JOURNAL OF COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

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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.
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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.

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Introduction to Spring 2019 JCIHE

Dear Readers -

    I am pleased to share the Spring 2019 issue of the *Journal of Comparative and International Higher Education* (JCIHE). The JCIHE mission is to promote scholarship opportunities and critical dialogue with the purpose of engaging professionals and academics to the comparative and international aspects of higher education. JCIHE includes a combination of peer reviewed journal articles, opinion pieces, country focus updates, and regional updates. Submissions include a range of contexts, perspectives, methodologies, and intersections of disciplines.

    JCIHE is proud to announce the launch of the new journal platform Open Journals in Education (OJED). Please visit the new platform at http://www.ojed.org/jcihe to submit manuscripts or to register as a peer reviewer. OJED is a Gold Open Access journal, and all articles in JCIHE will now receive a DOI number and will be cross-listed in the EBSCOHOST database, GoogleScholar and CiteFactor, to maximize article discoverability and citation.

    The Spring 2019 issue includes five articles that have an intersecting theme of how international education assists with gaining perception and deep understanding of others. The focus is primarily on the student, but also examines the role of programs, institution, and policy in promoting student learning about others. The articles in this issue analyze this process of learning as a result of Digital Humanities tools embedded in assignments that are completed by students prior to an exchange (Dorroll, Hall, Blouke and Witsell); through the lens of pre-service teachers who are studying/ working abroad (Yuan; Gaudino and Wilsom); through the analysis of the narratives of Chinese students who begin their studies at the secondary level with the intent of having long-term study abroad through higher education; and by critically assessing if policies and activities support or counter the hegemony of the West in terms of language, power, and discourse (Cheng).

    Courtney Dorroll, Kimberly Hall, Cate Blouke and Emily Witsell explore the extent to which digital humanities tools were used in scaffolding assignments prior to an exchange and the extent to which these tools fostered interpersonal engagement and heightened intercultural awareness. Huanshu Yuan explores pre-service Chinese teacher's perceptions on multicultural, multi-ethnic, and diversity in China. Ann Gaudino and Eleanor Wilson explore the effects of student teachers who studied abroad on their careers and teaching style. Anke Li documents the lived experiences in terms of academic and social experiences of Chinese students who study at the secondary level in Canada. Angel Oi Yee Cheng analyzes the global mission of Lehigh University as compares it against the United Nations Academic Impact mission.

    JCIHE is pleased to announce that the Special Issue for Winter 2020 will focus on Mapping Experiences of Refugee Students in Higher Education with Guest Editor Belma Sadikovic, Minnesota State University Moorhead. Please submit article proposals (500 words) to www.ojed.org/jcihe or belma.sadikovic@mnstate.edu by September 5, 2019. Article themes can include:

- Impact of refugee resettlement policies and immigration ideologies on refugee integration and academic success
- Refugee students as agents of change
- Refugee student inclusion in academia, refugee communities, and host communities
- Higher education admissions policies and their impact on refugee students bridging into higher education
- Impact of student support programs on refugee students
- Dimensions of inclusion in a range of social spaces (e.g., classrooms, campus community, community-based programs, the workplace, online academic spaces, or nontraditional spaces of inclusion)
- Influence processes of learning, practices of teaching, and policies of inclusive and equitable education
- Alternative forms of education for refugee adult learners: non-formal and informal education
- Traumatic life experiences and education

- Refugee women and higher education
- The role of faculty and staff involvement in refugee student college experiences

JCIHE is now soliciting future Special Issue Editors for the 2021 and 2022 Winter issues. Please submit proposals to Rosalind Raby at rabyrl@aol.com or to the new platform at http://www.ojed.org/jcihe. JCIHE is also now accepting Graduate Student Work-in-Progress for the Winter Issue on a rolling basis prior to the official deadline of October 1, 2019.

The editorial staff of JCIHE is please to help support the CIES Higher Education SIG in advancing JCIHE as a a professional forum that supports development, analysis, and dissemination of theory-, policy-, and practice-related issues that influence higher education. I especially want to thank our Managing Editor, Nickie Smith, for her support, insight, and creativity. She has been instrumental in the transition to the new platform and a constant source of technological support.

Editor in Chief,
Rosalind Latiner Raby
Spring 2019

Virtual Exchange Pedagogy: A Digital Humanities Approach

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Introduction

In order to connect students from Wofford College, a small liberal arts college in South Carolina, with students at Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt and the American University of Beirut (AUB), a collaborative group of faculty and librarians at three different institutions created a virtual exchange program utilizing tools and methods from the field of Digital Humanities (DH). Wofford College is a private undergraduate institution of approximately 1,600 students located in Upstate South Carolina and affiliated with the United Methodist Church. Al Azhar is a Muslim majority university, one of the oldest and most prestigious Islamic institutions of higher learning in the world located in Cairo, Egypt. The American University of Beirut is a private, non-sectarian institution based on the US liberal arts model; AUB has approximately 8,000 students. The partnership between Wofford and Al Azhar formed between professors that met at a summer institute on Islamic Studies, while the partnership between Wofford and AUB formed through a Wofford postdoc who had alumni connections to AUB.

The students who participated in the virtual exchange from Al Azhar were interested in learning about US culture and practicing their English. A professor at Al Azhar ran the exchange as a student group. The students participating in the virtual exchange from AUB were enrolled in a one-year English preparatory program, so the main objectives were for students to get hands-on English practice. Wofford professors involved their students from classes on Introduction to Islam (Religion), Revolution and Regime Change (International Affairs), Middle East Literature (English), Global Digital Cultures (English), and Exploring the Middle East (an incoming student course based on the Humanities fields). Professors from Wofford were chosen from the pool of

affiliated Middle Eastern and North African Studies faculty who showed interest in using the virtual exchange in their classrooms.

The impetus for this pedagogical initiative grew out of a desire to bridge the gap between the local and the global in classes focused on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region at Wofford College. Wofford is a predominately white institution with very few (if any from year to year) students from the MENA region or students who would have had any personal interactions with Muslims. This virtual exchange allowed Wofford students direct, virtual connection with a region of the world less commonly traveled. Al Azhar and AUB students who participated had a glimpse into US culture as described and curated by US students their own age through the digital media texts created by Wofford students. The resulting cultural conversations also gave students at Al Azhar and AUB the opportunity to practice and hone their English, one of the key objectives of their instructors.

The aim of the Wofford professors in using Digital Humanities tools and pedagogy was to flip the power dynamic of a traditional classroom and to enhance student agency. Students created and circulated tangible materials prior to the exchange, becoming the cultural gatekeepers for knowledge transmission. The digital content focused on students' everyday lives and their own culture, giving them a site of authority in order to teach across cultures. In this way, the glocal effect was achieved (Blatter 2013). The result of the virtual exchange has been a greater awareness and interaction between Wofford students and students in the MENA region. This article will describe the intersection between our Virtual Exchange and the field of Digital Humanities and argues that DH tools and pedagogy are particularly beneficial for helping students develop

intercultural competence because the simple, familiar, and readily available digital tools give students a high degree of technical and cultural agency that fosters authentic interpersonal engagement that results in heightened intercultural awareness.

The Digital Humanities Framework

Though origins of the field date back as early as the 1940s, Digital Humanities (DH) as a discipline or field of study remains a relatively recent phenomenon. The world's first PhD program in Digital Humanities was established just over ten years ago, when the Centre for Computing in the Humanities at King's College London initiated the degree program in 2005. Yet in less than a decade, the program has evolved to clarify and reflect multiple approaches to an evolving field. Now the program at King's College is housed in the Department of Digital Humanities, and the PhD program has also been rebranded, offering degrees in Digital Historical Studies and Digital Musicology, for example. DH embraces a wide array of projects and practices – from curating digital archives to data mining vast data sets – and draws scholars and methodologies from disciplines such as history, linguistics, literature, philosophy, archeology, and music, just to name a few.

Many view DH through the lens of specific tools and technologies – grounding it in often expensive and complicated programs that facilitate new understandings of extant corpora. For example, the Visualizing English Print project (VEP), which is a Mellon-funded interdisciplinary project, includes members from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University of Strathclyde, and the Folger Shakespeare Library. VEP brought together literary scholars and computer scientists, linking the two skill sets. The project uses methods adapted from computing to treat texts as data sets, using computers to abstract elements and analyze form. They see the project as a means not to replace close reading and traditional modes of textual analysis, but rather to "supplement humanist inquiry by locating patterns at scales and across scales not feasible for human readers" (Stuffer 2016). A massive undertaking, the VEP is one of many examples of DH projects which focus on scholarship and the ways digital tools can enhance understanding of specific texts or artifacts.

Alternately, the authors of the "Digital Humanities Manifesto 2.0" (2009) argue DH consists of "an array of convergent practices" which attend and adapt to changes in the ways knowledge is created, conveyed, and disseminated in a digital age. This focus shifts away from tools and specific technology and onto methodologies and praxis. Virginia Kuhn and Vicki Callahan (2009, p. 292) take up this stance, arguing that DH offers an opportunity for a uniquely interdisciplinary approach to analysis. By engaging with texts that span a wide range of media (including written/alphabetic texts, audio, moving images), DH provides an opportunity for hybrid forms of critical and creative engagement, bringing together the expertise and methodologies of scholars across fields. The authors contend that this provides a rich layering of both method and practice in teaching and scholarship; they interpret DH as an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to texts and artifacts which does not necessarily require sophisticated technology.

In Digital Humanities Pedagogy, editor Brett D. Hirsch notes the striking inattention to pedagogical practices in discussions of DH prior to the collection's publication in 2012. Only in the past several years have scholars sought to shift the DH conversation away from DH as research and scholarship and forward a discussion of the ways it manifests as classroom practices and the opportunities this approach to pedagogy affords teachers and students. Hirsch contends the bracketing or exclusion of conversations about DH pedagogy serves to reinforce the needlessly antagonistic and faulty distinction between a scholar's teaching and their research. He urges a symbiotic relationship of teaching-research, one that DH makes particularly possible with its foundation in "collectivity and collaboration in the pursuit and creation of new knowledge" (2012, p. 16).

Virtual Exchange as Digital Humanities Pedagogy

Our project approaches the DH field from the perspective championed by Hirsch – availing ourselves of the unprecedented capacity for collaboration and cross-cultural communication which digital technologies allow. Though on a smaller scale, Wofford's Virtual Exchange project mirrors the practices of projects such as Matthew K. Gold's "Looking for Whitman" project, which brought students together from four academic institutions to collaborate on place-based learning and analysis. The instructors involved in the "Looking for Whitman" project generated shared assignments that formed the basis of connection amongst the students. Gold and his collaborators drew on the unique affordances of online learning environments to have students research and then share the connections between their separate geographic locations (in New York, New Jersey, and Virginia) and Whitman's own life and work. Importantly for Gold (and for our project as well), the project was more oriented toward content and connection than working with specific or extremely sophisticated digital tools. Gold (2012, p. 163) notes, "the loose connections between tools [such as linked Wordpress blogs] allowed students to take more control over their online learning environments and to mold those environments to their particular learning styles." The activities scaffolding our virtual exchange embraced this emphasis on student agency and adaptation and utilized tools that were familiar to students and thus easy to use, and that required students to generate their own content in order to facilitate common ground with their virtual exchange partners. The two student-driven components that results from this approach were a Facebook group and a YouTube documentary. Because we also wanted to provide a scholarly and cultural context for their own content, we also created an online library guide that provided all of the Wofford students with a shared archive about the MENA region as they prepared for the virtual exchange.

Methodology

This project focuses on using virtual exchanges as a pedagogical tool to help teach across cultures and to build intercultural competency in students about another culture and language. Students in the MENA region were invested in learning English and US culture and the students at Wofford were invested in learning about the MENA region. The technology of social media and an online library guide allowed the students to connect virtually.

Previously a small scale, informal virtual exchange occurred between Dr. Courtney Dorroll and a professor at Al Azhar University. After two years Dr. Dorroll secured a grant from the Stevens Initiative to expand the virtual exchange and gave funding that helped bolster an in-classroom pedagogical activity into a pedagogical research project. The grant money from the Stevens Initiative allowed the pre-existing Wofford/Al Azhar virtual exchange to stabilize, grow, and professionalize. The grant money also allowed us to expand to connect our Arabic postdoctorate professor with his contacts at his alma mater, the American University of Beirut. We also had several other Wofford professors get involved to incorporate their students with the virtual exchange activities. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was secured so that responses collected from students could be used for research purposes. IRB helped us ensure we would protect our students' identities, and lessons of ethnography and working with vulnerable populations were also key to this endeavor. Students enrolled in Wofford classes with virtual exchange components were automatically included in the virtual exchange, as it was a key part of the syllabus for the class that semester. Students at Al Azhar voluntarily signed up to be a part of a student group that met off campus to participate in the virtual exchange activities. Responses from Wofford students are the focus of this article.

The research also included responses from students in the Al Azhar discussion section. These students all signed consent forms so that their responses could be utilized for research purposes and they were also guaranteed that their identities would remain anonymous. Throughout the entire virtual exchange, safeguards were put in place to ensure student identities would not leave the confines of the

classroom virtual exchange. This is particularly significant when working with students across different nation-states with different levels of legality regarding freedom of speech, cultural dynamics and social taboos. For example, the mere signing of an IRB consent form proved culturally difficult for Egyptian students (because it might be misread as a document that was aiding the US government or raise flags as to why data was being collected); therefore, we were able to get verbal consent from Egyptian students so as to limit misunderstandings.

In this paper we are focusing on Wofford student responses as all co-authors to this article teach at Wofford College which allowed us to work together to compare and contrast data collected over the virtual exchange on a common student population. Each professor asked students enrolled in their classes that had the virtual exchange as part of their syllabus to sign the IRB (only students who signed the IRB would be utilized for research purposes); there was not a grade or participation penalty for not signing the IRB. However, if students did not want to participate in the virtual exchange, then they would need to enroll in a different class, as the virtual exchange was an official component of the class and the students' participation grade for that semester. Data in the form of student responses were collected by each Wofford professor. We individually analyzed our data, then met as a group to analyze the data at the end of the semester to find compelling similarities and significant points that described the impact of virtual exchange on student learning and intercultural comprehension.

Virtual Exchange Uses

Facebook

We began with a sharing structure on Facebook, a tool with which most students are already familiar, because we hoped to encourage a relaxed and comfortable environment for cross-cultural communication. For the purpose of our project, the digital tools offered a tremendously fruitful means to connection. We utilized Facebook to create a Group Page for Wofford students in a first-year, general education course called "Exploring the Middle East"

and with students at participating in the Al Azhar Virtual Exchange student club. Wofford students were assigned to post 15 original posts about US Southern culture, and the Al Azhar students were asked to post 15 original posts relating to Egyptian culture. This was done on a closed Facebook group to make sure only students were participating in the assignment and to protect the identities of the students involved. The goal was to move away from the monolithic stereotypes of "American culture" and "Arab culture" in order to enable students to show intimate, personal family histories and cultural moments from their own lives. Students were challenged to produce content that defied stereotypes and personalized the narrative of culture. A Wofford upper classman, Breck Peterson, worked as a student preceptor (akin to an undergraduate teaching assistant) to specifically lead students in their Virtual Exchange activities for the class. Breck taught eight classes in the semester related to walking Wofford students through their Facebook group assignments.

Online Library Guide

Library research guides allow librarians, in conjunction with teaching faculty, to gather links to a variety of materials relevant to a course into a single, easily accessible website. Library guides are particularly helpful when a course enrolls students working in multiple locations because they provide access to resources at any hour, whether the library is open or closed and whether a librarian is on duty or not, which makes them an excellent resource for students taking part in a Virtual Exchange. The fact that the guide is a curated list of carefully selected items helps students overcome the feeling of being overwhelmed by the sheer number of resources available to them via the internet or their college library. Starting from a guide also assures students the featured resources have been vetted by their professor and a librarian, demonstrating that the quality of the sources is good, which can be a particularly difficult assessment to make for students working in a second language. Students are not limited to only using resources from the guide for their classes but giving them a set of approved materials as a starting point models the kind of scholarly materials professors expect them to utilize.

This library guide (http://libguides.woorford.edu/ MENAexchange) was developed in consultation with faculty working on the virtual exchange, with professors indicating the topics which would be covered in the classes and possible areas of student interest. The following topics form the main tabs of the guide: Egyptian and Lebanese Culture, American Culture, Ethnography, Cultural Sensitivity and Intercultural Competency, Films, and Genealogy. In each section, resources such as electronic books, journals, streaming videos, and online articles are featured, often with an explanation of why a particular resource was chosen for the class. In selecting materials, we chose scholarly books and articles from a variety of disciplines, paying special attention to the difficulty of the language used in each source. We perused the national library websites for Lebanon and Egypt to find genealogy sources in English to accompany the US websites. Finally, a grant provided money to purchase several new e-books which are linked on the guide to support the courses. Wofford's Sandor Teszler Library was able to offer the students in Egypt and Lebanon temporary access to selected electronic materials, allowing them to consult the same materials as Wofford students. If the library had not been able to provide access via temporary student status, the guide would have focused on freely available, open-access sources. A common course library guide allows all of the students involved in the virtual exchange to have a shared set of resources in common, which builds a foundation for the class.

YouTube

Using social media is a pleasurable experience because it requires both consumption and production in the form of either content generation or interactivity. The video sharing platform YouTube is not often included in scholarly discussions of social media platforms. However, its fundamental design emphasizes the sociality of sharing, and the scope of this sharing is global. As of 2018, YouTube has over one billion users and their mission language is focused on creating a global sense of community, much like virtual exchange pedagogy. Its widespread availability and user-friendly creator tools, such as embedded video editing, make it an accessible and engaging pedagogical tool (YouTube 2018).

YouTube was utilized for scaffolding activities, developmental, lower-stakes activities that help students build competence toward a higher-skill and higher-stakes assignment, in an upper-division Global Digital Cultures course at Wofford. Prior to the exchange, we asked students to create two minutes of footage depicting their everyday life. This idea emulates the model of the film Life in a Day (Macdonald 2011) which was created from user-submitted videos collected on a YouTube channel and released as a feature-length film. The film's narrative depicts 24 hours around the globe by editing the footage together. Students reported the film created a feeling of both sameness and difference across people, regardless of their background or circumstances. Striving to reproduce this effect in their own documentary film, students collected all of their individual footage in a YouTube channel. They worked in groups to annotate and then edit the clips together to create a representative film about 24 hours in the life of a Wofford student. We then shared the link for this video with the American University of Beirut so that students could view it prior to the exchange and ask questions about everyday life here.

The process of production generated both technical and cultural discussions that never would have arisen, even with the virtual exchange, had students not been tasked with creating a representative digital project. They had to collaboratively determine an annotation structure and a process for editing the film as a group. They ran into several technical challenges that could only be solved by digging deeper into the creator tools and external software to solve their problems. Similarly, they had to work through a variety of opinions about how to represent Wofford and the United States within the video. Because the Wofford students had already learned about and communicated with their AUB partners through the Facebook page, they were particularly aware of how their film might be received. For example, one student included a short shot of the US flag at half-staff. While some students thought this might amount to propaganda if included, others felt that this practice of honoring the dead through such a public symbol was an important cultural norm. Rather than censoring the image, the group decided to keep the clip of the flag in

the final film because it would allow them to discuss it directly in the virtual exchange so that they could understand how particular images were interpreted in different cultural contexts. Working through these technical challenges and differing perspectives within their own culture made them much more aware of the ways in which representation is shaped by both the affordances of the medium and the context of development (Life in a Day: Wofford Edition: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12sWmaT0ggs).

Discussion

This methodology requires technology, and technologies can fail. On both sides we had technological issues. Patience is required, and fast thinking on your feet for possible solutions is very necessary. Time zone problems were also difficult when trying to find a time that worked for both parties. Varying levels of English fluency created comprehension problems. This is not to be critical, as we of course did not have sufficient Arabic knowledge to even attempt doing the virtual exchange in Arabic, but this is a key inequality of the virtual exchange: English being the assumed conversational method.

Strategies that worked very well were the use of Facebook and blogs so that one could overcome the time zone problems in that students could post when was convenient for them on the group Facebook page and time could be taken to edit student's posts regarding the use of English. Skype was at time very effective but at other times very frustrating: internet connection issues, varying levels of English competency, and so forth diminished the quality of interactions. In the future we would reduce the number of Skype interactions and bolster projects and assignments that utilized the Facebook Group interactions.

The feedback solicited from students illustrates how impactful the virtual exchange was for teaching intercultural competency through this type of digital humanities project. Students are asked to discuss their own culture and learn from a peer about a culture that unfortunately, has many stereotypes and misunderstandings in a post-9/11 and post-ISIS United States.

Wofford Student Responses
Student 1:

The most significant change to me was how I viewed the students. The virtual exchange made it so that I view the students more like people, we [have] things in common, and not just entities across the seas to be studied. This occurred partially through the Facebook page but also through an extension of the Facebook page as students friended me on Facebook and we had conversations sometimes every single day and other times every few days. These conversations ranged from the virtual exchange itself to school to the general how our days are going.

It is significant because it is an actual discussion with someone in the region. It is not just reading a book and getting general knowledge but rather getting to know someone and by extension the culture and region they live in.

Student 2:

I found many similarities between Middle Eastern culture and Indian culture (some that I expected similarities, and some which weren't anticipated). I have learned to better appreciate the values and traditions that are followed by the people living there [the MENA region].

I think the Virtual Exchange program with Al-Azhar students was an amazing experience. It is so cool to be able to communicate with people half way across the world. I learned how similar the Egyptian students are to us. Obviously, there were differences; however, the students had a lot in common: love of sports, reading, and pop culture (music, dancing, Netflix, etc.). They were all talented people who spoke multiple languages and expressed a genuine interest in exchanging views and gaining awareness of popular US norms (Indian norms apply in my case).

The Virtual Exchange was so significant and beneficial to gain a better understanding of the Middle East. It is one thing to read a book or article on the region, and a whole other ball game when it comes to actually getting to interact with the people

who live there. (I, personally, am a huge fan of ethnography. I think the information that you receive from communicating with the people is so much more helpful in developing a better perspective of different people globally.) I strongly feel that this exchange program should be continued in upcoming years as well.

Student 3:

I have wanted to be a pediatric doctor all my life and I have wanted to do pro-bono work in the MENA region because there are a lot of incidents that happen there and they do not have the resources to truly help these children. I want to go to the countries that are underdeveloped so that parents can feel like there is hope for their child. I took this class hoping to learn more about how to interact with people from this region and then when we were told that we were going to be communicating through Facebook I thought to myself that I was going to be thrown headfirst into what I have always wanted to experience. I enjoyed seeing their posts and seeing the similarities and the differences that we share in our culture. Also, the Skype sessions were great because during the second one we were telling stories and many of them found the things that we did amusing. I feel like my access to this opportunity was the best way for me to learn about cultural sensitivity because we were told about things that we were not allowed to say. I really enjoyed this chance because personally I got to see how I interacted with people from this region and I learned a large amount about how to be respectful of another person's culture and this has pushed me to really want to accomplish my goal so that I can help people from this region.

I think this is a significant story because it shows that this was me jumping headfirst and getting in early on the future I want for myself and this experience has given me the push to want to study abroad and go to a country in the MENA region. I cannot wait to get to experience this first hand.

I have never participated in something like this before so this was a whole new experience for me

and I was very fortunate to get to experience this because it helped me to solidify what I want for my future and has shown me aspects that can help me here in the United States because of the diverseness that is here too and I have learned a lot about how to react to people of other cultures and that there are many differences between my own and theirs and I would love to get to experience other cultures one day too.

The student reflections demonstrate a number of common themes. First, US students were able to move beyond seeing the Middle East as monolithic culture filled with stereotypical characters and connect with their Middle Eastern peers on a human level, with multiple students citing common interests in movies, television, and food that ultimately humanized the people of Lebanon and Egypt. Student 3, for example, approached the exchange with the intention of one day helping "underdeveloped" countries, an unfortunate stereotype of many countries in the region, but the student ultimately recognizes similarities – both positive and negative - between the United States and the Middle East that should make the student a more effective doctor, whether in the US or abroad.

The personal interactions afforded by the exchange were deemed to be far more effective than reading about the region, and some students reported broadening their contact with the Al Azhar and AUB students beyond the confines of the Facebook group. The desire for more interaction motivated some students to explore studying abroad in a MENA country, and overall, increased empathy was reported by most students.

Conclusion

As the field of Digital Humanities is, itself, an emergent collection of practices, pedagogies, and projects, it provided an ideal framework for developing our Virtual Exchange activities. As Lisa Spiro (2010) asserts, the Digital Humanities illuminate a significant horizon because they are focused on "how the humanities may evolve through their engagement with technology, media, and computational methods." Spiro's assertion is

that contact with new forms of processing, or thinking, changes the way in which participants themselves think. The virtual exchange linked students across a vast geographic barrier and allowed the classroom's power dynamic to turn on its head: students became the producers and gatekeepers of the knowledge shared and disseminated about their culture. The most important accomplishment of this project was linking students across cultures and providing a safe virtual space for communication and learning. A virtual exchange can be easily replicated in other classroom settings, thanks to the free and easy to operate social media tools we utilized. It takes a contact between two institutions to get such an exchange going, but it is established, this method can be implemented to connect students from various cultures to have a lived cultural experience that increases intercultural competency.

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Teaching Across Cultures: Navigating Teacher Candidates' Perceptions of Multicultural Education in China

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Introduction

The People's Republic of China is a multiethnic, multilingual, and multicultural country, which is governed by a single party government, the Communist Party (Leibold and Chen 2014). China is also the world's most populous country with 56 different ethnic groups (Leibold and Chen 2014). It claims to advocate "diversity in unity of the Chinese nation" (Wang 2004, p. 358). Hans are the dominant ethnic group. The other 55 ethnic groups are regarded as minorities (Leibold and Chen 2014). Han culture is the mainstream of the society and Mandarin is the official language and required for all groups in China (Wang 2004). Historically, most minority groups live on the frontiers of mainland China (Zhao 2007). The majority of minority areas are underpopulated in comparison to the residential areas of the Hans. Along with the social transformation and urbanization processes, the number of minorities has been increasing, especially in metropolitan cities since the Chinese government started enabling the migration movement of people for both economic development and the improvement of individual living standards (Iredale and Guo 2003).

China's ethnic policy holds that the country is composed of 56 ethnic groups, with emphasis on both political integration and cultural diversification (Postiglione 2000). From the foundation of The People's Republic of China, various policies and reforms were implemented to improve national minority education quality. Despite the central government's concerns ethnic minorities are still often linked to biased cultural representation and stereotypical images in mainstream society (Zhao 2007). Many Hans hold deficit attitudes toward non-Han groups and "label them as barbarians" (Zhao 2007, p.4). As David Hansen (1999) points out that instead of correcting Han biased and negative images of minority groups, the Chinese central government and state education play a role in "reproducing notions of cultural inequity in the process of unifying the whole nation" (p.159). The national policy of assimilating minority groups into Han culture magnifies Han dominance and neglects non-Han cultures in teaching multiethnic students (Zhao 2007). While minority songs, clothing, and dances are celebrated and ethnic artifacts are preserved, the prescription for modernization includes education as cultural assimilation. This historically rooted stereotype has negative influences on cultural representations and educational experiences of minorities and their cultures in mainstream society, while the ethnic majority Han culture is represented as valued, modern, and normal.

The changing student populations and diverse cultural backgrounds in mainstream classrooms pose questions for teachers to rethink how to bridge cultural gaps between ethnic minority students and their peers, and teachers from the majority cultural and ethnic group. Recognizing multiple cultural differences among student culture, school culture, and teachers' culture may contribute to reducing cultural clashes. In any discussion of reducing cultural mismatch, teachers' competence in diversity is essential to better facilitating multicultural student learning. But so is determining how to multiculturalize the content of teacher education programs. When these elements are absent in the process of educating prospective teachers, a teaching training and teaching practice gap will be created and result in teachers misreading students' learning abilities.

Challenges of Teaching Multicultural and Multiethnic Students

The increasing diverse student population, the homogeneous teaching force and the declining enrollments of ethnic minority students in teacher education programs worldwide expands the "demographic divide" (Gay 2000). The racial and ethnic makeup of the teaching population in China is homogeneous, middle class, female, and Han dominant (Wang 2004). The decline of minority participation in the teaching force and teacher education programs at colleges and universities decreases prospective teachers' cultural sensitivity and awareness towards students from multicultural backgrounds. Teachers tend not to have the same cultural frames of reference and points of view as their students because, as Geneva Gay (2018) suggested, those teachers live in different existential worlds. Consequently, these preservice teachers often have difficulty functioning as effective role models for diverse students (Villegas and Lucas 2002), or serving as cultural brokers and cultural agents (Gay 2018) who can assist students bridging home-school differences and cultural gaps. They also often have difficulty constructing curriculum, instruction, and interactional patterns that are culturally responsive, which indicates that the students in the greatest academic need are least likely to have access to educational opportunities congruent with their life experiences and cultural heritages (Cochran-Smith 2004). According to Gerard Postiglione (2007, p. 94), "the demand by ethnic minorities for schools and teachers to elevate the status of their home culture within the national education framework has become an urgent issue with the increasing minority student population in schools." As Postiglione (2007) argued, the lack of cultural recognition and representation of ethnic minority students in schools limits meaningful access to education in China for its ethnic minorities, thereby sustaining their patterns of underachievement.

The lack of multicultural knowledge, attitudes, and skills about cultural and racial dimensions of learning can lead to inequitable instructional practices. A chain reaction of consequences broadens the pedagogical gap between teaching preparation and practice, and the learning outcomes of minority students. Yangbin Chen (2014) recounted her experience in observing an inland Tibetan class in Sichuan Province, where the Han majority teachers had very little knowledge of their Tibetan students' culture traditions, values, learning styles, and home languages and the impact of these on second language (Mandarin Chinese) learning processes and academic outcomes. The majority Han teachers had lower expectations for Tibetan students, some even kept a respectful distance from these students due to their low academic performance, and the misinterpretation of their ethnic and cultural origins as barbarous and backward.

Ethnic minority education in China is an integral part of the education system (Chapman, Chen, and Postiglione 2000). The number of ethnic minority students attending all levels of the education system has increased in recent years. Based on research conducted by Chapman and his colleagues, the proportion of ethnic minority students equals or exceeds their proportion in the national population in primary schools and in normal schools. As Mistilina Sato (2014) pointed out, China has experienced a history of concentrating resources in the eastern part of the country so that its education system is also experiencing an unbalanced growth in urban centers and the rural west. In recent years, many ethnic minority students move for the purpose of getting better education and this desire for high quality education in urban cities leads to a higher rate of migration from rural minority regions to urban Han residency areas (Iredale, Bilik, and Guo 2003). With the rapid urbanization and social transformation in China, there is a frequent flow of labor migration which increases interactions and contacts among people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. For example, ethnic minority workers from the western border migrate to the more affluent eastern coast provinces to work and live among the majority Hans. Schools in urban cities such as Beijing and Shanghai now have more ethnic minority students than before. Having experienced little encounter with and knowledge of minority people's cultures, values, and learning styles, Han teachers may hold stereotypes and prejudices about their minority students (Ma 2007).

Many teacher candidates from majority cultural and racial groups in different countries are often not well prepared professional to effectively work with culturally diverse students. They do not obtain the necessary multicultural knowledge base through their studies in teacher education programs. Yu (2014) investigated the lack of ethnic and cultural knowledge and course preparation for Han teacher candidates in his study of 120 colleges and normal universities from over 30 inland provinces in China. His findings showed that most of Han teachers and teacher candidates do not know how to deal with multiple issues regarding cultural and ethnic diversity and differences especially in urban cities. In working with increasing diverse student populations in urban cities in China, a critical question the dominant Han teachers must ask is, "what teaching perceptions and educational practices are in place to effectively communicate and teach multicultural and multiethnic students?" Inequitable educational practices for ethnic minority students have been documented in the United States and China, but the gap has been less fully investigated in association with culture and ethnic majority teachers' inequitable multicultural awareness, knowledgebase, and pedagogy especially in China's context. Further research is needed to explore how it operates in multicultural classrooms, such as for students from a variety of minority backgrounds and their dominant Han teachers. Ethnic minority students in urban cities in China are facing struggles over cultural and linguistic pluralism, ethnic and cultural hierarch in the mainstream society, continuing large-scale migration, unequal distribution of educational resources, and inequitable teaching preparation and practice especially for Han teachers and teacher candidates.

Theoretical Framework

Competent teachers are essential to improving the quality of education for students. Becoming a culturally responsive Han teacher is a multi-dimensional process. Based on related research, essential components of dimensions include the six identified components: Teacher attitudes, cultural knowledge base, culturally responsive

pedagogy, instructional material, positive interactions, and relationships with community. This study is guided by the theory of culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay 2018). Gay (2018) mentioned that teaching practices can play an essential role in reducing institutional racism and achievement gaps, as well as improving minority students' self-esteem, identities, and learning engagements and academic outcomes. Culturally responsive pedagogy involves informing teaching content with diversity; equips dynamic instructional methods with academic rigor; develops equity within the mainstream and students' cultural contexts; focuses on improving academic outcomes for minority students (Banks and McGee Banks 2004; Gay 2018).

Culturally responsive pedagogy provides guidelines for teachers to become "cultural mediators" (Sleeter and Cornbleth 2011) or brokers who can demonstrate respect and caring for students as well as make subject matter content more accessible and meaningful for minority students (Gay 2018; Sleeter and Cornbleth 2011). As such, culturally responsive teachers can and should be as cultural brokers (Lipka 1998), cultural translators (Lomawaima 2004), and warm demanders (Gay 2018). As Gay (2000, p. 29) indicated, culturally responsive teaching teaches to and through strengths of multicultural students; it is "culturally validating and affirming." It is more than a means to improve minority students' standardized test scores. Most importantly, it can improve instructional quality by inspiring teachers from the majority group to be critically reflective about what they know about their students' knowledge backgrounds and cultural heritages, and what conflicts might exist between their cultural knowledge and their students. According to Yang Lv (2004, p. 91), "this is especially important in China's educational context, where teaching materials and practices still do not fully embody and reflect the cultural diversity and needs of minority students." More scholars in China start to concern about the effects of negative stereotypes about minority students' cultures and the lack of minority representations and knowledge in school curricula and textbooks (Leibold and Chen 2014). Wang (2013) noted that Han Chinese-centered culture and knowledge constitute the content of the National College Entrance

Examination. Little attention has been giving to the culture and knowledge of minority groups in this national examination, which implies that the mastery of Han culture and knowledge equals to a good university to attend, a well-paid job after graduation, and a better life and bright future (Wang 2013).

In addition to recognizing that minority students bring rich funds of knowledge to their learning experiences, teachers can do much to modify their approaches to instruction. Educational equity and excellence for students from all ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds are unattainable without the incorporation of cultural and racial pluralism in all aspects of the educational system (Yuan 2017). The purpose of this article is to explore preservice Han teachers' perspectives of multicultural education in order to enhance institutional quality and effectively prepare culturally responsive Han teachers for multicultural and multiethnic students in China. This study navigated this research purpose through a qualitative approach to answer the research question "What are preservice Han teachers' perceptions of multiculturalism and of their teacher education programs in addressing and preparing them to be culturally responsive teachers for diverse students in China?"

Methodology

This study used a qualitative research approach, followed a basic interpretive format (Merriam 2009). Qualitative research is a useful way to explore Han preservice teachers' views of their professional preparation and fieldwork experiences with respect to teaching ethnically and culturally diverse students; their understanding of ethnic and cultural effects on minority students' learning; and how their teacher education programs incorporate knowledge, attitudes, and skills for culturally responsive teaching. Based on the research purpose of identifying preservice Han teachers' perceptions of their teacher education programs in addressing and preparing them to be culturally responsive teachers, the targeted study participants were Han teacher education students (who are called normal students) in a normal university in Beijing.

Participants were five Han teacher candidates enrolled in the teacher education programs at a major teacher education institution in China: Central Normal University, who will become K-12 school teachers after graduation. There were three females and two males. Participants were either 22 or 23 years old. All were in the fourth year of college studies and four of the five participants taught in middle schools. These preservice teachers were selected from a range of different compulsory subjects taught in schools, including Math, Chinese, English, Science, and Social Science. It was important to have variation in the subjects preservice teachers teach, while selecting disciplines that mostly needed a culturally responsive pedagogy that could connect with students' daily lives. Therefore Liberal Arts and Social Science subjects were targeted for identifying participants. Interviews were the major source of data for this study. They were helpful in capturing participants' perspectives, attitudes, strategies, and reflections. Interviews lasted for 45-60 minutes and were designed for in-depth exploration of the experience of the researched individuals (Charmaz 2006). The interview questions were all semi-structured, following the general flow of opening questions, intermediate questions, and ending questions to gradually address the three primary research questions of this study. All interviews were audio recorded on a digital device and subsequently transcribed, analyzed, and coded to search for common themes and sub-themes. During the interview, field notes also were taken to provide descriptions of the interview settings and the researcher's comments or reflections. Field notes also were taken during the coding process. Digital recordings were used for the interviews which were later transcribed by the researcher. As suggested by Erickson (1986, p. 149), transcripts of interviews were read multiple times to achieve "a more holistic conception of the content." The transcripts were carefully analyzed, using open coding and focused coding to develop themes according to the patterns derived from the hand-coded data (Strauss and Corbin 1998).

Findings

Puzzling Attitudes towards Multiculturalism and Diversity

All teacher candidates' impressions and conceptions of multiculturalism consisted mainly of Western (especially US) culture and Chinese culture. Participant A said, "When we talk about multiculturalism, it is not 'multi' as it is supposed to be. In most cases it is more like biculturalism---Western and Chinese cultures." Most of the other teacher candidate participants agreed with the wide spread "biculturalism" and the binary diversity created by this cultural paradigm. As she declared further, "I think the concept of multiculturalism is imported from the West, especially from the United States. This leads to the pervasive impact of Western culture on our conceptions and knowledge construction of diversity." Participant B agreed in that, "We [do not] have a clear understanding of multiculturalism in China, because the concept of cultural diversity we are so familiar with is closely tied to the Western context."

Participant C was confused about diversity because of cultural encounters in her daily life and schooling experience. She said, "When I think of diversity, I connect it to difference. Obviously Western culture is very different from Chinese culture. This difference is so visible because we learn English and Western history at school. Diversity within our Chinese society seems invisible." The cultural confusion in the context of globalization resulted in an imbalance of cultural recognition and appreciation. Western culture (especially US culture) has been central to the Chinese experience of diversity and modernity. This conception limits diversity in China to the five ethnic autonomous regions, where indigenous diversities are visible and distinctive. Therefore, there was a perception gap of diversity and multiculturalism between Western culture, Chinese majority culture, and ethnic minority Chinese culture. The ambiguous perception and vague definition of multiculturalism narrowed the concepts of diversity and culture to visible diversity and distinctive culture, which created a visibility gap within China's context of multicultural education. Consequently, the split conceptions of diversity divided the content of multicultural education and converted multicultural education in China into multi-ethnic education in ethnic autonomous regions. This cultural and diversity conception affected the diversity awareness and formation of cultural knowledge of prospective Han teachers in China.

Popularizing Western Culture

The five teacher candidates were concerned about the overemphasis on Western culture in Chinese schools and in daily life. Participant D mentioned the excessive promotion of US culture and the global impact of English. According to him, "People are intensely curious about Western developed countries especially the United States. We are eagerly interested in knowing and learning from America because it becomes the shining beacon of civilization and modernization." He also recalled that during his K-12 experience learning English and how it was pervasive and fundamental over other cultural and linguistic diversities. He commented that, "We learn English from kindergarten to university, because mastering English represents higher social status. Although we have hundreds of indigenous languages and dialects, few people are willing to master them."

Participant E described one of his onsite observation experiences in Urumqi, where the promotion of trilingual education (Mandarin, English, and Uygur) encountered resistance from local Uygur students and parents. He recalled, "Uygur parents concerned about the overemphasis on English and some of them considered this as 'cultural invasion'." Popularizing Western culture not only formally impacted school education, but also informally shaped people's diversity awareness and cultural appreciation between Westernized culture and indigenous Chinese culture. The value attached to English and Western culture leads to an unequal distribution of cross-cultural courses in schools, and an unbalanced focus between Western culture and Chinese culture.

Unifying Chinese Culture

All participants mentioned the significance of maintaining China's national unity and social stability. Developing a solid understanding of Han Chinese culture played an essential role in the moral, civic, and national education experiences of all participants. Since

Han is the dominant ethnic group, the pervasiveness of Han culture and social capital hold a significant position. This ethnic-cultural hierarchy also reinforced the construction of a unified Chinese culture and society based on Han ideologies and social capital. As participant E admitted,

> Although we acknowledge we have 56 ethnicities and non-Han ethnic groups bring their cultures into our society through attending schools and engaging in social activities, the mainstream culture, such as academic culture, economic culture, and political culture are still based on Han-centric culture.

The ethnic-cultural hierarchy was notably present in teacher candidates' volunteering in remoted ethnic regions. For example, participant A recalled from her volunteer teaching experience in Liangshan, that the Yi students there had a strong desire to leave the area because their hometown was synonymous with underdevelopment, and their ethnicity and culture were usually portrayed as benign and uncivilized. She explained,

> One of my students told me that he hoped to attend a Han-led school. Compared to local school, Han-led schools have more qualified teachers and a much better learning environment. But some inland public schools have stereotyped impressions of us. He expressed a common sentiment shared by many of my Yi students that if he were a Han, he would be more likely to succeed, such as to attend a prestigious university and get a decent job.

Participant D linked his personal experience to the formation of the unified Chinese (Han) culture and social ideology. He mentioned that, "When we talk about Chinese culture, we simultaneously think of the traditional Chinese culture which is based on Confucianism. Within the one single unified cultural concept of 'traditional Chinese culture', figures and voices of other groups seem to be silenced." Participant B stated further that, "Because we always say 'One China', the image of 'being the One' is deeply rooted in our minds. Sometimes we tend to ignore who makes up the 'One', and how we are different from each other during the process of making up the 'One'."

Blurring Minority Cultures and Ethnic Diversity

"We are all Chinese people." This was a frequently mentioned statement during the interviews with teacher candidates. "I cannot differentiate ethnic minorities from Han. We all look the same, except for Uygur and Tibetan people." Participant C described her previous experience and understanding of ethnic diversity as a blank paper in stating that, "Our understandings of minority groups are very limited. We can name major ethnic groups, but that is all I know about them. Moreover, like many Hans who grow up in Beijing, we lack a living sense of ethnic diversity." Participant E attributed this monotonous ethnic awareness to unclear ethnic distinctions, and the missing indigenous language heritage of minority groups. He elaborated,

> Generally speaking, the impact of ethnic minority culture and language is very limited compared to Han culture and the official status of Mandarin. Ethnic minorities have already been assimilated into Han. Although I experienced ethnic diversity due to the influence of my living community [Hui], most of Hui in Beijing no longer speak Hui language. I used to have ethnic minority classmates from Manchu, Mongolian, Oroqen, Xibes, and Hui ethnicities. No more than three of them could speak their indigenous languages. The rest of them no longer speak their indigenous languages for several generations. They told me they inherited nothing but the name of their ethnicities---just like wearing an ethnic hat.

The five teacher candidates also indicated that although ethnic minority cultures contributed to the rich context of diversity in China, the social impact, public awareness, and recognition of ethnic diversity were diminished. The national process and policy of ethnic integration and cultural assimilation homogenized ethnic minority cultures and languages, and reduced ethnic diversity awareness in urban Han-led cities. The diminishing minority presence in daily life created cultural distance from ethnic minority people and resulted in "ethnic blindness" among Hans in urban cities. Participant B summarized this process and the challenges within it, "Ethnic diversity is among us, but it is far away from us. People take for granted that there are no cross-ethnicity barriers because we imagine that

minorities are always happily adapting to our society. However the reality tells a different story."

Symbolized Cultural Representation and Knowledge of Minority Groups

All teacher candidates mentioned that geographic distance from minority groups limited multicultural living experiences, caused ethnic-blindness towards indigenous diversity, and created cultural and conceptual gaps between Hans and people from other ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The potential for cultural dissonance between majority Han teachers and their future multicultural students necessitated preservice teachers developing multicultural awareness, knowledge base, and instructional practice to achieve educational equity and excellence for students from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Unfortunately, the preservice teachers in this study reported limited knowledge of others. Their knowledge construction of others occurred primarily through K-12 education, informal learning in life through mass media, and social interactions with minority peers.

The academic knowledge of minority groups tended to be general, descriptive, and symbolized conceptions. Teacher candidates indicated that they learned about ethnic minority groups from courses in Chinese, morality and society, moral and education life, and history and politics. Although there were many course options to learn about other ethnicities, the knowledge received by students was mainly superficial. Participant B described the background knowledge of ethnic minority groups as "based on numbers [55 ethnic minority groups] and national slogans such as 'we are a big harmonious family'." Participant A added that, "The text and paragraphs of ethnic minority people can be summarized as 'happy and extroverted others'. My knowledge base and impressions of minority groups are still linked to the pictures of dancing and singing people who are wearing ethnic costumes." In addition to limited cultural knowledge and formal education of ethnic minority groups, social media transmit stereotypical impressions of cultural others. Participant C mentioned her hesitance to do volunteer teaching in Liangshan and Xinjiang because the media portrayed indigenous people in those regions as backwards.

Through reconsidering the definition of diversity, its significance in building relationships with others, and how to better understand students from historically marginalized ethnicities, teacher candidates and teacher educators in this study thought preservice education should reduce stereotypic beliefs of ethnic minority students, build cross-cultural skills, and obtain a broaden cultural knowledge base. However, most teacher education students in inland cities of China have limited awareness of cultural diversity and ethnic pluralism due to the superficial level of multiethnic and multicultural education in K-12 schools and postsecondary education.

Inadequate Academic Preparation in Teaching for Diversity

The traditional university-based teacher education curricula in China follow the Han-centric perspectives and focus on subject content knowledge and pedagogy (Zhang 2002; Bai 2005; Jin and Jin 2016). The curricula for pre-service teacher training at Central Normal University included: general education, subject-content education, teacher education, and field-work education. The teacher candidates mentioned the overemphasis on subject knowledge and how it limited the importance of sociocultural contexts of teaching. Participant D said, "I don't think our programs address the issue of diversity and sociocultural context of teaching."

Due to the commonly defined teacher competence as subject competence, the sociocultural impacts on teaching are usually ignored. Participant E added, "The majority of teacher candidates and teacher educators rarely pay attention to the issue of diversity and preparing teachers for diversity. They lack cultural or ethnic connections to minority groups and living experiences in diverse communities and cross-cultural environments." The limited presence of multicultural education in teacher education curricula and courses, along with teacher education students' insufficient pedagogical skills training and limited practical experiences in diverse placements created another fundamental problem. This was a growing cultural mismatch between prospective teachers and their multicultural students.

Discussion and Recommendations

A variety of studies that focused on multicultural education theory in China raised large amount of concerns, many of which are similar to those expressed by the participants in this study. For example, Geng (2013) questioned how to convert the multicultural theory into practice under the Chinese educational system. Jin (2009) noted that despite attention to situating multicultural education into China's context, theoretical and conceptual ideas have not been implemented very well in preservice and in-service teacher development. Most Han teachers do not understand cultural influences on teaching and learning, and they do not know how to respond to the needs of diverse students in multicultural schooling environments. These claims were confirmed by the results of this study and suggested that it is important to raise the multicultural awareness of teacher candidates in China. While teacher candidates in this study acknowledged the significance of ethnic minority culture and western culture, they stressed that their acceptance of the existence of various cultural heritages and ethnic diversities was not transformed into teaching strategies before and after entering in teacher education programs.

The findings of this study also revealed that conceptions of multiculturalism in China tend to be rather narrow in substantive focus, and limited to ethnic minority groups within minority autonomous regions in China. While this is quite common, it is contrary to much of current theoretical characterizations of multicultural education in both China and other countries such as the United States. As Wang (2012) pointed out cultural diversity and cultural sensitivity should not be limited to ethnically diverse groups in ethnic minority regions. In doing so, multicultural awareness and cultural competence will be neglected in urban cities and urban teacher education institutions. Wang and Gou (2012) suggested that the development of multicultural competence need to include both regional characteristics and national emphases. The teacher candidates and teacher educators in this study endorsed these ideas.

Teacher candidate participants also attributed their ambiguous conceptions and insufficient multicultural knowledge to limited exposure to diversity and inadequate academic training. The knowledge and skills they did have were acquired primarily from social interactions and volunteer teaching experiences rather than academic education and professional development. Consequently, their perceptions, knowledge, and pedagogy were often inconsistent with multicultural education academic theory, research, and scholarship. Their understandings of the scope of multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy needed more specificity and clarity to be appropriately applied in multicultural and multiethnic schools.

Ethnic and cultural diversity in China has been increased and enriched by globalization and urbanization. The unbalanced economic development and the unequal distribution of quality educational resources and opportunities have made improving rural education, ethnic minority education, and education for all Chinese students significant and urgent. Increasingly teachers are facing students from diverse socioeconomic, ethnic, cultural, and racial backgrounds. Previous research in other nations on improving teacher qualities and classroom practices with historically marginalized rural, migrant, immigrant, and ethnic minority students have identified teachers' cultural diversity competence as a major contributing factor. However, as Wang and Gou (2012) reported, both ethnic minority teacher education and teacher education in general in China largely ignores the significance of social and cultural impacts on teaching and learning. Scholarship on eliminating educational inequalities in China's educational systems mainly focuses on training ethnic minority and rural teachers for ethnic minority and rural students in ethnic autonomous and rural regions. This study symbolized both continuity and change in addressing these issues. Its orientation and results are consistent with the findings of previous scholarship on the importance and manifestations of teacher education for and about cultural diversity, and with the potential change that could result from better preparing Han preservice teachers in mainstream teacher education institutions for teaching ethnic and

cultural minority students in different contexts throughout China.

Teachers need much more training in how to value, affirm, and maximize the rich cultural heritages their multicultural students bring to classrooms. In this regard, prospective teachers should be educated to differentiate curriculum, instruction, interaction, and assessment to better facilitate success in minority students' learning at schools. Since teacher education programs play a crucial role in determining teachers' attitudes and actions toward diversity and their preparation programs should be much more explicit and comprehensive in developing dispositions and skills for culturally relevant teaching for ethnic minority, rural, and immigrant students in different living and learning contexts. The application of these competences may vary somewhat by location, ethnic group, teachers, and subjects being taught, but these different variations do not invalidate the necessity for multicultural teaching and learning.

Regarding the increasing diversity of the student population in China, teacher education institutions attempt to reduce the demographic divide and cultural mismatch by recruiting ethnic minority and international students through free normal education programs, and diversifying the faculty population. Zhou and Liu (2013) also demonstrated the importance of increasing cultural and ethnic diversities in urban teacher education institutions. They associated this demographic diversity with the improvement of cultural sensitivity and multicultural representation in dominant ethnic and cultural environment. However it is also important to improve majority Han teacher candidates' cultural awareness, knowledge, sensitivity, and skills. Both areas of growth should be pursued aggressively in the future.

In order for new teachers to translate their knowledge of culturally responsive teaching into practice with multicultural students, they need to connect to and be trained in diverse learning communities. Field experiences contribute to the preparation of culturally responsive teachers in a number of ways through offering prospective teachers opportunities to build a contextualized understanding of culturally responsive

teaching and multicultural education by getting them out of the university classroom and into schools and communities. Based on preservice teachers' demands for more cross-cultural and cross-ethnic teaching placements, more research is needed to explore how diverse teacher education programs implement practicum training and volunteer-teaching placements, and how these clinical experiences in diverse communities can be better integrated into teacher candidates' multicultural competences and practices.

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The Long-Term Effects of International Student Teaching Placements: Implications for Policy and Practice in Higher Education

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Introduction

University teacher education majors in the United States participate in student teaching as a requirement for their degree programs. During student teaching, students observe veteran elementary and secondary school teachers teaching classes and also practice their own teaching skills by instructing children. These practice teaching experiences are under the supervision and guidance of experienced teachers and university faculty.

Some universities offer the opportunity for education majors to do their student teaching abroad. NAFSA: The Association of International Educators (NAFSA) asserts that, "Through internationalization of curriculums and programs in teacher education, colleges of education can foster the formation of teachers with a global vision and global understanding who can contribute to the education of tomorrow's global citizens" (NAFSA 2010). The National Council for the Accreditors of Teacher Education (NCATE), which accredits university teacher education programs, concurs stating that the primary goal of teacher preparation experiences abroad is to foster global perspectives in future teachers (NCATE 2008).

The perceptions of university student teachers who participated in international student teaching are well documented in the literature. Student teachers anticipate benefits to their future as teachers including having greater: global vision and competence (Kissock and Richardson 2009; NAFSA 2010; NCATE 2008); personal awareness and self-confidence (Bradley, Quinn and Morton 2009; Kissock and Richardson, 2009; Martin 2012; Marx and Moss, 2011; Stachowski and Brantmeier 2002; Wilson 2009; Wilson and

Flournay 2007); job opportunities (Bradley, Quinn and Morton 2009; Richardson and Kissock 2009); and increased ability to self-reflect on their professional practice and implement change (Gaudino, Moss and Wilson 2012). There is scant literature involving studies with classroom teachers who previously student taught abroad to determine the lasting effects of student teaching abroad, if any, on their careers and teaching. Were the benefits anticipated by student teachers who student taught abroad the actual benefits teachers who student taught abroad experienced? This study attempted to fill this gap by interviewing a university coordinator of an abroad student teaching program and alumni of the program who are now practicing educators and providing recommendations for university international student teaching programs.

This study, conducted in the summer of 2017, was designed to examine the long-term effects of international student teaching placements on teachers. Twenty eight study participants were enrolled in an international student teaching placement in five cohorts between 2009 and 2013, and all responded to the call to participate in this study. These participants had been placed in three different schools in the United Kingdom for an eight-week period of student teaching. At the time of the study, all participants were in teaching or related educational careers. How do these interviews reflect, or not, the current understanding of the need to provide university teacher candidates with a world view that reflects the current population of today's students? More than that, how will research probing the teaching lives of future teachers who participated in international placements add to the discourse surrounding expectations of teachers and university teacher

preparation programs in the twenty first century? These were the questions guiding this study.

Analysis of the participant narratives provided a holistic picture of ways in which study participants continue to reflect on the impact of the international placements. Teacher participants reported significant positive effects on their career and professional practice as a result of their experience student teaching abroad including developing: increased cultural awareness and ability to differentiate instruction for diverse learners; personal confidence and classroom management skills; the ability to provide holistic instruction; the ability to self-reflect on professional practice and implement change; a desire to be selective in pursuing and accepting teaching positions; and increased job opportunity. Based on existing literature and the findings of this study, this paper provides recommendations for policy and practice in university international student teaching programs.

Theoretical Framework and Perspective

This study is grounded in the framework of ethnocentrism and ethnorelativsm as presented in the Bennett's (2004) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (M. Bennett 1986, 1993; J. Bennett and M. Bennett 2003, 2004). DMIS was developed with a grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990) using theoretical concepts to explain patterns that emerge from systematic observation (Bennett 2004). Bennett (2004) described ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism as existing on a spectrum of six development stages of cultural difference experience through which one may progress: Denial of cultural difference; defense against cultural difference; minimization of cultural difference; acceptance of cultural difference; adaptation to cultural difference; and integration of cultural difference.

Teachers who are ethnocentric rely on their own culture as central to their reality whereas teachers who achieve ethnorelativism experience their "own beliefs and behaviors as just one organization of reality among many viable possibilities" (Bennett 2004, p. 1). The DMIS purports that interaction with cultural difference generates pressure for change in one's worldview. This happens because the individual's ethnocentric worldview, which has been sufficient for managing relations within his or her own culture, is inadequate for developing and maintaining new, necessary cross-cultural social relations. This need for such cross-cultural relations creates pressure to develop greater competence in intercultural matters. This distinction is important because it supports that developmental interventions, such as international student teaching programs, are appropriately aimed at expanding student teachers' worldview towards ethnorelativism.

This theoretical perspective holds the significance of providing varied contexts within which future teachers develop understandings critical to educating students in the twenty first century (Bennet 2004; Cushner 2007). Bryan and Sprague (1997) concluded that the abroad student teaching experience had positive effects for teachers in initial hiring, retention in teaching, attitudes towards students, attitudes towards a second language, curriculum choices, teaching flexibility, and teaching strategies. Teachers overwhelmingly stated that the abroad experience helped them to get a job and also remain in the teaching field. Teachers gained respect for individual differences of students and cultural differences and learned to be flexible in teaching in varied places, with varied resources, and diverse students. DeVillar and Jiang (2012) concluded that teachers who previously student taught abroad: learned to teach creatively and flexibly; developed an appreciation for the resources available in classrooms in the United States; transferred and adapted certain techniques to their US classrooms in accordance with classroom needs; and found it difficult to integrate some practices into US contexts which are more standards and test driven.

Methodology
Participants

In designing this study, the faculty director was interviewed individually and in-person. The purpose of the interview was to gather information about the history, development, implementation, and goals of the program from the faculty director who was both the

founder and director. Data was collected via recording and hand-written notes by the researcher.

The director provided the lead researcher with the contact details of all program participants; once contacted, one hundred percent of the 28 alumni from the program participated in this study, and all were currently employed as educators. Focus group methodology was utilized in order to best understand and explore the perceptions of the teachers about how, if at all, their abroad student teaching experience had influenced them as teachers.

Defining Focus Group Interviews

Focus group methodology was chosen for this study in order to best understand and explore the perceptions of the teachers. Morgan (1998, p. 9) states that "focus groups are fundamentally a way of listening to people and learning from them." Focus groups "promote self-disclosure among participants… [which allows the researcher] to know what people really think and feel" (Krueger and Casey 2000, p. 7). Focus group interviews have five features including: "(1) people who (2) possess certain characteristics and (3) provide qualitative data (4) in a focused discussion (5) to help understand the topic of interest" (8). Krueger and Casey (2000, p. 26) assert that it is best to "plan three to four focus groups with any one type of participant", which provides a more accurate account of the participants' perception than one or two groups. Focus group interviews should be considered when trying to: understand the range of ideas or feelings that people have about something; understand the differences in perspectives between groups or categories of people (often, people in power see a situation or issue differently from those who are not); encourage ideas to emerge from a group; and gain information on qualitative data already collected (p. 24).

In particular, these interviews provided a broad range of narratives that expressed perspectives of the teachers participating in this study and reflected their eagerness to share their ideas with former colleagues. The questions posed to the focus groups were:

1. In what ways do you think student teaching abroad influenced the overall course of your career? Your teaching? Your professional practice?
2. Did your student teaching abroad affect your ability to reflect on your professional practice and implement change? How so?
3. Do you feel that your student teaching abroad benefitted you in the hiring process? How so?
4. In summary, what were the greatest benefits you experienced from student teaching abroad?
5. In summary, what were the greatest challenges you experienced from your international clinical experiences?
6. Are there any other topics you would like to discuss?

Procedures

Systematic steps were followed in each focus group. The researcher posed the question orally and, when participants finished responding to each question, a member check was performed by repeating back to participants the key points that they had raised and requesting their suggestions and confirmations. Member checking is a means of ensuring that the researcher has understood statements made by subjects and that subjects agree with the researcher's interpretation of their statements (Creswell 2014; Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, and Spiers 2002). The researcher's involvement in the focus group discussion was to read the questions, answer any questions from subjects who needed clarification on the questions, redirect conversation back to the question if the conversation became irrelevant to the question posed, conduct member checking, and ask subjects for further clarification of their responses if it appeared to be needed. The goal was to keep discussion focused on the questions and to limit the possibility of researcher perceptions and bias affecting the conversation.

Data were transferred to a Tape-Based Abridged Transcript by the researcher. Krueger and Casey (2000, p. 131) describe the Tape-Based Abridged Transcript approach by stating that it, "Relies on listening to a tape recording of each focus group and then developing an abridged transcript of the relevant and useful portions of the discussion . . . it is a condensed version of the focus group discussion with irrelevant conversation removed."

Data from the abridged transcript was organized using both NVivo software and a Long-Table Approach (Krueger 1998; Krueger and Casey 2000). Trends and patterns were coded and analyzed both within role alike groups representing each cohort and across the role alike groups representing all cohorts collectively.

Findings

The faculty director had a clear vision and viewed student teaching abroad as, "a way to help students become globally competent teachers who can teach diverse learners and be leaders of 21st century learning." She wanted students to, "understand the underlying pedagogical decisions and self-reflect on their professional practice and implement change." The faculty director also wanted to have a larger effect on their future lives as teachers by equipping her students with the ability and desire to be discerning in pursuing teaching positions and have an advantage in the hiring process.

Focus Group Responses

Participant responses in this study aligned with the vision of the faculty member and also indicated some additional findings. Foremost, study participants stated that student teaching abroad had a significant effect on their lives with many deeming their experience as "transformational to my life both professionally and personally." As a result of the experience, they selectively sought teaching positions that had some of the same attributes as in England and believe that their abroad student teaching experience has benefitted them in the hiring process. They felt that student teaching abroad was "key to being hired" because their districts "purposefully seek to hire teachers who have experience teaching in diverse settings including teaching abroad." They cited specific questions posed to them during interviews about their increased ability to teach diverse students and indicated that their districts formally recruit teachers with abroad experience and account for it in the hiring process.

Improved Cultural Awareness and Understanding and Ability to Differentiate Instruction for Diverse Learners

Participants also indicated that student teaching abroad increased their cultural awareness and understanding and ability to differentiate instruction for diverse learners. One participant summarized that, "This exposure to greater diversity in students, more detailed lesson planning, and teaching larger class sizes (30-40 students each) helped us to better understand and meet the needs of students when we assumed a teaching position." Another teacher spoke specifically to how student teaching abroad, "helped with empathizing with my students who are new to the country. My school is about 80 percent ESOL students and student teaching abroad with a diverse population of students helped me to know how to best meet the needs of these students."

Expanded Teaching Methods and Holistic Instruction

Participants asserted that the classroom environment and approach to teaching in England was "much more holistic," learner centered, promoted teacher and student creativity, and was not "stifled by standardized assessments like in America." They used a project-based learning approach to teach projects that incorporate many subjects. For example, they combined the teaching of music and space. The teacher played a recording of Holst's *The Planets* for students to discuss how music evokes feelings. Then students read poems about the planets. Finally, they studied about space in science class. In this way, teachers "could initiate curriculum" and had "more flexibility to teach" than in the US. As a result of experiencing this in their student teaching abroad, teachers stated that they both wanted to and were able to continue this holistic, problem-based approach to instruction immediately in their first year of teaching. They felt that this was a "significant expansion and enhancement of our teaching methods." As a result, they stated that they wanted to bring these practices into their teaching, however, several indicated that these practices "were not appreciated" in their school.

Increased Self-Confidence and Classroom Management Skills

Participants discussed how student teaching abroad helped them to become more confident as they assumed their first teaching position. While student teaching abroad, they had to, "adjust to a new culture, new

expectations, and deliver high-quality instruction and their success in doing so enhanced their confidence." They feel that meeting this immense challenge helped them to develop professional self-confidence. One stated, "The word I think about with student teaching abroad is perspective. Total immersion in the program and culture is a unique experience that I was very lucky to have. When I came back to the USA, I really felt ready for my own classroom." Another stated, "My horizons were so broadened because I had the opportunity to live and experience the culture" which was followed by the comment, "I felt like I had a first year teaching experience in England that allowed me to adjust to and better manage my own classroom when I was hired."

Increased Self-Reflection on Professional Practice to Implement Change

Participants indicated that the faculty director and cooperating teachers influenced their ability to self-reflect and make change to their professional practice. Prior to student teaching abroad and working with this faculty director, they stated that "little attention was paid to our ability to reflect on our professional practice and implement change." One student stated that the faculty director, "Encouraged us all along to self-reflect while we were here at in the USA and that continued and increased in England" while another commented that the faculty director, "developed a trusting atmosphere and taught us how to develop trusting relationships with other teachers so that we could collaborate and self-reflect together." Alumni felt that, in this way, the faculty director had prepared them very well for their experience in England where self-reflection on professional practice to implement change in teaching was the norm for teachers. All participants agreed that they brought this skill into their subsequent teaching positions and that this practice has helped them to "be more successful in our first years of teaching" and "deliver better instruction."

Discussion

Findings from this study add to the limited body of knowledge on this subject and aligned with some findings of Bryan and Sprague (1997) and DeVillar and Jiang (2012). Foremost were that every participant asserted their gratitude to the universities for offering an international student teaching experience, that they would recommend international student teaching, and some felt that it should even be a requirement for graduation. More specifically, participants felt that their international student teaching experience helped them to: gain respect for individual differences of students and cultural differences, learn to be flexible in their teaching, improve their classroom management skills, and acquire a job. Likewise, they felt that the techniques they had developed abroad were, at times, difficult to apply to classrooms in the United States due to the test-driven nature of education. Teachers in this study indicated a greater influence of student teaching abroad on their lives than previous studies including that they were: more selective of teaching positions; hired because of the experience, felt greater self-confidence in themselves and their teaching ability, and were better able to work with diverse student bodies. Finally, it is noteworthy that no participants indicated any drawbacks or negative effects to their teaching and professional practice as a result of student teaching abroad.

This study, along with the study by Gaudino, Moss, and Wilson (2011), found that teachers and student teachers indicated that student teaching abroad, and working with a faculty director and cooperating teacher who emphasized self-reflection, helped them to develop their ability to do so. The ability to self-reflect on professional practice and implement change is important in the career of the teacher as many states have moved towards a teacher evaluation system based on rubrics by Danielson (2007), Stronge (2009), or Marzano (2014) which place value on teacher reflection to improve practice.

Literature surrounding international clinical placements, along with this study, point to implications for university policy and practice. Student teachers who student taught abroad and teachers who previously student taught abroad, as well as national organizations, acknowledge benefits from student teaching abroad that cannot be realized in local, domestic placements. These benefits surround their development of a more

ethnorelativistic worldview which then positively influences teaching and professional practice as educators (Bennett 2004). Yet, international student teaching programs remain uncommon because there is a lack of support by university personnel towards international experiences (Kissock & Richardson, 2009; Peretz, 2001; West, 2009). Faculty opinions stated include: concern about meeting local standards, difficulty in supervising international experiences, and not recognizing the value of international clinical experiences.

Recommendations

Universities that do not offer an opportunity for student teaching abroad may want to pursue establishing such a program so that their students could have this type of opportunity to improve their practice. Universities need to acknowledge the contrasting perceptions regarding student teaching abroad that exist and work with faculty to resolve concerns in a way that benefits students. Additionally, accrediting bodies could provide incentives to institutions offering this option. While it may not be possible to require teaching abroad as an admission or graduation requirement, other means suggested in the literature can be utilized to enhance global educational awareness.

Universities should examine how their policies and practice can better assist education majors with developing reflective skills which are important to their professional practice. University supervisors and cooperating teachers are in a key position to assist teacher candidates with developing the skill of self-reflecting to improve professional practice. Universities should consider how they can assist supervisors and cooperating teachers with developing skills to lead these guided, cognitive discussions with teacher candidates. Accrediting bodies could support these efforts through policies requiring and assessing these aspects of education programs.

Finally, both the literature and subjects in this study suggest that teacher candidates who participate in international clinical experiences have an advantage in the job market. Clearly, there is widespread alignment in the beliefs of universities and supervisors, companies offering abroad student teaching experiences, student teachers, and teachers. However, there is no large-scale published data specifically relating international clinical experience and how it does or does not influence hiring. This is a substantive topic that warrants further investigation.

Conclusion

The primary university supporting the program described here withdrew support after the first five years (due to funding); the program leader successfully transferred the program to another university under the leadership of a former student and continues to provide support for that program. In conclusion, as faculty at two different institutions, both the primary researcher and the program leader share a strong commitment to the value of international student teaching programs based on the findings of this and others studies. Data analysis is completed for this part of the study but the primary researcher and the leader of the study continue to discuss how early student teachers "make sense" of an international placement and have a desire to pursue more comprehensive case studies of every student in their lives today…probably an overwhelmingly challenging task!

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University Integration of Chinese Undergraduate Students in Canada and the United States: The Role of Secondary School Experience

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Introduction

Students from Mainland China are the largest national group in the United States and Canada, and their numbers have grown substantially (Institute of International Education (IIE) 2017). The influx of Chinese students has contributed to US and Canadian higher education institutions academically, financially, and culturally (Cooper 2017; Hanassab and Tidwell 2002). In addition, the numbers at the *secondary level* have grown even more dramatically. In the United States, 42 percent of international secondary students (about 34,431) come from China, and the number had increased 48 percent from 2013 to 2016 (IIE 2017). Similarly, in Canada, 55 percent of international secondary students (about 24,480) were from China (IIE 2017). However, little is known about the lived experiences of Chinese students with secondary education abroad when they enter colleges or universities.

Research literature on Chinese students in US or Canadian higher education institutions has shown that most students suffer from various challenges during their acculturation to the US or Canada. For example, most of them have to deal with lack of interactions with local students (Sovic 2009) due to cultural differences and the language barrier (Henze and Zhu 2012). Moreover, Chinese students suffered from academic challenges caused by unfamiliar teaching styles and learning environments (Zhang and Zhou 2010).

While there are numerous studies addressing Chinese international students' social and academic experiences in US and Canadian universities, few researchers have investigated the lived experiences of Chinese first-degree students with secondary education abroad or in international high school in China where curriculum and instruction are structured similar to those of another country's secondary school. These students are exposed to western cultures and gain academic experiences in US or Canadian classrooms before they go to US or Canadian colleges or universities. Such unique experiences add complexities and nuances to the lived experiences of Chinese undergraduate students with secondary education abroad or international high schools in China.

For decades, research studies have identified common problems facing Chinese international students going abroad. Such challenges include: reduced intercultural communication with local students; English-language difficulty; classroom participation; and social isolation (Feng 1991; Henderson, Milhouse and Cao 1993; Henze and Zhu 2012; Sovic 2009; Su and Harrison 2016; Sun and Chen, 1997; Zhang and Zhou 2010). Researchers find Chinese students have little communication with local students and too close contacts with co-nationals. Chinese and local students shared few common experiences together (Heublein, Lam 2006, cited in Henze and Zhu, 2012; Sommer and Weitz 2004). The limited research on Chinese students in Canadian universities similarly found it was not easy for Chinese students to make close friendships with local and other international students (Zhang and Zhou 2010). More positively, co-national friends in the host country provide international students with "the reassurance of instrumental and emotional support that was unforthcoming on the part of the host community" (Brown 2009, p. 246). Such "material, informational, emotional, educational, and entertainment services" (Kim 1988, p. 64) that co-national friends offer one

another facilitates international students' adaptation in the initial phase.

Moreover, previous studies found that the adjustment challenges of international students are related to the length of stay in the host country. These studies showed that a student's length of residence in the US is related to the adjustment issues of college and university student sojourners (Abe, Talbot and Geelhoed 1998; Mittal and Wieling 2006; Sodowsky and Plake 1992; Trice 2004). The longer students had lived in the US, the more they were acculturated. As discussed above, Chinese undergraduate students with secondary education abroad or international high schools in China have had spent several years in US or Canada or at least exposed to Western cultures. In this case, they might not experience problems and challenges as other international students without secondary education abroad. They might have different needs and expectations. However, most universities made various policies based on previous studies, largely addressing intercultural communication problems or social isolation problems. These policies might not meet the needs of international students with secondary education abroad or in international high schools.

Given the rapid rise of undergraduate students in both US and Canada (Araujo 2011; IIE 2017), Araujo suggested future research "should narrow the focus to international undergraduates, in order to further understand their adjustment problems and illuminate areas of convergence" (p. 6). Furthermore, given the recent increasing trend of Chinese international secondary students in US and Canada (IIE 2017), it is important for US and Canadian higher education institutions to understand the special group of Chinese undergraduate students who spent their secondary education abroad or in international high schools in China. Some researchers have pointed out "while international secondary students do benefit from improving their English skills and gaining academic experience in US classrooms, some may still face some language or academic challenges when they enter higher education and may require academic support services at the higher education level." (IIE 2017, p. 10)

In summary, this study aims to address an important, yet under-researched topic in the field of comparative higher education—the lived experiences of Chinese undergraduate students with secondary education experiences abroad or in international high schools in China. Their special secondary education experiences add more complexities and nuances to the lived experiences of Chinese international students. With the rapid increase of international students with secondary education abroad, it is necessary for universities to inform policies addressing this group of students specifically. My study aims to provide rich data for universities to make such policies to meet the needs of this group of students.

Methodology

This study aims to answer the following question: *How do Chinese university students, especially those with secondary experience in the host country, view their current social and academic experiences in US or Canada?* One study site was an US state-related research institution in the Northeast and the other one is a large Canadian university in Ontario. The phenomenological approach allowed me to gain in-depth understandings of the meaning for Chinese undergraduate students of their lived experiences of studying abroad (Creswell, 2007). In the following sections, I describe the study settings, data collection, and data analysis.

Lion University (main campus) and Tree University (main campus) were selected for comparison as both are large public research universities with large populations of Chinese undergraduate students. Lion's main campus is the Lion's largest campus, with a population of over 9,000 international students in recent years (IIE 2017). Among them, about half are undergraduates. Tree's main campus is its largest campus, housing a population of nearly 14, 500 international undergraduate students. More than 9,000 were from China. Also, in terms of tuition, the two sites have similar tuition fee.

I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 10 Chinese undergraduate students at Lion and 10 at Tree. The focus population was Chinese

undergraduate students, whose immigration statuses were as international students at the time of data collection, or those students whose immigration statuses were not currently international students but had been international (visa) students when they first arrived. Moreover, those Chinese undergraduate students gained their secondary education either in Canada or in United States, or in international high schools in China. The potential subjects of the study were mainly identified through Chinese Undergraduate Student Association (hereafter "CUSA") and church communities at both Lion and Tree. Written recruitment letters were sent out through officials in both universities to potential subjects via email or in person. Moreover, hard copies of written recruitment letter in both Chinese and English were sent out in communities and cites with potential Chinese population, such as Chinese supermarkets, libraries and dining halls. Once Chinese students showed interest in my study, they contacted me with the contact information on hard copies of invitations. The interview protocol was designed to understand students' current experiences. Based on previous studies, this protocol addressed common problems and challenges students might meet, such as reduced intercultural communication with local students; English-language difficulty; classroom participation; and social isolation (Feng 1991; Harrison 2016; Henderson et al. 1993; Heublein et al, 2004; Li et al 2012; Perkins 1977; Sovic 2009; Su, Henze, and Zhu 2012; Sun and Chen 1997; UKCOSA 2004; Ward 2001, citied in Henze and Zhu 2012; Zhang and Zhou 2010). This protocol allowed participants to reflect on these problems during their studying and living abroad. Interviews were conducted in Chinese and then translated into English.

Three rounds of interviews were conducted as my research questions and interview protocol developed. During the first round of interviews, I asked the students to share their daily life and academic experiences. I also asked them to share their views of their lives abroad. After initial coding of the first round of interviews, I further specified and refined my research questions. In Canada I arranged interviews with 10 Chinese undergraduate students. I asked them to share their thoughts on interactions with local students and Chinese students. After rough coding of the second round of interviews, I focused on students' academic stress. In the third round of interviews, with additional subjects, I specifically asked students to reflect on their academic stress. This essay reports in detail about the experiences of students in each university (see Table 1).

After the interviews, I reviewed all transcripts and memos to develop a comprehensive understanding of the data. I applied open coding to data and sought the themes emerging from the interviews. Major codes and corresponding excerpts were created and sorted in this phase. Sequentially, with my research questions in mind, I specifically coded data that speak to the social and academic lives of Chinese undergraduate students in each university.

Coded data were then analyzed using an approach which focuses on the themes of the data (Boyatzis 1998). The themes, as described by Boyatzis, are "[patterns] found in the information that at minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon…, [which] may be initially generated inductively from the raw information or generated deductively from theory and prior research" (Boyatzis 1998, p. 4). Thematic analysis allows me to comprehend prominent themes emerging from the data, to organize them systematically, and to make interpretations based on the theoretical framework.

STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Pseudonym	Sex	Age	Major	Year in College	Secondary Education	Post-secondary Education
Tiaotiao	F	19	Chemical Engineering	2	US	Lion
Shu	M	18	Computer Science	1	International high school	Lion
Didi	M	21	Mechanical Engineering	2	US	Lion
Ku	M	21	Architecture Engineering	3	US	Lion
Jing	F	20	Economics	4	International high school	Lion
Manman	F	21	Public Accounting	4	Canada	Tree
Wen	M	21	Biological Physics	4	Canada	Tree
Cheng	M	20	Economics & Finance	3	Canada	Tree
Mian	F	18	Economics & Statistics	1	Canada	Tree
Xiuxiu	F	21	Accounting	4	Canada	Tree

Finding One: Similar Social Lives and Satisfaction with Social Life in Two Universities

When asked about their social lives, most students in Tree and Lion said that the majority if not all of their friends, especially "close" friends, were Chinese. Participants' interactions with local students were mainly limited to the classroom. Such classroom interactions were not considered as a "friendship." Some students even said that "class-friend" (friends in the classroom) was not true friendship. Rather, these relationships were only for specific purposes and interests, such as working on the assignments, group projects and examinations. Relationships based on these purposes are different from relationships based on emotional and psychological needs. For example, Tiaotiao, a female sophomore at Lion described her interactions in and outside the classroom:

"If [I] really want to have fun or for social purpose, [I would have] more interactions with Chinese. Yet for purposes of study, then [I would have] interactions with both Americans and Chinese. ... My American friends, um, they mostly are from either academic or career field. Um, no one is the

type, like deeply-bonding." [Note that this and all interviews have been translated by the author from Chinese]. [Studied secondary education in the US]

Cheng described a similar situation in Tree:

"All of my current friends are Chinese. Sometimes in the class, I will do projects with Canadians or other foreigners. Yet we do not become very good friends." [Studied secondary education in Canada]

From Tiaotiao and Chen's responses, we can see that it was difficult for Chinese students to make friends with local students. Interviewees saw many social differences between themselves and their Canadian or US peers. Their differences included not only language, but also cultures, personal experiences, and personalities. Yet language was seen as the most important barrier and caused most of my subjects to interact mainly with co-nationals. It was not about the influence of English. In fact, since all the participants had their secondary education in English, they were confident about their language skills. Instead, participants in both universities explained that it was simply easier for them to express their deep feelings by using the mother tongue. For example, Xiuxiu, a female

junior student in Tree, described her feelings of using mother tongue for communication:

*"Sharing the same language, we [my friends and I] undoubtedly spend more time together. But, then, I actually had many foreigners as friends in Freshman and Sophomore years, and **I don't think my English is not good or I could not speak English frequently**. Yet I felt that, my mind works differently when speaking Chinese and speaking English. When speaking English, my mind may be more rational. I think thoroughly before I speak, whereas speaking Chinese may be more emotional. **Annoying complaints are conveyed with Chinese all the time**. Just closer to them [Chinese people]. Thus, now my friends are all from China."* [Studied secondary education in Canada]

"Feel closer to co-nationals" is a common theme found across interviews. In Xiuxiu's view, her problem was not English fluency. In fact, she was very confident with her English and did not think she had problems of expressing herself clearly in English. Yet using English did not allow her to express her deep feeling since she was "*more rational*" when speaking English. Instead, using Chinese made her "*more emotional*" and easier to share annoying experiences with her Chinese friends. Such conversations made her feel closer to her Chinese peers.

Other participants who did not have language concerns also had such feeling. They thought most of their conversations with local students were superficial and limited to "*small talk.*" From their perspectives, it was hard to have deep conversations with local students. This was partly seen to reflect cultural differences, which they could not define, using the word: 文化不同 *(wen hua bu tong).* For example, Cheng vaguely pointed to different types of entertainment enjoyed by him as compared to his Canadian peers:

"When white people go out, they normally prefer to party at home rather than at pubs [like Chinese]. They prefer to buy a bunch of drinks, and just drink until wasted at home. I just feel like we have cultural differences. Like, although I hang out with [Canadians], I feel happier when hanging out with Chinese. The stuff white people are interested does

not really appeal or interest me. I actually didn't think that I had any language barrier with white people. But it's just a cultural thing. I feel like they talk about girls together, drink together, do stupid stuff together. Like, I feel bad not doing stuff together with them, but feel stupid doing it." [Studied secondary education in Canada]

"What interests local students does not interest me" was a common theme in the interviews at both universities. Many participants complained that it was difficult to find common interesting topics, and this difficulty hindered making friends with local students. They attributed this to cultural differences. Cheng had his secondary education in Canada, and he was exposed to Canadian culture for a long time. He knew how to be social with his Canadian peers and understood their activities, but this did not mean he liked the culture. Instead, he still felt "*stupid*" doing activities with his Canadian friends. Then he turned to his Chinese friends in college since he felt "*happier*" with them.

Yet other participants viewed this difficulty in a different way. For example, Shu, a male freshman expressed his understanding of his difficulties in interacting with his US peers.

"I feel like: This is a State University, a public school, with many Americans, many from the state. Those people are like, most of those people have lived their entire lives here, having never gotten out to know about this world. I think, they do not know about the cultural communication in this world and the many different cultures. I feel like, with most of the people, the Americans I have met so far, we actually do not have that many similar topics or concepts, differences in experiences and therefore conception of the world…." [Studied secondary education in international high school in China]

For Shu, due to his secondary education in an international high school in China, he got more chances of accessing to western cultures. He thought he was exposed to different cultures for a long time. In this sense, Americans around him and he had different conceptions of the world, and they did not have many similar topics or concepts. This hindered him from making friends with Americans around him.

Besides these social differences, participants reported that their interactions with Canadians and Americans were influenced by the number of available Chinese. Participants stated that they were surrounded by more Chinese students in and outside the classroom. They also reported that large numbers of Chinese students reduced their already limited social interactions with local students in the classroom. For example, Manman in Tree majored in business, which is a major predominated by Chinese students. She complained that Tree and her major had too many Chinese students. Therefore, "*it is extremely hard for me to reach out to local students in my major*". Unlike Manman's situation, Ku, a junior male student in engineering in Lion, stated that it was easy for him to make friends with local students. This was because his cohort in this major only had 88 students, and only five of them were Chinese.

Beyond the classroom, residence halls provide another space for Chinese students to meet and interact with local and other international students. Many participants stated that they had more interactions with local students in their first year in college, since they were forced to live in the dormitory. However, after they moved out of the university residence they began to meet more Chinese students. For example, when Didi was forced to live on campus in a university residence in his first year, he had more interactions with local students and other international students. At that time, his best friend was his American roommate. In his second year he moved off campus. He explained that he would have planned to live with his American roommate, but his roommate had too little money. As a result, Didi and other two Chinese students became roommates. After that, his friends were almost all from China. Didi explained that this is because "*there are so many Chinese students in Lion*". He referred to his high school experiences as an explanation. Didi had his secondary education in the US, and at that time all his friends, including best friends, were non-Chinese because there were only two other Chinese students in his school. Thus he had no choice but to make friends with Americans. Yet the situation in university was different. He was surrounded with both Chinese and local students, and with many more Chinese after he moved from the student residence. Thus, Didi's surroundings with population of Chinese students influenced his social life most.

Contrary to what many policy makers would predict, most participants expressed their satisfaction with their current social situation. Some participants explained that they had experienced friendships with local students in high schools, so they did not necessarily spend time and energy making friends with local students. Moreover, more interactions with co-nationals and fewer interactions with locals did not mean participants failed to blend into the local culture and were isolated socially from local students. Instead, my participants actively chose to have interactions with their own group. For example, Tiaotiao, a female student in Lion stated:

> "*I never tended to break the bubble [to make friends with local students]. I think I already passed that phase when in high school. In high school, sometimes I felt like I could not keep up with the way Americans talked, or could not understand the way they thought. Nevertheless, after a while taking the time to get along with them, it was not hard to understand after all. Thus, I personally think right now I simply am not reaching out, to be real friends with the American, but if I want to, I think I can do it. ... I am in my comfort zone, simple as that.*"
> [Studied secondary education in the US]

Other interviewees in both Tree and Lion also shared common experiences in high schools abroad. They thought their intensive interactions with local students in high school helped them better understand and get used to local culture. Interestingly, such experiences reduced their desire to make friends with Canadians or Americans students in university, and even pushed them back to their co-nationals for social needs.

Finding Two: Different Views of Academic Life in Two Universities

Although my participants shared similar perspectives on social lives in both Tree and Lion, they sharply diverge in their perceptions about their academic experiences. Moreover, participants'

experiences of secondary education did not help them adapt to their academic lives in colleges. My participants asserted that they did not have any difficulties in communicating with professors in and out of the classrooms, but they still had various complaints and worries of their academic lives. During interviews, I heard more complaints and worries from participants in Tree while participants in Lion expressed few worries about their academic lives. For Lion participants, although some of them complained about heavy workload, none of them mentioned their worries about not passing exams or gaining high GPA. For example, when asked about academic lives, Ku merely complained that his life was occupied with projects, assignments, and exams, which was quite different his lives in high school in the US. Yet he did not mention pressures from passing exams or worries of not being able to graduate. Instead, Ku was confident in finding an internship and even a job in the future. Didi, who finished his college in two years with an impressive GPA of 3.95 (out of a possible 4.0), even described his academic life as "*easy and satisfying*". Echoing Didi, other participants also expressed their satisfaction with their academic lives, including good communications with professors and gaining a good GPA.

More Tree participants expressed frustration with the pressure of exams. According to them, passing exams was difficult and obtaining a high GPA was even harder. Hours of study did not guarantee a high GPA. Some of them asserted that it was common for students to re-take classes for another year. They worried constantly about their test scores, and their abilities to graduate. For example, Mian, a freshman stated:

"I feel like, I tried really hard, but still did not get the best grades. To give an example, what professor teaches, lectures, is at a level, homework is at another level, and exam is one more level. The problems in example tests used a different solving process that was never taught in class. When you put those in the exam, within one hour, such a short time, it's impossible you can figure out how to do those. ...Anyway, if you don't study at all, it's just really hard at Tree, in order to graduate. I am studying really hard without getting a 3.8 or 3.9. If

I don't get it, it may get pretty dangerous." [Studied secondary education in Canada]

Echoing Mian most participants complained that they did not have time for being social and resting. Instead, they spent most of their time in the library studying after classes. Some participants even said that Tree students could only choose two things to do among sleeping, socializing and studying. When Tree participants were asked about their reflections of such stress from studying, they often attributed this to large class sizes and to, what they believed, an unreasonable teacher-student ratio. They also made negative comments about the faculties, and about professors' intentions to lower the average grades. For example, some participants complained about 1,400 students in one class. "*It is true that you could not hear one word in the classroom if you sit backwards*". Such large class sizes were seen as preventing professors from caring about most students. It was impossible to interact with professors inside or outside the classroom. Some participants complained that it was impossible for them even to ask questions after the class. "The line of students who want to ask questions is too long," one student told me.

Another view was that professors intentionally lower GPA. Some participants complained that "*there's no rule for [lower] grading, but it seems like every class keeps around the same average*". They thought such action was "*like a tradition*". One participant even used her summer abroad program (SAP) to explain how Tree purposefully created their difficulties to gain a high GPA. She explained that "*whatever grades students from Tree get in [the summer program], when converted back to Tree's scores, would be curved 9 ~10 points lower. This rule was listed when we signed up, before we went.*" She thought such rule increased her academic pressure.

However, participants who did not complain about grades pointed out such stress may be due to what they described as easy admission standards of Tree. According to them, the quality difference among Tree students was dramatic because Tree did not require students to pass any standard test. This is different from US universities, they felt, which required students to

have minimum SAT scores. Since it was imagined to be comparatively easy for international students to enroll in Tree, my interviewees thought that some students might be unqualified for college-level academics. Consequently, after admission, some Chinese students may find it difficult to catch up or gain a good score. Some participants even thought their academic stress was a deliberate way for Tree to eliminate some students from competition.

Discussion and Conclusion

Chinese students in both universities had similar social lives but different academic lives. Overall, they were satisfied with their experiences of studying abroad.
Benefits from previous secondary education experiences

Participants in my study completed their secondary education abroad, either in Canada or in US, or at least attended international high schools in China. In the past five years, more and more international secondary students in the US ultimately seek to enroll in US higher education institutions following their secondary studies (IIE 2017). Their experiences of secondary education abroad or in international high schools played an important role in students' social life in colleges. Such experiences helped these Chinese undergraduate students feel confident with their language abilities and satisfied about their social lives. This is different from post-graduate students who complained about few interactions with local students (Yuan 2011). They explained that this was because of insufficient language skill and cultural difference (Yuan 2011). Thus, they might "lose their motivation to engage in uncertainty reduction because it requires too much effort and it may bring them out of their comfort zone (p. 153)."

Although my participants reported fewer interactions with local students than with co-nationals, they did *not* ascribe this to language barriers. In fact, most interviewees were fluent in English. Most thought they had the abilities to make friends with local students. As Tiaotiao pointed out, after her intensive interactions with local students during her high school in the US, she learned how to communicate with Americans. Therefore, she was confident in her ability to make friends with local students in college. She was unsure whether she really wanted relationships with Americans, and what she wanted from friendships.

Thus, my interviewees' adaptation to local culture did not mean they actually *liked* Canadian or US culture. As Cheng said, he spent his high school in Canada. Nevertheless, he felt "stupid" when doing things with his Canadian peers. Meanwhile, he felt "happier when hanging out with Chinese". Consequently, he actively chose to be social with his co-nationals. We might conclude that Chinese undergraduate students with secondary education abroad or in international high schools have fewer adjustment problems in their college social lives. After experiencing and understanding both Chinese and local cultures, Chinese undergraduates exposed to both cultures actively chose their friends. They did not need interactions with local students to gain knowledge of the local culture, adapt to local culture, or improve their English. They felt they had already experienced this process in their high schools.
Population of Chinese students in higher education institutions

With expansion of enrollment of international students in higher education institutions in US and Canada, the numbers of Chinese students, especially Chinese undergraduates, continues to grow. Although there are signs of increased anti-immigrant sentiment in the US (Cooper, 2017), the US still witnessed an increasing number of Chinese international students. Most recently there have been over 350,000 Chinese students studying in the US (IIE 2017). Canada, with more friendly immigration policies and lower tuition fees, now outpaces other countries in terms of international student enrollment (Cooper 2017). Beginning from in November 2016, Canadian visa requirements gave greater weight to the value of a Canadian post-secondary credential. Under the new Express Entry system, this will benefit international students hoping to remain in Canada (Cooper 2017). More importantly, due to the rhetoric and policies of US President Donald Trump, several Canadian schools experience a surge in applications (Cooper 2017).

The increased populations of Chinese students in both Canada and the US have increased the interactions of Chinese undergraduate students' with co-nationals. However, classrooms and student residences are places where Chinese students to meet and interact with non-Chinese. In classrooms, students often need to participate and collaborate with other students on group projects. Chinese students have greater chances to interact with local students and other international students. And yet Chinese students have fewer chances to meet local students in the classroom, given recent trends.

University residences prove another place for Chinese students to meet and interact with non-Chinese. Many of my participants asserted that they had more local friends when they lived in dormitories in their first year in colleges. Most of them moved to shared rental apartments/houses in their second year for a comparatively lower cost and more comfortable living conditions. The majority of those who shared off-campus accommodation chose Chinese students as their roommates. Some studies thought staying together only with co-nationals would limit their communication with local and other international students and their chances to learn about local culture as well as academics (Jiao 2006). Thus, many researchers have called for more interactions between local students and international students as such interactions can help boost international students' academic achievement, less alienation and homesickness, and so on (Perrucci & Hu 1995, cited in Sovic 2009). Yet we should notice that, as discussed above, Chinese undergraduate students who experienced secondary education abroad were not in urgent of these interactions. They were already used to local cultures. Instead, living with other Chinese students helped them build up good social network, which would be beneficial for them if they would like to go back to China for future development. This is consistent with some UK research, which sees the separation between local and international students as desirable and actually calls for "less emphasis on the integration of international students, who will remain in a host country for a relatively short time, and an encouragement to maintain links with home, and form links with co-nationals in the host country" (McKinlay et al 1996, p. 392; also quoted in Sovic 2009, p. 749).

Academic stress and complaints

Tree participants were vocal about what they described as a heavy workload and pressure from exams. They asserted that they spent hours and hours in the library after class, but still could not get a high GPA. Some of them stated that they even worried about graduation if they did not study hard. However, participants in Lion did not mention such worries or stress. This did not mean Tree was stricter or harder than Lion. In fact, Tree and Lion had similar retention rate, 91.7 percent and 93.1 percent, respectively (Lion 2017; Tree 2016). Lion even has a lower graduation rate than Tree, with 66.5 percent to 77.2 percent (Lion Fact Book, 2017; Tree 2016). In this sense, it is puzzling why Tree participants complained more than Lion participants about academic stress.

Some Tree participants ascribed their academic stress to an inconsistency between what they were taught and what was examined. From their perspectives, lectures, homework, and exams were at different difficulty levels. Thus, they had difficulties applying what they learned in the class to exams. Nevertheless, were all material to come at the same difficulty, there is no point for their existences as separate individuals. Learning is a process involving more than receiving, a process requiring comprehensive and critical thinking. The purpose of homework is to challenge students to think, to ask deeper questions, and hence to learn. Aside from homework, distinct level for exams are also necessary to test acute and comprehensive thinking. If students received homework, which do not require more effort and thinking, their knowledge will only include the exact basic concepts in lectures. If exams were at the same level as homework and lectures, which require no additional thinking but only memorization, they then only serve the purposes to test students' writing speed.

Although Tree and Lion have similar acceptance rate, since Tree has a more open admissions process and does not require standardized test scores, it is very likely for Tree to enroll students with a wide range of learning abilities and language proficiency. It is possible that some Toronto students will experience

greater challenges. By contrast, like most US universities, Lion requires minimum SAT scores admission. This may be the reason that, although some participants asserted that workload was heavy, none of them mentioned it was hard for them to pass the exams or gain a high GPA.

Their different situations in the two universities also create different student attitudes toward academic life. The student-faculty ratio at the Tree's ratio was 35.2 (Tree 2016). But Lion's student-faculty ratio in was 16.2 (Lion Fact Book 2017). In addition, although Tree is committed to providing undergraduate students with the opportunity to participate in a variety of learning formats, including smaller class experiences, 57.5 percent of first-year courses for undergraduate students in Arts and Science had more than 200 students (Tree 2016).

In summary, we can see that Chinese students with secondary education abroad or in the international high schools did have their own advantages and needs. Due to students' experiences of secondary education abroad or in international high schools, these students did not have strong desires and needs for intercultural interactions with local students. They actively made their own selections of social relations. In terms of academic lives, their secondary education experiences did not help them survive in the college studies. They still struggled with their academic experiences.

Recommendation

There are several policy implications from this study. First, higher education institutions need to help Chinese undergraduate students, even those secondary education abroad. Also, policies aimed at helping international students integrate into local culture may not work for Chinese undergraduate students with secondary education abroad or in international high schools. It is possible that many Chinese students – despite exposure during secondary school - do not desire for integration into local culture. Their fewer interactions with local students and more with co-nationals result from rational and active selections of social relations. In this sense, this group of students do not need policies to help them integrate to local cultures. Nevertheless, many international students do not have such experiences. Therefore, it is important for higher education institutions to learn from the secondary education experiences of this special group. Universities can use it to create similar environment for their international students and domestic students to meet each other and have relatively intensive interactions.

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Global Mission – "Glocal" Internationalization: United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) and Lehigh University

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Introduction

The United Nations launched 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015 to continue the legacy of solving the residual global issues left from Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for the next 15 years. The roles of tertiary education have been strongly stressed to achieve the SDGs and the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) is the main initiative, established by the former United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki Moon (United Nations, 2010). He strongly believed that higher education could play a crucial role in producing knowledge and promoting universal values through global citizenship (UNAI Japan 2011). The UNAI aims to create a platform for tertiary institutions to connect and work on the mandate of the United Nations through global citizenship education to achieve SDGs. Nevertheless, the chief language used throughout the discourse at the U.N. is English.

This study explores the relevance between the missions of the UNAI and the strategic planning of internationalization of Lehigh University. Lehigh University is purposefully selected due to its unique partnership with the UNAI and its role as a "Global Citizenship Hub" in 2011. Though Lehigh University actively implements internationalization plans at home and abroad, which align with the missions of the UNAI, the relevant activities strongly illustrate the hegemony of the West in terms of language, power, and discourse.

Significance

The United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) is a United Nations initiative formed by the former Secretary Ban Ki Moon, which has close alignment with the internationalization of institutions of higher education. Internationalization of higher education is a worldwide phenomenon and an irresistible force under globalization. With the power from international organizations, such as the United Nations and the World Bank, it has gradually become more institutionalized and hegemonic to the West (Puchala 2005). In this regard, western hegemony refers to hegemonic strategies of the U.S. government in utilizing "soft power" of assent, cooperation, and consensus in the world politics (Agnew 2005). By studying the missions of the UNAI and Lehigh University's internationalization plan, it will assist researchers and practitioners of the tertiary sector to think and act critically to internationalize the institutions according to the contextual factors, by outlining the institutional elements and actions that align with the UNAI, exemplifying contextual components of the region, and illustrating the clear relationships with the UNAI, to manifest the importance of multilingualism on their official websites.

Research Questions

1. How do the international programs of Lehigh University evolve with internationalization of higher education in the USA and partnership with the UNAI?

2. How do the official websites of Lehigh University reflect the global missions of the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI)?

Review of Empirical Literature

This section presents a critical review of the literature on the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) and the historical perspectives of internationalizing higher education in the U.S.A. The literature review provides a background of the UNAI and examines the broader perspective of internationalization of higher education in regard to its rationales, phenomena, and impacts on the wide usage of English within this spectrum. The emphasis on English medium is done because it is an example of arguments of post-colonialism and the power of the West through the theoretical frameworks.

United Nations Academic Impact

There is limited scholarly research on the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI), presumably because UNAI is a relatively new U.N. initiative launched in the past decade only. The UNAI is under the Outreach Division of the Department of Public Information and is located near the headquarters of the United Nations in New York City, the United States. All tertiary institutions granting degrees or their equivalent, as well as bodies whose substantive responsibilities related to the conduct of research, are open to apply for the partnerships with the UNAI. The UNAI aims to create connections between the United Nations and institutions of higher learning throughout the world, to become a mechanism for institutions to commit themselves to the fundamental precepts driving the United Nations mandate, particularly the execution of Sustainable Development Goals, to serve as a chief point of contact for generating ideas, knowledge, and proposals relevant to the United Nations mandate, and to promote the direct engagement of higher education institutions in programs, projects, and initiatives relevant to this mandate (UNAI 2017). UNAI also has partnerships with colleges and universities worldwide to work on the U.N. mandates through the networks of Academic Consortium 21 (AC21), American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), and Association of Arab Universities (AARU) (UNAI 2017). There are approximately 1,237 members of universities worldwide, of which 262 are in the United States and

comprise 19.9 percent of the total membership (UNAI, 2018b). These three associations are a network of higher education institutions focusing on different regions.

FIGURE 1: COMPOSITION OF UNAI UNIVERSITIES BY NATION AS OF JUNE 2018 (SOURCE: UNAI, 2018B)
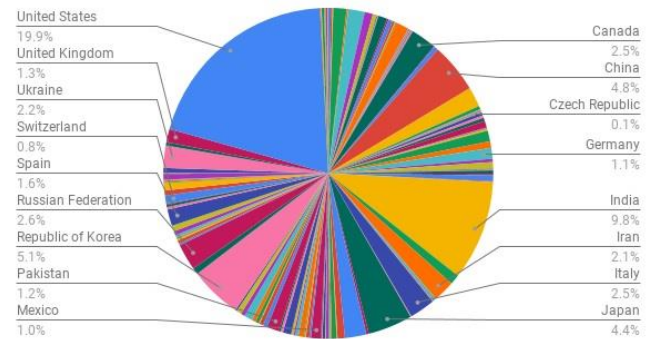
Despite the tremendous effort of the United Nations in peace-keeping after the WWII, it still faces numerous criticism, such as its rigid bureaucracy and concentration of power within five countries in the security council with veto power. Though the United Nations does not have any binding power with the nations, the agendas are primarily driven by five powerful countries: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (United Nations, 2018b). Among many of them, the focus of this paper is the widespread usage of English throughout the international discourse of this international organization. It demonstrates the cultural and linguistic politics and elitism that penetrate various sectors, including contexts of economic development, military conflict, religious struggle, mobility, and tertiary access (Pennycook, 2017). The six official languages of the United Nations have been stated on the right-hand corner of the homepage of the UNAI for the readers to choose. They are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish. Nevertheless, English is still widely used on the websites of the UNAI. This scenario of dominant usage of English is against the thematic concept of internationalization (Altbach, 2013; de Wit, 2002).

Internationalization of Higher Education in the United States of America

The World Declaration on Higher Education for the twenty-first century was held in 1998 to recall the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNESCO 1998) through the mechanism of higher education. This congregation also intensifies the activities of internationalizing higher education. Together with the role of the US as an important player on the global stage, the nation has also taken the lead in internationalizing higher education. Nevertheless, the language of power and the imbalanced flow of students is also embedded in this phenomenon.

America as the pioneer of internationalization of higher education. The chief turning point of the US being a pioneer in internationalizing higher education is the post-World War Two (WWII) period when the international dimension of higher education began to be stressed in the tertiary sector (de Wit 2002). In the USA, the expansion of higher education has transited to mass access to get admitted to universities from the 1950s and 1960s (Trow 1972). Another critical period was the strategic US influence on other countries, such as Germany and Vietnam, during the Cold War to fight against Communism. The collapse of Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall led the US to be practically the sole power and actor of global politics in the 1990s (Kumar 2006). One important reason of internationalizing higher education in the United States is to strengthen foreign policy and national security. This top-down approach intensifies the phenomenon of spreading soft power from the Departments of Foreign Affairs and Defense, private foundations and professional associations, and institutions of higher education and related representative parties, instead of only from the state governments and the Department of Education (de Wit 2002). The hidden agenda is to export knowledge of the US outside of the country, including the establishment of the Fulbright programs, significant influx of foreign students, and the establishment of the branch campuses in Asia and the Middle East.

English as the language of power. Internationalization of higher education is currently prevalent in various forms worldwide. Nevertheless, an adverse consequence that emerged from this phenomenon, and originated from the United States, is the dominant usage of English in every aspect of the sector. The domination of the English language fundamentally goes against the aim of "internationalization" (Altbach 2013; de Wit 2002). Altbach (2013) explains that while English is the chief scientific language and a medium for the international knowledge network which assists in growing linkages among academic institutions, it also has a sense of perpetuating inequality. English language dominance has prevented scholars from the Global South, with limited financial resources and limited opportunities, to develop a level of proficiency in academic English necessary to publish in top-tier journals. For instance, the knowledge about advocacy for the Global South has not been placed as a priority to be published in the press of the US or European universities (Mignolo 2011). The issue of English language dominance is related to the topic of UNAI's effectiveness since English is the chief language on its website.

Imbalanced flow of student exchange. According to the annual Open Doors from the Institute of International Education (IIE) (2016), Chinese nationals comprised one-third of the total international student body in the higher education institutions of the United States. Out of 132,410 total international students, 44,490 were from China (IIE 2016). On the contrary, the latest report of IIE in 2017 showed that only one in ten undergraduate students in the US studies abroad before graduation (IIE 2017). After more than seven decades of internationalization of higher education, the flow of student exchange is still from the non-West countries to the West, though the paradigm shift started to alter.

Conceptual / Theoretical Framework

This study is framed by the theories of Post-colonialism of Edward Said and the relationships between power, discourse, and knowledge by Michel Foucault. These two lenses showcase the power of the international organizations and the dominant usage of English in tertiary institutions worldwide. According to Said's Theory of Post-colonialism, the Orient was always viewed as the primitive or uncivilized "other" to

create an image to make a contrast from the advanced and the civilized West (Said 2006). Colonialism created a west-east division, which led to the concept of "Orientalism" (Mignolo 2011). From the perspective of west-east division, a powerful colonizer imposed a language and a culture, while cultures, histories, values, and languages of the Oriental peoples were ignored and even distorted by the colonialists. It was for the sake of dominating these peoples and exploiting their wealth in the name of enlightening, civilizing, and even humanizing them. To extend this argument from the historical perspectives of colonizing the Global South, the invasion from Western civilization started from the year of 1,500 and kept expanding (Mignolo 2011). The Global South does not indicate a specific location underneath the equator, but rather, is a receiving end of globalization, an endurer of coloniality, and a sufferer of all these consequences, including racism, classism, genderism, and the loss of indignity (Mignolo 2011).

Second, Michel Foucault focused on language, power, and discourse. From his perspective, the goals of power and the knowledge could not be separated. The inseparable combination of knowledge and power would deploy the force and establish the truth by investigating it through discursive power relations in history (Foucault 1977). In other words, "truth" is a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and functioning of statements. It is also intertwined with a circular relation to systems of power, which produce and sustain it (Brass 2000). According to Foucault, knowledge is socially constructed so as to maintain the power of the ruling class (Foucault 1975). He believed that a network of power and knowledge has been so prevalent that it is embedded in every type of institution, including workplace, military, and schools. Knowledge has been relevant to disciplinary power to reflect and express the power relations through hierarchical systems (Gendron 2013). According to de Wit (2002), English has become the global language of communication in science and teaching, the language of delivering and receiving knowledge, and the medium of teaching in higher education. Conversely, it placed the United States in a problematic situation domestically and internationally.

The social constructions of English are viewed as a valuable language of power in the context of globalization (Beard 2018).

Methodology

This study uses purposeful sampling to examine the relationships between the UNAI, internationalization of higher education in America, and Lehigh University and to address the research question. Lehigh University was selected because of its unique partnerships with the UNAI, in accordance with its official website's member list. Lehigh is located in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, the East coast of the United States. Lehigh University was chosen as a case study of its relationship with UNAI because it served as a "Global Citizenship Hub" in 2011. Not only Global citizenship is one of the 10 main principles of the UNAI, but it also has been heavily embedded in the initiatives and agencies of the United Nations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 (UNAI 2018a; UNESCO 2014; UN Chronicle, 2018).

Additionally, Lehigh University was the sixth university in the world to gain Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) status with the United Nations in 2004 (Lehigh University 2018c). It has opened another gateway for students, faculty members, and staff members to attend UN conferences, high-level briefings, and private meetings with ambassadors and other UN officials in New York City and on campus. These two criteria make Lehigh University a unique case to investigate the strategies of internationalization of higher education in this study.

Data Source

The public information on the official websites of International Offices of Lehigh University, the United Nations, and the UNAI is widely utilized. The materials used are chiefly texts. Texts on the public websites of these three organizations are used. Because of using critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a methodology, the criteria of choosing the texts are the sources of knowledge and power as well as the choice of language in the websites.

Method of Data Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a problem-oriented methodology that seeks to uncover elements of power and ideology as it is expressed and embedded in discourse (Wodak & Meyer 2009). It is to examine the discourse critically to reveal hidden connections and causes (Fairclough 1992) as well as to understand social inequalities (Bhavnani, Chua, and Collins 2014). Being "critical" and pattern driven are two distinguished elements of CDA from other methodologies. Approaching language as a social process, CDA offers the opportunity to understand how language represents and transmits knowledge, as well as its use by organizations to communicate, justify, or exercise power (Fairclough 2001; Wodak and Meyer 2009). It aligns with the ideas of Ball (1990), Fairclough (1992), Rogers (2004), and Van Dijk (2015) about examining how relations of power and struggles shape the inequality of wider social and cultural structures, relations, and processes.

Process of Data Analysis

In this study, critical discourse analysis is mainly adopted to examine the public information on the official websites of Lehigh University, the relevant information of Lehigh University on the United Nations' and the UNAI's websites. This method is to explore their strategies of internationalization in relation to the missions of the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI). The source of power, knowledge, and discourse will be investigated on how the UNAI's missions at the global level influence the internationalization of Lehigh University at the institutional level.

CDA is an inductive method, and thus, is pattern, theoretical, and thematic driven. First, the researcher looks into the texts to study to categorize the themes of internationalization plan of Lehigh University. Second, the researcher analyzes the themes from the elements of two theoretical frameworks, post-colonialism and Foucault's theory of discourse, knowledge, and power. Third, the researcher examines the source of power within the chosen materials to unravel the implicit and explicit meanings of syntax. For instance, the founder and the nature of the international programs at Lehigh University will be studied with the timeline of the internationalization of higher education in the US and the underlying power within the United Nations. Fourth, the researcher needs to identify the obstacles of this revealed phenomenon and give suggestions for better cohesion.

Findings

From the analysis of official websites of Lehigh University, the United Nations, and the UNAI there are five emerging themes, including "Internationalization of Lehigh University", "internationalization at home", "internationalization abroad", "Relationships with the United Nations / UNAI" [Global Citizenship, U.N. Youth Representative Program, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)], and "Post-colonial Legacy".

"Internationalization" of Lehigh University

On the first page of the Office of International Affairs, the words, "here" and "there", overtly introduces two types of internationalization for the faculty members, staff members, and students to experience at Lehigh University. One is "Internationalization at home" and the other one is "Internationalization abroad". Eight programs have been shown on the website as well, including "English as a second language", "Fulbright Program", "Global Union", "Iacocca Institute", "International Internships", "International Students and Scholars", "Study Abroad", and United Nations Partnerships" (Lehigh University 2017a). Consistently, the numbers shown at the bottom of the website help quantify the degree of internationalization of the institutions on the fully funded internships, partnerships with universities overseas, awarded grants for international faculty research, and the internationalism of classes of 2017. Nevertheless, there is no choice of other languages except English to choose for reading, which is a hegemony of the language.

Internationalization at Home

Among the eight programs of International Affairs, "English as a second language", "Global Union", "Iacocca Institute", "International Students and Scholars", and "United Nations Partnerships" can be categorized as internationalization at home. These

various programs can provide very different internationalization experiences to students on campus with different missions. "English as a second language" aims to provide "intermediate to advanced level language and cultural support to non-native English speakers through credit and non-credit coursework, workshops, tutoring, testing, and cultural guidance" (Lehigh University 2017b), while "Global Union" is to offer international experiences to every student, faculty, and staff member on campus through interactive educational, cultural, and social programming (Lehigh University 2017d). "Iacocca Institute" is a program inspired by alumnus, Lee A. Iacocca, and is more business oriented providing three programs, "Global Village", "PA School for Global Entrepreneurship", and "Global Village on the Move" to train the younger generations to build global networks, to learn new best practices, to cultivate professional skills, to explore cultural diversity, to empower leadership in individuals and organizations, and to develop lifelong friendships (Lehigh University 2017e). With Lehigh University's distinct business program (Lehigh University 2018a), it assists the programs at "Iacocca Institute" to flourish. "International Students and Scholars" mainly provides regulatory and transitional services and support for the international community, including immigration and visa advising and adjustment support services (Lehigh University 2017g). There are several programs within "United Nations Partnerships", including "Youth Representative Program", "Internships", inviting prominent speakers from the U.N. to speak on campus about various timely global issues, and leading trips to the U.N. to attend different sessions (Lehigh University 2018c).

Internationalization Abroad

Among the eight programs of International Affairs, "Fulbright Program", "International Internships", and "Study Abroad" can be categorized as internationalization abroad. First, "Fulbright Program" is a program that the US government to enhance mutual understanding through the international exchange between the people of the United States and the people of other countries (Lehigh University 2017c). Second, "International Internships" is a program ranging from six to ten weeks for students to develop and grow

profoundly in their professional field (Lehigh University 2017f). It is also funded by Lehigh University's alumnus, Lee A. Iacocca. Third, there are 250 "Study Abroad" programs in over 60 nations, ranging from short-term to semester and year-long programs (Lehigh University 2017h).

Relationships with the United Nations / UNAI

Global citizenship. Lehigh University was one of the first institutions to take the lead to carry out the principle of the UNAI. In 2011, it served as a pioneer for "Global Citizenship Hub". This theme is significant. Global citizenship is advocated by Ban Ki-Moon, former U.N. Secretary-General, to be the foundation of achieving all SDGs (Ban Ki-Moon Centre for Global Citizens 2018). One of the ultimate goals of internationalizing higher education is to create global citizens, who have empathy, critical thinking, cross-cultural understanding, international mindedness, to promote peace and generate solutions in this complex globalized world. Being in this role as a "Global Citizenship Hub" aims to offer a unique online portal for the dissemination and sharing of knowledge on those topics relevant to the practice of Global Citizenship in higher education, and to help create a global, intellectual community (UNAI 2018a). With the rich experience of providing Global Citizenship Program since 2004, this involvement with the UNAI assists Lehigh University to bring this program forward to infuse the universal values into various study fields through the comprehensive components of curriculum, travel, and student life. Its mission statement perfectly resonates with the UNAI's goal for global citizenship, where both emphasize individuals' international mindedness, critical reflection, and responsible actions for the humanity and global communities (Lehigh University 2018b).

U.N. Youth Representative Program. Lehigh University was the first university to create "U.N. Youth Representative Program" in the world (Lehigh University 2018c). This program started in 2006 is another demonstration of global citizenship and capacity building to let the youth from Lehigh University representative the non-governmental organizations worldwide to give a voice at the United

Nations and to achieve the SDGs. The themes of the NGOs cover a wide range of topics, such as gender equity, peacebuilding, public health. Some of the partnerships are Center for Public Health and African Citizens Development Foundation in Nigeria, World Corrosion Organization and Unitarian Universalists in the USA, Caring and Living as Neighbours in Australia, Global Human Rights Defense in the Netherlands, Peace Building Solutions in Haiti, Center for Women's Studies and Intervention in Nigeria, and the United Federation for Peacekeeping and Sustainable Development in the USA and Middle East.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). While global citizenship is inseparable from the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations 2018a), one of the manifestations in responsible actions is the first impactful student-led conference, "Students Seeking Solutions on SDGs" for SDG 6, Clean Water and Sanitation, in April 2018. With the partnership between Lehigh University and the UNAI, it successfully showcased students' diligent effort in creating ideas on sustainable infrastructure, such as simple water filters, using algae to purify water, and using the seeds of the Moringa Tree to create a simple filter, of providing clean water and sanitation in developing countries (UNAI 2018c). It aligns with the objective of the UNAI where global citizens should connect the social, political, environmental, or economic actions with communities on a worldwide scale.

Recently, the related activities of the Youth Representative Programs with the United Nations have placed much emphasis on "SDG 5: Gender Equality". For instance, the youth representatives spoke at the General Assembly as part of the second annual "International Day of Women and Girls in Science" conference, organized by Princess Dr. Nisreen El-Hashemite. Some of them not only moderated a UN briefing on "Young Women's Leadership and Voices at the UN" at the 61st Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), but also led and presented on CSW parallel event panels. There was also an attendance of the Secretary-General's designation of Malala as a UN Messenger of Peace.

Post –colonial Legacy

The United States was colonized before and has become a colonizer. From the above analysis, the internationalization activities at Lehigh University are the enactment of the Western hegemony in higher education. First the emphasis of the ability of English speaking for the international students is stressed through "English as a second language". Tertiary education has played a significant role in developing culturally driven and alternative local economies (Appadurai 2000; Lavia 2007); the power of English to be the local and global language has been so embedded and intertwined between the colonizer and the colonized (Khoo 2012).

Second, the founder of "Iacocca Institute" is originally from the United States. Though Iacocca assisted to transform management and leadership in the United States in the 1980s, it also demonstrated a crisis of the nation (Spector 2013). Thorpe (1988) also commented that the identification of Iacocca as an essentially *American* hero, which referred that "the American underdog winning the battle of preserving the American dream" (p. 44). It was carefully and consciously cultivated by Iacocca himself.

Third, with the participation of Lehigh University in the United Nations as a member of the UNAI and also as a recognized NGO, the influence to the rest of the world can be embedded through the global citizenship education and the U.N. Youth Representative Program. Nevertheless, Pushby (2012) suggested a post-colonial global citizenship education framework to raise the awareness of learning about "others", which has been implicated in power relations and colonial way of knowing.

Fourth, "Fulbright Program" also has a hidden political agenda from the US government, which is a soft power to spread American power and culture overseas (Lynn and McClure 1973). The incoming scholars are mostly from the developing countries, while the outgoing scholars spread the "knowledge" of the United States and to "aid" the developing countries. According to Woods (1987), it originated with the idea to build the national stability through its citizens to learn about and appreciate foreign culture. He further explained that the underlying ideology of Fulbright's internationalism has been to define Western civilization by the constellation of economic and political

institutions. This area is in line with the political rationale of the internationalization of higher education on promoting the United States' foreign relations (U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, 1995), peace and mutual understanding to dilute the image of American imperialism (de Wit 1998).

While the United States uses various "international" education programs to spread the soft power, covertly, it is consistent with the ideas of Said (2006) regarding imposition of culture, language, and power from "advanced and civilized" West to the non-Western parts of the world. From this perspective, colonial and racial domination has affected the way of viewing "otherness" (Hudis 2015).

Discussion / Implications

In this case, Lehigh University has intertwined relationship with how the internationalization of higher education in the nation started. WWII and the end of the Cold War became a turning point for the USA as a proactive actor on a global stage. Partnering with the UNAI from 2011 not only helps Lehigh University advance the level of internationalization plan and increase its visibility at the United Nations, but also manifests the post-colonial legacy. Nevertheless, this study could shed a new light on revisiting this phenomenon.

Power from the West in the higher education did not decrease with the end of WWII. Instead, it marked the beginning of this global power dynamics. The United States pioneered the internationalization of higher education due to the promotion of peace and understanding in the Post WWII period. It is closely linked to the reason with the founding of the United Nations and the Fulbright Programs. Unavoidably, due to this factor, English has become a powerful social and cultural capital in every facet of "globalization". The proximity of Lehigh University with the headquarters of the United Nations has been an advantage of enriching the programs with the U.N. and allowing the participants in the institutions to experience the U.N. activities extensively on and off campus. From this point of spreading the soft power through internationalization, higher education in other nations

began to borrow the policies from the USA and adopt this model to shape their reforms according to the contextualization (Craig and Mark 2004). Hence, Lehigh University first acts as a receiver of internationalization of higher education, but then changes its role to transmit and export knowledge overseas. It can leave researchers for deeper investigation of this circumstance.

Most significantly, it is imperative to examine the underlying reasons why the institutions in the US have composed the most among the members of the UNAI universities. This study can give the future researchers a baseline to expand the scope of institutions within and across different nations. Thus, it is timely for researchers and practitioners in higher education sector from different parts of the world to reconsider how to transform the current phenomenon. Especially with the unexpected changing political landscape of the United States, including its withdrawal from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural and from the U.N. Human Rights Council, and Brexit in the United Kingdom, the rise of nationalism and isolation of two dominant western nations have shaken up the global stage. On the other hand, there has been the rise of East Asia and the expansion of Confucius Institutes from China in the African and Western countries. The new research can give insightful perspectives on how to be strategic in internationalizing their institutions with international organizations.

Conclusion

The internationalization of higher education has been institutionalized with the push from the UNAI and start from the United States. Post WWII has become a critical and watershed in the history to promote peace from the West through the establishment of the United Nations. Thus, internationalization of higher education has served its purpose through soft power. The formation of the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI), an initiative from the former Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, has made this claim to be more legitimate through tertiary sector. Through the lens of Said's Theory of Post-colonialism and Foucault's

theory of discourse, power, and knowledge, the official websites of Lehigh University in the United States have not only revealed their relationships with the U.N. and its missions, but also have showcased the dominant usage of English and ownership of knowledge from the West. These themes have been embedded throughout the discourse and public information in the institution.

While internationalization of higher education is a very heated topic, researchers and practitioners in this area should revisit and alter the current trend and move beyond the current westernized, managerial, neo-liberal models of internationalization with international organizations. When SDGs are applied worldwide, the higher education sector has a vital role to adjust its language and accommodate contextual factors according to the regions for its success by 2030. Internationalization is not a one-way road. To be truly internationalized and to create equal footing with other institutions, higher education institutions must demonstrate at least three components: multilingualism, empowerment programs for both domestic and international student body for mutual understanding, and equality of flow of cultural and student exchange between the host and the guest institutions. These strategies will have a long-lasting effect on the student body, research, curriculum, and the study abroad programs for tertiary institutions.

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