comparative (higher education) research is methodologically also more complex than non-comparative research (Hantrais 2009; Kosmützky 2016; Øyen 1990; Smelser 1976). This type of research is so complex due to the logic of comparison itself: the combined and simultaneous observation of (partial) sameness and difference of research objects in different national higher education systems. It is furthermore more complex because the analysis usually proceeds simultaneously at the level of the higher education system or country, which is typically used for the explanation of similarities and differences, and at a within system level and/or supra-national level, for example, policy discourses, universities as organizations and academic careers. But it is also more complex because it gathers, analyzes and compares data from different national, geographic, cultural, etc. contexts, and in different languages. Both individual researchers and international teams cope with this methodological complexity in comparative research, and, thus, rich and deep contextual knowledge of the countries and cultures of the comparative objects and units under investigation is essential for rigorous research. International teams have the benefit that they are typically composed of team members from the countries under investigation and, thus, have access to the contextual knowledge of the comparative objects, access to data sources and contacts on the local ground that are needed. An international research team might also more easily deal with cross-national interpretations and data-analysis. The multiperspectivity and the detailed contextual knowledge of the team members about the comparative objects are conducive to comparative research, and an international team of local experts of the countries, cultures and contexts under investigation makes rigorous comparative research possible (Kosmützky 2018b).

In return, and this is the main argument of this article, international research teams also have to cope with social challenges that stem from the team

dimension, particularly from the diversity of their team members from different institutional and national contexts. A collaborative team has been defined as international when it involves investigators whose primary employment affiliations are located in different countries (Anderson 2011). Collaborative research teams are largely voluntary, substantially autonomous, self-governed social entities that see themselves (and are seen by others) as a team based on mutual interests of multiple individuals (Wang and Hicks 2015, Weiss and Hoegl 2015). They can vary from pretty fluid ad hoc teams with unstable memberships and ill-defined boundaries to more stable research projects based on shared goals (e.g., as part of a research proposal), project funding and more stable memberships (López-Yáñez and Altopiedi 2015, Wang and Hicks 2015). This article focuses on the latter and additionally defines such projects as temporary organizations (see e.g., Bakker 2010; Burke and Morley 2016; Lundin and Söderholm 1995) due to their time limit and the participation of different home organizations (universities, research institutes, etc.) of the project members. On this basis, three dimensions of influence on the research practice and process in collaborative research projects can be distinguished: I. the *task (and time) dimension* which is determined to a large extent by the character and complexity of the research but also by the form of collaboration (e.g., extent of division of labor and interdependence), the envisaged outputs and the research capacity, and thus, the project duration, II. *the team dimension* which addresses the social dimension and the team dynamics, and III. *the context dimension* which includes the institutional and national contexts that are carried into the project by the project members. Table 1 presents an overview of the assertive aspects for each dimension.

TABLE 1

Conceptualizing International Team Research as Temporary Organizations

Task (and Time)

- Character and Complexity of Research
 - Division of Labour and Form of Collaboration
 - Envisaged Outputs; Publication and Dissemination Strategies
-

Team

- Team Composition and Dynamics (incl. Trust, Motivation)
 - Project and Publication Language(s)
 - Intercultural Differences/ Congruence (incl. Intellectual and Academic Styles)
 - Research Coordination and Management (incl. Leadership)
 - Communication Management and Exchange; Technological Support for Communication and Collaboration
-

Context

- Research Integrity and Ethics
 - Research Capacity/ Budget/Funding
 - Legal Aspects
 - Institutional and National Modes of Research Governance and Measurement of Success
 - Promotion of Early Career Researchers
-

Geographically dispersed research teams typically consist of team members speaking different languages and coming from countries with differing academic styles, cultural norms and practices (Jeong, Choi, and Kim 2014; Rambur 2009; Wagner 2005). Such teams often choose English as the language for the project communication and for their publications, which puts team members in different social positions within the team according to their language skills. Thus, research coordination and management (including leadership and trust building) is of particular importance in such projects (Fiore 2008). Research on research teams in the sciences has shown the importance of the project coordination and furthermore revealed as precondition of successful project management that principal investigators and project managers need to be respected, need to have experience in managing and leading such research teams, and need to exhibit strong leadership qualities (Olson et al. 2008). The larger the size of the project and the more members from different countries are involved in the international team the more complex and challenging the coordination and project management, including attitudinal factors like trust-building. But many principal investigators of international comparative and collaborative research

projects learn about the management of such a project on the job (Hantrais 2009). Moreover, the team members bring their diverse contexts and working backgrounds in multiple institutional settings (e.g., research universities, teaching universities, (extramural) research institutes) and in multiple national contexts (national higher education and science systems) into the team. Thus, there are differing standards of research integrity and ethics, legal and normative aspects, governance and quality assurance, and graduate education and postdoctoral training within the team (Anderson 2011; Bohnhorst et al. 2011; De Vries, Rott, and Paruchuri 2011). Last but not least, research teams (international as well as national) also typically have team members in different career stages, from doctoral students to senior professors, with diverse goals and needs (e.g., publications vs. reputation) and differing requirements and practices of PhD training and education (Anderson et al. 2011). Thus, international research teams need to reflect on and negotiate about their different contextual conditions, which also might be challenging in the social dimension but might play out differently for the principal investigators who are in charge of the overall project, the project's success, and outcomes, and the researchers involved in the project.

Although it can be assumed that the socio-cultural complexity and negotiations related to their institutional and national configuration of international research teams influence the research practice and the task fulfillment and shape the research object (Deville, Guggenheim, and Hrdličková 2016a), and thus, also the research results, the social dimension of comparative and international collaborative teams has so far not been examined and is still mostly a black box (Kosmützky 2018b).

Studies that systematically provide insight into the micro-level of international teams and the collaborative research practice are rare (see for exceptions, Brew et al. 2013; Jeong, Choi, and Kim 2014; Melin, 2000; Rambur 2009; Ulicane 2015; and Wagner 2006). Even the "Science of Team Science" (SOTS) research (Fiore 2008; Hall et al. 2008; Stokols et al. 2008), which is particularly concerned with team dynamics, has not yet focused on international teams or research teams in the social sciences, let alone comparative research. Their focus is mostly on collaborative research in STEM fields and their recommendations do not match knowledge production processes in the social sciences and, particularly, in international comparative social science research (see for a discussion: Kosmützky 2018b). To begin closing this gap and to approximate first empirical evidence on the impact of the social dimension of international comparative team research in the field of higher education, a rating among higher education

researchers, who have conducted comparative research with an international team, was carried out. As a first step toward more detailed research, the rating should help in examining whether scholars perceive the team dimension and context dimension as sources of social challenges in collaborative and comparative team research.

An Approximation to Some Quantitative Empirical Evidence on the Team Dimension

Data Collection

To collect the data a rating among higher education researchers was conducted in autumn 2016 at a major international higher education conference in the UK. The conference, which typically has around 150 participants, had almost 200 participants from 26 different countries in 2016. By checking the list of participants it was proven that enough scholars who have been involved in international team research in comparative higher education would be attending the conference. For one third of the participants such an experience could be assumed, because of the authors' field knowledge and desk research on the participants' CVs, which was considered as sufficient as sampling frame. The group of people with experience in international collaborative team research on comparative higher education topics consisted of scholars from all career stages. Only early career researchers up to the point of their PhD were not included, because their PhD research is often tied to the comparative project and this might cause a response bias. The aim of the rating was to explore the scholars' perception of the strength of the influence of the team dimension that is mostly invisible in assessments of comparative and collaborative research. Thus, the scholars were asked about their personal experience and perception of the influence of social aspects and, thus, asked to think back to the last comparative and collaborative research project in which they have participated and to do the rating according to that project.

The method of collecting data from one's own peers and in one's own community to test instruments and to gather first insights into the phenomenon under investigation was adopted from scholars in the field of computer science, who use real-world conference data to capture community information about participants and their face-to-face contacts and, thus, often apply their instruments (e.g., sensing technologies, like RFID tags, networking applications, and data collection tools) among their own colleagues at conferences (e.g., (Atzmueller et al. 2016)). Scholars in the field of computer science use the approach to utilize their own community as their study participants in order to have access to study subjects. This approach was also

suitable for this study in order to get access to study subjects for an exploratory investigation of a topic that has so far been widely overlooked. Another compelling reason for sampling the participants and collecting the data within one international conference was the opportunity to include the scope of scholars from different countries.

The rating sheet was constructed based on a) methodological and social challenges that were distinguished and b) measured dependently (summing up to overall challenges), but not built on a causal model of methodological challenges as dependent and social challenges as independent variables, but rather challenges are included as dependent variable, while size and role were envisaged as independent variables. For the methodological challenges, the rating sheet was differentiated along the steps of the research process and captured the specificities of comparative research: definition of purpose and research design (purpose of comparison, comparative approach and design, research question); selection of theories and hypotheses (consideration of suitability of theories and hypotheses in different contexts) and selection of empirical objects, levels of investigation, methods (consideration of country and data selection, levels of comparison); data collection and data analysis (consideration of adequacy of methods, equivalence of data collection in different contexts, and data analysis); reflection on results (consideration of the equivalence of findings, incl. documentation etc., comparison); publication and dissemination of findings (consideration of publication strategies and outlets, write-up). For the social challenges the assertive aspects for the team and context dimension listed in table 1 were given on the rating sheet. Further questions about the geographical distribution of the team members were not included to keep the rating sheet manageable as research tool for a data collection during a conference. But they were asked whether they have participated in this project as principal investigator or as researcher.

On the cover sheet of the rating sheet, the purpose of the research and the approach to methodological and social challenges of international comparative and collaborative research were briefly explained. As mentioned above, the participants were instructed to recollect their last comparative collaborative project in which they worked with an international team and rate to what extent the challenges this project team faced was of a methodological or social nature. The actual instruction that was given was as follows:

On the following page you find a rating sheet that is organized along the lines of a research project and

differentiates in methodological and social challenges. Please think back to the last comparative and collaborative research project in that you have participated and do the rating according to that project. Assume that the challenges you and your team were facing in that project taken together sum up to a total of 100%. On this basis, please rate the percentage of methodological challenges for each stage of the research process (left column). Please also rate the percentage of the social challenges for all stages together (right column). Taken together, the methodological (left column) and social challenges (right column) should sum up to 100%, e.g. [...]. Additionally, please specify whether you have participated as PI or as researcher and how many researchers took part in this project.

After an initial call for participations for the rating in one of the opening sessions, scholars, who have been involved in international comparative team research, were approached personally during coffee and lunch breaks on the first two conference days and invited to participate in a quick rating of challenges of comparative collaborative research. After they agreed, they received a rating sheet that was to be filled in immediately or to be returned by the end of the conference.

Forty-nine rating sheets were distributed to recognized researchers (PhD holders who are not yet fully independent), established researchers (PhD holders who have developed a level of independence) and leading researchers (researchers leading in their research area)(European Commission 2011). Thirty-seven rating sheets were returned. This corresponds to a response rate of 76 percent, which is the result of the personal and direct approach to the participants. Thirty-five of the rating sheets were valid and included in the examination of the results. Although the sample size is small allows for a range of basic descriptive statistics when the standard principles of quality research design respected. Another justification of the small sample as well as sampling at one conference is that that the population of interest is relatively small and spread around the world (Petersen 2008).

Results

The results are based on the rating of 21 principal investigators and 14 researchers. Not included in the data analysis was data on the size of the projects because of non-response and missing data on the variable size. Only the variable role – as principal investigator or researcher – was included in the descriptive statistic analysis as

independent variable. Although the variable role is missing and the overall sample is small, the collected data allows for analyses based on basic descriptive statistics. The data shows a normal curve of distribution described by its mean and standard deviation and a t-test and the effect size (Hedges g) was calculated to test statistical significance of differences between principal investigators and researchers.

The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2. They indicate that scholars in higher education research attribute the challenges that occur in such collaborative and comparative research projects to 60 percent to the methodological dimension and to 40 percent to the social dimension. The standard deviation is 18 percent for the methodological challenges and 17 percent for the social challenges. It is important to note that this result might have a bias due to the small sample (smaller samples are more vulnerable to bias) and to the structure of the rating sheet. For the methodological challenges, the rating sheet was differentiated along the steps of the research process, but it was not equally differentiated for the social challenges and contained only one block for the task, team, and context related challenges. This difference might cause a distortion of the results and the social challenges might have even been underestimated. Although the sample is small, this shows that social challenges originating from the collaborative mode of research play a noteworthy role and provides some initial evidence that scholars in the field of higher education research attribute challenges in the comparative team research process to a great extent to the social dimension. Thus, it also indicates a direction of future research.

Furthermore, the results show that principal investigators do not rate the social challenges as more challenging than project members without principal investigator status, and the methodological challenges appear also not more challenging for them than among project members. Although, their perception differs somewhat in percentage – 10 percent in the arithmetic mean for both the social challenges and the methodological challenges – it does not differ statistically significant neither for the methodological challenges with $t(33) = 0,08$ ($p > 0.05$) nor for the social challenges with $t(33) = 0,07$ ($p > 0.05$) as t-tests reveal. Additionally the effect size, which emphasizes the size of the difference between both groups rather than sample size, was calculated according to Hedges g. g. The effect size is 0,684 for the methodological challenges and 0,605 for the social challenges. These values indicate that the difference is about two thirds of the respective standard deviation.

TABLE 2
Results of the Rating among Higher Education Scholars

	MEAN	SD	MIN	MAX
All Respondents; N = 35				
Methodological Challenges	60%	18%	5%	95%
Social Challenges	40%	17%	5%	80%
Principal Investigators; N = 21				
Methodological Challenges	64%	15%	5%	95%
Social Challenges	36%	18%	5%	75%
Researchers; N = 14				
Methodological Challenges	54%	14%	20%	70%
Social Challenges	46%	14%	30%	80%

Discussion and Conclusion – Taking Social Challenges Serious

This article has argued that international comparative team research faces multifaceted challenges beyond the higher level of task-related methodological complexity that comparative research has anyway when it is conducted with an international team. On the one hand, an international team offers access to contextual knowledge of the countries and cultures of the units under investigation, which is essential for rigorous research. On the other hand, additional social challenges result from the mode of knowledge production in teams that are geographically dispersed, and culturally, socially, and institutionally diverse. The article particularly focuses on research projects that are conducted with an international team and has conceptualized research projects as purpose and goal-oriented interest groups and temporary organizations. The conceptual perspective that defines international team research projects as temporary organizations and enables the differentiation of a team, task, and context dimension should help to unravel methodological and social aspects.

On this conceptual basis a rating that was conducted among higher education scholars illuminates that the social dimension matters to a large extent. On average, higher education scholars attribute 40 percent of challenges that they are facing in international team research to social complexities and, in turn, 60 percent to task-related methodological challenges. It was also shown that principal investigators and researchers do not differ much regarding their perception of these challenges.

How can these results be interpreted? Due to its temporary and at the same time collaborative character, comparative research in international project teams is conducted under high uncertainty and at the same time highly interdependent (regarding task-relevant contextual knowledge of the comparative objects, access to data sources and contacts on the local ground, and language skills etc.). Thus, the social dimension matters and trust is particularly important. However, the geographically distributed and temporary nature of such teams limits the possibilities for trust building, which result from personal interaction. Research on temporary organisations also shows that the tendency to focus on tasks rather than relationships is typical for temporary organisations (Bakker, 2010). Furthermore, survey research conducted among principal investigators of multi-institutional projects on a national level has shown that paradoxically in multi-institutional projects, which might need more collaboration management, fewer resources were devoted to research management and collaboration-promoting practices, and fewer project meetings were held. The division of labor was also less discussed, and the transfer of knowledge between institutions played a less important role (Cummings and Kiesler 2005, 2007).

Based on such findings, one could also assume that principal investigators tend to focus more on the task-related methodological issues. Due to their role as project leaders, principal investigators who are in charge of the overall project, the project's success, and outcomes, might underestimate the social challenges systematically for reasons related to the temporary character of the collaboration. But opposed to that, one could also assume that researchers overestimate the social challenges, because they are more involved in the actual process of data collection and data analysis than principal investigators and, thus, more affected by the division of labor and rely on reflexive communication processes to connect and combine knowledge to a larger extent. As postdoctoral researchers they also might be new to the practice of collaborative research and might have greater difficulties in getting used to this mode of knowledge production within an international team. These two effects might balance each other out and eventually cause a very similar perception. However, the difference in the perception of challenges by principal investigators and researchers might be a random effect caused by the small sample size of the rating, and a replication with a refined rating sheet and a larger group of respondents would be necessary to verify it.

But although based on limited data, the results of the study indicate that we should take the social side of international team research serious and that it is worth

studying the social dimension, particularly in its interplay with the construction of the objects of comparison and the design of comparative research more systematically. Thus, further investigations with special focus on team dynamics, division of labor and conditions for trust building might be important.

The rating that was presented in this article was not built on a causal model of task-related methodological challenges as dependent and social challenges as independent variables. For this purpose, a more complex survey will be constructed and conducted in the future. Such a survey should also include the size of the projects (number of team members, number of national teams within the international team) as well as the geographical scope of the team, the previous international research experience and national and disciplinary backgrounds of team members. Furthermore, the definition of an international team needs to be adjusted and refined. Based on Anderson (2011), for this article a research project team was defined as international when it involves investigators whose primary employment affiliations are located in different countries. This is a handy and approximate but only preliminary definition that should be refined for future research to capture the diversity of international teams. Team dynamics might play out very differently in e.g., a team with members from Australia, the UK, and US and a team with members from Finland, Germany, Japan, Portugal, the US, and the UK, which are culturally more diverse and distant. Particularly important is also qualitative research, for example, in the form of case studies and projects ethnographies of international research teams who conduct comparative research, to learn more about the practices and processes within international comparative research teams and how they shape the comparative object and influence the research process and the quality of research results. At the center of such research would be the "comparator," as Deville, Guggenheim, and Hrdličková (2016b, p. 99) call the entity that does the comparative work (whether it is an individual researcher or an international team and whether it is a human comparator or non-human devices), and on how the comparator and the comparative objects shape each other within research process.

A practical implication of the findings is the need to develop reflexive knowledge on international collaborative processes that is accessible to principal investigators and researchers. International team research is growing and funding programs and grant agencies at both the national and supranational level support its proliferation (Cuntz and Peuckert 2015; Slipersæter and Aksnes 2008). And it is likely that

many higher education researchers will find themselves participating in an international research team or leading it as principal investigator at some point in their careers. Within the above-mentioned SOTS field, a discussion about field guides and practical recommendations that try to support principal investigators and team members throughout the course of the collaborative enterprise is on-going (National Research Council 2015). This discussion, however, has not yet arrived in the social sciences nor has it been the subject of interest in higher education research. But it is important to begin with it, because not all recommendations from the SOTS, as e.g., a high division and modularization of labor (Olson et al. 2008), fit for comparative international team research in the social sciences that operate on high levels of task-interdependence (Mauthner and Doucet 2008). Another implication of the results on the methodological challenges is that more discussion of issues and options related to the construction of comparative objects and the design of comparative research as well as verified and tested comparative procedures within the field might be needed to help cope with methodological challenges and pitfalls of comparative research, whether it the comparator is a team or an individual researcher. This in turn implies that the promising debate on comparative methodology, which has begun within the field of comparative higher education a few years ago, should also be continued and intensified.

References

- Amarasekera, Nanda. 2012. "International Collaborative Clinical Research: Advantages Are Many, but We Need to Be Cautious." *Ceylon Medical Journal* 57 (4): 137-139. doi: 10.4038/cmj.v57i4.5076.
- Anderson, Melissa S. 2011. "What Can Be Gained and What Can Go Wrong in the Context of Different National Research Environments." In *International Research Collaborations: Much to Be Gained, Many Ways to Get in Trouble*, edited by Melissa S. Anderson and Nicholas H. Steneck, 3-9. New York: Routledge.
- Anderson, Melissa S., Felly Chiteng Kot, Yiyun Jie, Takehito Kamata, Aliya Kuzhabekova, Christine C. Lepkowski, Marta A. Shaw, Martha M. Sorenson, and Sonia M. R. Vasconcelos. 2011. "Differences in National Approaches to Doctoral Education: Implications for International Research Collaborations." In *International Research Collaborations: Much to Be Gained, Many Ways to Get in Trouble*, edited by Melissa S. Anderson and Nicholas H. Steneck, 169-190. New York: Routledge.
- Atzmueller, Martin, Andreas Ernst, Friedrich Krebs, Christoph Scholz, and Gerd Stumme. 2016. "Formation and Temporal Evolution of Social Groups During Coffee Breaks." In *Big Data Analytics in the Social and Ubiquitous Context. Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, edited by Martin Atzmueller, Alvin Chin, Frederik Janssen, Immanuel Schweizer and Christoph Trattner, 90-108. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Bakker, René M. 2010. "Taking Stock of Temporary Organizational Forms: A Systematic Review and Research Agenda." *International Journal of Management Reviews* 12 (4): 466-486. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2370.2010.00281.x.
- Bohnhorst, Mark A., Meredith McQuaid, Stacey R. Bolton Tsantir, Donald M. Amundson, and Melissa S. Anderson. 2011. "Legal and Regulatory Considerations in International Research Collaborations." In *International Research Collaborations: Much to Be Gained, Many Ways to Get in Trouble*, edited by Melissa S. Anderson and Nicholas H. Steneck, 79-96. New York: Routledge.
- Bray, Mark, Bob Adamson, and Mark Mason. 2007. "Introduction." In *Comparative Education Research: Approaches and Methods*, edited by Mark Bray, Bob Adamson and Mark Mason, 1-11. Hong Kong, Cham: Comparative Education Research Centre (CERC), Springer.
- Brew, Angela, David Boud, Lisa Lucas, and Karin Crawford. 2013. "Reflexive Deliberation in International Research Collaboration: Minimising Risk and Maximising Opportunity." *Higher Education* 66 (1): 93-104. doi: 10.1007/s10734-012-9592-6.
- Burke, Catriona M., and Michael J. Morley. 2016. "On Temporary Organizations: A Review, Synthesis and Research Agenda." *Human Relations* 69 (6): 1235-1258. doi: 10.1177/0018726715610809.
- Cowen, Robert, and Andreas M. Kazamias. 2009. "Joint Editorial Introduction." In *International Handbook of Comparative Education*, edited by Robert Cowen and Andreas M. Kazamias, 3-6. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Cummings, Jonathon N., and Sara Kiesler. 2005. "Collaborative Research across Disciplinary and Organizational Boundaries." *Social Studies of Science* 35 (5): 703-722. doi: 10.1177/0306312705055535.
- Cummings, Jonathon N., and Sara Kiesler. 2007. "Coordination Costs and Project Outcomes in Multi-University Collaborations." *Research Policy*

- 36 (10): 1620-1634. doi: 10.1016/j.respol.2007.09.001.
- Cuntz, Alexander, and Jan Peuckert. 2015. "Openness Determinants of National Research Funding Programmes in Eu27." *Science and Public Policy* 42 (4): 474-486. doi: 10.1093/scipol/scu063.
- De Vries, Raymond G., Leslie M. Rott, and Yasaswi Paruchuri. 2011. "Normative Environments of International Science." In *International Research Collaborations: Much to Be Gained, Many Ways to Get in Trouble*, edited by Melissa S. Anderson and Nicholas H. Steneck, 105-119. New York: Routledge.
- Deville, Joe, Michael Guggenheim, and Zuzana Hrdličková. 2016a. "Introduction: The Practices and Infrastructures of Comparison." In *Practising Comparison: Logics, Relations, Collaborations*, edited by Joe Deville, Michael Guggenheim and Zuzana Hrdličková, 17-41. Manchester: Mattering Press.
- Deville, Joe, Michael Guggenheim, and Zuzana Hrdličková. 2016b. "Same, Same but Different: Provoking Relations, Assembling the Comparator." In *Practising Comparison: Logics, Relations, Collaborations*, edited by Joe Deville, Michael Guggenheim and Zuzana Hrdličková, 99-129. Manchester: Mattering Press.
- European Commission. 2011. *Towards a European Framework for Research Careers*. Brussels: European Commission.
- Fiore, Stephen M. 2008. "Interdisciplinarity as Teamwork: How the Science of Teams Can Inform Team Science." *Small Group Research* 39 (3): 251-277. doi: 10.1177/1046496408317797.
- Frame, J. Davidson, and Mark P. Carpenter. 1979. "International Research Collaboration." *Social Studies of Science* 9 (4): 481-497. doi: 10.1177/030631277900900405.
- Gardner, Paula, Keiko Katagiri, John Parsons, Jeonghwa Lee, and Radha Thevannoor. 2012. "'Not for the Fainthearted': Engaging in Cross-National Comparative Research." *Journal of Aging Studies* 26 (3): 253-261. doi: 10.1016/j.jaging.2012.02.004.
- Gazni, Ali, Cassidy R. Sugimoto, and Fereshteh Didegah. 2012. "Mapping World Scientific Collaboration: Authors, Institutions, and Countries." *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 63 (2): 323-335. doi: 10.1002/asi.21688.
- Hall, Kara L., Annie X. Feng, Richard P. Moser, Daniel Stokols, and Brandie K. Taylor. 2008. "Moving the Science of Team Science Forward: Collaboration and Creativity." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 35 (2): 243-249. doi: 10.1016/j.amepre.2008.05.007.
- Hantrais, Linda. 2009. *International Comparative Research: Theory, Methods and Practice*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jeong, Seongkyoon, Jae Young Choi, and Jang-Yun Kim. 2014. "On the Drivers of International Collaboration: The Impact of Informal Communication, Motivation, and Research Resources." *Science and Public Policy* 41 (4): 520-531. doi: 10.1093/scipol/sct079.
- Kosmützky, Anna. 2016. "The Precision and Rigor of International Comparative Studies in Higher Education." In *Theory and Method in Higher Education Research*, edited by Jeroen Huisman and Malcom Tight, 199-221. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.
- Kosmützky, Anna. 2018a. "Comparative Research, Higher Education." In *Encyclopedia of International Higher Education Systems and Institutions*, edited by Pedro Teixeira, Jung Cheol Shin, Alberto Amaral, Andres Bernasconi, António Magalhaes, Barbara M. Kehm, Bjorn Stensaker, Edward Choi, Elizabeth Balbachevsky, Fiona Hunter, Gaelle Goastellec, Goolam Mohamedbhai, Hans de Wit, Jussi Välimaa, Laura Rumbley, Lisa Unangst, Manja Klemencic, Patricio Langa, Rui Yang and Terhi Nokkala, 1-8. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Kosmützky, Anna. 2018b. "A Two-Sided Medal: On the Complexity of International Comparative and Collaborative Team Research." *Higher Education Quarterly* 72 (4). doi: 10.1111/hequ.12156.
- Kosmützky, Anna, and Georg Krücken. 2014. "Growth or Steady State? A Bibliometric Focus on International Comparative Higher Education Research." *Higher Education* 67 (4): 457-472. doi: 10.1007/s10734-013-9694-9.
- Kwiek, Marek. 2015. "The Internationalization of Research in Europe: A Quantitative Study of 11 National Systems from a Micro-Level Perspective." *Journal of Studies in International Education* 19 (4): 341-359. doi: 10.1177/1028315315572898.
- Laudel, Grit. 2002. "What Do We Measure by Co-Authorships?" *Research Evaluation* 11 (1): 3-15. doi: 10.3152/147154402781776961.
- Livingstone, Sonia. 2003. "On the Challenges of Cross-National Comparative Media Research." *European Journal of Communication* 18 (4): 477-500. doi: 10.1177/0267323103184003.
- López-Yáñez, Julián, and Mariana Altopiedi. 2015. "Evolution and Social Dynamics of Acknowledged Research Groups." *Higher Education* 70 (4): 629-647. doi: 10.1007/s10734-014-9835-9.
- Lundin, Rolf A., and Anders Söderholm. 1995. "A Theory of the Temporary Organization."

- Scandinavian Journal of Management* 11 (4): 437-455. doi: 10.1016/0956-5221(95)00036-U.
- Manzon, Maria. 2011. *Comparative Education: The Construction of a Field*. Hong Kong, Dordrecht: Comparative Education Research Centre (CERC), Springer.
- Mauthner, Natasha S., and Andrea Doucet. 2008. "Knowledge Once Divided Can Be Hard to Put Together Again': An Epistemological Critique of Collaborative and Team-Based Research Practices." *Sociology* 42 (5): 971-985. doi: 10.1177/0038038508094574.
- Melin, Göran. 2000. "Pragmatism and Self-Organization: Research Collaboration on the Individual Level." *Research Policy* 29 (1): 31-40. doi: 10.1016/S0048-7333(99)00031-1.
- National Research Council. 2015. *Enhancing the Effectiveness of Team Science*. Edited by Nancy J. Cooke and Margaret L. Hilton. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press.
- Olson, Judith S., Erik C. Hofer, Nathan Bos, Ann Zimmerman, Gary M. Olson, Daniel Cooney, and Ixchel Faniel. 2008. "A Theory of Remote Scientific Collaboration." In *Scientific Collaboration on the Internet*, edited by Gary M. Olson, Ann Zimmerman and Nathan Bos, 73-97. Cambridge, London: The MIT Press.
- Øyen, Else. 1990. "The Imperfection of Comparisons." In *Comparative Methodology: Theory and Practice in International Social Research*, edited by Else Øyen, 1-18. London: Sage.
- Petersen, Naomi Jeffery. 2008. "Designing a Rigorous Small Sample Study." In *Best Practices in Quantitative Methods*, edited by Jason W. Osborne, 137-146. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Rambur, Betty. 2009. "Creating Collaboration: An Exploration of Multinational Research Partnerships." In *Academic Research and Researchers*, edited by Angela Brew and Lisa Lucas, 80-95. Maidenhead, New York: Open University Press, Society for Research into Higher Education.
- Rust, Val D., Brian Johnstone, and Carine Allaf. 2009. "Reflections on the Development of Comparative Education." In *International Handbook of Comparative Education*, edited by Robert Cowen and Andreas M. Kazamias, 121-138. Dordrecht, Heidelberg, London, New York: Springer.
- Schriewer, Jürgen. 2009. "Comparative Education Methodology in Transition: Towards a Science of Complexity?" In *Discourse Formation in Comparative Education*, edited by Jürgen Schriewer, 3-53. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Slipersæter, Stig, and Dag W. Aksnes. 2008. "The Many Ways of Internationalisation." In *Borderless Knowledge*, edited by Åse Gornitzka and Liv Langfeldt, 13-36. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Smelser, Neil J. 1976. *Comparative Methods in the Social Sciences*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- Stokols, Daniel, Kara L. Hall, Brandie K. Taylor, and Richard P. Moser. 2008. "The Science of Team Science: Overview of the Field and Introduction to the Supplement." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 35 (2): 77-89. doi: 10.1016/j.amepre.2008.05.002.
- Teagarden, Mary B., Mary Ann Von Glinow, David E. Bowen, Colette A. Frayne, Stephen Nason, Y. Paul Huo, John Milliman, Maria E. Arias, Mark C. Butler, J. Michael Geringer, Nam-Hyeon Kim, Hugh Scullion, Kevin B. Lowe, and Ellen A. Drost. 1995. "Toward a Theory of Comparative Management Research: An Idiographic Case-Study of the Best International Human-Resources Management Protect." *Academy of Management Journal* 38 (5): 1261-1287. doi: 10.2307/256857.
- Teichler, Ulrich. 2014. "Opportunities and Problems of Comparative Higher Education Research: The Daily Life of Research." *Higher Education* 67 (4): 393-408. doi: 10.1007/s10734-013-9682-0.
- Tight, Malcolm. 2012. *Researching Higher Education*. 2. ed. Maidenhead, New York: Open University Press, Society for Research into Higher Education
- Ulnicane, Inga. 2015. "Why Do International Research Collaborations Last? Virtuous Circle of Feedback Loops, Continuity and Renewal." *Science and Public Policy* 42 (4): 433-447. doi: 10.1093/scipol/scu060.
- Wagner, Caroline S. 2005. "Six Case Studies of International Collaboration in Science." *Scientometrics* 62 (1): 3-26. doi: 10.1007/s11192-005-0001-0.
- Wang, Jian, and Diana Hicks. 2015. "Scientific Teams: Self-Assembly, Fluidness, and Interdependence." *Journal of Informetrics* 9 (1): 197-207. doi: 10.1016/j.joi.2014.12.006.
- Weiss, Matthias, and Martin Hoegl. 2015. "The History of Teamwork's Societal Diffusion: A Multi-Method Review." *Small Group Research* 46 (6): 589-622. doi: 10.1177/1046496415602778.

First Generation International Students and the 4Ds Shaping the Future of Global Student Mobility: A Comparative Report Analysis

Peggy Gesing^{a,*} and Chris Glass^{a,*}

^a*Old Dominion University, United States*

*Corresponding author: Email: mgesing@odu.edu; crglass@odu.edu
Address: Old Dominion University, Virginia, United States

If we are to understand the future of global higher education, we must begin to study first generation *international* students who embody the future of student global mobility. Traditional paradigms of global student mobility narrowly focus on a small subset of the global student population (de Wit & Jones, 2017). However, first-generation students are the growing edge of university enrollments worldwide (Schulmann & Le, 2018; World Bank, 2018), and their future depends on ensuring that access to higher education translates to economic opportunity and social mobility (Glass, Gesing, Hales, & Cong, 2017). The livelihoods of the next generation of students are being shaped by rapid urbanization, automation of the global workforce, and the rise of economic and political nationalism in traditional host countries (Choudaha & van Rest, 2018). The coming wave of global student mobility will be shaped by what we term the 4Ds: new demographics, new drivers, new directions, and new forms of delivery. We briefly describe how each of these dimensions, including findings from our analysis of the National Survey of College Graduates (NSCG, 2015) to illustrate these trends, particularly as they relate to access and equity for first generation international students.

Demographics

The *demographics* of globally mobile students are shifting. International enrollment growth is being driven by students from low- and middle-income countries, where demand is outpacing the capacity to supply higher education (Choudaha, 2011; Ortiz, Chang, & Fang, 2015). Growth in degree attainment worldwide is being driven by older, non-traditional students, students from emerging economies, and students from fast-growing urban populations (Schulmann & Le, 2018). Meanwhile, the shrinking domestic college student population in host countries like the US has heightened the need to recruit international students (Bound, Braga, Khanna, & Turner, 2016; Hussar & Bailey, 2017). Although the US global share of international students has decreased from about 25 percent in 2008 to 15

percent in 2018, the proportion of the total US international student enrollment has grown from three to five percent in the same time period (UNESCO, 2018). China and India make up nearly 50 percent of the international student population in the US, yet there is concern that Chinese student enrollment may be on the decline (IIE, 2017). In our analysis of 2015 NSCG data, 43 percent of students from China were the first in their family to attend college; whereas, only 20 percent of students from India were first generation. In addition, first generation international students come from Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Mexico, all countries where fast-growing planned or emergent regional educational hubs are reshaping the patterns of global student mobility (British Council, 2018; Kondakci, Bedenlier, & Zawacki-Richter, 2018).

Directions

The *directions* of globally mobile students are also shifting. As traditional host countries lose market share, the appeal of regional education hubs has broadened for a new generation of glocal students, i.e., international students who seek career advancement from an international education while staying in their home region (Choudaha, 2013). For example, there are three times as many Malaysian students in branch campuses of UK universities in Malaysia than those going to the UK universities in the UK (Choudaha, 2016). Planned education hubs that combine national universities and international branch campuses, such as United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Singapore, and Hong Kong are part of coordinated strategies for national and regional economic development (Kondakci et al. 2018). Social network analysis has identified emergent regional hubs, including South Korea, South Africa, Turkey, Brazil, and Mexico where, without formal coordination, cultural, geographical and historical factors are attracting glocal students to study at world-class institutions (Kondakci et al. 2018). It is estimated that by 2030, 75 percent of global STEM graduates will graduate from universities in emerging hubs like Brazil,

Russia, India, Indonesia, China, and South Africa, compared with eight percent and four percent from the US and European universities respectively (Choudaha & van Rest, 2018; OECD, 2015). Geographical and cultural proximity make these emerging regional hubs attractive destinations for the new generation of international students. Moreover, the relative ease of visa procedures and transportation to-and-from home countries make emerging regional hubs affordable alternatives to cost conscious international students. Although the number of first generation students at regional hubs is not known, the implications of these trends suggest that these regions will become increasingly attractive and affordable intraregional destinations for first-generation international students.

Meanwhile, the pathways to college degree attainment continue to shift. Enrollment in community colleges and their global counterparts has increased worldwide to meet workforce demands (Raby & Valeau, 2018). Moreover, since the US travel ban, international student enrollment at US higher education institutions has varied depending on the type of institution, with the steepest declines at US master's colleges and universities (AACRAO, 2018; IIE, 2017). In our analysis of the NSCG data, first generation international students are just as likely to attend a research (29 percent) or comprehensive university (29 percent), whereas non-first-generation students are about twice as likely to attend a research university (38 percent) than a comprehensive university (22 percent). First generation international students in the US are also twice as likely to attend a US community college (five percent) as their non-first generation peers (two percent).

Drivers

The economic, sociocultural, and political *drivers* of global mobility are shifting. Economic and employment opportunities continue to drive global student mobility, but today's international students are more price sensitive and career-minded (Loo, 2016). Changes to UK post-study work visa policy have reduced the number of international students from Africa and Asia. Increasingly, many international students opt to study in host countries where tuition is affordable and pathways to work opportunities are supported by national immigration policies (Barnett et al. 2016). The financial benefits of an education abroad may not be equal for first generation students. Our analysis of the NSCG data identified a gap in the post-college earnings of first-generation international students in the US. After controlling for age and graduation year, first generation international students

who stayed in the US after earning their bachelor's degree earned \$61,730 per year on average, compared with \$67,342 for international students with one parent with a college degree, and \$78,540 for international students from households where both parents hold college degrees.

Sociocultural factors also shape perceptions that drive global student mobility. Where personal safety used to rank among the bottom of concerns of prospective students, personal safety now ranks at the top of concerns that international students express about study abroad, surpassing employment and affordable tuition (British Council, 2017). There has been a spike in reports of hate crimes on college campuses in the US since the election of President Trump (Dreid & Najmadadi, 2016), adding to concerns about neoracism and gun violence that impact students' choice of institution and host country. Traditional host countries, like the US and UK, have erected barriers for mobility, where viewpoints about the value of international students is divided across party lines (Esipova, Ray, & Pugliese, 2018). Prospective students are experiencing an increase in student visa denials at US embassies and consulates in China and India, along with a general perception that the US is less welcoming to international students (AACRAO, 2017). These prospective students are also concerned that the Trump administration's travel ban could be expanded to additional countries, and that further visa restrictions could impact family members' ability to visit them, impede re-entry if they travel home, and create barriers to post-education employment pathways in the US. These impediments are in evidence with international students who graduated and are in the US workforce seeing greater challenges in maintaining temporary work visas due to longer processing times and increased costs (Hudzik, Streitweiser, & Marmolejo, 2018). Finally, geopolitical upheavals including regional conflicts, economic crises, and pandemics also drive global student mobility, with the 22.5 million refugees who have fled their home countries posing another challenge for higher education internationalization (Hudzik, Streitweiser, & Marmolejo, 2018).

Delivery

The modes of *delivery* of global higher education are also impacting global student mobility (British Council, 2017). The number of globally mobile students exploded from 2000 to 2010, then leveled off after 2010, as regional hubs, branch campuses, joint degree programs, and online programs became increasingly affordable alternatives to study abroad. As regional

provision of higher education expands, all signs point to a precipitous slowdown in the number of outbound international students (British Council, 2018). Thirteen million students are enrolled in cross-border, online programs, three times the total number of globally mobile students (Choudaha & van Rest, 2018). New online, blended forms of transnational education are on the rise, and more universities are developing cross-border English programs in emerging economies. Students' methods for financing their education are also changing and can affect their mobility decisions. In our analysis of the NSCG data, 75 percent of non-first generation students receive financial assistance for college from their parents, spouse, or other relatives, whereas first generation students are 50 percent more likely to rely on prior earnings from employment. Because of the change in this demographic, online programs and other forms of more regional, affordable delivery of higher education will impact the next wave of global student mobility.

Conclusion

First generation international students are a harbinger for the coming wave of global student mobility that must be addressed. As we look into the future: international enrollment growth will be driven by first generation students from low- and middle-income countries (demographics); more likely to study at emerging regional hubs with more geographical and cultural proximity (directions); with more career-minded and employment-focused goals for short-term migration (drivers); and engaged in new forms of hybrid and online education programs (delivery). The data from the National Survey of College Graduates suggest that it is critical for researchers to examine this fast-growing population of international students to ensure short-term mobility leads to upward social and economic mobility.

References

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). 2017. *Trending topics survey: International applicants for Fall 2017- Institutional and applicant perceptions*. Washington DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

Barnett, George A., Lee, Moosung, Jiang, Ke & Park, Han Woo. 2016. "The flow of international students from a macro perspective: a network analysis."

Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education, 46 (4): 533–559.

Bound, John, Braga, Breno, Khanna, Gaurav, & Turner, Sarah. 2016. *A passage to America: University funding and international students*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan: Michigan Population Studies Center.

British Council. 2017. *Ten trends: Transformative changes in higher education*. London, UK: British Council.

British Council. 2018. *International student mobility to grow more slowly to 2027*. London, UK: British Council.

Choudaha, Rahul. 2011. "Drivers of mobility of Chinese and Indian students." *International Higher Education* 62: 26-28. doi: <https://doi.org/10.6017/ihe.2011.62.8526>

Choudaha, Rahul. 2013. "Know your international student – Global or glocal?" *University World News*, 269.

Choudaha, Rahul. 2016. *Three megatrends shaping the future of international student mobility*. Melbourne: Australia: AIEC.

Choudaha, Rahul., & Van Rest, Edwin. 2018. *Megatrends shaping the future of global higher education and international student mobility*. South Boston, MA: Study Portals.

de Wit, Hans, & Jones, Elspeth. 2017. "Improving access and equity in internationalisation." *University World News*, 486. Retrieved from: <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20171206071138138>

Dreid, Nadia & Najmabadi, Shannon. 2016. "Here's a rundown of the latest campus-climate incidents since Trump's election." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 22.

Esipova, Neli, Ray, Julie, & Pugliese, Anita. 2018. *Migrant acceptance in Canada, U.S. follows political lines*. Retrieved from: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/233147/migrant-acceptance-canada-follows-political-lines.aspx>

Glass, Christopher R., Gesing, Peggy, Hales, Angela, & Cong, Cong. 2017. "Faculty as bridges to co-curricular engagement and community for first-generation international students." *Studies in Higher Education* 42 (5): 895–910. doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2017.1293877

Hudzik, John K., Streitwieser, Bernhard, & Marmolejo, Francisco. 2018. "Renovating internationalisation for the 21st century." *University World News*, 509. Retrieved from: <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20180606110124870>

- Hussar, William J., & Bailey, Tabitha M. (n.d.). *Projections of education statistics to 2022*. Retrieved from: <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014051.pdf>
- Institute of International Education (IIE). 2017. *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*. New York, NY: Retrieved from: <https://www.iie.org/opendoors>
- Kondakci, Yasar, Bedenlier, Svenja, & Zawacki-Richter, Olaf. 2018. "Social network analysis of international student mobility: uncovering the rise of regional hubs." *Higher Education*, 75, 517–535. doi.org/10.1007/s10734-017-0154-9
- Loo, Bryce. 2016. *Career services for international students: Fulfilling high expectations*. New York, NY: World Education Services.
- NSCG. 2015. *National Survey of College Graduates*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvygrads/>
- OECD. 2015. "How is the global talent pool changing (2013, 2030)?" *OECD Indicators*. Paris: OECD Publishing. Retrieved from: [http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/EDIF_31_\(2015\)--ENG--Final.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/EDIF_31_(2015)--ENG--Final.pdf)
- Ortiz, Alejandro, Chang, Li, & Fang, Yuanyuan. 2015. *International student mobility trends 2015: An economic perspective*. New York, NY: World Education Services.
- Raby, Rosalind, & Valeau, Edward. 2018. *Handbook of comparative studies on community colleges and global counterparts*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.
- Schulmann, Paul, & Le, Cindy. 2018. *Navigating a new paradigm for international student recruitment*. New York, NY: World Education Services.
- UNESCO. 2018. *Education: Outbound internationally mobile students by host region*. <http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?queryid=172>
- World Bank. 2018. *Outbound students by income classification, tertiary education, databank*. Retrieved at www.worldbank.org

Regional Update: Self-Reflections from a Project that Links Education Data from Various Sources in Ontario, Canada

Karen Robson^{a,*}

^a*McMaster University, Canada*

*Corresponding author: Email: klrobson@mcmaster.ca, Address: McMaster University, Ontario, Canada

I have had the privilege in my career of working with many longitudinal data sets that allowed me to follow the educational trajectories of young people from youth and beyond. That privilege is largely due to working and studying in the UK, where longitudinal and life course data have been collected on birth cohorts since 1946. It is certainly the case that researchers in the UK have a vast array of data from which to choose (at least 6 cohort studies, several other types of longitudinal household panels) which are quite reasonably housed and archived at the UK Data Service and are often downloadable upon agreeing to the terms of the archive online. Virtually any research question you have around youth, education and school to work transitions can be addressed using one or more of these data sources. This was the “normal” I was exposed to when working on my PhD in the early 2000s.

After repatriating to Canada to take up my first tenure track job at York University in 2004, I slowly began to realize that my “data situation” in the UK was special. As most newly minted PhDs do, I continued to work with my old UK data sets to publish out of my dissertation. But years passed and it only became logical to examine research questions in my own region. At the time, Canada had two longitudinal cohorts collected by Statistics Canada – the *National Longitudinal Study of Children (NLSCY)* and *Youth and the Youth in Transition Study (YITS)*. The former ran from 1994 to 2009 and the latter from 1998 to 2009. Yes, it has been nearly a decade since the federal government in Canada has collected longitudinal data on Canadian youth. The defunding of data was inextricably linked to the decade of cuts to various scientific agencies undertaken by the Conservative government that held office between 2006 and 2016.

Data protection laws in Canada require that researchers can only access Statistics Canada data in highly secure Statistics Canada Research Data Centers (RDCs), which are similar to other government data set-ups in the United States. A researcher must fill out a detailed application to access the data and undertake all analyses in the RDC. Results are vetted by the RDC staff. I attempted to work this way with the NLSCY data in the mid 2000s, as I was involved in a study examining the youth from military families compared to those from civilian families and we used many instruments from the NLSCY. Having to go through that process and work in the RDC was not ideal – I was still yearning for the data panacea of the UK.

Around 2010 I was asked to help with data analysis on a project with the local school district. It has been through my ongoing partnership with the Toronto District School Board that I have been involved in researching the determinants of academic success as well as the transitions to postsecondary education in Ontario. The partnership with the district has allowed me to undertake comparative analyses with partners in other cities like New York, Chicago, and London. What is visibly absent from this list of comparative cities is *Canadian cities*. While it is certainly a privilege to examine postsecondary trajectories of at-risk youth between major cities in the world, it seems only logical that comparisons should also take place closer to home.

Unlike the vast majority of countries, Canada does not have a national education system. Responsibility for education is delegated to provinces, and it has been this way since the beginning of our history as a nation. As such, although education is broadly comparable across the country, its administration and policy development has been cultivated regionally. Toronto schools are in no way “linked” to schools in Vancouver or Montreal.

Indeed, these major cities exist in different provinces with different approaches to data collection. Additionally, although all schools in the country collect administrative data on their students, with the exception of British Columbia, *there is no linkage of their school records between secondary and postsecondary*. This makes it infinitely frustrating for education researchers to be able to say anything about postsecondary transitions. In the case of Toronto, we are able to link district records to a central application data centre for colleges/universities in Ontario. We can know if student applied to postsecondary and whether or not they were given an offer of admission. What we cannot know is if they showed up and if they stayed at the institution in question. Obviously being offered a place and graduating a degree are very different things. And notably, we don't know anything about any other students living in Ontario outside of Toronto and who do not attend the public school board (there is a large publicly funded Catholic board in Ontario as well, servicing over 90,000 students a year in Toronto alone).

Trying to link the data from the public school system and postsecondary institutions in Ontario is a project that is currently being undertaken by myself and several other researchers. We don't have the National Student Clearinghouse Research data linkages that my American colleagues enjoy. In fact, data infrastructure is only being given attention lately because of the push that many researchers are giving to evidence-based policy around postsecondary access. Increasingly, the script for adulthood requires postsecondary education, even for the most basic entry-level jobs. As such, the issue of access: - i.e. who gets in, who does not – it being regarded as an important policy topic, and rightly so, as postsecondary education is increasingly being seen as a required ticket to gain entry into the labour market. In Ontario, the Toronto district has published numerous reports on racial inequities in special education, academic success, and in the streaming process in the secondary education system. Such relationships undoubtedly are exacerbated in the postsecondary sector; however the absence of data makes the research question impossible to study.

Partnerships between the Toronto district and individual postsecondary institutions are slowly developing. I am personally involved in an initiative that seeks to link data from my local district (Hamilton-Wentworth Public and Catholic) to data from my university (McMaster) and a large community college (Mohawk). This initiative is being driven by the Higher Educational Quality Council of Ontario, an agency of the government of Ontario responsible for evidence-based research on the postsecondary education in Ontario. This is, however, very new territory for Ontario bureaucrats, so it is not a quick process. Safeguards must be in place to protect data confidentiality at all partner institutions and trust relationships must be developed between the parties involved. In our Hamilton-based pilot, we are hoping to have some very preliminary results by the end of 2018. It is these kinds of district-based pilots that we hope we eventually be “scaled up” to include all districts and postsecondary institutions in Ontario. In the absence of federally-based data collection on students, this is the best we can hope for.