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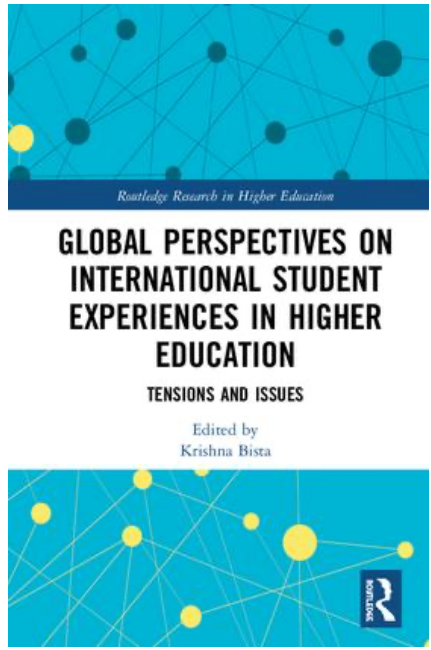

The volume explores important topics pertaining to international student wellbeing, their learning, post-study and socio-cultural experiences, and represents a fascinating contribution to the growing body of literature on higher education internationalization. **– *Dr. Maia Chankseliani, Associate Professor, University of Oxford, UK***

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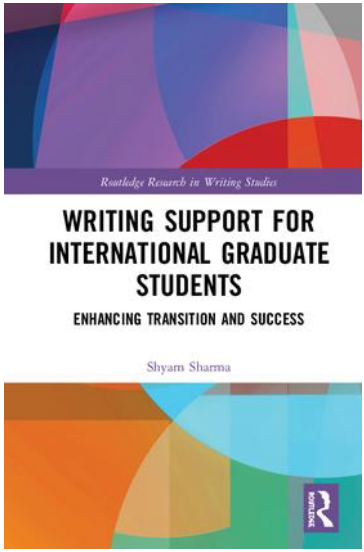


Shyam Sharma | Routledge, 2019

Using qualitative data collected from more than twenty universities across the US, *Writing Support for International Graduate Students* describes and theorizes agency- and advocacy-driven practices, programs, and policies that are most effective in helping international students learn graduate-level writing and communication skills. It uses compelling narratives and cases to illustrate a variety of program models and support practices that fostered the students' process of academic transition and success. Employing an ecological framework, the book seeks to advance academic conversation about how writing scholars/instructors and program administrators, as well as other academic service professionals working with this student body, can formulate policies, develop programs, and implement practices that best help these students grow as writers and scholars in their disciplines.

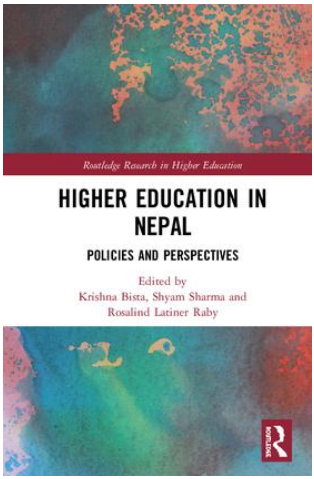
Reviews

"*Writing Support for International Graduate Students* vividly captures the numerous challenges international graduate students are likely to encounter in the course of writing their way into the university and provides an array of critical interventions faculty can call on to ease the transition." *– Dr. Juan C. Guerra, University of Washington at Seattle*

"Writing Support for International Graduate Students is a must read for everyone involved in writing instruction and research, graduate program administration, and international education." *—Dr. Michelle Cox Director, English Language Support Office, Cornell University Past Chair, Consortium on Graduate Communication*

"The book provides a nuanced and in-depth exploration of how international students learn to write and communicate, with program models, support strategies, and resources that make a real difference. The interviews and practical examples will make you rethink how your program or institution approaches international student writing development and what it means for international students to 'find their voice' in written assignments and verbal presentations." *—Dr. Chris R. Glass, Associate Professor, Old Dominion University*

Edited by: Krishna Bista, Shyam Sharma, Rosalind L. Raby



This book presents a showcase of discussions and critical perspectives about Nepalese higher education. Its chapters cover topics such as the impacts of local sociopolitical changes and global forces on public and private education, emerging online and distance education, administrative and intellectual leadership, quality assessment, graduate employability, global mobility of students, and the contributions of global diaspora of Nepalese scholars.

'An important contribution to the existing scholarship.' - *Karen Valentin, Aarhus University, Denmark*

'This well-researched, informative, and timely volume about Nepalese higher education.' - *Hari P. Koirala, Eastern Connecticut State University*

'This is an impressive collection of well-researched chapters on Nepali higher education in a single volume'.- *Bal Krishna Sharma, University of Idaho*

'a unique construction of research on theories and practices in reflecting the outcome conducted within the higher education in Nepal ' - *Mani Rajbhandari, Pontificia Universidad, Catolica del Peru*

'A must read. Each chapter topic provides critical perspectives that should be extremely helpful to policy makers, educators as well as researchers.' - *Jeet Joshee, California State University, Long Beach*

'We owe Krishna Bista, Shyam Sharma and Rosalind Raby a debt of gratitude. A unique volume relevant for today's educators, scholars, and policy makers.' - *Kalyani Rai, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*

'The first of its kind.' - *Prithvi N. Shrestha, The Open University, UK*

'It is a unique and timely contribution ' - *Tejendra Pherali, University College London, UK*

'Must read title for everyone in the field.' - *Jeet Sapkota, University of Tsukuba, Japan*

'This book asks critical questions about the state of Nepal's higher education, and how innovative teaching and knowledge production can revitalize Nepal.' -*Åshild Kolås, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Norway*

'This volume comprehensively explores the systemic obstacles to and pedagogical opportunities for quality higher education in the new Nepal as it continues to play that role.' - *Tom O'Neill, Brock University, Canada*

'This book examines and showcases the impacts of the shifting global dynamics, socio-politics and socio-economics on higher education in Nepal.' - *Sapna Thapa, University of Wisconsin-Stout, USA*

'A must read for anyone interested in contemporary higher education in Nepal, its role in the social transformation of the country, and importantly the challenges it faces.'- *Alpa Shah, London School of Economics and Political Science, UK*

'This book will be essential reading for scholars and practitioners interested in higher education in Nepal or in a comparative context.' - *Miranda Weinber*

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Knowledge Production in Difficult Times

Shyam Sharma

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Difficult times test us. They test both our social systems and our value systems behind them. The year 2020 has been a year of many tests. In a crisis brought on by one major global challenge of a pandemic, while yet others like climate crisis lurk on the horizon, many systems are being tested, more than they've been in recent memory. In academe, our systems of administration and shared governance, our curricula and pedagogies, our support and mentorship for students, our inclusiveness and empathy, our resilience emotional intelligence are all put to the toughest of stress tests. While academic communities seem to be spared from high levels of loss of lives, the levels of disruptions, anxiety, and uncertainly have been extreme even in academe. In fact, in many ways, the pandemic has exacerbated or exposed the challenges of normal times in ways that we're just starting to come to terms with. Graduate students are left stranded, and so are international students and scholars; people of color and minority or vulnerable populations have suffered the most. The academic landscape reflects broader patterns of inequality and injustice, instead of being able to model a different world that the rest of society could emulate. And our research and knowledge production are often agnostic to what is going on in society, even during crises like this. This issue foregrounds the pandemic's effect on education and society, including issues that scholars are starting to get a handle on.

When we started this journal almost five years ago, we were most inspired by the need to approach quality and rigor in ways that are better attuned to our time. Traditional features of academic publication, such as rejection rate, citation index, and parochial scope of citation, no longer align

with what has come to be known as the social justice turn across many disciplines. In a world where knowledge-based economy is rapidly becoming the norm rather than an anomaly across societies, knowledge production can no longer remain dominated by gatekeepers residing in and serving the interest of a few countries—or that of the few in any given society. Nations themselves can no longer be effectively served by pursuing national interest alone; there are too many shared and often global challenges that demand more than national attention and solutions. The ongoing global pandemic has laid bare the needs for producing and applying new knowledge on transnational (often global) as much as national scales. A new vision of quality that is defined by more than "rigor"—by relevance to and impact on society, by inclusion and participation of the traditionally excluded, by cause and a sense of justice, and by the need advancements in the very modes and methods of knowledge production—has become even more relevant today.

Today's scholars (residing in any country) are conscious about the inequality and inequities in knowledge production, which are unsurprisingly exacerbated by the global pandemic. Female scientists, for instance, have reportedly produced significantly less publication than their male counterparts. At the same time, scholars in the global south are facing increasingly unreasonable demands for publishing "internationally" while their working conditions are worsening. Especially in the global south, universities and government alike are demanding publications in international journals with high citation index, giving rise to both corruption of standards and exploitation of scholars. When scholars face increasing demands without additional time, resource, or support, it not surprising that they resort to predatory or junk publication, plagiarism or data fabrication, or, more often, unproductive competitions for producing research and publication that may contribute much to their society or discipline. The pandemic is exacerbating all of these challenges, as well as exposing them. And they are likely to outlast the crisis. The emergence of a new publication landscape—including commercial publishers to predatory journal to greater postcolonial/neoliberal hegemonies—could pose new challenges to the cause of creating respect for scholars across borders.

There are, however, silver linings as well. Technology for communication, collaboration, and dissemination of new knowledge have all rapidly developed and they are being adopted by vastly increased number of academic professionals. While the inequalities of access and privilege are stark here too, the far wider adoption of tools for knowledge sharing and application is likely to change the academic landscape positively in the longer run. While the push for more publication around the world may misguide thousands of scholars, even within the regime of quality defined by the number of citations, greater engagement in research and publication could involve a lot more scholars in meaningful knowledge production than

before. It might also diversify participation in the global map of knowledge production. It may open up critical discourse about the value of knowledge to local communities and societies, before or in addition to the conventional idea that knowledge is always universal. More scholars and the economic and social agencies behind them might start asking on whose terms and to whose benefits—and by and for whom—knowledge production is occurring, what that knowledge is contributing to, and so on. On the one hand, many scholars and students are unable to do much of what they do in normal times, involving field work and labs, physical and material aspects of scholarship, mentorship and collaboration. On the other, the shaking up of many systems within academe is creating opportunities as well as challenges that we will have to grapple with, more or less productively, in the long run.

The articles and essays in this issue reflect a reckoning demanded by the disruption of the global pandemic. The contributing scholars have raised a number of local and global issues from within education, issues that have social ramifications beyond academe. They have written about a range of issues pertaining to what the world is going through, from trauma to resilience and need for adaptation, from wellbeing to success of both students and scholars guiding them, from ways to empower students and foster agency in the face of crisis, from structural racism to issues of justice and dignity for minoritized groups, from vocational learning for students to professional development for students to scholars, from issues in the discipline of music to engineering, from topics of technology and online education to topics about the post-covid world. The question that connects all of the contributions in this issue is: How can we overcome the crisis, as we also seek to address challenges and create opportunities that we see more clearly now? How do we seek new opportunities even as we counter problems that are exacerbated by this crisis? The authors collectively argue that this is a time for us to become more informed, aware, and sensitive to these challenges. It is time for us to envision action and solutions to the new challenges (ex)posed by the pandemic and many more that have persisted.

We hope that especially with the inclusion of the shorter essays, we've been able to include the voice of more (and more diverse) scholars. By creating this new space, which we intend to test a few more times, we hope to practice the idea of inclusion that past issues embraced more generally through the calls and the review process.

As editor, I would like to sincerely thank the assistant editors for their countless hours of contribution. I am truly grateful to Crystal London and David Johnson for being willing to contribute on short notice. Dr. Krishna Bista, advisor and mentor for this and other OJED journal, has given so much support on so many areas I can't fully express my gratitude. Thanks also to Dr. Chris Glass for his support with the platform and the technology as and when needed. Along with my fellow editors, I am grateful to reviewers and advisors. The authors own thanks for all of us on the

editorial team; your patience and cooperation are truly appreciated. During such a difficult time, yours is a work of dedication to society and love of knowledge. Journals like this exhibit volunteerism and commitment to causes that our academe exhibits at its best. Your selfless service is cause for hope in the world, in spite of the pain and uncertainty in the world.

Finally, thank you, readers, for reading the contents of this issue. In addition to looking up the journal for your own publication, please promote it with other colleagues who may find it relevant to their work.

Peer Reviewed Article

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Managing (In)Equality through Simultaneity: Differentiation and the Rhetoric of Reform and Revolution in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

The coronavirus pandemic has heightened the sense of crisis in higher education, initiating a reconsideration of the conditions under which transformative change actually occurs. For some historians, the radical disruption of a social system occurs under four conditions: mass mobilization warfare, transformative revolution, state failure, and lethal pandemics. However, peace aids the return of inequality and its correlate, differentiation. Differentiation produces equality and inequality in education. Dismantling this simultaneity may be impossible without radical disruption. This study reveals how this conditionality challenges the egalitarian impulse in the rhetoric of reform and revolution espoused by change agents in academe. It marks the limits of these perspectives by surveying the academic models that treat differentiation as a feature rather than an anomaly in education.

Keywords: Coronavirus, Differentiation, Education Policy, Higher Education Reform, Pandemic Policies

For years, critics and scholars have offered us different appreciations of the collected difficulties or *crises* in higher education. For some, the coronavirus pandemic has magnified many of these problems and drawn even more attention to the deficiencies and inequalities that have plagued higher education well into the digital age (Alexander, 2020; Fain, 2020).

Noted scholars have articulated many of these same concerns long before the pandemic. For instance, the considerations made by Bok (2017) and Davidson (2017) clarify many of our perennial criticisms about what ails higher education. They offer thoughtful insights for democratizing and improving the system. In his evaluation, Bok (2017) outlines the various troubles that have compromised the quality of higher education such as the fragmentation of knowledge, dwindling success rates and resources, and irresponsive political and academic leadership. He explains how these elements and others hinder innovation and slow the pace of progress in ways that maintain the status quo. While somewhat skeptical, Bok (2017) calls for *reform* and presents a number of suggestions that can help us to build on many initiatives already in place (pp. 169-182). In her assessment, Davidson (2017) argues that our current academic system is prescriptive and designed for the Industrial Age and not the Digital Age. One of the key architects of the industrial model that Davidson (2017) criticizes is Charles W. Eliot of Harvard University. To transform education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Eliot adapts what he learns studying institutions such as the University of Berlin, established by Wilhelm von Humboldt and inspired by philosophers such as Immanuel Kant (also see Taylor, 2010, and Wellmon, 2015). Davidson (2017) contends that it is time for us to develop a new system of higher education and better ways to integrate knowledge and promote collaborative learning. Davidson (2017) claims that higher education needs to be redesigned systemically and systematically in order to prepare students for the complex worlds beyond the academy. Inspired by the equalitarian nature of digital technology, she calls for a *revolutionary* redesign of higher education.

However, one critic suggests that Davidson's appraisal may be untenable and more sustainable as rhetoric than as reality. In "What Does Higher Education Need: Revolution and/or Reform?" Huber (2019) determines that Davidson's vision is infectious and capacious, but it is Bok (2017) who provides us with the "comprehensive and sober-sided analysis" that we need in order to transfigure higher education (p. 27). The problem with Huber's conclusion is that it encourages what Scott (1995) calls *warring opposites* in the discourse on the crises in higher education. When we employ dichotomies to frame calls for academic reconfiguration, we advance binarity as an explanatory tool in a way that oversimplifies *reform* and *revolution* and often reinforces the status quo. Scott (1995) writes, "I think it is most useful to treat the crisis in higher education not in terms of warring opposites, but as a series of paradoxes that have produced further paradoxes" (p. 294). Even Huber (2019) signifies this *series of paradoxes* when she questions the differences between reform and revolution and when she asks if Davidson's revolutionary vision can be accomplished through Bok's "decidedly unrevolutionary process of reform" (p. 29).

This turn toward the study of paradox in higher education is consistent with what Scheidel (2017) reveals about the contradictory nature of *change* throughout world history. The author claims that four kinds of disruption have reversed inequalities and provided opportunities to reconfigure established social institutions. They are mass mobilization warfare, transformative revolution, state failure, and lethal pandemics. While these *four levelers* can work to bring about sweeping changes in any society, Scheidel (2017) states that no one in his or her right mind would welcome the fear, violence, and destruction that they entail. What is even more ironic and troubling is that peace and stability aid the return and proliferation of inequality and the ideologies and infrastructure that support it. *Inequality* describes the effect of differences that are often used to thwart democratic policies and practices. Scheidel (2017) claims, "There does not seem to be an easy way to vote, regulate, or teach our way to significantly greater equality" (p. 9). He (2017) also says that advances in economic capacity and state building have favored inequality over equality since the beginning of civilization. Too often, little can be done to reverse this condition once it is put into play. In Scheidel's work, it is important to note that differentiation is identified as one of the techniques that those in positions of authority use to maintain inequality, typically using a system of institutional structures that distribute advantages and disadvantages in society. For him, differentiation signifies as a dividing practice that functions as a bulwark against social, political, and economic equalization.

As a concept, differentiation continues to operate in higher education for many of the same purposes and effects pointed out by Scheidel (2017). As in history, differentiation reproduces the kinds of inequalities in higher education that often mirror those in the larger society (Bastedo, 2016; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Thelin, 2011). More significantly, the concept is at odds with the rhetoric of democracy and meritocracy that is sometimes viewed as synonymous with higher education (Brennan & Magness, 2019; Markovits, 2019). However, we often fail to consider why this contradiction is tolerated in spite of the reoccurring dissonance that it produces for educators and academic leaders (Lemann, 2000; Tough, 2019; Wilkerson, 2020). A few scholars might agree that many countries tend to generate more ambition and aspiration than there are opportunities for them to be realized or satisfied. For some to succeed, others must fail (Dennis, 2019; Robertson, 2012). Therefore, ambition must be managed. Otherwise, the legitimacy of the academic system itself is jeopardized. According to Brint and Karabel (1989), "there was something potentially threatening to the established order about organizing the educational system so as to arouse high hopes, only to shatter them later" (p. 11).

Academic leaders and advocates for reform would have to find a way to curb the public's desire for improvement and social mobility using the very academic system that often accepts the fulfillment of such

aspirations as its mission. Brint and Karabel (1989) write, “The ideal of equal education would have to be forsaken, for only differentiated education—education that fit students for their different vocational futures—was truly democratic” (p. 11). In his examination of the impact of differentiation as a policy and practice in higher education, Marks (1980) argues that the concept affirms the social perspectives of dominate groups who tend to view individual differences as innate. Advocates in higher education and elsewhere reason that innate differences necessitate different kinds of training for different kinds of people at different academic institutions. In the name of efficiency, differentiation is a mechanism that is used to fit people into designated positions in the social and economic order (also see Lemann, 2000, and Wilkerson, 2020). The interplay involved in extending opportunities while restricting them through differentiation characterize *simultaneity,* and it is considered a rational way to accommodate the realities and complexities of the social order and the division of labor in many nations (Bastedo, 2016; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Dennis, 2019; Tough, 2019).

In this respect, the legacy of differentiation and its service to the nation state challenges the egalitarian impulse in the rhetoric of reform and revolution signaled by Bok (2017) and Davidson (2017). It also troubles Huber’s (2019) suggestion that adequate solutions may fall somewhere between the two appreciations. It appears that all three authors undervalue differentiation as a cross-cultural phenomenon that continues to accelerate in higher education around the world (Reimer & Jacob, 2011; Veiga et al., 2015). As such, professors and administrators will continue to be positioned as both subjects and agents in academic systems that perpetuate (in)equality by bestowing privileges on some and denying them to others (Foucault, 1995; Markovits, 2019; Tough, 2019). The paradoxical character of differentiation and its technicians suggest that calls for reform and revolution in the future might benefit from the kind of historical and philosophical contextualization that makes this logic much more explicit for change agents across the academic disciplines and in the public sector.

Purpose

The purpose of this discussion is to survey the perspectives and discourse in three models of reform for higher education that offer the historical and philosophical contexts that change agents need in order to more clearly recognize the powerful ways in which differentiation thwarts change and reproduces (in)equality in academe and society. As a dividing practice, differentiation treats crises and conflict as features rather than anomalies in higher education. In this sense, the rhetoric of reform and revolution must compete against the operationalization of differentiation and its powerful progenitors and advocates. Sadly, opportunities for successful changes to differentiation and its paradoxical ethos are limited. Throughout

the history of academic reform, differentiation is repeatedly evoked and legitimized as a deliberate practice for managing complexity in higher education.

To illustrate this point, I will identify the properties of differentiation using a conceptual framework inspired by the work of Clark (1983, 2008), a leading voice in the study of higher education systems around the world. Using this paradigm, I appraise the academic plan of Immanuel Kant, the California Master Plan for Higher Education made famous by academic leaders such as Clark Kerr, and the plan for The New American University imagined by Michael Crow and William Dabars. The significance in juxtaposing these models of academic reform and their periodization is that it allows educators to more clearly see the connection between the discourse that supports differentiation and the persistence of crises and (in)equality in education despite the repeated calls for reform and revolution by scholars such as Bok (2017) and Davidson (2017). The value in signaling differentiation as a form of simultaneity is that it encourages more realistic discussions about what kinds of changes are possible in higher education and society without unleashing the horror, violence, and unimaginable destruction that Scheidel (2017) associates with the *four levelers*. Hopefully, this (re)view will recalibrate the way that we conceptualize and discuss *change* in higher education in the future.

Conceptual Framework

According to Burke (1969), rhetoric is more than just the various conceptualizations of communication and discourse that help us to interact and achieve goals. He claims that rhetoric is also a form of *identification*. Identification is achieved when we relate the patterns or properties of one idea or object to another. According to Burke's thinking, we might imagine rhetoric as a body of identifications that owe their persuasiveness to the similarities and connections that are evident across space and time. Clark (1983, 2008) supports this consideration of rhetoric for framing and evaluating the paradoxical nature of change and the structural fragmentation that resists it in higher education. For example, he claims that "structure grants and withholds voice, not only in determining who sets agendas and tells others what to do—decision making—but also in restricting the scope of what will be decided—non-decision making" (1983, pp.107-108). When we value structure as a form of rhetoric, we can more clearly recognize the ways in which it frames and conditions the relations of various speech acts that further the cause of certain groups while subordinating others. For Clark (1983), the exercise of power or the ability to influence or coerce is indispensable to all discussions of structure in higher education. Structure is simply one of the ways in which power is translated and operationalized. In fact, structure arranges authority in ways that allow policies and their originators to remain largely invisible and impervious to those who demand

change (see more on structure as a form of rhetoric and power in Hirst, 1993, and Foucault, 1995).

Change is the term that is variously used to refer to "alterations that vary from simple reproduction to radical transformation" (Clark, 1983, p. 182). It occurs in ways that are incremental, opaque, paradoxical, and controversial. For clarity, change and its coextensions might be conceptualized as points on a continuum. Though reform and revolution are correlated, they excite different responses in the public imagination. *Reform* suggests a gradual transformation within established boundaries that are acceptable to dominate authorities or groups who benefit from the status quo. *Revolution* excites caution and fear. The term is often interpreted as a complete reorientation of worldviews. It is a reconfiguration of the status quo and its supporting institutional structures and ideologies. It is imagined to be more disruptive and even apocalyptic by some alarmists (Buller, 2015).

Any analysis of change in higher education should begin with an awareness of the presuppositions associated with these representations of change, especially as they relate to academic systems. Clark (1983) defines a system of higher education as an institution that advances knowledge and disseminates the intellectual heritage of the world. One of its more definitive characteristics is that its structures and supporting ideologies tend to remain in place. Clark (1983) claims that we need to examine how change is influenced by the ways in which structures operate over long periods of time. One of the reasons academic structures are so resilient is political and economic interests that incentivize changes in one area often become sources of rigidity in others. This may explain why academic systems can foster innovative changes in some contexts while remaining deeply resistant to them in another.

To understand this paradox, Clark (1983, 2008) has determined that we need a paradigm that will improve the way we investigate the structures and imperatives that work against change in higher education. He writes, "There is so much observable inertia that we need a theory of nonchange" (1983, p. 182). Without an adequate framework, perennial conversations about reform and revolution remain ineffective and pointless if they are not grounded in an understanding of how structures in higher education resist change. Consequently, Clark (1983) would agree that the rhetoric of reform and revolution posited by Bok (2017), Davidson (2017), and Huber (2019) cannot be divorced from the study of the relationship among the key features of academic systems and the historical and philosophical perspectives that underpin them (p. 237).

To help us to move in this direction, Clark (2008) presents differentiation and its properties as the kind of conceptualization that illustrates the significance of the abovementioned relationship. Differentiation and its tenets construct the lens through which one can map

and contemplate a wide range of problems and divisions that are evident throughout the history and philosophy of higher education. In the parlance of higher education, differentiation is essentially a synonym for academic fragmentation. It describes the vertical and horizontal tiers, levels, compartments, and hierarchies that appear in varying combinations across the various academic landscapes that form the complex system of higher education found throughout the world. With that said, systems of higher education are generally differentiated by two crisscrossing modes. One is by disciplines and the other is by institutions. More importantly, these elemental formulations of differentiation flow across national and international borders. As such, they allow power to protect certain interests and incentives at the expense of others, thus reproducing equality and inequality under the cloak of meritocracy. Unsurprisingly, the simultaneity that is produced by differentiation is inseparable from the contradictory values found in the larger society. In many ways, it aids their legitimation. Ultimately, the cumulative effect of differentiation thwarts transformative change and sets the stage for many of the social, political, and economic problems that underwrite the crises in higher education (Clark, 1983, 2008). These descriptive features constitute the conceptual lens that will be used to review the ways in which differentiation reemerges as a rhetorical stance and management strategy in three influential models of reform in higher education: The Kantian Plan, The California Master Plan, and The New American University Plan.

The Kantian Plan

In his assessment of higher education, Taylor (2010) determines that "the lack of historical perspective is one of the most important factors blocking reforms that are so desperately needed" (p. 49). Like Bok (2017) and Davidson (2017), he would agree that it is important to examine the reform efforts of innovative leaders such as Charles W. Eliot. However, Taylor (2010) indicates that the key academic reforms that anticipate Eliot's efforts and those of many others really begin with Immanuel Kant. Derrida (2004) concurs that Kant's contributions to education are largely overlooked or ignored by educators outside of philosophy. When we revisit Kant's work, Derrida (2004) writes, "we find a kind of dictionary and grammar (structural, generative, and dialectal) for the most contradictory discourses we might develop about—and, up to a point, within—the university" (p. 90).

Kant meditates on higher education in general and the university, specifically. His view of education is rooted in Enlightenment thought. Kant (1784/2013) describes e*nlightenment* as the employment of reason for intellectual maturity. Kant (1784/2013) concludes that human nature is fallible and he wants people to be educated to order their lives according to *reason* or disciplined thought. One's use of reason has to be restricted or censored for the greater good of the community and the nation state. As a

consequence, some situations will require that humans comply and obey so that through "artificial unanimity" the government can guide them toward peace and public good. According to some scholars, Kant prefers that the enlightenment that he associates with education be initiated by reform and not by revolution. Revolution is far too costly. It destabilizes the state and supporting institutions such as the academic system (Derrida, 2004; Reiss, 1956).

In *The Conflict of the Faculties,* Kant creates a blueprint for avoiding disruption and managing many of the problems that he found in higher education, particularly among faculty. He claims to use *reason* to resolve the tensions between the higher faculty and the lower faculty in his academic plan for higher education. Preoccupied by censorship and challenges to academic freedom, Kant (1798/1979) develops a rationale and an organizational scheme to correct academic misalliances. He fragments the faculty, differentiates their functions, and limits their domains of knowledge and authority. In Kant's *architectonic* or system of higher education, the higher ranks are composed of the professional fields of theology, law, and medicine. The lower rank consists of two departments: one for faculty concerned with historical knowledge and the other for those concerned with pure rational knowledge. Today, these departments make up the human sciences, social sciences, and natural sciences. Kant refers to the faculty who teach in the lower rank as the *philosophy faculty*. According to Kant (1798/1979), the lower faculty must be given the freedom and power to judge autonomously in order to discover truth through the sciences. Ironically, the lower faculty members play important roles as both regulators and functionaries for the higher faculty. They are subject only to the laws of reason and peer review. As a trade-off, the faculty in the lower rank are largely free from disturbances by government officials; however, "the higher faculties (themselves better instructed) will lead these officials more and more onto the way of truth" (p. 47).

In Kant's plan, the higher faculty in theology, law, and medicine form a special class of the intelligentsia. The higher faculty are privileged because they attend to the eternal well-being, civil well-being, and physical well-being of the people. They provide the services that placate and reassure the public. In a moment of candor, Kant (1798/1979) says, "The people want to be led, that is (as demagogues say), they want to be duped." They want to be led not by scholars but by "businessmen of the faculties—clergymen, legal officials, and doctors—who understand a botched job (savoir faire) and have the people's confidence" (p. 51). Because the higher faculty will have a more direct and lasting influence on the public, Kant (1798/1979) refers to them as the *tools of the government*. According to Kantian logic, this plan accords with reason and the order of cognition. The higher faculty must serve the needs and interests of reason as well as government. Kant (1798/1979) says that "the government is interested

primarily in the means for securing the strongest and most lasting influence on the people, and the subjects which the higher faculties teach are just such means" (p. 27). To avoid conflicts in these roles and purposes, Kant claims that faculty must remain differentiated and not enter into a misalliance.

In many ways, Kant's model serves as a tool that is designed to unify a series of academic compromises under a philosophy of reason. Kant (1803/1904) remarks that the art of government and that of education present us with our greatest problems (also see Jefferson, 1785/1999). To solve these complicated difficulties, Kant (1803/1904) develops a theory of academic reform that functions as a state pedagogy and a social policy (pp. 114-115). Eventually, his philosophical principles and organizational structure for higher education influence the conceptualization of the University of Berlin under the leadership of Wilhelm von Humboldt (Derrida, 2004; Wellmon, 2015). The Humboldtian university or *German model* then inspires the transformation of institutions such as The Johns Hopkins University. After two centuries, Taylor (2010) claims that this legacy is still alive in academic institutions around the world, particularly those in the United States of America.

The California Master Plan

After World War II, Aronowitz (2000) indicates that key academic reformers in the United States of America ignore some of Germany's ideas for achieving academic reform and extend others. This negotiation is largely in response to the labor needs of a growing postwar economy and the politics of the Cold War amid a demand for higher education by an increasingly diverse student population. In Aronowitz's work, Clark Kerr (2001) is noted as one of the more prominent advocates for academic reform. As a labor economist, the first Chancellor of the University of California at Berkeley, and later the president of the University of California, Kerr (2001) is interested in reconfiguring higher education and promoting his vision of academe as a *knowledge industry* and *multiversity*. The multiversity is Kerr's conception of higher education as a complex community of interacting academic institutions with different missions, functions, and constituencies that ultimately work in the service of the economic and social growth of the nation.

In *A Master Plan for Higher Education in California* presented by the California State Board of Education (1960), Kerr's vision of a multiversity becomes a reality and a state statute with the passing of the Donahoe Higher Education Act of 1960. The master plan identifies a range of problems that are to be solved or managed in a new system of higher education in California. One solution is the differentiation of functions in the academic system. The divisions and roles of the various institutions in higher education are locked in place using the force of law instead of reason. In his extensive study of The California Master Plan, Douglass (2000)

describes the logic behind the codification of a tripartite system of higher education in California. First, the plan resolves the conflicts over prestige and funding within academic communities. It limits the ambitions of faculty and the entrepreneurial drive of college administrators and lawmakers. Douglass (2000) claims that this notion that education could play a key role in developing a stable state, a prosperous economy, and a more specialized labor force was reinforced by the German conceptualization of education (pp. 92, 117). To realize this idea in California, a rigid hierarchical structure would be needed to (re)order the various academic institutions in the state and thwart misalignment. In the scheme, the highly selective elite public research universities form the top tier, the semi-selective comprehensive campuses occupy the middle, and open-access community colleges anchor the lower tier. Each segment has a different mission and function, thus decreasing redundancy while encouraging institutional excellence within each particular sphere of influence (Douglass, 2000).

The California Master Plan has gained national and international attention as a model for educational reform. Popular publications have considered the plan "a pinnacle of modernist ideals of rationality and efficiency, championing democracy and inclusion and, ultimately, promising prosperity and culture" (Douglass, 2000, p. 312). As a noted academic leader and advocate for the master plan, Thomas R. McConnell claims that it is not an overstatement to say that the plan's "functions" have been engraved in "tablets of stone" (Douglass, 2000, p. 321). Because politicians and other academic leaders promoted and replicated the California model across the United States of America and the world, Douglass (2000) claims that there are lasting concerns about the ways in which the model has reproduced inequality and legitimated the social construction of differences. "In other words," argues Darknell (1980), "the master plan became an extension of the lower school tracking system" (p. 393). Many students would pass through the California system and would often emerge at the same social class level. One can go to college, but he or she would likely stay in place or move up one square in the socio-economic hierarchy. The inherent fragmentation of knowledge and the bureaucratization of academic degree programs in a tripartite system effectively limit academe as an agent for social equality. Enduring yet under-theorized, this system underwrites the crises in higher education and will likely continue to do so without substantial change. Douglass (2000) writes, "There has been no dire need to rethink a system of education that, seemingly, has served the state so well" (p. 324).

The New American University Plan

In order to initiate a reconceptualization of higher education and enable its transformation, Crow and Dabars (2015, 2020) present The New American University Plan (also known as a Fifth Wave academic

institution). Their plan is both a critique and an extension of models such as the California plan. For the authors, the California system and its iterations represent what they call *the gold standard* in American higher education. According to Crow and Dabars (2015), it has been a successful platform for advancing innovative research and teaching along with American prerogatives at home and abroad. This may explain why there is little incentive to change this system and the influence that it still maintains around the world. However, Crow and Dabars (2015) claim that this model is no longer sufficiently aligned with the needs of contemporary society in the digital age. In many ways, it contributes to the challenges facing higher education in the twenty-first century. Crow and Dabars (2015, 2020) present a new vision for a research university that is inspired by advancements in technology and digitalization. One of the central problems that the authors use their plan to address is the limited access that the majority of students have to elite colleges and top tier research universities.

Unfortunately, many academic institutions define themselves by adhering to practices that are exclusionary and often at odds with the idea of education as a public service. Crow and Dabars (2020) are concerned that too many schools disregard the fact that intelligence is distributed throughout the population and it can be expressed in many different ways. Instead of using elite colleges and top tier research institutions to educate the top 5 percent of high school students and perpetuate their privileges, Crow and Dabars (2020) propose educating the top 25 percent. However, this percentage would only apply to those students who are identified as academically qualified to pursue rigorous coursework at a research institution. If we are to make the nation more competitive in the future, Crow and Dabars (2020) argue that their more inclusive approach is necessary. The New American University is ideal for educating a broader selection of students. As a *new wave* institution, the New American University model is designed to accommodate and train a more diverse student body by providing it with access to cutting-edge technology and more alternative learning opportunities. For Crow and Dabars (2020), the New American University Plan would develop students who can appreciate and practice interdisciplinary learning in a world that is continually changing due to technological innovations. It would also offer the students more options to start and stop their studies in accordance with the changing circumstances of their lives.

In many respects, Crow and Dabars (2020) frame the New American University as an alternative vanguard in higher education. They position it as a leader in a network of public and private research universities, liberal arts colleges, corporate industries, and government agencies. Through interaction and transdisciplinary collaborations, the various sectors in this complex system are expected to become increasingly varied and differentiated. Crow and Dabars (2020) indicate that

differentiation may be the most efficient way for these various sectors to function successfully. In fact, they argue that the kind of innovation that their plan initiates calls for more and not less differentiation in higher education. Due to the privileged nature of Crow and Dabars' model, many schools would have to continue to operate as independent but subordinate components in a complex academic system that offers different experiences and opportunities to different students.

For example, Crow and Dabars (2020) explain the important role that online learning platforms will play in serving the learning needs of different populations. The promising growth and capabilities associated with online education will also help institutions to serve more students while driving down costs. In the New American University model, online learning platforms operationalize what Crow and Dabars (2020) call *universal learning frameworks*. Universal learning frameworks help to disseminate teaching and learning nationally and to audiences around the world at low or no costs. Crow and Dabars (2020) characterize universal learning frameworks as pedagogical and programmatic tools that serve as resources for continuing education and retraining for lifelong learners and those students who do not qualify for admission to the New American University. Crow and Dabars (2020) view universal learning frameworks as a way to bring the resources of a major research institution to curricula generally associated with community colleges and technical schools. Regardless of socioeconomic status or life situation, one can use universal learning frameworks for general intellectual development and for gaining the knowledge and skills essential to a particular career pursuit. Ultimately, advanced technology and universal learning frameworks serve as the major elements that allow Crow and Dabars (2015, 2020) to expand the reproduction of differentiation in higher education while also claiming to democratize it and drive down the costs associated with teaching, learning, and research operations at a premiere university.

Discussion and Conclusion

If Crow and Dabars' elaboration is any indication of what educators can expect in the future, then the simultaneity associated with differentiation may very well prove to be the kind of cross-disciplinary concept that we need in order to add explanatory value to future discussions of change in higher education. This study advances this perspective by providing an overview of three reform plans and some of the historical and philosophical underpinnings that condition them. More importantly, it illustrates the ways in which differentiation reemerges as a discourse and management policy in one reform plan after another, thus reproducing equality and inequality and operationalizing simultaneity. Evidencing this relationship, hopefully, signals differentiation as an accepted practice and not an irregularity that can be easily remedied. What we ultimately learn is that differentiation operates

in education to protect power and distribute advantages and disadvantages in ways that reproduce the status quo. The simultaneity that we find in differentiation in education is simply an expression of the paradoxes, tensions, and compromises inherent in academic systems that function as double agents in society.

Identifying the logic of simultaneity and differentiation in higher education ultimately poses a problem for change agents such as Bok (2017) and Davidson (2017). They call for reform and revolution in academic systems that have essentially *locked in* the paradoxes that too often reflect existing social relations and values. When we underappreciate the unique obstacles that this presents, we indirectly aid the reproduction of the status quo and its accompanying problems in education. Brennan and Magness (2019) agree that "once we identify the cause of our problems, we often can't do anything about it" (p. 12). In other words, academic organizations and many of the people who maintain them tend to resist change because they believe that it may cost them too much to participate in an alternative configuration of the system (Roithmayr, 2014; Wilkerson, 2020). Over time, existing conditions reproduce themselves and become insuperable or *locked in* without the kinds of radical disruptions that Scheidel (2017) says we should not welcome. However, the growing threat of the coronavirus and its implications may give us little choice in the matter. Whether the impact of the pandemic on higher education proves to be reformatory, revolutionary, or regrettable is yet to be determined.

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Invite Students to Skip the Unemployment Line: How health information management education (HIM) programs can increase employability with support from HIM stakeholders

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ABSTRACT

Students graduate from accredited programs every year with skills and competencies required by the academic program of choice. However, industry leaders and educators have different perceptions as it relates to graduate preparedness for the workforce. The topic of this research study was the employability of health information management (HIM) undergraduates. This paper posited that university connections and partnerships will assist graduates in securing employment and other required skills after graduation. The purpose of this paper was to extend the work begun by Jackson, Lower, and Rudman, finding evidence via a systematic review of the literature. The question explored was how management frameworks can bridge the gap in HIM education and increase graduate employability by partnering with healthcare organizations. A systematic review methodology was used to aggregate the data from 21 articles. The findings showed it was important to consider both hard and soft skills in when increasing graduate employability. Recommendations were made for each of the actors in this situation, the educator, the undergraduate student, and the HIM industry leader/employer.

Keywords: employability, health information management, Partnership in Pedagogy, Accreditation and Collaboration (P-PAC), university industry linkage (UIL), work integration learning (WIL), soft skills

Forty-one percent of recent undergraduates are underemployed, according to December 2019 data from the New York Federal Reserve Bank of New York. In health services, the underemployment rate jumps to 45.7%, while the unemployment rate is 3.1%, as of December 2019 (Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2019). The underemployment rate is defined as the share of undergraduates working in jobs that typically do not require a college degree (Federal Reserve Bank of New York 2019). HIM students graduate from accredited programs every year armed with most of the skills and competencies required by their academic program. However, the evidence showed that there is a disconnect between what educator and employers consider preapared for the HIM workforce. The problem that this research addressed is HIM undergraduate student employability. According to a study conducted by Jackson, Lower, and Rudman (2016), there is a "statistically significant difference" between what industry leaders and educators observe undergraduates knowing when entering the workforce. The purpose of this systematic review was to synthesize frameworks that will assist health information management education students, educators, and industry leaders in bridging the gap between internships/practicums to increase graduate employability. The inability of graduates to find a job is significant in that it could decrease enrollment in colleges and universities where this major exists.

Background

HIM is not a new field; ninety-two years ago, the profession started with medical record librarians providing clinical recordkeeping in healthcare facilities. Health information management is the practice of managing medical information vital to providing quality patient care, sound fiscal management of medical resources, and data governance supporting the confidentiality of patient records (CAHIIM, 2020). Management of these data includes acquisition, analysis, and protection of digital and traditional types of information. HIM professionals are key players in health informatics, healthcare information technology, and work in any area where health information is kept. The HIM field is driven by credentials.

HIM students in the United States attend an accredited college or university to earn the right to sit for either the registered health information administrator (RHIA) or the registered health information technician (RHIT) credential. The Commission on Certification for Health Informatics and Information Management (CCHIIM) establishes and enforces the standards and procedures for certification and recertification in the United States of health informatics and information management (CAHIIM, 2020). CCHIIM is a standing commission of the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) dedicated to assuring the competency of professionals practicing health

informatics and information management (HIIM) (AHIMA, 2020). CCHIIM provides strategic oversight of all AHIMA certification programs (CAHIIM, 2020).

Colleges and universities that offer HIM degrees are accredited based on curricular competencies created by AHIMA. Individual HIM competencies are grouped into six domains that represent specific and similar areas of content taken from the input of the current HIM workforce. The six domains are:

1. Data Structure, Content, and Information Governance
2. Information Protection: Access, Use, Disclosure, Privacy, and Security
3. Informatics, Analytics, and Data Use
4. Revenue Cycle Management
5. Health Law & Compliance
6. Organizational Management & Leadership

The Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management (CAHIIM) oversees the execution of AHIMA's curricular competencies by implementing the standards created to monitor programs (CAHIIM, 2020). CAHIIM strives to provide the public with effective and consistent quality monitoring of health informatics and health information management programs through the maintenance of accreditation processes (CAHIIM, 2020). The Council for Excellence in Education (CEE) enhances the health information management (HIM) profession, plans for its future through education, and provides HIM professionals with a way to get involved in the process (AHIMA, 2020). The competencies, standards, and the credentialing exam for an HIM professional, making undergraduates highly marketable, yet obtaining their first job is still difficult.

The New York Federal Reserve Bank of New York (2019) calculated employment and underemployment rates based on workers age 16-65 years of age. College undergraduates are those aged 22 to 65 with a bachelor's degree or higher; recent college undergraduates are those aged 22 to 27 with a bachelor's degree or higher (Federal Reserve Bank, 2020). Sangwan and Garg (2017) describe employability in two ways: (1) the ability to get a job and (2) ensure that students can put into practice the skills, knowledge, and understanding gained from pursuing the degree. HIM students, in accredited programs, learn skills and competencies that are directly connected to healthcare, information technology, and management.

Explanation of the Organizational Problem

HIM undergraduates have a difficult time finding jobs immediately after graduation. This could be for lack of experience or a lack of the employability skills that are required by HIM employers.

Rao's 2014 findings indicate that effective collaboration is needed among industry, faculty, students, and educational institutions. Rao (2014) also recommended that there be an integrated approach, in educational institutions, to handle unemployability. According to Hollister, Spears, Mardis, Lee, McClure, and Liebman (2017), ongoing industry input into curricula and expanded experiential opportunities may ensure that undergraduates are prepared to address current and future IT developments. Although students are prepared with the theory and concepts to perform the duties of jobs in the field, they are not purveyed the opportunity to acquire a position.

Methodology

The process of identifying and appraising empirical evidence that meets specified criteria pertinent to the research question was done through the method of a systematic review (SR). This SR was performed to determine how management frameworks bridge the gap in health information management (HIM) education and increase graduate employability by partnering with healthcare organizations. According to Gough, Oliver, and Thomas (2012), "systematic reviews are a form of research; they are a way of bringing together what is known from the research literature using explicit and accountable methods" (p. 2). Systematic reviews are a scientific evidence-based methodology. The SR methodology enables the research to merge relevant research literature by using a rigorous and transparent process (Gough, Oliver, & Thomas, 2012, p.6). The cornerstone of evidence-based management is the well-executed systematic review that explicitly summarizes what is known and unknown about a specific practice-related research question (Briner, Denyer & Rousseau, 2009). A search strategy was crafted based on the RQ themes and concepts to gather the literature used for this SR.

Search Strategy/Data Collection

The RQ examined the literature of P-PAC, Knowledge Transfer (KT), University-Industry Linkage (UIL), and Work Integration Learning (WIL) in the field of HIM. Immediately, The Journal of AHIMA and Perspectives in HIM were searched for relevant articles. The following table depicts the search strings used. All available UMGC databases were used in each search. The asterisk was used at the end of the search string as a truncation symbol. This symbol is used to include single and plural endings of literature titles.

Table 1
Search Strings

Number	Search String	Database	Number of Items Returned
1	(knowledge management AND university or college or higher education AND apprenticeship or internship)	UMGC's OneSearch	1089
2	Work-integrated learning AND employment		555
3	university industry linkage AND employment		314
4	knowledge transfer and employability		92
5	P-PAC Partnership in Pedagogy, Accreditation, and Collaboration	Google Scholar	2

Search strings one through four were conducted with the University of Maryland Global Campus' (UMGC) OneSearch. Search string one returned 1,089 results using the Boolean operator AND. This operator helps to narrow results and informs the database that all search terms must be present in the resulting records. Search string two returned 555 results using the Boolean operator AND. Search string three returned 314 results with the Boolean operator AND. Search string four returned 92 results. Search string five was performed using Google Scholar and returned two results. Google Scholar was utilized for this search to find an assortment of materials, including articles and "grey literature" like conference proceedings. All searches utilized requested publications between 2015 and 2020. All searches were limited to peer review/scholarly journals. Articles that were specific to HIM or allied health, employability, internships, and practicums were included, while articles that did not were excluded. Articles that included the frameworks P-PAC, Knowledge Transfer (KT), University-Industry Linkage (UIL), and Work Integration Learning (WIL) were included regardless of the year. Articles that did not mention these frameworks were excluded.

Critical Appraisal

Each article was assessed for transparency, accuracy, purposivity, utility, propriety, accessibility, and specificity (TAPUPAS) on a three-point scale (completely met, somewhat met, and not at all met) (Pawson, Boaz, Grayson, Long, & Barnes, 2003). TAPUPAS demonstrates an element of rigor in the SR process. Measuring articles by similar domain

and scale ensures that each was measured against similar criteria and that their inclusion in the systematic review is purposeful.

Transparency was assessed by examining whether each article described the methods clearly enough for replication and understanding. Further, was the author open to scrutiny, and did they discuss their study's limitations. Accuracy was assessed by looking at whether their results and implications were realistic, given their study design and implementation of it. Also, was there appropriate use of the previous studies they were citing as evidence for their claims and direction. The criteria focused on whether the design and approach were appropriate for their research purpose or hypothesis to assess purposivity. It should be noted that both accuracy and purposivity measure elements of rigor, which are the design and methods that keep the research as unbiased as possible and demonstrates a good fit for purpose. The utility was assessed by examining whether the knowledge generated was useful to the intended audience. For propriety, the criteria focused on whether the authors cited when appropriate and whether they were making claims that could be potentially harmful should someone implement their implications. The readability of the article, the presentation style of the information, and whether the authors explained the data in a way that was accessible to the target audience used to assess accessibility. Lastly, for specificity, would the research or article meet the expectations of the field in design, methods, and implication assessment?

Each of the 21 articles that remained after the screening for this systematic review was measured using these assessment criteria. The articles that scored the lowest using TAPUPAS were excluded from the subsequent coding and synthesis.

Data Extraction

Data were extracted from the articles by using analytic memoing for the first cycle coding. Analytic memoing is a note-taking method that parallels blogging or journaling (Groenewald, 2018). Analytic memoing allows the researcher to gather research thoughts and data (Groenewald, 2018). A free-flowing note-taking process, analytic memoing, was utilized to capture themes and understand the articles completely.

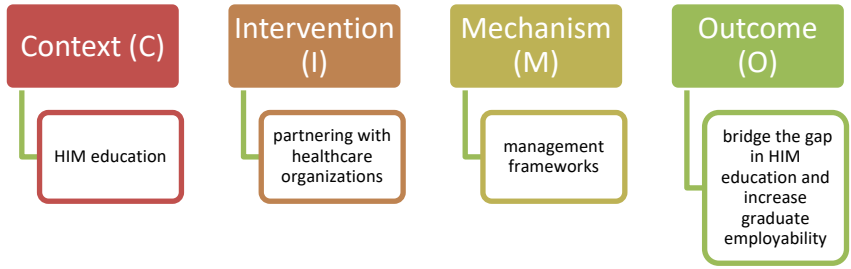
Theoretical coding was used to code the articles on the second cycle coding. Theoretical coding, also known as selective coding or conceptual coding, establishes an overarching code that incorporates all the codes and categories that emerged from the data; the entire set of codes and categories then "become systematically integrated around the central/core category, the one that suggests a theoretical explanation for the phenomenon" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 250). There are ten emerging themes: learning, work, graduate(s) work-integrated learning, university industry

linkage, Partnership in Pedagogy, Accreditation, and Collaboration (P-PAC), employ/employability, internship, practicum, and apprenticeship.

Study Selection

In this section, synthesis was performed to integrate relevant knowledge and research findings from the research question. Rigor was demonstrated by triangulating data and providing multiple sources of data to draw conclusions. Each of the studies provided a wealth of information to appropriately defend their claims. When creating a research question, it is important to use a framework to help form a good question. CIMO is a framework that requires the writer to focus on the content, intervention, mechanisms, and outcomes of the research question. According to Denyer and Tranfield (2009), a "well-formulated review question in management and organization studies need to take into account why or how the relationship occurs and in what circumstances" (p. 682). The selected articles all help to answer the research question: how can management frameworks bridge the gap in health information management (HIM) education and increase graduate employability by partnering with healthcare organizations? Figure 2 depicts CIMO for the research question.

Figure 2
CIMO



Theoretical Frame

Knowledge management (KM) aligns with university approaches to educating students on the competencies required by accrediting bodies and professional organizations. KM is defined as getting the right knowledge to the right person at the right time (Hajric, 2018). The overarching goal of KM is to leverage and refine the knowledge assets of undergraduates to meet organizational goals. Knowledge transfer refers to sharing or disseminating knowledge and providing inputs to problem-solving. Transferring the concepts and competencies learned during the student's college tenure is paramount for increased employability.

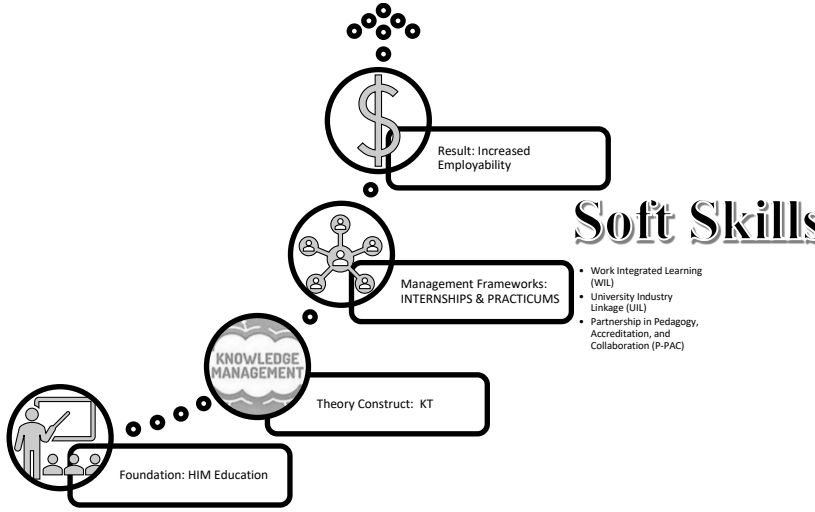
In the spirit of KM, getting the right education to the right person, KT allows students to transform that knowledge into practice with

vendors and healthcare organizations during their internships, practicums, and/or apprenticeships (IPAs). HIM IPAs are usually conducted at traditional healthcare settings such as hospitals, healthcare clinics, and doctors' offices. IPAs may also be in unusual settings such as prisons and healthcare consulting firms. Armed with their arsenal of professional competencies, innovative scholarship, and technical abilities, students are prepared for IPAs.

Employers look forward to the fresh perspective and ideas from students entering the field. Wrye, Chafin, and Higginbotham (2019) posit the partnership and collaboration between community organizations and educational establishments is an important conduit in community and public health student's employability skills (p.606). Through the lens of knowledge management, knowledge transfer seeks to organize, create, capture, or distribute knowledge and ensure its availability for future users (Hajric, 2018). Knowledge transfer will be reciprocal when creating increased graduate employability. Employability requires a set of skills that could direct the individuals to get employed, maintain being employed, and even possibly become self-employed and create jobs (Majid, 2016). The research showed that frameworks such as Partnerships in Pedagogy Accreditation and Collaboration (P-PAC), Work-Integrated Learning (WIL), and University-Industry Linkage (UIL) increases employability skills in recent undergraduates.

As mentioned above, HIM education is the foundation for all students accepted into accredited programs. Accredited HIM programs are governed by the competencies created by AHIMA and maintained with standards created by CAHIIM. Figure 1 depicts the strategy for increased employability for HIM undergraduates. The scholastic curriculum is considered the origin of the HIM student's education. A strong curriculum is crucial to the health and longevity of the major. At the origin of the HIM students' education, the construct of KM, KT, is used to take the knowledge gained from HIM education to translate theory into practice within internships and practicums to increase employability.

Figure 1: A conceptual model for HIM education strategies for increased employability



Note: Strategy for increased employability for HIM undergraduates

Results

Current Methods of Knowledge Transfer

The findings show HIM students currently transfer knowledge to practice via internships, practicums, and apprenticeships. However, this ability does not equate to increased employability after graduation, as evidenced by the study conducted by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (2019). Coco (2000), Jackson et al. (2016), and Ripamonti, Galuppo, Bruno, Ivaldi, and Scaratti (2018) believe that internships assist with preparing students for real-world experience in a learning environment. Internships, as explained by Ripamonti et al. (2018), provide students with an opportunity to integrate academic learning with 'real-world' experience, to integrate action and reflection, and to integrate formalized and procedural knowledge. Rao (2014) posits that effective collaboration is needed among industry, faculty, students, and educational institutions. Gardiner and Salmon (2014) discuss urban teacher residencies (UTR) to bridge the theory and practice gap and is an excellent example of increasing graduate employability. The authors posit UTRs help undergraduates secure teaching positions in partnering districts and provide induction program support (Gardiner & Salmon, 2014). This is demonstrative of increasing employability in HIM undergraduates with a secured position in the HIM field of study.

Internships, practicums, and apprenticeships also offer opportunities for employers. Coco (2000), along with Jackson, Lower, and Rudman (2016), agree that employers benefit from internships. Internships and apprenticeships offer employers the opportunity to observe individuals' skill sets, evaluate their strengths and weaknesses, and identify new candidates for employment (Jackson et al., 2016). Coco

(2000) posits internships offer businesses an opportunity to recruit future employees who have proven themselves. The following frameworks are ways in which to increase employability in HIM undergraduates. The frameworks will be introduced and then compared to current practices in HIM.

University Integrated Learning (UIL)

UIL establishes a relationship between the university and industry. Ishengoma and Vaaland (2016) postulate that UILs are defined as interactions between all parts of the higher education system and industrializing economy. There are four models synonymous with UIL: research and development projects, technical training, short courses, and graduate education, and activity-based sponsoring (Ishengoma & Vaaland, 2016). UIL uses items such as career talks, vendor exposure, education of faculty through education sabbaticals, and research collaborations to enhance the learning experience for the student; thus, making them able to secure a position after graduation.

Ishengoma and Vaaland (2016) suggest two internship modes to increase employability in students: internship adoption strategy (IAS) and the internship diffusion strategy (IDS). The difference between the two strategies is the source of the skill transfer. In IAS, the idea is to adapt existing skills and attitudes from the firm to the student to increase employability. Inversely, IDS diffuse skills from the student to the local firm to improve the competitiveness of the firm and increase the employability of the student.

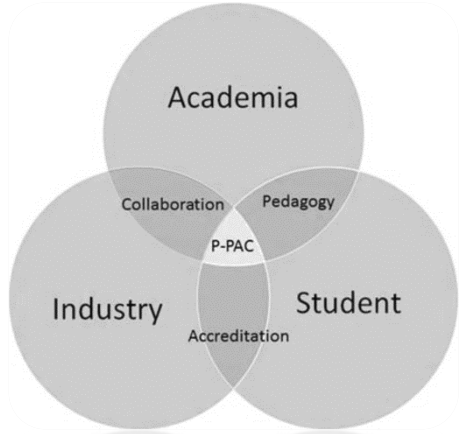
P-PAC

The evidence shows that graduate employability increases when universities partner with employers. Partnership in Pedagogy, Accreditation, and Collaboration is a framework that encourages and embeds a partnership approach between academia, students, and industry (Brennan & Dempsey, 2018). Brennan and Dempsey (2018) posit that students are better equipped when the goal is promoting collaboration, facilitating relevant curriculum with pedagogy practice, and accrediting achievement. The goal is to ensure that more engaged in learning and are students better equipped with the necessary skills for both employability to increase human capital.

Studies show that students typically view the purpose of higher education institutions (HEIs) as that of providing them with the credentials and competencies necessary for rewarding employment. P-PAC framework encourages and embeds a tripartite partnership approach between academia, students, and industry(Brennan & Dempsey, 2018). This framework promotes collaboration, facilitates curriculum and pedagogy practices, and accredits achievement to develop undergraduates

with the attributes for employability and global citizenship(Brennan & Dempsey, 2018). The theoretical framework for P-PAC (shown in Figure 3) involves academia, industry, and the student. Academia and industry overlap when collaboration occurs. Academia and students interact through pedagogy. Industry and the student overlap through accreditation. When the three (student, academia, and industry) overlap, that is the definition of P-PAC.

Figure 3: P-PAC Theoretical Framework



Experiential learning and work-integrated learning are used synonymously in the literature. Experiential learning is through experience, while experimental learning is via experiment. Jackson et al. (2016) posit that experimental, not experiential, learning provides an opportunity to develop by transferring in prior knowledge. Govener and Taylor (2015) theorize that experiential or work-integrated learning allows students to learn through partnerships with business, industry, and government to improve economic growth. Evidence shows that managers benefitted from the partnership in meeting national skills development imperatives (Govender & Taylor, 2015). It is noted from the literature that employers also enjoyed screening undergraduates for full-time employment.

Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

WIL aims to increase graduate employability by integrating IPAs into the curriculum. Jones, McAllister, and Lyle (2015) explain work-integrated learning as the transition of theoretical knowledge into

professional practice, thus preparing the student for their work following graduation. A qualitative study, written by Jones et al. (2015), indicate that students were challenged in transitioning from being observational learners and appreciated the 'real work' experiences gained from their work-integrated learning experience. This study also suggested that an opportunity to work in rural areas to increase service-learning opportunities. Nottingham (2019), similar to Jones et al., has findings that suggest that academics practitioners should collaborate with industry leaders to "embed personal, social and economic dimensions into the curriculum" (Nottingham, 2019, p. 41). Exposure to rural areas can introduce new employability opportunities for undergraduates and expose them to areas that may be unfamiliar to them.

Discussion

The Frameworks Compared

P-PAC, WIL, and UIL all similarly aim to increase graduate employability and can be implemented by incorporating a collaborative effort between the university and industry leaders. P-PAC differs from WIL and UIL in that it inserts innovative ideas, from the industry, into the school's curriculum. Brennan and Dempsey (2018) contend that the success of education lies in the application of frameworks such as P-PAC to scaffold the student-academia- industry partnership in order to 'best' prepare and equip students with both the hard and soft skills for employability. In contrast, WIL involves the placement of students into workplace settings to move individuals from being just students to becoming novice professionals (Govender & Taylor, 2015). Student IPAs assist with this critical step of increased employability. UIL aims to include the student, faculty, and professional societies in the partnership. An equally important part of the employability process, students, faculty, and professional societies, should partner as often as possible to network and increase familiarity.

Incorporating the Frameworks in HIM

HIM has incorporated experiential learning strategies and techniques to increase the concept comprehension in students. UIL suggests that industry leaders and educators partner to offer vendor talks and vendor exposure; this is something that HIM educators do well. Currently, students are encouraged to engage with the national and state HIM associations. Vendors are invited to campuses to share industry knowledge, along with personal and professional experiences. AHIMA has an entire student section on their website. The website uncovers the profession, assists students with locating accredited programs, has an interactive career map, and highlights jobs and the job search feature.

Increased Employability and Soft Skills

Students may use internships and practicums as an opportunity to develop, enhance, and refine soft skills such as critical thinking, teamwork, and communication skills. Soft skills, business acumen, improved communication skills, and work etiquette assist recent undergraduates with securing employment after graduation (Jackson, Lower, and Rudman, 2016). Employability hinges on both the undergraduates' subject knowledge, practice, skills, and character qualities and the faculty, curriculum, and instruction in university systems, in addition to the companies who employ the undergraduates and their prospects (Tang, 2019). Soft skills are defined as those related to personal interaction and are behavioral in nature (Pang, Wong, Leung, & Coombes, 2019). Pang et al. (2019) further state that research shows that employers place greater emphasis on soft than hard skills. It is worth saying that the lack of people, communication, and social skills, along with missing or peculiar character or personality traits, will decrease a graduate's employability. Gabor, Blaga, and Matis (2019) stated that hard and soft skills are equally as important as knowing key competencies. An undergraduates' attitude, career attributes, social intelligence, and emotional intelligence proportions are more likely to increase employability and marketability. Stellar soft skills allow undergraduates to navigate their environment, work well with others, perform well, and achieve their goals with complementing hard skills.

Role Recommendations-Implications for Practice

Students and Recent Undergraduates

The studies show that students should be flexible, self-directed, and implement both soft and hard skills in the workplace. An undergraduates' attitude, career attributes, social intelligence, and emotional intelligence proportions are more likely to increase employability and marketability.

Colleges and Universities

The studies show that universities should practice transparency in disclosing the concepts and skills being taught within the curriculum. Accredited programs are committed to teaching the six domains of AHIMA's CEE competencies; however, it is up to those programs to create a robust curriculum that supports those domains. Pang et al. (2019) proved that apprenticeship programs readily available, universities, ideally supported by the government, can study, learn and then develop and implement similar programs with a clear focus on the competencies demanded by employers.

Hollister et al. (2017) and Nottingham (2019) recommend that industry input into curricula and expanded experiential opportunities may ensure that undergraduates are prepared to address current and future IT

developments. Majid (2016) further suggests, "besides being pedagogically competent, the academics also need to become industry aware" (p.80). Collaborating with industry partners at a micro-level could enable the academics to be within the industry as much as the industry could be within the academics' classrooms (Majid, 2016). It is recommended that apprenticeship programs such as these be set up to extend into the period after graduation to bridge the gap and increase employability.

It is further recommended that soft skill lessons be implemented throughout students' tenure in HIM programs. The evidence has shown that soft skills are essential to employers. It is the responsibility of the university to ensure that students have regular soft skills training so that students exhibit a balance between soft and hard skills.

A final recommendation for HIM educators is to increase academic scholarship by writing about and publishing articles regarding the changes and updates made to their respective curricula. The research on HIM education is limited and needs to be enhanced. As it is noted in the limitations of this study, the research on HIM is not robust in HIM education.

Industry Leaders and Employers

The studies show that industry leaders and employers should attempt to understand what is being taught at accredited colleges and universities, inserting into the curriculum the soft skills and characteristics that are lacking from their perspective. Pang et al. (2019) state with the increasing demands from employers of recent undergraduates comes an increasing need for a better understanding of graduate competency requirements. As stated above, the recommendations of Hollister et al. (2017) should encourage employers to share the specialized skill sets being sought in new undergraduates. Employers and industry leaders should partner with universities to "home grow" ideal candidates to increase the employability of undergraduates.

Limitations and Future Research

This study was limited by the amount of research found related to HIM education. There appears to be limited research regarding the HIM curriculum and increasing graduate employability. Future researchers can expand on this topic by studying HIM students and their habits, specifically. The field would benefit from a study that measures how long it takes HIM students to secure a position in HIM.

Another limitation was the amount of time given to perform searches, literature reviews, and synthesis. This study was conducted for a doctorate in business administration (DBA) course; the length of the project was four weeks. Future researchers should also consider studying

employers that home grows employees that have recently graduated from HIM programs and their success. The HIM field would benefit from the study of the rate of innovation and change in HIM undergraduate employability as it relates to the input given by employers to colleges and universities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the SR reviewed frameworks that will assist recent HIM undergraduates with increasing their employability. In December 2019, forty-one percent of recent undergraduates are underemployed, while 3.9% of recent undergraduates were unemployed. In health services, the underemployment rate jumps to 45.7%, while the unemployment rate is 3.1%, as of December 2019 (Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 2019). Recommendations were provided based on the role of the individual in the HIM educational journey. Undergraduates are encouraged to perfect soft skills to enhance the hard skills learned in their respective programs. Universities are encouraged to share their curriculums with industry leaders and solicit feedback on the concepts being taught. Industry leaders are encouraged to adopt HIM programs. Corporations should contribute to streamlining the curriculum to standards that would allow them to employ recent undergraduates.

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Computer Supported Collaborative Learning for Developing Higher Order Thinking Skill in ELT

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ABSTRACT

The practice of integrating pedagogical approaches using multimedia technologies has become one of the common interests in education in recent years. The technology-based approaches such as computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) and electronic literacy approach (ELA) are spreading widely in English language teaching (ELT) at present. The research reported in this article studied the characteristics of CSCL tasks in the context of ELT in higher secondary school education in Nepal. Non-participant observation of the CSCL tasks assigned to the students in the English class in two different schools, and semi-structured interviews with the students were used as research tools. It was found in the study that the CSCL tasks were useful for enhancing some cognitive skills of the students, though many of the CSCL tasks assigned were more exam-oriented and the teachers gave limited attention to enhance students' higher order thinking skills. This shows that the integration of technology-aided new modes of learning do not in themselves foster higher-order learning; that goal requires deliberate curricular and pedagogical efforts of educators. This study offers new insights for the teachers, students, educators and all others who are interested in technology-based education.

Keywords: Technology-based education, collaboration, constructivism, scaffolding, cognitive skills, HOTS

The technology-based education integrating digital media in teaching and learning has become one of the common interests in the practice of English language teaching (ELT) at present. It is because technology-mediated education has possibilities of providing several opportunities in media-based instruction in general, and in English language teaching and learning in particular (Pim, 2013; Rank, Warren, & Millum 2011). Among various pedagogical approaches in technology-based education, CSCL can enable the learners for cross-fertilization of knowledge by creating environment for discussing and negotiating ideas, and for sharing learning resources with different possibilities of improving their quality of cognitive skills (Stahl, Koschmann, & Suthers 2006). It is an emerging branch of learning sciences that concerns with learning together by means of social interaction in technology supported environment.

CSCL includes two broad concepts– 'computer support' which refers to the integration of technologies such as web 2.0; and 'collaborative learning' which indicates learning together for co-construction of knowledge through mutual engagement. Historically, CSCL arose as a reaction to the pedagogy of software that forced individual learning (Stahl, Koschmann, & Suthers, 2006). In fact, collaborative learning involves individual learning too; however, the unit of analysis in collaborative learning is the group, not an individual. Collaborative learning is different from co-operative learning in which 'partners split the work, solve sub-tasks individually, and then assemble the partial results into the final output'; whereas in collaboration 'partners do the work together to solve the problem' (Dillenbourg, 1999, p. 8). Thus, working together in a group to learn with support of technological tools is the main essence of CSCL

According to Phielix, Prins, Kirschner, Erkens and Jaspers (2011), both cognitive process such as reasoning, critical thinking, problem-solving; and social process such as developing social relationships, and feeling of group trust are the keys to successful collaborative learning. The educational value of CSCL is that it is useful to create an environment that enhances not only the language skills but also cognitive skills and social skills of the learners through carefully designed CSCL tasks Ada (2009). The social interaction and collaboration establish a learning community, which creates possibilities for fostering cognitive skills including both lower order thinking skills (LOTS) and higher order thinking skills (HOTS) through the process of co-construction of knowledge.

According to Persico and Pozzi (2011, p. 3), tasks, team and time – the three Ts' – are the characterizing elements to structure the CSCL process. Thus, the tasks that the students are asked to carry out are one of the important components in CSCL. Persico and Pozzi (2011) stress that there should be a careful tuning of tasks, teams and time for smooth going of CSCL process. Likewise, Weinberger (2011) views that the design of the learning tasks and the scaffolding of the teachers can give the students many

benefits for problem-solving in CSCL activities. For appropriate and effective integration of technology-based approaches in education, Koehler, Mishra and Cain (2013) stress the crucial role of technological pedagogical and content knowledge (TPACK) of the teacher,

English language teachers can take different advantages of multi-media technologies for engaging the learners in negotiating meanings and sharing cognitive resources relevant to problem-solving tasks to enhance the students' cognitive skills in the CSCL environment (Liu, 2012; Phielix et al., 2011). However, technology integration in school education in developing country Nepal has recently been introduced (MOE, 2013); and many of the schools are struggling with the challenges such as information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure development, instructional materials and pedagogical training to the teachers (Giri, 2010; UNESCO, 2015). Some of the schools that are relatively stronger in infrastructure management trying their best to integrate ICTs and use the approaches such as computer-mediated communication (CMC) and CSCL in ELT and in teaching other subjects as well. In this regard, the CSCL approach practiced in school education in Nepal might have its own special characteristics. Therefore, it is beneficial to study and explore these characteristics of the integration of CSCL approach.

One of the very essential components in CSCL is the integration of ICTs that have potentialities of making learning activities faster, easier, and more enjoying. However, technological tools are like a double-edged sword (Khechine & Lakhal, 2018), and their benefits and usefulness in a pedagogical approach depend on the context where and how they have been used. Therefore, success of CSCL approach is also greatly influenced by the factors such as the way the technological tools have been integrated and the tasks designed to be conducted. In this regard, several research studies have been carried out to explore the issues such as technological tools for CSCL, social aspects in CSCL, pedagogical challenges in CSCL, team effectiveness and benefits of CSCL, and so on. However, the studies related to CSCL tasks–one of the key elements in CSCL process–, and particularly, the characteristics of the tasks in CSCL activities that play important role in the development of cognitive skills of the students are still quite a few. Moreover, as the integration of technology-based approach in Nepalese school education is at its learning phase (MOE, 2013), and the new approaches and platforms of teaching and learning such as CSCL, blogs, Moodle etc. have been recently introduced in ELT; it is essential and worthwhile to study and explore the characteristics and efficiency of such new approaches in the context of their use in Nepalese educational institutions. Taking all these into consideration, the research questions I have raised in this study were:

(i) What are the characteristics of the CSCL tasks designed by the teachers to be conducted by the students in the context of ELT in the higher secondary school education in Nepal?
(ii) What cognitive process dimensions do the CSCL tasks contain?

This study investigates the characteristics of CSCL tasks that play an important role in developing cognitive skills of the students learning English at higher secondary school in Nepal. The study has been expected to add at least a few empirical findings in the field of research in CSCL and ELT. Importantly, the study gives some insights to the teachers, students, and educators concerned with English language teaching and learning to improve the quality of school education. It has also been expected that the study will be a useful document to anyone who are interested in technology integration in English education.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that guides to understand and explore the integration of CSCL activities in ELT in this study is social constructivism. Social constructivism is one of the several schools of thought under cognitivist constructivism (Dakich, 2014). According to Jonassen (1999), constructivist theorists view that learners construct and co-construct knowledge both individually and socially through their interactions with the world when they are engaged in active, interactive and collaborative learning activities. Social constructivism is a theory of knowledge which assumes that meaning and understanding are developed through active interaction and co-ordination in social activities (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009). In the social constructivist learning environment, the learners are surrounded by the tools and resources that provide opportunities for learning, interaction and collaboration, where the learners' activities are initiated by several problem-based tasks (Jonassen, 1999). ICTs in CSCL can act as a catalyst to bring a change in education because they have the capacity to shape collaborative, interactive, constructivist, and constructionist approach to learning (Drigas, Kokkalia, & Lytras, 2015)

One of the pioneers of social constructivism, L. Vygotsky (1978) views that as knowledge is constructed socially and culturally, and then is internalized and used by the individuals; to make sense and construct knowledge, the learners need to relate themselves in social circumstances. According to Vygotsky, the learners' actual development level related to problem-solving can be extended through social interaction and collaboration. This enables the learners to move into a new zone of cognitive maturity called 'zone of proximal development'(ZPD), which to Vygotsky is "the distance between the actual development level as determined through problem-solving through adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). The web 2.0 technologies in this information age create lots of opportunities providing valuable tools and

learning resources for scaffolding and developing such cognitive maturity and HOTS in CSCL environments (Dakich, 2014; Jonassen, 1999; Siraj-Blatchford & Siraj-Blatchford, 2006). The theory of constructivism is highly relevant for enhancing knowledge construction and cognitive development of the learners in this digital age of the 21st century world.

Methodology

Based on social constructivism as the theoretical lens, this study followed the qualitative research approach which emphasizes the exploration of meaning and conclusion by means of observation and interpretation (Creswell, 2014). For the purpose of data collection, two higher secondary schools/colleges that were running ICT-based instruction as their teaching-learning strategy from the Kathmandu valley, Nepal were selected by means of purposeful intensity sampling methods (Patton, 2002, p.234). According to Patton (2002), purposeful sampling enables the researchers to represent the phenomenon of the study more strongly. The college administration and the teachers were requested for their permission to conduct a non-participant observation of the compulsory English class of grade eleven at both higher secondary schools for 13 weeks (from the opening of the session to the first term examination) to study the CSCL tasks and activities of the teachers and the students. The two classes (one class at each college) observed were assigned pseudonyms as 'class A' and 'class B' for confidentiality according to research ethics (Saunders, Kitzinger & Kitzinger, 2015) in the data analysis process.

Non-participant observation is a relatively more unobtrusive method of primary data collection about some aspects of social phenomena without directly interacting with the participants and without affecting their spontaneity in natural settings. This method helps the researcher minimize the 'reactive effects' while observing individual behavior or process (Bryman, 2004, p. 175). In this study, the tasks that were designed by the teachers to be carried out by the students as the CSCL activities were observed and noted down in the observation diary during the 13 weeks' period of information/data collection. The design of the tasks and the students' performance on the tasks were carefully watched and field notes were taken to understand their characteristics. In addition, information about the characteristics of the tasks and their experiences of using CSCL approach were also taken from the class teachers through informal discussions. The tasks were classified in terms of their nature to develop cognitive skills of the students based on 'the revision of Bloom's taxonomy' by D. R. Krathwohl (2002), which is the review of 'the taxonomy of educational objectives and classification of educational outcomes' (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill & Krathwohl, 1956). Krathwohl categorizes 'the cognitive process dimensions' into six types: remembering (e.g. recalling),

understanding (e.g. summarizing), applying (e.g. implementing), analyzing (e.g. differentiating), evaluating (e. g. critiquing), and creating (e. g. producing); in a hierarchy from less complex to high complex skill; and then, he classifies these six types into two: the first three which are relatively less complex, are said to be lower order thinking skills (LOTS), and the last three which are comparatively more complex, are said to be higher order thinking skills (HOTS). In this study too, the tasks given to the students were observed and categorized into LOTS and HOTS following Krathwohl. The findings were shown in tables and charts; and were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistics.

Besides non-participant observation, three students from each class were selected using probability random sampling methods for the purpose of semi-structured interviews. Random sampling is one of the most rigorous forms of sampling, which helps the researcher to make generalizations in the population (Creswell, 2012). It enables to control biasness likely to occur, and thus, to increase reliability in the study. Semi-structured interviews, according to Creswell (2012) are the most commonly used tools in qualitative research that allows the participants to voice and describe their experiences in more detail. For interviewing in this study, some open-ended questions were prepared to understand the students' in-depth experiences of CSCL tasks and activities. The three students selected from class A were assigned pseudo names A1, A2, and A3; and the students from class B were assigned pseudo names B1, B2, and B3 for establishing confidentiality. The information collected through the semi-structured interviews were analyzed and interpreted thematically and conclusions were drawn based on the interview findings and the field- experiences of the researcher.

Results and Discussion

In this section, the information and data collected through observation and semi-structured interviews have been presented in thematic narrations, and in tables and charts. Particularly, the relevant issues of the study– characteristics of the CSCL tasks, and the cognitive process dimensions in the CSCL tasks– have been discussed and analyzed. The findings have been explained and interpreted in the sub-headings to come for more clear understanding of the main issues.

Characteristics of CSCL tasks and activities

It was found in the observation that there was integration of CSCL tasks to be conducted by the students in both of the classes in their ELT practice. On average, the students were given collaborative tasks once a week to be carried out as a group work. The teachers were the facilitators in conducting the tasks. Most often, the teachers announced the tasks in the class, they divided four to six students into a group, and informed the students of their group membership. The group leaders were selected

sometimes by the teacher, and sometimes by the students themselves in class A while in class B it was the teacher who chose the group leaders. Likewise, the task submission deadline, and the day of group presentation was also notified by the teachers. Some of the important common characteristics of the CSCL tasks and activities of the observed classes have been discussed in the following points:

(i) Tasks copied from the text-book: It was found that most of the tasks were the exact copy of the questions given in the exercise and activities in the prescribed textbooks (see Table 1 and Table 2). Little attention was given to modify the questions of the textbooks to be carried out as the CSCL tasks. The students were found to be satisfied with such tasks. One of the participants, 'B2', shared his experiences,

> The tasks are useful not only to enhance our language skills and cognitive skills, but it is also that they are the possible questions for our examinations. If we work on the tasks given, there is a chance of securing good marks in the tests and examinations and achieving the goals of the curriculum.

It is not completely inappropriate to design the CSCL tasks, making them similar to the exercises of the textbooks. As there is usually a good co-relation between the textbook and the curriculum, such tasks might be useful to help the students achieve the objectives determined by the curriculum. The findings in this study go in the line of Persico and Pozzi (2011) who viewed that tasks should be based on the learning objectives and the contents to be addressed.

The types of the tasks copied from the textbook seem to engage the students in collaboration and improve their knowledge in some ways. In the informal discussion, the teachers opined that with such tasks, they intended to facilitate the students' cognitive skills; and at the same time, they wanted to help the students to be prepared for the examinations because those were the most possibly repeated questions in the examinations. The teachers were not wrong in their logic. However, it indicates the exam-oriented mentality of the teacher rather than giving emphasis to improving creativity of the students. Moreover, with such text-book tasks, there is equally a greater possibility for the students to copy the solutions of such tasks from the guidebooks available in the market, which increases the possibility of hindering the students' creativity skills. Therefore, in the CSCL approach, the tasks need to be carefully designed so as to enhance the students' problem solving and creativity skills. This requires the teachers to have more skills and experiences to link the textbook contexts with their practical life while designing tasks in CSCL. As suggested in Koehler, Mishra and Cain (2013), TPACK of the teacher is significantly important in the technology-based approach including CSCL to design teaching-learning tasks.

(ii) **Scaffoldings:** It was found in this study that the students expected more scaffoldings and support from the teacher in their collaborative activities and the teachers provided the students with frequent guidelines and a lot of scaffoldings in carrying out the tasks in the CSCL activities. The teachers encouraged the students to actively participate in conducting the tasks, they instructed in planning the tasks and provided learning resources to facilitate the students' activities. It was also that the students could take advantages of the support from both the teachers and their intelligent peers in solving the tasks. Participant A1 reacted,

> Our teacher gives us useful hints while carrying out the CSCL tasks. He provides us with relevant learning materials and website links to consult. Besides, we can get lots of help from our group members. We can observe how our peers work and share our feelings and difficulties more frankly with them.

In the informal discussion, the teachers shared their experiences that they provided the students lots of scaffoldings because it was the first term of the session and the students were in the initial phase of the session, where more guidance was required to support and to form the students' habit in carrying out collaborative learning activities. However, according to Dillenbourg and Jerman (2007), over scaffoldings or guidance might hinder the students' creativity and self-regulation. On the other hand, Liu and Tsai (2008) view that an excess of freedom might not engage all the students in productive interaction in CSCL tasks. As Persico and Pozzi (2011) opine, it would have been better if the teachers could maintain a balance between over scaffoldings and over freedom. The teachers need more experiences and pedagogical training to develop such skills of applying CSCL approach into the classroom.

(iii) **Participation:** Active participation of the group members is one of the most requiring aspects of CSCL. In general, there was considerably good participation of the students in both the classes. In the observation, many of the students were interested in doing the tasks given, however, it was found that some of the students rather lacked their motivation despite the teacher's encouragement. In the interview, A 3 shared,

> In some of the groups, some of the friends are rather passive. They do not labor, but depend on other friends, and just act as if they are showing their participation.

One of the main characteristics of CSCL is that it creates several opportunities for interaction and collaboration, but the teachers need to be more careful to engage all the learners in the activities given (Drigas, Kokkalia, & Lytras, 2015). The teacher might need to treat the students individually if it required. He needs to move around the

groups in the class, and need to follow both synchronously and asynchronously giving feedback. This requires appropriate size of the class, and the teachers to be more active and experienced. In the discussion, the teachers shared that the size of the class and overload to the teachers were some of the important challenging and problematic factors for them to provide frequent feedback to the students. However, it is the teacher, who can play an important role for creating an environment where the students participate actively and work collaboratively. This helps enhance cross-fertilization of knowledge discussed in Stahl, Koschmann, and Suthers (2006) in CSCL approach.

(iv) **Strategy:** The strategies of the teacher play significant role in group mobilization and active participation in the CSCL activities. It was observed in the study that the teachers' design of the CSCL tasks making them similar to the textbook exercise, was also one of the useful strategies for motivating the students in both the classes. Likewise, the teachers frequently modified the structure of team members that could add not only newness and curiosity among the students, but also that the students experienced the varieties in socialization and other social aspects. Likewise, the strategies like bringing variations in the role of team-leader and making the name of the group presenter unknown until the time of presentation were useful for increasing the students' active participation. Similarly, the teacher in class A used other strategies such as 'first submission award' and 'winner prize' to motivate and encourage the students. In the interview, one of the participants, 'B1' said,

> We do not know who will present our preparation until the time of presentation. This makes everyone sincere and well prepared in carrying out the tasks given.

As Weinberger (2011) discussed, the pedagogical skills of the teachers to design the strategy of teaching, and their balanced scaffoldings are very important in CSCL to make it more effective. In this study, the strategy of making the CSCL tasks similar to textbook exercise mainly targeted tests and examinations apart from the development of some cognitive skills of the students at the same time. Likewise, the strategies such as 'first submission award' and 'winner prize' not only encouraged the students to complete the tasks in time but also aroused a sense of competition among the groups. In this way, the teachers in this study were found to be careful to consider the factors such as the nature of the team and availability of time while designing the tasks though they were less attentive towards cognitive skills development of the students. Several factors such as technological-pedagogical knowledge of the teachers, level of students' knowledge and skills, classroom environment, resource

availability to the students, might have influenced in designing the strategy and CSCL tasks. In the discussion, the teachers shared their experiences that they were not confident about the strategies appropriate to CSCL approach because they did not have got any opportunity to take part in pedagogical training or workshops to the teachers.

CSCL tasks and cognitive skill development

The participants shared their experiences that the tasks designed by the teachers increased the students' participation in the activities of English language skills development such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. They reported that the CSCL tasks helped facilitate their communicative power, sharing learning resources, and enhance their skills of taking part in discussion and in meaning negotiation. Besides, the analysis of the information in the observation showed that the tasks were also useful to enhance their cognitive skills to some extent.

It was found in the observation that most of the CSCL tasks were announced in the classroom by the teachers while some of them were sent through email. The teachers encouraged the students towards collaborative group work with such tasks though they did not seem to give more emphasis for the development of HOTs of the students. The CSCL tasks, cognitive process dimension of the task and the type of cognitive skill that the tasks facilitated the students' cognitive development in class A and class B in this study have been presented in Table-1 and in Table-2 respectively.

Table 1
CSCL tasks and the cognitive skills in class-A

S. N.	CSCL Tasks	Category of cognitive domain	Type of cognitive skill that the task facilitated
1	Define dictionary and write any three advantages of a dictionary.	remember	LOTS
2	Describe any four situations of the use of present continuous tense.	understand	LOTS
3	Write a short description of your daily routine and compare it with one of your friend's routine.	analyze	HOTS
4	Write an account of some of the most important events in your country's history	understand	LOTS

5	List the advantages and disadvantages of a small and a large family	remember	LOTS
6	Write your arguments against deforestation in a few paragraphs.	evaluate	HOTS
7	Write a short description of your classroom	understand	LOTS
8	Write a few paragraphs comparing village life and city life.	analyze	HOTS
9	Explain the effect of world war in reference to 'Look at a tea cup'	understand	LOTS
10	Explain the paradox 'child is the father of man'	understand	LOTS
11	Compare 'The loving mother' with 'The house call'.	understand	LOTS
12	Why is unchopping a tree impossible?	evaluate	HOTS
13	Write a description on how Halloween is celebrated	understand	LOTS
14	Construct a story using the hints given	create	HOTS
15	What are the possible ways of giving advice? Write an advisory paragraph including advice	apply	LOTS

Table 1 shows the information collected during the period of class observation in class A. It reveals the tasks assigned to the students, and their characteristics. During the observation period, altogether 15 tasks were assigned to the students. It was found that most of the tasks were copied from the lessons and activities given in the text-books prescribed. The Table shows that though the tasks covered all the cognitive domains, many of the tasks were related to 'understand', the second complex cognitive process in the hierarchy of the cognitive process dimension. The data reveal that majority of the tasks, 10 out of 15 tasks (i. e., 66.6%) were less complex; classified into LOTS while five of them (i. e., 33.3%) were relatively more complex categorized into HOTS.

It was found that the tasks assigned covered different cognitive dimensions. Out of 15 tasks observed, seven tasks (46.6%) were related to the cognitive dimension 'understand' categorized into LOTS (see Figure 1). Likewise, there were two tasks associated to the dimensions 'remember', and one task was associated with 'apply'. Similarly, the dimensions 'analyze', and 'evaluation' categorized into HOTS contained two tasks

each., while the highest complexity in the hierarchy of cognitive process 'create' contained one task only.

A close observation of the information collected shows that most of the CSCL tasks were the same as the exercises and the activities of the textbooks. The tasks seem to be useful to develop the learners' cognitive skills to some extent. However, such tasks increase the possibility of copying the solution form the guidebooks by the students instead of using their creativity. It shows that little attention was paid to engage the students in the development of their HOTS. Even within the category of LOTS, it seemed that more focus was given to the simple level skills in the hierarchy of the complexity of the cognitive skills. There was only one activity related to relatively more complex skill 'apply'. The same trend was found among the tasks related to HOTS provided to the students. Most of the activities and the tasks were related to relatively low-level skills in the hierarchy of their complexity. There was only one task related to the most complex cognitive skill 'create'. Additionally, none of the tasks was teacher's own original that could relate the students' real-life situation with the context of the text.

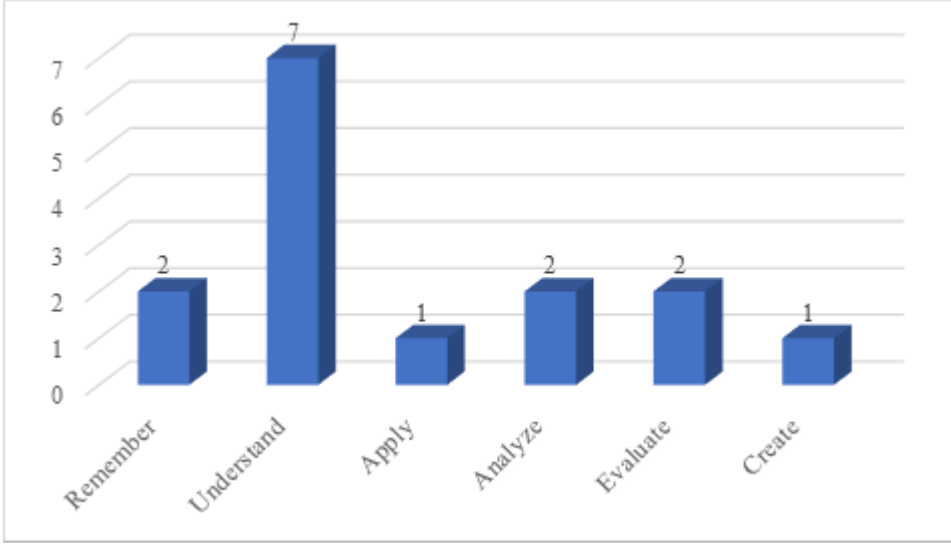

Figure 1: CSCL tasks and their cognitive process dimensions in class-A

Table 2 presents a summary of the data collected from class B. It shows the CSCL tasks and their characteristics – the cognitive process dimension the tasks supported, and the type of cognitive skill – in class B. During the observation period, there were 12 tasks assigned to the students. The data show that three out of 12 tasks (i. e., 25%) were relatively more complex categorized into HOTS. Majority of the tasks, nine out of 12 tasks (i. e., 75%) were less complex; classified into LOTS.

Table 2
CSCL tasks and the cognitive skills in class-B

S. N.	CSCL Tasks	Category of cognitive domain	Type of cognitive skill that the task facilitated
1	Make a list of any seven irregular verbs and their forms from the third quarter of the dictionary	remember	LOTS
2	Write a supernatural story on your own	create	HOTS
3	Write a short biography of William Wordsworth	understand	LOTS
4	Arrange the given sentences to make a sensible paragraph.	remember	LOTS
5	Write your arguments for nightmare life without fuel	evaluate	HOTS
6	Write a summary of the story 'Recurring dream'	understand	LOTS
7	Write a paragraph giving advice to your sister who is going abroad to study.	apply	LOTS
8	Summarize the poem 'My heart leaps up…'	understand	LOTS
9	Interpret the poem 'Keeping things whole' on your own	understand	LOTS
10	Write your argument why child spacing may be important for a happy family life	evaluate	HOTS
11	Differentiate between a guide word and a headword	understand	LOTS
12	Write a conversation between you and your friend using the expressions for asking for permission	apply	LOTS

Figure 2 shows the coverage of the cognitive skills dimension with the tasks assigned in class-B. It reveals that the cognitive process dimensions 'understand', the second category of the cognitive process dimension belonging to LOTS contains five tasks, almost half of the total tasks. Likewise, other dimensions ' remember' and 'apply' contained two tasks each. On the other hand, the dimensions belonging to HOTS 'evaluate' contained two tasks, while 'analyze' contained no task at all. The highest complexity in the hierarchy of cognitive process dimension 'create' contained one task.

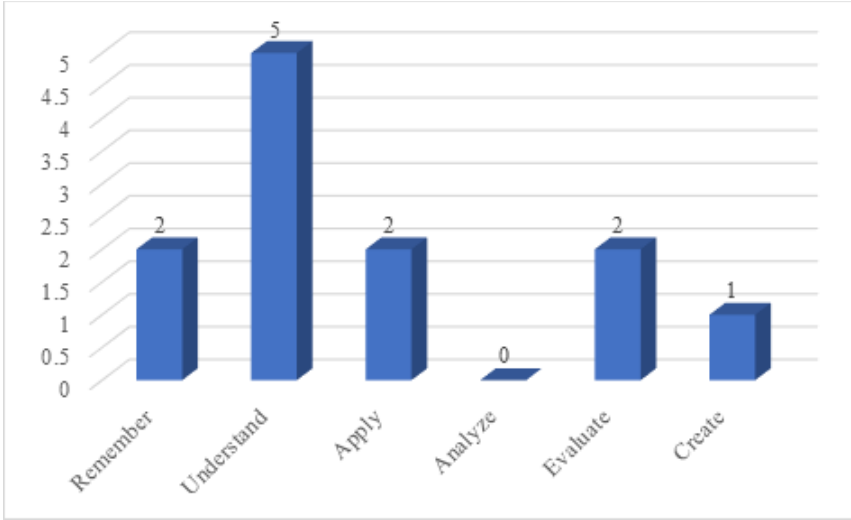

Figure 2: CSCL tasks and their categories of cognitive process dimension in class-B

In the observation it was found that both face to face classroom mode and online mode were used to give the tasks to the students and attempts were made to cover most of the cognitive domains. The information collected reveal that similar to class A, the tasks were copied from the activity section of the textbooks in class B too. Little attention was given to modify the questions so as to connect the tasks with the students' real-life situation. The tasks were useful to develop many of the cognitive skills in some ways. However, it seemed that emphasize was given to LOTS rather than to HOTS. Within these LOTs and HOTs, many of the tasks were associated with lower level rather than higher level skills in the hierarchy of their complexity.

The findings show that most of the tasks were not beyond the level of difficulty of the average students of grade eleven in context of Nepalese school education because the tasks were based on the authentically prescribed textbooks in both classes. It was found that the frequency and the number of the tasks given to the students was relatively higher in class A than in class B. The teacher in class A gave 15 CSCL tasks while the teacher in class B gave 12 CSCL tasks during the period of 13 weeks' observation. It seemed that the frequency of the CSCL tasks given to the students was once a week in average, and it was not adequate enough to engage the students in cognitive skills development. One of the teachers in the informal discussion viewed that such low frequency of the tasks was due to the length of the syllabus that he did not have enough time to engage his students in more collaborative group works.

CSCL approach creates a lot of potentialities for enhancing cognitive maturity of the students (Dakich, 2014). However, it was found in the study that the number of the tasks associated with facilitating HOTS was

quite smaller in comparison to the tasks associated with the development of LOTS in both classes. As a matter of fact, LOTS and HOTS are interconnected, and HOTS cannot be enhanced separately from LOTS. However, the knowledge-based society of the twenty-first century requires a change in educational paradigm giving main focus to the development of HOTS (PPRC, 2010). Tanujaya, Mumu, & Margono (2017) claim that the students who practice HOTS tend to be more successful because the students with HOTS are more capable to learn, perform, prepare for challenges and solving problems, and in critical and creative thinking. In this study, the teachers in both classes seemed to give little attention to promote HOTS of the students in designing the tasks. There were several responsible factors behind this. In the informal discussion, one of the teachers stated that it was the first term of the academic year, and the teacher was making the students familiar and motivated towards the tasks involving them in relatively more simple activities. Another teacher shared his experiences that many of his students in the class were not capable to perform more complex tasks and that the teachers needed to use relatively simple tasks. He expressed that a considerable number of the students in English class do not have adequate previous level knowledge mainly due to the evaluation system which allows to upgrade students though they fail in one or two subjects among total subjects of their curriculum. More importantly, the teachers also accepted that they were less confident as they were not trained, and they had insufficient technological and pedagogical knowledge so as to design more appropriate CSCL tasks. As Koehler, Mishra and Cain (2013) stressed the significant of TPACK for productive utilization of technology-mediated approaches for adding quality in teaching and learning; concerned people need to give more attention to this causing factor.

Conclusion

CSCL is one of the recently emerged pedagogical approaches under the constructivist paradigm that can enable the learners for co-construction of knowledge with the support of CMC environments. The designing of CSCL tasks is one of the essential components in CSCL approach for helping the students promote their cognitive skills such as LOTS and HOTS. However, the CSCL tasks and activities in ELT class in the school education in Nepal are more exam oriented, and they are not adequate in number. Likewise, the class sizes are not well manageable to conduct collaborative group tasks and that the students demand over scaffoldings from the teachers. Moreover, most of the CSCL tasks are found to be of LOTS promoting category, and little attention has been given by the teachers to promote HOTS of the students. The CSCL activities have also been influenced by some provisions existed in syllabus and evaluation system.

Therefore, for successful integration of CSCL approach, the teachers and students need to abandon their exam-oriented mentality. Likewise, the teachers need to be more careful to maintain a balanced scaffolding, and give more attention to promote self-regulation and HOTS of the students. Additionally, the government and educational administration need to formulate some plans and policies to manage class size, and to bring improvement in curriculum and syllabus and in the system of evaluation. More importantly, among several pre-requisites for the success of CSCL approach, the designing of appropriate tasks is significantly important, which requires a good TPACK of the teacher because the quality of the CSCL tasks is greatly influenced by their knowledge and skills. Therefore, pedagogical training and workshops about the use of new technological tools and pedagogical approaches are needed to be organized more frequently. This can also contribute to update and upgrade the teachers, to improve their teaching profession, and to advance the quality of education.

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Foreign-Born Faculty's Perceptions and Experiences in a Turbulent Sociopolitical Climate

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the experiences of five foreign-born faculty in the US after the 2016 election. Through a written questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, the participants shared their recollections of several critical incidents, their reactions to Trumpism, and their perceptions of support from their institutions. The analysis of the critical incidents revealed that while the participants experienced varying degrees of collegial support and sense of isolation, for some, their concern with Trumpism impacted their intent to stay at their institution and in the US. The article concludes with recommendations to increase diversity in faculty body, training US-born faculty about diversity and inclusivity, and increasing systems of support for foreign-born faculty in order to increase the recruitment and retention of foreign-born faculty.

Keywords: Foreign-born faculty, Trumpism, recruitment, retention, critical incidents

"This country has turned really ugly to me." (Alia)

"This coming year we are considering Canada … because I know that they are much more open to immigrants. They're much more open to people who look like me and my husband." (Maria)

According to a report by the Institute for Immigration Research[1], 22 percent or nearly 393,100 of the estimated 1.8 million postsecondary teachers in the United States are foreign-born, and nearly half of foreign-born educators work at the tertiary level (Furuya et al., 2019). The terms *international* and *foreign-born* are sometimes used interchangeably in the literature as studies often do not collect data on the immigration status of the foreign-born faculty. However, in this study, *international* refers to individuals who have a work visa which allows them to reside and work in the US for a specific period of time. *Foreign-born,* on the other hand, refers to any faculty who was not a US citizen at birth (United States Census Bureau, 2020) and includes those with a work visa, permanent residency status (green card), or US citizenship through naturalization. Foreign-born faculty are present in all institution types, but the highest concentration tends to be at research universities, in several arts and science fields, and especially in engineering (Mamiseishvili 2013; Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2010; Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006).

In the increasingly competitive global market, recruiting and retaining highly skilled professionals have become crucial, and countries often have initiatives in place to attract professionals who can contribute to the competitiveness, growth, and prosperity of the country. To increase the faculty's embeddedness (Mitchell et al., 2001) or their intent to stay at their institutions, it is important to examine and understand their experiences and perceptions as well as the challenges they face in the current sociopolitical climate in the US. Using the Critical Incident Technique and examining prior incidents in their particular contexts, this study sheds light on the perceptions and experiences of five foreign-born faculty in teacher education and applied linguistics fields and the constraints they encountered in the era of Trumpism after the 2016 elections in the US. The following broad research question guided this study: What are the experiences of five foreign-born faculty in the current sociopolitical climate? Insights gained from this study can add to the body of knowledge in qualitative research, higher education, applied linguistics, teacher education, and educational leadership. Particularly, the findings and practical implications may be used by higher education institutions to enact policies and practices that could improve the on-campus lived experiences of foreign-born faculty and in turn facilitate their recruitment and retention.

Literature Review

[1] The Institute for Immigration Research is a research center at George Mason University. It examines the economic contributions of immigrants in the United States.

Despite the substantial number of foreign-born faculty in the US, very little is known about their experiences and the challenges they face. However, the contributions of foreign-born faculty to the US higher education are evident in the limited available literature. First, foreign-born faculty play an important role in internationalization of higher education in the US (e.g. Ferren & Merrill, 2013; Gahugu, 2011). Foreign-born faculty tend to co-author with peers from abroad more frequently (Finkelstein et al., 2009), and as Theobald (2013) argued, "widen perspectives on research and give voice to globalization in higher education" (p. 111). Similarly, Skachkova (2007) noted that the immigrant women faculty in her study "created international networks of knowledge and experience that contributed to the internationalization of American academia" (p. 729). Second, studies have shown that foreign-born faculty make exceptional contributions to science (Stephan & Levin, 2001) as well as to the research productivity of universities as they tend to be more productive in research output than their native-born counterparts (Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2010; Webber, 2012). Third, several studies have shown that foreign-born faculty use their culture and worldviews as pedagogical resources and enable their students to see world events from a different perspective (Alberts, 2008; Bookman, 2019, Gahungu, 2011; Mamiseishvili, 2013; Skachkova, 2007). Research on students' perception of foreign-born professors shows that many students believe that foreign-born faculty "provide them with more than the regular classroom education by exposing them to different points of view, helping them to overcome stereotypes, and giving them first-hand insights into other places and people" (Alberts, 2008, p. 201). Fourth, as Mamiseishvili and Rosser (2010) argue, foreign-born faculty, when supported by their institutions, "can serve as role models to the growing number of international students" (p. 104). Similarly, female foreign-born faculty can be good role models for students, especially for female students in fields where women are underrepresented (Skachkova, 2007). In Skachkova's study (2007), for instance, being able to identify with students from different countries and cultural backgrounds, foreign-born faculty express a strong sense of empathy for their students which they credited to their own personal experience of overcoming obstacles in adjusting to the US.

Despite these contributions, foreign-born faculty encounter unique challenges as they navigate the US education system and way of life (Alberts, 2008; Collins, 2008; Foote, 2013; Foote et al., 2008; Gahungu, 2011; Skachkova, 2007). Often perceived as enjoying an elite and privileged status as college professors, foreign-born faculty in the US are not immune to challenges and marginalization. For instance, in comparison to their US-born counterparts with the same qualifications, for instance, in comparison to their US-born counterparts with the same qualifications, foreign-born faculty often face a glass ceiling in relation to authority and leadership

positions (Skachkova, 2007; Tang, 2000; Varma, 2006). Being perceived as outsiders, foreign-born faculty in the US often also experience a sense of isolation in the academic community (Foote et al., 2008) and may be sidelined as they face discrimination and segregation in their teaching, research, and service (Skachkova, 2007). For instance, Skachkova's (2007) research participants noted that they were excluded from leadership roles, their previous leadership experience in their home countries was not recognized in the US, and the committees they were placed in "did not give them the opportunity to make a real change" (p. 718). In addition to a lack of differentiated support on campus (Foote et al., 2008), foreign-born faculty may experience a sense of loneliness and cultural challenges such as difficulty integrating into their host society, institution, and less-diverse communities surrounding their campus (Collins, 2008; Murray, 2007; Skachkova, 2007) although research has shown that support programs such as mentorship and socialization opportunities may facilitate the foreign-born faculty's integration into their new community (Bland et al., 2009; Espino & Zambrana, 2018; Fountain & Newcomer, 2016; Hildebrandt & Swauger, 2016; Zambrana et al., 2015). While foreign-born faculty are more likely than their US-born counterparts to form collaborative networks outside their university as well as internationally, this broader external network has been shown to index the isolation and lack of equal opportunities they experience within their own institutions. For example, in Skachkova's (2007) study, immigrant women faculty "were segregated to teach courses and research topics that were bonded to their ethnic, national, or regional background. This affected their teaching credibility regarding U.S.-based topics, which was further reinforced by their accents" (pp. 728-29). These discriminatory practices on campus provide a plausible explanation for why foreign-born faculty may be more likely to seek and form academic networks outside their own departments and institutions. Studies have also shown that foreign-born faculty tend to be less satisfied with their jobs compared to their US-born colleagues (Kim et al., 2011; Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2010). Some of these challenges are similar to the racial microaggression and discrimination black faculty and other faculty of color in the US experience in terms of tenure and promotion (e.g. Witherspoon Arnold et al., 2016), marginalization, bias in hiring, unfair work expectations, and accent discrimination (e.g. Turner et al., 2008). However, foreign-born faculty also face unique challenges, for instance the need for assistance with the visa process and support with adjusting to US customs for classrooms, their departments, and research and funding opportunities (Foote, 2013).

This article is a part of a larger qualitative research project in response to Favell et al.'s (2007) call for more empirical studies on skilled migrants and Foote et al.'s (2008) and Mamiseishvili's (2013) calls for more research on foreign-born faculty, especially in humanities, social sciences, and education fields. It explores the obstacles foreign-born faculty may

encounter within their social and professional communities in the current sociopolitical climate. Because individuals' experiences must be contextualized within broader societal structures or normative discourses (e.g. Guarnizo & Smith, 1998; Purkayastha, 2005; Waldinger, 2008), this study situates the participants' micro experiences within their sociopolitical contexts, and more specifically, Trumpism. While there are different definitions for Trumpism, in this paper I define it as "alt-right forces that, marginalized for decades, are bringing bigotry, patriarchy, nativism, and nationalism back into a visible place in the American civil sphere" (Alexander, 2019, p. 5). This alt-right ideology is manifested in Donald Trump's rhetoric and policies, such as his insult on Mexicans, executive order banning travel from seven predominantly Muslim countries, disparaging comments about developing countries, long term immigration detention centers and separating children from their parents, attempting to end Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and significantly decreasing refugee admissions (National Immigration Law Center, 2019; Schmidt, 2019). The above rhetoric and policies, among others, have exacerbated a climate of racial conflict and xenophobia and have brought race and immigration to the forefront of the public and social justice discourse.

Theoretical Framework

The data in this study was collected and interpreted through the application of the critical incident technique. A *critical incident* is defined as any occurrence, positive or negative, that has significance to an individual for whatever reason. Because critical incidents represent events that have had a lasting effect on a person, they can be information-rich sources. For instance, in a study about the experiences of recovering alcoholics, Denzin (1987) asked the participants to talk about critical moments in their lives in relation to their addiction and rehabilitation process, noting, "uncovering the meanings to the pivotal event in their lives was a key to understanding how they became recovering alcoholics" (Denzin, 2014, p. 48). The Critical Incident Technique (CIT), however, involves more than just a description of a past event. I adopt Tripp's (2012) approach in that:

> critical incidents are not 'things' which exist independently of an observer and are awaiting discovery like gold nuggets or desert islands, but like all data, critical incidents are created. Incidents happen, but critical incidents are produced by the way we look at a situation: a critical incident is an interpretation of the significance of an event. To take something as a critical incident is a value judgement we make, and the basis of that judgement is the significance we attach to the meaning of the incident. (p. 8)

Thus, a critical incident is constructed when a prior incident is examined in its particular context, its significance is recognized, and conclusions are offered. Furthermore, as Tripp (2012) elucidates, critical incidents are not

"all dramatic or obvious: they are mostly straightforward accounts of very commonplace events … These incidents appear to be 'typical' rather than 'critical' at first sight, but are rendered 'critical' through analysis" (pp. 24-25).

To increase the participants' engagement with the questionnaire, I invited them to present their critical incidents in any form or genre they preferred; for instance, by drawing, creating a collage, writing narratives, poems, or prose, including a photograph, or using a combination of these forms. As Atkinson (2002) urged, "What is important is that the life story be told in the form, shape, and style that is most comfortable to the person telling it" (p. 125). However, art forms such as poems do not always express their author's intended meaning. Therefore, during the interviews, I asked the participant who had used poems in her critical incidents to explain what she intended her poems to signify. My goal during the interviews was to have the participants go beyond simple description of the events and to provide me with their interpretations.

Methods

This study reports several threads from a dissertation project that investigated the lived experiences, perceptions, and practices of five foreign-born faculty in the US. This article focuses on a portion of the findings related to the sociopolitical climate and collegial support. Using purposeful, convenient, and criterion-based sampling, I identified five individuals I knew through a professional association for teachers of English as a second language. The criteria for selection consisted of being 1) foreign-born, and 2) a faculty member in a higher education institution in the US. Alia, from Europe, Kayoko, from Japan, and Maria, from Brazil, and Chatri from Thailand were all tenured faculty while Ismail, from Turkey, was pre-tenured[2]. Kayoko, Maria, and Chatri were in their 40s while Alia was in her 50s and Ismail was in his 30s. All five participants were PhD holders, lived and worked in a southern or southwestern state, and taught Teacher Education and/or Applied Linguistics to graduate students. All, other than Alia, taught at R1 universities. Alia, Kayoko, and Maria were US citizens and held department-level leadership positions, Chatri was a green card[3] holder, and Ismail was on a work visa waiting for his green card interview. Table 1 presents an overview of the participants.

[2] All names are pseudonyms.

[3] The green card is the legal documentation given to US permanent residents before becoming US citizens.

Table 1: Research Participants Overview

Pseudonym	Country of Birth	Age/ gender	Race/ Ethnicity	In the US Since	Location in the US	Title/ Institution	US Citizenship Status
Alia	Europe	Early 50s/ female	White/ European[4]	Late 1980s	South	Professor, Department Administrator/ Private Liberal Arts College	US Citizen
Kayoko	Japan	Mid 40s/ female	Asian/ Japanese	Late 1980s	Southwest	Associate Professor & Program Director/ R1	US Citizen
Maria	Brazil	Mid 40s/ female	Latinx/ Brazilian	Mid 1990s	South	Professor & Department Chair/ R1	US Citizen
Chatri	Thailand	Mid 40s/ male	Asian/ Thai	Mid 2000s	Southwest	Associate Professor/ R1	Green Card Holder
Ismail	Turkey	Mid 30s/ male	Middle Eastern/ Turkish	Late 2000s	Southeast	Assistant Professor/ R1	Work Visa (Green Card in process)

After obtaining the IRB approval and informed consent from the participants, I began data collection first by a written questionnaire, followed by two semi-structured interviews with each participant, 60-90 minutes long each. The questionnaire collected biographical information, asked several questions related to the current sociopolitical climate, and prompted the participants to narrate several critical incidents they had experienced. The parts of the questionnaire this article is focusing on are presented in the Appendix. Then, during the interviews I asked the participants to expand on and clarify their responses to the questionnaire.

After the interviews, I transcribed them verbatim using a "broad transcription" (Du Bois et al., 1993, p. 45). I read and re-read the data and analyzed them to make sense of the participants' experiences, to make

[4] Alia requested that I use 'European' as her place of origin instead of the specific European country to further protect her confidentiality.

inferences, and to offer explanations (Patton, 2002). I was particularly interested to see if the findings align with what the literature shows about foreign-born faculty's job satisfaction and the challenges they face in their workplace and communities. I identified quotes that represented each participant's experiences and made interpretations as to what they entailed. I then carried out member-checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to ensure that the interview transcripts and my interpretations of the participants' critical incidents accurately reflected what the participants intended. My analysis yielded four overarching themes of 1) perceptions about Trumpism, 2) continuum of collegial support, 3) feeling of not being good enough, and 4) sense of isolation. I present these themes below.

Findings

Perceptions about Trumpism

The racism and xenophobia in the current sociopolitical climate in the US had an emotional impact on Alia, Maria, Chatri, and Ismail, to varying degrees. All participants expressed concern about the direction in which the country was going. Alia's and Maria's deep concern had led them to consider relocating to another country if Trumpism continued.

Alia described that she was deeply disturbed by the political events, for example when she watched the meeting between the US President Donald Trump and the Russian President Vladimir Putin on TV in 2018:

> I saw the live interview when it happened, and I cried. I said: 'this is so terrible'; I don't even know what to say. My mom is a refugee from [a country in Eastern Europe], she grew up under the Russians … Where they lived, all the women were raped and many kids were raped, and she's a refugee and I'm thinking who in their right mind would look at a Russian KGB[5], former KGB boss to look [at him] as a friend? I mean I'm also offended by that.

Alia was also extremely concerned about the rise of white supremacy in the US. She believed that even though racism had always existed, "at least people had to work on overcoming it, but now it's okay". Because of the sociopolitical change in recent years, Alia had learned about the xenophobic views of many individuals around her, which she found horrifying:

> People can channel all the racism now, attacking people on the street and openly finding it okay to discriminate … [Trump] opened this Pandora box … this country has turned really ugly to me because even people that I thought were good people are horrible people and come out of the wardrobe now.

Alia was considering leaving the US if Trumpism continued:

[5] KGB (Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti) translates to "Committee for State Security" in English and was the secret police force in the Soviet Union.

> We haven't acted on that but if it goes on in the future, we may [leave]. I'm not afraid of starting over somewhere else. So, I have friends in Australia, in all kinds of countries. I would definitely keep that option. We even looked into other jobs abroad, like in the Middle East.

Maria, too, was concerned about the political climate in the US. She believed that she was personally impacted by it because her work was directly connected to immigrant children and their education:

> It's so sad, it's so draining… I feel like for the past couple of years it has had an effect both on me and my husband and how we feel … what is happening now on the borders and people taking kids and separating kids from their parents and all of this, it's just disheartening. So it really drains you, it drains you and that's why I feel like I'm also getting more tired. … Even if I sleep, the next day I'm still tried, and I think it does have some connection to what is going on in politics.

She added:

> This coming year, we are considering Canada … because I know that they are much more open to immigrants. They're much more open to people who look like me and my husband … We definitely want to go to a place that is … more democratic.

Similarly, the sociopolitical climate during and after 2016 elections made Chatri feel uncertain about his future in the US. Describing the unpredictability of immigration policies, he explained:

> Speaking of politics, right now it's not really a good time, specially for immigration or people who come from other countries because with one signature everything can, just like "poof", [be] gone, right? So we can be legal now and then in a few days you're like "no, you're done". We have to watch out for a lot of things.

Ismail described his thoughts about the political climate as follows:

> Personally I feel really, really sad about this country getting into that direction, and I can see what's going on here is very similar to Turkey because people are getting emotionally manipulated or the leaders are using people's emotions to govern them and they're using religion, they're using patriotism … they're abusing people's emotions about, like, flag or country.

Ismail also explained that the new vetting policies by Trump administration, requiring applicants to submit additional information and attend interviews have made it more challenging for him to obtain his green card:

> It's probably because of the new government that my green card is taking longer and I'm going to have to go through an interview because now everybody is going through interview. In the past, it was just very few people, they just picked randomly … but now everybody is.

As these quotes illustrate, for all participants other than Kayoko, the current sociopolitical climate amid Trumpism was a source of concern and, to varying degrees, had led them to contemplate leaving the US for a safer, more immigrant-friendly country.

Continuum of Collegial Support

Collegial support was a recurrent theme that emerged in the critical incidents of all the participants. However, the degree to which each participant reported receiving support was different. Maria stated:

> For the most part, most of my colleagues really, really respect me and because they know my knowledge base, they know that I know my stuff and I have knowledge that they don't and experiences that they don't. I think that, for the most part, I'm really very well-respected by my colleagues.

Similarly, Kayoko claimed:

> I just feel really fortunate … I had really supportive colleagues who just looked out for me and advocated for me. They made it very clear from the beginning for example that they wanted me to get tenured. … there was definitely a culture to protect junior faculty … and that made me feel comfortable asking questions and I could always find people who could help me.

As foreign-born women faculty of color, Maria and Kayoko claimed that they had never felt that they were treated differently because of their ethnic, racial, linguistic, or foreign-born identities. When Kayoko was assigned to a committee she did not enjoy, she did not attribute it to her foreign-born or identities. Similarly, Maria reported that her presence in committees was always welcomed and her voice was always heard. In addition, Kayoko recalled that at her first institution, when she felt she needed much support linguistically and academically, she found a great deal of mentorship and compassion among her colleagues. Maria also spoke highly of her administrator who advocated for her at the university level. The findings from Maria and Kayoko's narratives contradict some of the existing literature on marginalization of women and women of color in academia (e.g., Lin et al., 2004; Motha & Varghese, 2016; Skachkova, 2007; Toth, 2007); however, both Maria and Kayoko acknowledged that the level of collegial support they had been receiving was not always provided to all foreign-born faculty, women faculty, and faculty of color in other departments and institutions.

Ismail and Chatri, too, reported supporting working environments. However, Chatri expressed concerns about lack of leadership opportunities for foreign-born and minority faculty at his institution:

> In my college, we had this conversation a few years ago about the lower participation of foreign nationals or foreign-born faculty in the administrator level and there were some training … My

> department is very diverse. We have people from different countries … many of us are bilingual … [but] the faculty of color [have] had limited opportunity to climb the administrative positions and the dean had sort of initiatives and that conversation has died down but I feel like it is sort of true … if I'm to think about department chairs of the one that I know, or the deans that I have seen, the majority of them would be white American … Not so much of Latin or African American or Asian. I know only one who is department chair who is Asian here in this university.

Ismail at times felt like a "diversity token" because on two occasions he was assigned courses on diversity and multiculturalism which did not align with his areas of specialization. Nevertheless, he stated that he felt his voice was heard in department meetings. His concern, however, was in regard to issues of his assigned identity as a foreign-born faculty member and that his colleagues often focus on his ethnic identity instead of his professional identity:

> I had conversations with another faculty from Turkey who was hired in the same year as me and we agree that we feel uneasy when people approach us and start telling us about what they know about Turkey or asking us questions about the current events in Turkey, as a conversation opener, I guess. We expect to be positioned more than just a Turkish guy/faculty. … It was a narrative I remember, like, you're from Turkey, so I've been there or my husband's been there, or my cousin has been… I mean, okay, that could be a nice introduction or nice entry point but then, I'm not saying that I want to deny my home country, but the thing is: here I'm at the university, not because I'm from Turkey, I'm at the university because I have a degree and I have been hired to work here … It's those macro sociological identities that people assign to you automatically.

While Kayoko described her institution and colleagues as supportive, she narrated a critical incident in which she was criticized for focusing her work on Japanese speaking participants:

> It was the 3rd year review on my job as a tenure-track assistant professor. My review was overall positive, but … two comments in particular really surprised me. One was "when would [Kayoko] move on and start studying people who are not like herself?" It referred to the fact that my research focused on English language learners in different contexts (including but not limited to the US and Japan) and the particular project I was working on then was about international teaching assistants. I told my mentor that there was actually an entire field of TESOL[6] dedicated to studying

[6] TESOL stands for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.

> "people like me," comprised of people "who are and are not like me." … The second comment, which annoyed me quite a bit, was that some of my colleagues felt I was "getting an easy way out" by conducting studies using Japanese… I wanted to point out that I was then publishing it in English, my L2[7] … so I really did not see how I was getting anything easy.

In contrast to the other participants, Alia spoke of a hostile work environment where she did not feel welcomed, supported, or valued. Despite being an administrator in her department, Alia believed that her institution denied her opportunities to obtain higher-level leadership positions beyond her department:

> When there's new positions coming for leadership on campus, I know that I'll never have a chance ever … I know that there's this ceiling that I cannot penetrate upwards. When I have good ideas of what we can do on campus, [the administrator] doesn't even listen to me.

When a college-wide administrative position became available, three senior faculty members in Alia's department encouraged her to apply for the position. When Alia submitted her application, one administrator was not pleased: "The administrator was criticizing me and said, wow, everyone else only did one page, you did like a whole dossier. Now I have to ask them to go back and rewrite theirs". Alia was confused because, as she put it, "each person submitted what they wanted, … you could submit as much as you want". Alia also felt like an outsider at work. For example, Alia described that when the faculty members in her department had lunch together and engaged in conversation, she did not always feel like she was a part of the group:

> There's always something that makes me feel [like] 'the other'. When they look at my food or whenever … it's not always coming from a good place. They're all patriots, you know. And I'm thinking I'm less of an American than they are in their eyes.

For example, Alia described that at the beginning of every new academic year, her institution had a retreat where they played a game based on TV shows and characters, which Alia did not know because she did not grow up in the US.

> It's like you cannot remind them in any way that you're not exactly the same because they don't like that. So, it just makes me feel very lonely and a lot of time like outside of the group … I have to completely fit the structure … there is no space to carve out a different mold. It's like cookie cutters; you have to fit exactly in that cutting hole and not make your own holes.

[7] L2 stands for second language.

Because the degree of collegial support the participants experienced varied, it can be interpreted as a continuum. On one end of the continuum were Maria and Kayoko who claimed to have received a generally high level of support from the institutions they had worked at. On the opposite end of the continuum is Alia who recounted several critical incidents in which she felt she was marginalized and excluded from social gatherings and an institution-wide leadership position. In the middle of the continuum are Chatri who reported a glass ceiling for minority faculty at his institution and Ismail who felt he was hired as a diversity token and his Turkish identity was often foregrounded by others over his researcher and scholar identity.

Feeling of Not Being Good Enough

An interesting phenomenon emerging from Maria's and Ismail's data is their feeling of not being good enough which led them to "do more" by maintaining a higher research output than their US-born counterparts. Maria described:

> Especially in graduate school and in my first few years as an assistant professor, I felt like I had to show to get tenure: "oh it's not [enough] having like 10 refereed journal articles, I need to have 30" … otherwise, whoever's reviewing my case or the university, my colleagues, they're not going to think that I'm good enough… it really was important to show that I really am the best in my field because that was the requirement for the green card. … I have always felt that way that I really need to be the most productive to show that it's okay for me to be here.

Likewise, Ismail explained:

> [Even though] I don't feel pressured much, … comparing myself with the domestic scholars, I feel like I need to do more … It's a complex that I have, that I need to compensate [for] something, like I'm not from here … I need to do the best that I can.

This finding is consistent with the literature that has found higher research productivity in foreign-born faculty compared to US-born faculty (Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2010; Webber, 2012). As demonstrated in these quotes, Maria and Ismail did not attribute their feeling of not being good enough to pressure from their institutions or colleagues, rather, they felt that they needed to do more than their US-born colleagues in order to continually earn their position in the academe in the US.

Feeling Isolated

Chatri, Ismail, and Alia expressed a sense of loneliness as an academic in the US. Chatri, for instance, stated:

> Making friends … is a little more difficult … So people have different lives, families, kids, and those kind of thing, so it is hard to

> have a friend that you can talk to or go out and hang out with once in a while.

Chatri added that without mentorship, it would be difficult for foreign-born faculty to feel supported:

> I think the institutions need to provide more support, especially emotional support … we hire them but there's no support system in terms of inviting them to make more friend or having mentorship … and they feel isolated. They wouldn't feel welcomed, and in the end, they would just leave for another place where they feel supported and welcome.

He described the mentorship program at his own institution and how it helped him feel connected:

> When I first got in, I was paired up with a full professor from another department, and I felt we can talk about anything at all because he is not from my department, so I can actually talk about other things life in the university … I felt very supported because of that.

Similarly, Ismail expressed a difficulty forming meaningful relationships:

> I'm not saying that I don't have meaningful relationships but most of the people I see, I see them at meetings only … The relationships are usually pretty superficial at the professional level … building relationships takes time and most of the time … it's really easy to feel isolated in academia. … you can just come here, close your door, and do whatever you do on your computer. That's not healthy. … I hear stories from other colleagues, from other universities where they have more workshops where people just go and have fun and just interact and communicate with people, just talk about fun things.

Alia, too, expressed feeling lonely but traced the cause of her loneliness to the unwelcoming environment her colleagues had created for her as a foreigner with a different culture, as she stated in her quote in the section about her colleagues' attitude toward her.

For Kayoko described feeling lonely at her previous institution due to a lack of diversity in both the university and in the surrounding community, which caused many foreign-born minority faculty to leave:

> What [my university] does is that it does hire a lot of scholars from diverse backgrounds, … So I think when new faculty comes here, it's not so hard for any of us to find someone at the senior level that look like us or that sound like us … and I think that makes a big difference. At [my previous university], faculty was very white and … hiring wasn't so difficult but retaining ethnic minority faculty … they often ended up moving to other institutions saying that they didn't feel quite at home, like they didn't fit in. And I don't think … it's the problem of the institution only. The surrounding community

> was very white. So I think it went beyond workplace issue. They just felt really out of place every single day.

Kayoko then emphasized the importance of diversity in both the institution and the surrounding community in retention of foreign-born faculty:

> [In my current institution] I know that there are multiple groups that I could belong to … I do belong to some of them and that does give me connection to other people on campus who share the same concern, whether it's the gender issue or whatever. So it might be helpful to have these official or unofficial groups that faculty feel they can be part of and then they can meet people … and there could be some unofficial mentoring … finding people who are similar to me or finding someone who are similar to you, I guess for me that's a big thing.

As seen in these quotes, the participants claimed various causes for their sense of isolation: lack of racial and ethnic diversity on and off campus, work culture of academia which prioritizes research productivity over personal relationships, and nationalist attitudes toward foreigners.

Discussion and Implications

The findings in this study must be interpreted in tandem with three main limitations. The first limitation involves the sampling as the study did not feature black participants, particularly from non-Arab African nations. Studies have shown that black faculty often experience challenges such as microaggression, lack of collegial support, and increased scrutiny in hiring, tenure, and promotion. Including black participants in this study would have generated a richer and more complete perspective on the intersectionality of race and academy for the foreign-born faculty in the academy in the US. The second limitation of this study is that the description of the participants' lived experiences in this study is complete to the extent that they felt safe and comfortable sharing them with me. Although my familiarity with the participants and our shared experiences as foreign-born faculty based in the US and members of the same professional association provided us with a certain degree of closeness, due to the personal, political, and sensitive nature of the interviews, I sensed varying degrees of reservation on the part of the participants when sharing their experiences and perceptions about their institutions and colleagues. Third, because the focus of this study was the experiences and perceptions of the participants as foreign-born faculty, the interview questions prompted the participants to reflect on their experiences only as foreign-born faculty. As a result, the data did not yield insight about the intersection of race or gender as prominent identity constructs in the experiences of the participants. I now realize that overlooking the intersectionality of race, gender, foreign-born identity, and academia may have caused me to miss important aspects of the participants' experiences. Future studies may avoid these shortcomings by including

more black foreign-born faculty and by using a Critical Race Theory or Feminist theory to examine the intersection of race and gender with issues that foreign-born faculty face.

Despite these limitations, several insights can be gleaned from this study. Most participants expressed concern regarding Trumpism and the future direction of the US, and some considered leaving the US if Trumpism continued. In addition, the participants experienced varying degrees of support from their colleagues, and some felt a sense of isolation in their workplace. Among the three participants who described a lack of support to varying degrees, Alia attributed her sense of disconnectedness to the cultural bias and nationalist ideology of her colleagues, and Chatri and Ismail explained that their isolation is due to the systemic culture of academia which prioritizes research productivity over all other activities. The findings in this study parallel similar findings by Collins (2008), Foote et al. (2008), and Skachkova (2007), who reported that loneliness is one of the challenges encountered by foreign-born faculty. Additionally, while Maria and Kayoko claimed that they felt they had never been treated differently because of their racial identities, Chatri and Ismail alluded to racial tension when Chatri spoke about limited leadership opportunities on his campus and Ismail described being positioned as the diversity hire and a Turkish person rather than a scholar. This parallels the research findings that certain challenges may be intensified for foreign-born faculty of color in the academe (e.g. Skachkova, 2007; Tang, 2000; Turner et al., 2008; Varma, 2006; Witherspoon Arnold et al., 2016).

The practical implications presented below are divided into two categories: a) ways to increase diversity in faculty body through recruitment and retention of more foreign-born faculty and b) training US-born faculty and creating systems of support for foreign-born faculty.

Increasing Recruitment and Retention of Foreign-Born Faculty

Disconnectedness and loneliness can play an important role in foreign-born faculty's embeddedness (Mitchell et al., 2001) in their institution, negatively impacting retention. One way institutions can increase the sense of community for foreign-born faculty is to increase diversity on campus by hiring a more diverse faculty body. When an institution is located in an area that lacks racial and ethnic diversity, the area surrounding the campus may not offer the cultural and social advantages that larger, more diverse cities can offer, thus affecting the recruitment of diverse faculty such as foreign-born faculty or faculty of color (Cejda, 2010; Murray, 2007). One way to facilitate recruitment of minority faculty is by involving current minority faculty in the recruitment process. As foreign-born faculty tend to engage in research projects with international collaborators (Bookman, 2019, Skachkova, 2007), the professional network

of the current foreign-born faculty may be a rich source for identifying future faculty members.

Another way to increase recruitment of diverse faculty is establishing a student-to-faculty pipeline. Starting from undergraduate programs and continuing on to graduate programs, institutions can make a commitment to recruiting, mentoring, and cultivating a diverse student body as potential future faculty. This pipeline will provide the institution highly qualified, diverse candidates for faculty positions once they earn their graduate degrees.

Another type of pipeline for hiring diverse faculty can be established through teaching fellowship programs. Murray (2007) has several suggestions in the context of rural community colleges which may be useful for other kinds of institutions in less diverse areas. For instance, he suggests creating a teaching fellowship program where new graduates or graduate students completing their dissertations are offered teaching fellowships consisting of a temporary faculty position, mentorship, and the opportunity to gain experience. This teaching fellowship program could then lead to permanent positions for the teaching fellows.

A third way to create a pipeline is by keeping track of student alumni. Former students may welcome the opportunity to return to and teach in their former community (Murray, 2007), and returnee students are more likely to be familiar with and have realistic expectations about the cultural and social norms of the institution and the surrounding area. As Murray (2007) argues, "individuals whose expectations are met tend to have higher job satisfaction, and those with higher job satisfaction are … more committed to the organization, and have longer tenures" (p. 60). Therefore, recruiting foreign-born alumni may allow a relatively easier adjustment for the foreign-born faculty as it allows the returning faculty and the campus community to tap into and continue to build on the relationship they had already established.

But, merely recruiting diverse faculty does not ensure their retention. In addition to the recruitment initiatives proposed above, several actionable plans could be implemented to increase the retention of diverse teacher-scholars by increasing their connectedness to their community both on and off campus. First, it is important to provide specifics about the geography, demographics, and cultural attributes of the area surrounding the campus during the recruitment process. Including this information in job advertisements and discussing it with job candidates during interviews can manage potential candidates' expectations and increase their retention. As Leist (2007) claims, "the lack of specificity can prevent a good fit" (p. 35).

Training US-Born Faculty and Creating Systems of Support for Foreign-Born Faculty

Providing regular opportunities for informal one-on-one talks among all faculty, as Ismail suggested, can allow administrators to connect with minority faculty on a personal level, to inquire about their well-being, and to learn about the ways the faculty can be better supported. Alternatively, regular focus groups may be used to elicit minority faculty's perceptions about issues that are important to them.

Alia's experiences highlights the importance of institutional training and professional development on diversity and equity issues such as implicit bias and prejudice, effective cross-cultural communication, and how US-born faculty can foster welcoming academic communities for their foreign-born peers. Trainings can focus on tangible and practical issues, for instance, that in social gatherings such as faculty retreats, it is important to choose activities that are inclusive and sensitive to the cultural background of the foreign-born faculty as to not to exclude them.

Additionally, Chatri spoke about the effectiveness of the mentorship program at his institution, where junior faculty members are paired with more experienced faculty members who can provide insights and support in different aspects of academic life. Many scholars have demonstrated the effectiveness of mentoring programs in faculty development (e.g., Blandet al., 2009; Espino & Zambrana, 2018; Fountain & Newcomer, 2016; Zambrana et al., 2015). This study provides further empirical support that mentorship programs can be an effective way in professional and personal development of novice foreign-born transnational teacher-scholars.

Other recommendations for institutions to increase the embeddedness and retention of minority faculty may include:

- Establish a task force to develop a clear mission statement and an action plan to address issues of diversity and equity both on and off campus.
- Decrease minority faculty's sense of isolation by providing opportunities for them to build relationships.
    - Create regular venues and Table Talks for minority faculty to meet and socialize.
    - Arrange social networking events for faculty and staff from different departments.
    - Offer incentives to faculty and administrators to attend these social events.
    - Create a multicultural center to promote and celebrate diversity on and off campus; invite guests and speakers from diverse backgrounds.
    - Help newly hired minority faculty settle into their new home by offering financial programs such as housing incentives and partnerships with realtors.
    - Support the work-life balance of faculty.

    - Provide affordable child-care services, child-friendly resources, and activities for the family.
    - Promote and encourage self-care.
    - Offer flexible work hours.
    - Provide mental health services on campus.
    - Assess institutional policies that impact work-life balance of faculty such as leave policies and professional development options.
    - Allow spousal hire.
    - Implement regular community outreach.
    - Offer university-community mixers to celebrate diversity and to foster cross-cultural connections on and off campus.
    - Develop partnership with community service-providers to promote services and products that may be of interest to minority faculty.
    - Offer recognition and reward (such as space-use) to community organizations that promote diversity and cross-cultural activities.
- Conduct on-going assessments of faculty satisfaction to identity needs and concerns.
- Utilize exit interviews or surveys eliciting departing foreign-born faculty's input on ways to increase faculty's embeddedness.
- Regularly evaluate the institution's success of the efforts in the action plan.

Some of these actionable items have been proposed and/or implemented by institutions across the US in an effort to address campus climate and retention issues. For instance, my doctoral institution, Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), which is located in a rural area of Pennsylvania with a population of less than 90,000, reported that IUP's faculty of color expressed great appreciation for "'networking events' where minority faculty could gather, socialize and share their experiences in an informal but institutionally-supported event" (Hildebrandt & Swauger, 2016, p. 31). Thus, institutional support for foreign-born faculty must go beyond assistance with immigration process (Foote, 2013) and provide assistance in creating a welcoming community, sense of belongingness, and fulfilling relationships.

One particular phenomenon that emerged in the narratives is the rise of nationalism in the US, as a result of which some of the participants (i.e. Maria and Alia) were considering leaving the US for a more immigrant-friendly country. The intersection of academia and nationalism—as well as Trumpism and the current sociopolitical climate—is an important issue with significant implications for higher education institutions. Issues institutions must consider for close examination include how nationalism and Trumpism may affect the identities, perceptions, and experiences of their foreign-born faculty, how scholarship opportunities available to their foreign-born faculty

may be affected, how their foreign-born faculty's relations with their students, colleagues, and other members of their community may be impacted, and what type of support may be provided to their foreign-born faculty to increase their sense of safety, belonging, and embeddedness both inside and outside the campus. Attending to these issues does not only increase faculty retention and institutions' competitiveness and prosperity, but it is also an ethical responsibility and social function of educational institutions to defend and protect their faculty, both US-born and foreign-born, against injustice and marginalization in turbulent sociopolitical times.

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Appendix: Excerpt from the Written Questionnaire and Interviews

Critical Incidents

Please describe 5 events you've experienced related to your transnational lived experiences, and/or teaching, research, or service in the United States. Please note:

- The events may be commonplace or routine. They do not have to be dramatic.
- The events must have had a special significance or lasting effect on you as a transnational or as a teacher-scholar.
- The events may have been a positive or negative experience.
- You may have been directly involved in the event, or you may have been an observant.

❖ Feel free to use any genre or form that you'd like. For example, you may write narratives, write poems, make a collage, draw, or use photos to represent the events and how they impacted you.

Reflection Questions:

1) What challenges have you experienced as a [foreign-born] faculty?
2) Are there any social or political issues or realities you've recently encountered that have surprised you or challenged your values?
3) Has the recent political climate ever made you consider relocation?
4) How do you think higher-education institutions can attract and retain highly qualified [foreign-born] transnational faculty?

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Teaching and Learning for this Moment: How a Trauma-Informed Lens Can Guide Our Praxis

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ABSTRACT

In this time of COVID-19, continued and relentless violence against Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, (BIPOC), organized resistance by many young people, and violent institutionalized attempts to suppress resistance, demonstrations and social change movements, what should educators be thinking about as we return to our college classrooms? In this short piece, we share our thinking and experience about our students' psycho-social needs and our belief that faculty must be focused both on students' and faculty's socio-political context and students' and faculty's emotional wellbeing as we think about teaching and learning for this moment.

Keywords: covid-19, critical conversations, critical pedagogy, higher education, pandemic, supportive environments, trauma-informed pedagogy

We are two faculty members in the Human Services (both of us trained and experienced counseling professionals and one of us currently a practicing psychotherapist). Over the past three months we have had extensive conversations with both students and colleagues which have sparked much thinking about our praxis and what frameworks may be helpful to think through teaching and learning in

higher education during this tumultuous time of COVID-19, continued police violence against Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), organized resistance and social change work by youth activists, and the violent institutionalized attempts to suppress people demonstrating against systemic racism. As we move into the Fall 2020 semester our institutions are grappling with "transition plans" and modalities of teaching and learning. Our colleagues are beginning to talk about how to "deliver" instruction whether we will be online, in-person or teaching hybrid courses. Much attention is being paid to the content and method of instruction for these courses and faculty are having deep conversations about pedagogies and learning new technologies to accommodate for these possible new realities. In this short piece, we would like to turn our attention to our students' psycho-social needs and to our belief that faculty must be focused on students' socio-political context and students' emotional wellbeing as we think about teaching for this moment. This requires a balance between our primary mission of providing high-caliber education and the reality of what our students currently need to effectively engage in the learning process.

Our experiences as counselors informed in systemic theoretical frameworks (i.e. ecological systems theory, critical multicultural education, social justice education) and trauma-informed care have been helpful in planning meaningful classroom experiences to build psycho-social supportive environments. Our theoretical assumptions inform how we co-construct the classroom environment, the relationship-building that occurs between us, and how we go about structuring teaching and learning throughout the semester. Our students are engaged in the complex realities of our socio-political context and bring their experiences (often of intra and interpersonal and systemic crisis and trauma) into the classroom, and into their engagement with learning. We believe a Systems-informed paradigm and trauma-informed classroom practice should always guide educators and especially at this moment of national/international crisis.

During the Spring 2020 semester as the COVID-19 pandemic was exploding internationally and here in the United States, institutions of higher education where students lived and learned abruptly shifted to online instruction. With little time to prepare or adjust, students were asked to leave the spaces where they had been

co-creating their community with friends and faculty and asked to "return home."

Once off campus, faculty amidst their own anxiety and stressors, were encouraged to reassure students that they would be provided with a "seamless" transition to resume their education, often with promises that it would continue to be as "rigorous" as it had been in the in-person setting. Conversations and debates amongst educators arose about how to support students during these chaotic and unpredictable times. After all, wouldn't creating routine, establishing a "new normal" and helping students get back into a groove help them?

However, students were not just negotiating the challenges of the new online learning environment. Students were not just learning how to engage in new remote education through flipped classrooms, seeing their instructors lecture through Zoom or YouTube or having their lectures asynchronously. Some became homeless almost overnight, others were facing the prospect of a suddenly uncertain job market, others experienced unemployment and food insecurity in their families and communities, caring for ill family members--and doing so within a larger struggling healthcare system. Our students were adding many household responsibilities to their already-complex lives without community infrastructure for support. We heard from students who were homeschooling their younger siblings and sharing their technology in the process. Others began to work full time as essential workers in pharmacies, nursing homes, and grocery stores. For those whose family members became ill, responsibilities of parenting and nursing their loved ones to health were added to their growing lists of demands. And, as family violence is ubiquitous, we were all too aware that our students, and students across the nation, often returned to homes where they experienced trauma and where "shelter in place" often meant something antithetical to safety.

As the spring semester came to an end, the ever-present systemic and institutionalized racism that exists in our country was brought to light, once again, in the latest in an interminable list of murders of Black people by police. And, once again, a video-taped murder caused both trauma and action on a massive scale. Young people organized and spoke out. Demonstrations ensued and paramilitary response and violence followed. BIPOC students spoke about their trauma and how difficult it would be to focus, concentrate

and study in this context of violence against BIPOC. Their concerns for the fall semester rang loudly and clearly.

Given this socio-political context, the emotional consequences on our students (and ourselves), and our motivation to be more effective in the classroom, we found ourselves asking how we could develop a path forward that recognizes and adjusts our praxis to integrate psychological supports and a trauma-informed approach.

While the current times present challenges for educators, we propose taking a purposeful approach to our interactions with students and colleagues in and out of the classroom to foster an appreciation of the existence of invisible trauma and intersectionality (Sweeny et al., 2018) that will build resilience and support student success. This process can begin with asking ourselves what our students need now and what we may need to do to support them in this critical context? We need to find effective ways to recognize and deal with unfamiliar dynamics in the classroom, even when this creates discomfort, to create safe spaces for students to share their reactions and emotions (Clair et al., 2002), and to build competency in talking about race and racism (Fox, 2009; Kernahan, 2019; Sue, 2015; Tatum, 2003).

While adversity is a predictable part of the human experience, its impact on functioning and responses are varied requiring a person-centric approach to support and interventions (Bohannon et al., 2019; Bonnano, 2004). It will be important not to make assumptions about how students are responding to events; rather, it will be important to ask how they are impacted. We must also recognize the direct influence of contextual factors on resilience, making our role critical to adaptation and capacity building (Crosby, 2015; Noltemeyer & Bush, 2013). To assist in the process of functional adaptation to the uncertain landscape ahead, we propose that educators consider the following suggestions.

1) Recognize that students cannot decontextualize their learning from their social identities or the sociopolitical context. We are reminded hundreds of times per day that we are amidst a global pandemic and in a historical moment of reckoning with white supremacy and racism. These realities will need to be acknowledged and brought forth into the spaces we create in our classrooms (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Watermeyer et al., 2020).
2) Find ways to authentically connect with each student and have a willingness to be vulnerable. In times of crisis, educators find themselves in the role of responder to students' who are experiencing a crisis; however, this is a salient moment to shift this

to an acknowledgement of shared experiences and to set the tone for vulnerability, honesty, humility and openness (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Clair et al., 2002). The ability to recognize shared lived experiences can directly influence coping and emotional regulation while allowing for learning to be positioned as a dialogue among equals. This dynamic is very empowering giving student's ownership of the process and outcome of learning. Further, social distancing guidelines can directly undermine the supports that our students need and their perception of what they are returning to in the coming semesters. We can assist in enhancing connectedness by taking steps to learn students' names, understanding who they are in the context of their lives and learning the strengths that they are bringing to our classrooms.

3) Be prepared to play multiple roles and to be flexible. While current research shows that educators found themselves reducing the expectations that they had for students in the Spring of 2020, this also created dialogue about how to balance rigor while providing critical skill acquisition and opportunities for practice and demonstration (Ralph, 2020; Watermeyer et al., 2020). Although learning is the primary goal of the college experience, supporting students' social-emotional health and helping them process these unprecedented events is necessary to achieve it (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Morgan et al., 2015). This is not to suggest that we abandon our roles of expert educators to become mental health practitioners, but it does foster the need to look at ways to creatively adapt to the current situation and its ever-changing trajectory, which may include flexibility in scheduling, reaching out to students who have fallen behind, and employing crisis-intervention skills with compassion and sensitivity. Shifting the educator role to include one of resource broker will include providing avenues to access social, physical, and emotional support. Rather than seeking to lower the bar for student achievement, we can foster success by meeting students where they are and devising a plan to move forward.
4) Be clear and consistent in our expectations and communication. Miscommunication and confusion of expectations can increase the stress experienced by our students (Sahu, 2020). While we now exist in a world where Zoom has become our home office and classrooms and we are regularly seeking innovative ways to improve our curricula, perhaps of greater importance is consistency in routine and expectations when designing our course expectations. Research on flipped classrooms and blended learning models has shown benefits to students including increased skills such as independent problem solving (Suebsom, 2020), increased self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation (Thai et al., 2017). In addition,

students have reported higher rates of satisfaction and feelings of competence (Sergis et al., 2018). However, in order for these outcomes to come to fruition , we must first recognize that not all of our students have had the same exposure to these pedagogies, innovative technologies and terminology as we have. We have spent endless hours researching practicing and preparing for a classroom environment that may look very different from what our learners may have expected. This makes course orientation, practice, clear communication, and consistency more critical than ever before. We should not make assumptions about our students' prior knowledge and familiarity with online pedagogy and instead patiently introduce and reintroduce them to the online, blended, hybrid, HiFlex, synchrounous, asynchrounous learning to ensure their understanding and informed participation in the classroom. This, in turn, will result in decreased confusion and increased participation and success.

While this moment presents challenges to our teaching and learning, we believe there are ways in which we can co-construct meaningful classroom communities (whether online or in-person) where both students and faculty may thrive. In order to do this, however, it will be important to focus on students' psycho-social wellbeing, being ever-mindful that the sociopolitical context and students' and faculty's social identities enter the classroom and the learning space. When faculty can be vulnerable and share their lived experience, get to know their students and create connections with them, bring the outside world and acknowledge the realities of the moment into the classroom, approach difficult conversations, connect students with appropriate supports when needed, and communicate clear and consistent expectations they will be creating safe and supportive communities where students and faculty can learn and thrive.

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Traumatic Skepticism of COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

The impact of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) is not just limited to fatalities around the world in the present times. The psychosocial impact is catastrophic and will last much longer than ever anticipated. The stigma attached to the fear of an isolated and lonely death, the trauma of not being close to your loved ones, the societal economic derailment, the loss of campus experiences by freshmen at any level across the globe, and above all the mass hysteria of staying caged behind closed doors until all is well demands the restructuring of both the physical and psychological aspects of the society. Even the stress, and pressure on the medics and scientists across the globe is immense. The lurking fear of uncertainty, the pain of losing jobs, livelihood, businesses, and homes along with exposure to contradicting information has taken its toll on people's peace of mind. The masses are struggling to adapt to the new world in a hope that everything will go back to the usual 'normal' soon. Only long lasting and effective measures for physical and mental well-being, astute direction, and the planned steps can help heal the trauma of skeptical life ahead.

Keywords: catastrophic, economic derailment, fatalities, hysteria, interventions, psychosocial, skepticism

The Calamity

The initial human cases of the deadly virus were first reported by officials in Wuhan City, China, in December 2019. It sounded mysterious and despite the catastrophic emergence of the event, people were skeptical about making any kind of claims. Little did

they know this virus would be declared a pandemic by WHO and their lives will be affected in an unimaginable way. As of September 9, 2020, across the globe a total of 218,149 new cases, 27,486,960 confirmed cases and 894,983 deaths have been reported due to disastrous COVID-19 since the first outbreak (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020). With no vaccination or cure in sight, the frustration first led to rebellion by masses and then to depression in various parts of the world. No other group has been more affected by the pandemic and uncertainties revolving around it, than children of all age groups. A recent report titled 'Lives Upended' by the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund has said that "an additional 2,400 children in South Asia could die every day as an indirect consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic" (United Nations Children's Emergency Fund [UNICEF], 2020, p. 13). The report adds that the pandemic is undoing decades of progress made on health, education and other areas. Besides children, the older generations that successfully survived world wars and economic depression suddenly seem to be feeling lost and lonely. The initial confusion and casual approach towards this deadly pandemic were soon replaced by panic due to limited to no communication and physical contact with their friends in the community. The response to handle the Coronavirus has been unique in different countries depending on the spread, resources, population, and social structure of the society. However, the social, emotional, mental, and financial factors seem to be overlapping everywhere as everyone is scrambling through unauthenticated sources of information. The void created by forced physical distance in all walks of life has compelled people to go to extremes by either completely shutting down or by rebelling, leading to shocking effects in both scenarios. This essay is a reflective work of a distraught society before and during this pandemic with an end not visible anywhere.

Domino Effect

According to a study conducted by Hawryluck et al. (2020), "quarantine can result in considerable psychological distress in the forms of PTSD and depressive symptoms. Public health officials, infectious diseases physicians, and psychiatrists and psychologists need to be made aware of this issue" (para. 36). As the doctors, researchers, and scientists fight to find some cure of the coronavirus, society is facing a domino effects of this pandemic economically and psychosocially. Lack of funds have led to frustrated

households with increased child abuse, sexual abuse, increased screen time for children of all age group, lack of focus from education, fear of uncertain future and acute depression (Jeffreys, 2020). “About 30% of children or their parents who are subjected to quarantine at home or are isolated, suffer from acute stress disorder, depression and adjustment problems caused as result of such dramatic change in their daily lifestyle” (Madan, 2020).

Spending less time on the road, saving money on gatherings, having the luxury to work from home, and leading a life with a minimalistic approach can be a healthier way of living by accepting the new normal. However, it does not seem to have become normal for the present generation. Especially for the ones who have lost their families and friends to this deadly virus.

The repercussions have led to suicidal tendencies among college students coming from insecure family backgrounds. The alarming aspect is that these stressors are bound to trigger new symptoms and aggravate underlying neurological conditions. Another frightening aspect is the symptoms for any mental or neurological disorder is not initially as evident as in case of any physical ailment. Moreover, the focus has suddenly shifted towards visible symptoms and not much education, training or information is being provided to deal with conditions like depression, post-traumatic stress disorder or mood instability. The confinement has also led to eating disorders due to a lack of routine and structured lifestyle in certain cases (Muhlheim, 2020). The potential use of cyber use in the name of learning and education has shown irrational behavior and unrealistic demands from children. With more focus on only economic and educational aspect, no one seems to be taking the long-term mental imbalance of generations to come which will continue to be a huge red flag.

The Restructuring

As stated by Jones (2020),

> Epidemics eventually resolve whether succumbing to societal action or having exhausted the supply of susceptible victims. As [Charles] Rosenberg put it, ‘Epidemics start at a moment in time, proceed on a stage limited in space and duration, follow a plot line of increasing revelatory tension, move to a crisis of individual and collective character, then drift toward closure” (para. 6).

The 21st century is also the epoch of developing contagion of ever-growing mental illnesses. All stakeholders all over the world must analyze the psychosocial indispositions of this pandemic and assess the burden, fatalities and associated repercussions. According to Dubey et al. (2020), there is no doubt that the stigma attached to this disease has stopped masses to come forward and acknowledge it

openly. This has hampered international trade and relationships leading to hollowness. The utmost sensitive care is needed to erase the humiliation associated with disease, racism, religious publicity and psychosocial impact. The halt on trade and travel among countries has given a setback to the exchange of global culture.

Besides the medical force, the mental ailment experts such as psychologists and trauma specialists need to gear up to form executions teams to enable effective communications between policy makers, front runners, and the affected masses. The officials also need to hit the ground running by setting up mental health organizations specific for future pandemics with branches in many nations and in individual healthcare institutions for research, mental healthcare delivery and arranging awareness program at both personal and community levels. The global agencies and leadership need to come together to provide a concise direction with one aim in mind not just for the present pandemic, but to also revert any such situation in future. Social media can be productive if used effectively in times like this to provide accurate, research-based, and authentic information to masses that can help build confidence and immunity. The generations to come will continue to face the trauma of this pandemic that seemed to have started like a hoax and then grew into an uncontrollably giant monster that gulped down millions of people all over the world. The responsibility to face this skepticism falls on all of us as a society. Providing correct information is a good start and hence, it is important more than ever now to protect social media from deflations and execute strict government laws and legislation regarding inaccurate news, social media rumors, disinformation, and misinformation. At the end of the day, it seems this pandemic is a learning lesson for mankind to realize the biggest treasure of mankind are good health, correct knowledge, compassion, and camaraderie among human beings. Only if we learn to coexist!

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Ready, Fire, Aim: Adapting to COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides insight into the rapid transition experienced by the students and staff who, before COVID-19, were part of a blended instructional format for their classes. The students reported general satisfaction with the online transition while expressing reservations about the loss of personal interaction and concerns about inabilities to engage field experiences deemed critical to completion of the program

Keywords: instructional preferences, student adaptability, student resilience

This past semester started in a normal and predictable fashion. It did not end that way. Normally students in our educational leadership courses engage a blended curriculum where some portions of the class are delivered online while also maintaining face-to-face instruction.

Instructional changes necessitated by COVID-19 were introduced with drastic swiftness. In Louisiana, where our college is located, the executive order announcing the closure of schools came with no prior notice. I have spoken with essential personnel who were on a conference call with the office of emergency preparedness one hour before the announcement and they were given no notice of what was about to be announced. When the executive order to close schools was enacted, my institution cancelled classes for one week in order to give students and staff alike a chance to get their bearings. Instructors were expected to use this interval to begin a transition to full-time, online delivery for the remainder of the semester.

Responding to the Crisis

So, it began. During the week of class cancellation, instructors were expected to modify their original class schedules and to gear them towards full-time, online delivery. The expectations for course modifications were consistent for the entire university, but the strategies employed to reach these expectations were left to the discretion of the individual faculty members. Given the fact that no hints of immediate cessation of face-to-face instruction was even being considered at the executive level of government, it is likely that instructor discretion in how change would be implemented was the only viable option for the university.

The change in instructional delivery required significant modification to classroom learning objectives. Each class in our program has a major project, known as an artifact, to complete. Regardless of the class, the artifact requires a significant amount of field-based work in the school where the degree candidate is working. For my particular cohorts, the class artifact focused on auditing the school's efforts to create equitable learning opportunities. Clearly, the expectations for the artifact were no longer tenable since K-12 schools were also required to transition to online instruction. In our class, we amended the artifact to become a check list that students could refer to when they assumed their first administrative position.

Besides significantly modifying the artifact's requirements, we also created six class goals to correspond with the remaining meetings. The goals were combinations of NELP standards that are embedded throughout our program delivery. Each class focused on a particular goal, and we reserved one class for a wrap-up and debrief for materials that had been covered. We also created three case studies that would directly apply to situations a first-year principal could expect to face.

Two separate cohorts undertook this revised learning plan. I had met one cohort for the first half of the semester, so we were able to interact face-to-face. The other cohort, however, had never met me. Historically in our program, students received their instruction entirely face-to-face or through a hybrid model where some course material was presented online synchronously or asynchronously. These students were now, for the first time, going to class completely in an online format. The first cohort, as mentioned, had met face-to-face earlier in the year. The second cohort, however, had never met me. This would be the first time any of these students would be taking a course with an instructor they had not met face-to-face.

As we began the classes an immediate problem arose; the students did not appear on the screen in our delivery platform. We resolved this problem after the first week of instruction by applying an add-on to the screen that allowed everyone to see everyone. If we had not found that option, it would have been much more difficult to interact productively.

Since our class was now proceeding in a manner that no one had anticipated, I thought it would be useful to conduct a program evaluation. Students were able to anonymously answer a short survey that asked for their perception of instruction effectiveness for traditional learning versus online instruction.

Students were asked to use a seven-point sliding scale were 0-3 represented a preference for traditional learning, 4 indicated that traditional and online learning was viewed equally, and 5-7 represented a preference for online learning. Students were also asked to provide comments with two open-ended responses. An item analysis was conducted on the six items hypothesized to assess Instructional Preference. Each of the six items was correlated with the total score, with the item removed. All of the correlations were greater than 0.30 with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89 indicating strong internal consistency.

Student means for their perceptions for each of the items are listed below:

a. Instruction pacing (4.47)
b. Interact with classmates, (2.53)
c. Ability to interact with instructor, (3.93)
d. Completing course requirements, (4.07)
e. Quality of feedback, (3.87)
f. Overall instructional effectiveness, (3.73)

Open-ended questions:

1. How could online instruction better serve you?
2. Any other thoughts on traditional or online instruction?

The program evaluation proved to be a valuable means of gathering insight from the students. Mean scores that were close to 4 for almost every item suggested the students perceived the rapidly implemented online format for instruction to be generally equivalent to what they would have expected from a traditional course format and this view was supported by informal conversations with students after the survey was completed. This was particularly encouraging, given the short preparation time available to make the changes that were necessary to move to a virtual learning environment. That said, the trend was noticeably absent for responses related to interacting with classmates. Clearly, students felt like the opportunity to interact with their peers was a strong suite of their past experiences. Students elaborated on this finding in their open-ended responses, repeatedly noting that the personal interactions that take place in face-to-face instruction were important to them and the inability to personally interact to the same degree in the virtual class environment detracted from their overall sense of course satisfaction.

Another consistent theme in the open-ended responses was the concerns raised by the inability to acquire field hours with all school campuses closes. Their concern is duly noted. How does one acquire field experiences when

the "field" is not currently available? Rectifying this problem will be a priority as we move into the summer courses and alternative opportunities such as case studies that mimic the actual field experience are under development.

Given that we all, students and instructor alike, were propelled into our circumstances with little to no advanced warning, considerable effort was directed towards ensuring that students felt comfortable and they knew they were not working in isolation. Students were given my cellphone number and encouraged to use it. We also used a class debrief from each class where the high points were provided by me in a summation. Power point were designed so that students could interact with them in real time, and these power points were shared to everyone the next day.

It was heartening to have students comment favorably at the course's completion about how well the classes had gone. When students completed their anonymous course evaluations, the following comments were provided:

> I got into this program to be a teacher leader. Not necessarily a principal, but someone to help new teachers rise to their potential That I might in fact be the right kind of something that would make a good principal was encouraging and has revived something in me that I wasn't even aware I had let die. I am finally ready to shine again, and it feels so good. Thank you for that. You did that for me. Your classes and the challenging but doable work did that for me. Thanks again.
>
> Thanks for an awesome semester! I've learned a ton and look forward to applying what I've learned in the future.
>
> Even though we had to shift gears, I thoroughly enjoyed the class. Our time together was both informative and fun. And fun was something I definitely looked forward to. Thanks again!

In the past I have shied away from using a virtual component to my classes. I have always preferred the conversations and interactions that come from being in the same room together. I learned that it is possible to replicate many of these advantages in a virtual classroom also. Student reactions during the class and the results of the survey we generated both provided reinforcement for this thinking, as did the comments provided during the students' course evaluations.

The obvious drawback to our situation was the inability for students to do any work at their schools. COVID-19 will not last forever, and eventually we will be able to return to normalcy. The knowledge gained during this semester has provided invaluable insight on how to merge the virtual world with field-based experiences.

We are all familiar with the adage, Ready, Aim, Fire! It may be familiar, but it does not capture the reality of our response to COVID-19. We were not ready for an immediate shift to virtual learning, but we quickly got up to speed. We had to take what we had and immediately put it to use. In short, we had to fire. As we went through the class, we discovered how to not only make the best of our circumstances but also how to make our circumstances the best they could be. In this regard we were continually aiming. We quickly prepared for the transition to complete online instruction because it was our only option. For students and for myself it was surprisingly enjoyable, and the experiences during this very unusual semester should serve us all well.

Author Bio

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A Lesson to be Learned

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ABSTRACT

This brief essay departs from the ascertainment that, according to official agencies and epidemiologists, the COVID-19 pandemic was preventable, to outline the current research regime in so-called 'knowledge societies'. It argues that the state and business control of universities, which in Europe has been particularly promoted by the EU, as well as the overwhelming emphasis on the inventions of the 'fourth industrial revolution', have displaced research that addresses the common good.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, knowledge society, fourth industrial revolution, academic autonomy

A Preventable Pandemic

Those who were in the position to know, they knew. The Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (co-convened by WHO and the World Bank) knew: in their last annual report, published just before the outbreak of the plague, they underlined that investments in vaccine development and broad spectrum antiviral drugs were inadequate, in the face of a high risk for epidemics or pandemics that would cause loss of life, upset economies and bring about social chaos (GPMB, 2019). The American government knew: in 2017, the Pentagon warned that a 'novel respiratory disease' could 'quickly evolve into a multinational health crisis that causes millions to suffer' (Klippenstein, 2020). The EU knew, but 'industry lobby groups have managed to convince the European Commission to let the private sector decide how very large amounts of public research funding should be used' (CEO, 2020). Billionaire-run philanthropic foundations knew, but 'the

investments that could have been done … were not made', because there was 'no private sector incentive for something uncertain like this' (Gates, 2020). Indeed, pharmaceutical companies also knew, but, over the last twenty years, they sat on vaccine research results, because investing in face creams, drugs that maintain chronic diseases, marketing, and stock buybacks are where the big profits lie, not in preventing pandemics (Lawson, 2020). As Michael Osterholm (2020), the acknowledged infectious disease epidemiologist, said, if a vaccine was prepared right after the SARS epidemic of 2003, today half of the victims of COVID-19 could have been rescued, even if the two coronaviruses are not exactly of the same strain. Richard Horton (2020), editor of *The Lancet*, confirmed that the 'warnings of doctors and scientists were ignored, with fatal results', and that 'coronavirus is the greatest global science policy failure in a generation'.

Lo and behold, the much celebrated 'knowledge societies', in which the utilization of scientific knowledge to the benefit of public health is by no means self-evident. It could not be otherwise, since the 'new era of knowledge' that countries around the world, and especially the European Union, ecstatically declared, since the 1990s, meant nothing but that university research must be subjected to the investment priorities of business enterprises; and that innovation must be orientated predominantly towards enhancing technologies of social control and consumption, under the 'fourth industrial revolution'. The text delineates these two characteristic features of so-called 'knowledge societies' that, as it is argued, have displaced independent research and, for that matter, research that serves the common good.

The Failure of 'Knowledge' Societies

Since 2000, universities in Europe have been formally brought into what the EU called a 'knowledge industry', under the direct guidance of big enterprises that largely defined the 'modernization agenda' for higher education. The European Council pronounced 'the role of universities […] as a main contribution to Europe's competitiveness and the need for closer cooperation between academia and the world of enterprise' (EC, 2007a). The 'European Research Area' set as its main aim 'to ensure "knowledge transfer", namely exploitation of research produced in universities by businesses and industry' (EC, 2007b).

To accomplish this aim, the EU and governments around the continent initiated a series of reforms intended to abolish the fragments of academic autonomy that universities in Europe used to have, targeting primarily their form of governance. European universities have been turned into business-like organizations led by appointed managers and operating with cost-benefit and profit-seeking criteria. Established divisions in faculties, departments, laboratories and administrative units – where academics traditionally had a say – have been replaced by 'management

systems' that have reduced scholars to 'human resources'. Researchers are now subject to assessment by indicators such as: 'research outputs per academic staff', 'external research income', 'number and percentage of competitive grants won', 'commissioned reports', 'consultancy contracts', 'number of collaborations and partnerships', and similar gauges that force them to shape their knowledge and research according to the desires of all kinds of sponsors.

Under these European-wide university reforms, management-based governance has dissolved the academic community by turning scholars into methodically controlled 'knowledge workers', with no say for the affairs of their institution. The management system promoted across Europe has altered the relation between the academic staff and the administration within the university: now, academics are being fully subjected to a voluminous administration, which exercises (and is subject to) thorough surveillance through digital databases. Moreover, management has exposed scientific staff to market relations, by involving business agents in governance, removing employment security from researchers, and forcing them to make their interests and knowledge available for purchase.

Indeed, for about three decades now, initially in the UK and then around Europe, universities have been stripped of the limited academic autonomy they used to have, disabling scholars from deciding, not only about the governance of their institution, but also about their research and even their teaching. They are forced to 'generate income' or 'buy their salaries' by selling research results to businesses or state agencies. The consequences of obliging academics to sell their research are obvious in natural sciences: As Stephanie Pain, associate editor of *New Scientist,* wrote already back in the 1990s. '. . .where research was once mostly neutral, it now has an array of paymasters to please. In place of impartiality, research results are being discreetly managed and massaged, or even locked away if they don't serve the right interests. Patronage rarely comes without strings attached'. In humanities and social sciences, scholars must conform, too, to the agendas and pursuits of private or public agencies and research funds at the expense of their personal intellectual interests. Academics are required to succumb, and, in fact, they have, to the aims and the bureaucratic rules of external agencies (e.g., applications, budgeting, anticipation of outcomes, deadlines, procedures of approval or rejection, reporting to sponsors etc.), rather to be accountable to their community and the public. Thereby, scholars have been institutionally obstructed from creating knowledge following their own intellectual interests and judgement and they are obliged to produce knowledge which is, in an unprecedented manner, both marketized and bureaucratized.

Indeed, university knowledge is now subject to procedures imposed by managers and funding agencies, industrialized by the global publication system, degraded as a mere product listed by automated software tools that

measure the productivity of academics, and absorbed by massive production. In fact, the neoliberal policies of the last three decades have not merely sought to bring knowledge under the effective control of the state and capitalist economy, but literally to destroy it, as quest for the truth, critique, and rational debate. Therefore, the neoliberal university is not exempt from the truth decay that we have been witnessing in the public space over the last decades. It is one of its main actors.

The second feature of the current knowledge production regime is the so-called 'fourth industrial revolution' (i.e. synergy amongst information technology, artificial intelligence, robotics, genetics, nanotechnology and neuroscience), whose rapid progress is promising to improve everyday life. However, the inventions announced, every now and then, hardly convince that this is indeed the priority: robotization across production and service sectors threatening to raise unemployment and underemployment; underwater nuclear-armed drones, soldiers who can activate military equipment through neural messages, and killer-robots; predictive policing; face recognition and collection of biometric data through cameras and policemen's eyeglasses; lip-reading and emotion detection devices; 'smart cities' (i.e. urban areas equipped to collect data from citizens through sensors in lamp posts, street cameras, and mobile devices); brain implants and mind-reading helmets, connected with AI devices, that decipher thoughts from neural activity; AI debaters and invincible chess players; 'virtual assistants' that replace peer or parental advice and record private conversations; distortion of photographic and video material through 'face-apps' and 'deepfake' software; the Internet of Things (IoT) which connects appliances in order to constantly renew consumables; social-media platforms exposing and selling off details of private lives; animes, holograms, and sex robots. Apparently, instead of (or as) the general improvement of society, what the 'fourth industrial revolution' is mostly about is the reinforcement of economic and biopolitical controls, intense competition on military might, perpetual and pervasive surveillance, the algorithmization of judgement and conduct, and the turning of human life into data.

Thus, ironically, while countries around the world, with almost universal education and high-tech economies, have been declaring themselves as 'knowledge societies', scientific knowledge, as rational reflection and utilization of empirical results for the common good, has been given miniscule attention – as the pandemic is testifying and, even more, the unfolding environmental destruction. Thus, 'knowledge societies' have come to remind the Orwellian Oceania, where '… there was no vocabulary expressing the function of Science as a habit of mind, or a method of thought, irrespective of its particular branches', and where '… technological progress only happens when its products can in some way be used for the diminution of human liberty' (Orwell, 1949).

It is not surprising, then, why 'knowledge societies' are running now to avert the destruction, while they had the capacity to prevent it. Guided by globalized capitalism, both authoritarian and liberal societies have displaced free scientific thinking and true innovation and have focused on inventions that constantly expand, social control, and consumption of all sorts of gadgets, always in the name of progress and economic development.

Re-establishing the University

It is time for rethinking, as it is commonly, and rightly so, being said, about 'the next day', when the world makes it through this plague, and its yet unknown toll in lives and suffering. The next day should include the freeing of research and knowledge from the grip of businesses and the state (including the inter-state EU), which has been acting unabashedly in their service over three decades of neoliberal policymaking. The university must become again university, in accordance to its valuable European tradition of academic autonomy, which, however, has very little been realized. Scholars should reassume their intellectual, educational, and decision-making roles, and students should become again, from customers and consumers of knowledge, integral members of the academic community. Researchers should be giving account to this community, and, by extension, to the public, not to all sorts of commercial interests, and state bureaucracies. The state's role should be to support free research, which is the only kind of research that serves the common good.

But most importantly 'the next day' should include the emancipation of societies from the perception that progress and development are equivalent to enhancing technologies of consumption, and control, and expanding perpetually human domination on nature, a consequence of which is also this pandemic (see Vidal, 2020; Weston, 2020). There are certainly good reasons to do so. Technologies of surveillance and control, which are now welcome to constrain the spread of the disease, could acquire a new legitimation basis and establish themselves even further, in the name of 'public health'. Above all, of course, if the domination of societies on nature continues, the destruction of the global ecosystem, the mass extinction of fauna and flora, and the imminent climate catastrophe will render the very concept of public health meaningless.

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Flipped Learning During a Global Pandemic: Empowering Students with Choice

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ABSTRACT

This essay provides a research brief on current studies related to utilizing a flipped learning model. The flipped model entails students engaging with a recorded lecture prior to live class time, allowing for more student engagement with content, classmates, and the instructor during synchronous class time. A flipped model empowers students with more choice and control over their learning, can improve student achievement, and can reduce student anxiety. During a global pandemic when nearly all higher education institutions have rapidly transitioned to online learning platforms, a flipped model can provide a blended, balanced approach to student learning.

Keywords: flipped classroom, online learning, pandemic, student choice

Online learning during a global pandemic

By April 1, 2020, 90% of students in the world, including nearly all of the students in U.S. schools were out of school due to the global coronavirus pandemic (Kamenetz, 2020b). The experience of children being out of school for months is unusual, but not unprecedented; the Rwandan genocide, Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, and fleeing Syrian or Rohingya refugees have also led to a hiatus from face-to-face learning for children. The rapid transition to online learning continues to pose numerous challenges to schools, districts, teachers, students, and parents. Approximately half of students in U.S. public schools are considered to be

low-income, and 12 million of them lack internet access (Kamenetz, 2020a). The equity challenges that have arisen due to the pandemic reach far beyond technology resources and access, and yet, as teachers, we must utilize instructional methods that can help accommodate for the challenges our students, and we ourselves, are facing.

A flipped learning model for online instruction is one method that individualizes student learning and demonstrates the teacher's value of collaborative synchronous learning time. Many college classes are three hours in duration, and our students frequently have multiple classes per day. Numerous hours on a virtual call can lead to fatigue, caused by the effort to read non-verbal cues, the stress of feeling watched by others, and feelings of vulnerability that can result when our professional and personal spaces are blended (Jiang, 2020). The amount of time we spend on screens can cause physical and mental health impacts, including eye and neck strain, anxiety, depression, and obesity (Andrews, 2020; American Heart Association, 2018). Despite the recommendations from the American Heart Association (2018) to limit screen time to one to two hours per day, since the Corona-virus forced schools and nearly all of life online, screen time for adults and children alike has increased dramatically. A 2019 digital report (Kemp, 2019) found the average adults spent nearly seven hours on mobile devices or online per day, and since the Corona virus pandemic transitioned much of life and learning online, there has been an increase in screen time (Andrews, 2020).

Despite the challenges associated with increased screen time, Covid-19 has led teachers and students alike to learning in virtual spaces. By the end of May 2020, 4,234 higher education institutions and an estimated 25,798,790 students had been impacted by Covid-19 (Entangled Solutions, 2020). Colleges and universities that had previously offered little online learning options were suddenly transitioned into e-learning institutions. Professors with a wide variety of technology competence had to quickly adjust to teaching virtually. A blended approach to online learning though a flipped classroom model allows instructors to integrate synchronous and asynchronous platforms into their classrooms, maintain control of the lecture component of their classes, and provide students with a healthier and more differentiated approach to online learning.

Research on flipped learning

A flipped classroom model is a *flexible pedagogy* (Gordon, 2014) housed in the blended learning umbrella of online, or e-learning. In a flipped classroom, the instructor provides web-based lectures for students to view prior to class (Thai et al., 2017). With this content-based instruction occurring prior to a live class session, the professor and classmates can actively engage with difficult cognitive tasks in real time, applying the foundational content they have learned prior to class (Talbert, 2017).

Students are able to apply concepts and creatively engage with each other in a live learning space (Flipped Learning Network, 2014). The Flipped Learning Network (2014) defined flipped learning within four pillars utilizing the FLIP acronym: 1) Flexible learning environment, which allows students to differentiate and individualize learning; 2) Learning culture, where the learning process is learner-centered; 3) Intentional content, where the professor explicitly connects the learning targets to content and uses differentiated materials; and 4) Professional educator, where the instructor is prepared, knows their students' needs, conducts formative assessments, and is a reflective practitioner. The flipped approach is worth considering in the midst of the current challenges in education and the world.

Benefits of using a flipped model

Research over the past 10 years has included empirical studies regarding the impact of flipped learning on students. Several studies have found improved academic performance in flipped classroom models (i.e., Albert & Beatty, 2014; O'Flaherty & Phillips, 2015; Thai et al., 2017). It appears that flipped classroom learning has a positive impact on academic outcomes as compared to traditional learning models (Thai et al., 2017). Additionally, flipped classrooms have been found to reduce dropout rates and improve exam marks (Lopez-Perez et al., 2011). Gaughan (2014) found that students in a flipped learning environment were better prepared to engage in face-to-face learning, such as debates, discussions, and activities.

The reduced amount of direct, virtual instruction required when students engage with content prior to a live class session also appears to have broader mental health benefits for students. Perhaps one of the most important potential benefits during global pandemic is reduced student anxiety (Aşıksoy & Sorakin, 2018). A recent Center for Disease Control and Prevention survey of 5,412 U.S. adults found increased depression and anxiety compared to the previous year, with nearly 25 percent of adults between the ages of 18 – 24 reporting that they had "seriously considered" suicide in the past 30 days (Czeisler et al., 2020). Reduced synchronous learning time on a virtual screen can potentially improve the mental health of our students.

In a related finding, Karaca and Ocak (2017) found that flipped learning reduced student cognitive load. Talbert (2017) also found that flipped learning promoted self-regulation in students in their capacity to determine how they digested lecture material in their own time and space. A flipped approach to teaching and learning appears to improve student and staff satisfaction (O'Flaherty & Phillips, 2015). These academic and health benefits for students are perhaps more important now more than ever. Teachers must accommodate for these challenging times and adjust instructional strategies to meet the needs of students.

Challenges & recommendations

Despite the apparent benefits to a flipped learning model, there are also challenges. There is a large time commitment required of the instructor, and there is a need for institutional support and flexibility with assessments (Wanner & Palmer, 2015). Additionally, O'Flaherty and Phillips (2015) found little evidence that flipped learning contributed to lifelong learning and the increase in 21st century skills in college students. Perhaps learning from the voices of practitioners who have utilized this model effectively can help improve efficacy. Several recommendations can help promote a successful flipped learning environment, including determining methods for holding students accountable for their individualized learning, such as formative assessments, deliberately choosing what content you want to flip, and asking for feedback from students (Ramirez, 2019). Additionally, using existing video lectures from platforms such as Khan Academy, asking students to listen to podcasts or watch TED Talks in lieu of an instructor created video lecture can reduce the teaching load while diversifying content.

Empower students with choice

The coronavirus has led to a lack of choice in all parts of life, including how we access education. Flipped learning is one way to provide students with choice, which they value (Wanner & Palmer, 2015). Flipped classrooms provide a flexible, student-focused approach to online learning (Gordon, 2014). The flipped learning model promotes student autonomy and control over their own learning (Gasparini, 2020). Additionally, a flipped learning environment allows for direct instruction to occur in a student's individual space where students have control and feel safe; active learning occurs in a group space, where students can engage with their peers and instructor in real time (Talbert, 2017). In a world that is steeped in a global pandemic, we often feel lonely, isolated, and socially disconnected. A flipped classroom model can provide students with some control over their learning in a world that currently feels quite out of control.

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Reforming Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Sector: What Next?

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ABSTRACT

Employment sector has been invariably affected in the current crisis resulting from the global pandemic of COVID-19. This demands a paradigm shift in the present way of intervention in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) *sector through short- and long-term strategies.*

Keywords: Employment, Nepalese TVET Sector, TVET Policy and Practice

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is increasingly gaining emphasis worldwide as it prepares young people for employment and helps overcome their socio-economic challenges. TVET is also perceived as a tool that fundamentally provides the youths with necessary skills required for job market and that subsequently leads to the economic development (Anderson, 2009). It is imperative that one of the bases for sustainable livelihood is employment and gainful income (McGrath, Mulder, Papier, & Stuart, 2019) and the TVET offers necessary skills to the youths for employment (Maclean& Wilson, 2011). Realizing the contributions to the socio-economic development of nations through skills is enhancement and engagement, TVET is gradually gaining policy attention globally. Its role has ever increased amid the present global pandemic with hundreds of thousand youths losing their jobs and, thus,

posing a challenge to retain the workforce in their normal health condition. Nevertheless, the TVET sector at the moment can hardly address the unprecedented situation with its present normative way of functioning. This requires a diagnostic assessment of major problems rooted in the TVET sector so that a set of measures can be introduced to revitalize it in a new normal situation. The assessment is also pertinent to generate employment opportunities in the future. With this into consideration, this article has brought out major problems and possible strategies required to redeem the TVET sector. The article begins with the description of TVET sector development citing a reference from a case of developing country Nepal before presenting possible reforms.

TVET Sector Development: A Country Case

Nepal is a country replete with diversity both in terms of socio-cultural and ecological heritages and thus carries an array of immense opportunities. Within a small territory of 147,181 square kilometers, as many as 126 ethnic groups with diverse cultures have been living here for generations (CBS, 2011). Besides, geographical diversities ranging from fertile plains in the southern parts with 60 meter from the sea level to mid-range hilly landscape and high mountains in the north with the top of the world (8848 meter) also present Nepal as a high potential for agricultural and other economic activities. However, having a per capita income of approximately US$ 1000, the country is acutely facing the resources to overcome poverty, lack of infrastructure, weak services, etc. (Ministry of Finance, 2019). More specifically, agriculture as the most dominant employment sector hardly fulfills the basic needs of the people in Nepal as there exists a very weak linkage between employment and the skills that youths receive before they enter into the world of work. In such a context, TVET is expected to overcome unemployment challenges, and importantly, fundamental efforts for the development of the sector began in the country with the establishment of the Council of Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT) in 1989. However, the sector has not yet progressed in realizing its meaningful contribution to the job market.

Despite some government efforts to streamline the sector through legal and policy mechanisms like CTEVT Act, TVET policies, and institutional mechanism of CTEVT, the sector has been ever relegated to the back-burner. It is considered to have been less connected with diverse employment providers and is also not substantially playing an anticipated role in reducing unemployment rates and lowering poverty in the country. Thus, it has not gained wider popularity among youths in Nepal. This may be the reason as to why TVET hasn’t been a popular choice for the students with better educational performance.

Limited and Inefficient Government Intervention

There is a marked exodus of job-seeking Nepali youths to the Middle East and elsewhere. Most of them do not have the specific skills required for their jobs. The reason is that only 10 percent of Nepal's migrant workers receive TVET qualifications (International Labour Organization, 2015). Further, women migrant workers bound to serve as domestic workers are also mostly unskilled (Nepal Planning Commission, 2016). To address the problem, the annual intake capacity of TVET institutions of Nepal is not enough. At present, the enrolment capacity of the public and private institutions for the same is less than 130,000 which include both short-term and project ventures (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology [MoEST], 2018a; MoEST, 2018b). Although the government plans to provide short term skill development courses to 45,000 youths (Nepal Planning Commission, 2020), this will not suffice the aspirations of the youth populace seeking for employment.

In this connection, the Nepal government is currently expanding and developing TVET infrastructure in its 607 local government levels out of 753 (Government of Nepal, 2020). But this is a herculean task for the government since much-needed TVET governance at large is not well-coordinated from federal to local levels. For this, the coordination effort for mustering supports from different stakeholders and concerned authorities such as CTEVT- affiliated and constituent colleges, short-term course providers, and TITI among others is anticipated. However, the coordinated efforts can also prod other TVET providers, including the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Labor, Employment, Vocational and Skill Development Training Center (Department Level), Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies (MOICS)-Department of Cottage and Small Industries (DCSI) in operating their programs. Likewise, the National Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management runs some academic and training programs. Besides, some projects such as EVENT (a project in collaboration with the World Bank), TVET practical partnership (an EU supported and CTEVT and British Council -implemented project) and, ENSSURE (a Swiss-supported project) are currently being executed. Other direct donor-funded programs are being implemented through GOs and NGOs across the country. Also, there are some marked initiatives from the private sector end. However, a clear framework to streamline all these efforts has not been made yet.

TVET schools have been established to provide a decent learning environment, appropriate physical facilities, and training materials to meet the demands of the job market. But this is not mostly happening because many TVET institutions are in operation without the required physical and learning environment. Disable-friendly infrastructure has hardly been constructed. Work-based learning as an essential aspect of TVET is to be strengthened in the TVET system. A well organized and meaningful unit to

recognize the indigenous, local and self-innovative learning is yet to be made much functional. Importantly, apprenticeship has yet to be institutionalized though the government has emphatically included this in its annual policy and budget for the fiscal year 2020/21 (MoF, 2020). Consequently, the sector is not being able to develop human resources with employable skills and approaches. School facilities are not only the issue but the numerical presence of TVET institutions in itself is a matter to ponder.

Un/coordinated Policy and Initiations

The TVET Policy, 2012 played a significant role for the development of the TVET sector. After the formulation of the TVET policy, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) and CTEVT started meaningful coordination with TVET stakeholders albeit coordination is still a challenge. The sector-specific projects such as TVET PP and ENSSURE are already in place. However, the gaps are observed in quality control and Monitoring and Evaluation aspects of TVET system. The policy has not been aligned much with economic development related to agriculture, migration and training for informal sector workers. The TVET policy does not explicitly incentivize the private sector as well. Competency-based curricula, enterprise development and meeting global standards among other areas are not thought of while framing the policy. The policy is yet to be made compatible with the Nepal Constitution (2015), and the new federal setups of Nepal. National Education Policy, 2019 has made specific provisions in vocational and technical education in Nepal.

The constitution has envisaged TVET as the means to prepare competent, competitive and ethical human resources so to enable them to live up to national interests. The constitution also intends to make education sector scientific, technical, and employment-oriented. It has enshrined a provision for enhancing access of the marginalized population to skills development. Articles 31 to 39 of the law of the land have specified provisions related to free and employment-oriented quality education. Furthermore, the particular concern of TVET has also been prioritized in the Sustainable Development Goals- Goal 4, quality education (Nepal Planning Commission, 2015) laying emphasis on TVET/skills development. Out of seven education-related targets stipulated in the global transformative goals, four are related to skills development. In line with this, Nepal has set a specific target to increase the number of youths and adults with relevant skills that includes technical and vocational, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.

The Major political parties also have manifested TVET as their priority area. The Nepali Congress (NC) has envisaged the opening of technical schools under local levels and encouraged the proliferation of local entrepreneurs and their enterprises in the rural areas. Then CPN- UML envisaged restructuring of TVET system to ensure 70 percent human

resources in the technical sector. The then Maoist (Central) pitched a skill and employment program within the country putting forth the concept of labour bank, youth employment and poverty alleviation funds in each village for employment. Nepal Loktantrik Forum, later merged into Nepali Congress, bat for local resources mobilization, skills and technology for the enhancement of production and income generation.

In keeping with the constitutional spirit, the Sustainable Development Goals and manifestoes of various political parties of Nepal opted for an integrated TVET Act and a long-term strategic plan necessary in the new federal structure. To implement the plan as per its spirit, a dedicated group of human resources is required. Department of Development Education at Kathmandu University-School of Education has launched a first-ever Master's Degree in TVET in Nepal since 2018. The program needs long-term support to produce dedicated human resources in TVET sector who can critically engage in managing and leading the sector. This concern draws relevance since the experts in Nepal, mostly engaged in managing and leading TVET as of now, are the outcomes of experiences rather than that of formal academic qualifications.

What Next in The Context of Present Crisis?

Every country has its own contexts and priority initiatives. The strategies applied to any initiative may differ from place to place and from time to time. Some interventions can be adopted while some others can be ignored or contextualized. Nevertheless, citing the country-specific case analysis, it can be claimed that TVET sector requires special attention to vitalize the job market in the new normal situation. The sector requires many short and long term reforms which are as follows:

- Reform in training: Linkage with a job (apprenticeship) can connect students/trainees with employers, but it requires standards in the design and delivery of training compatible with the need of the existing job market at home and abroad.
- Governance: Coordination with MIS (Management Information System) and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), institutional restructuring in line with federal setups, and developing institution with integrity is essential.
- Access: Disabled-friendly infrastructure in each local unit and equity in training/learning opportunities are necessary.
- Knowledge re-construction: Local knowledge can be renovated and disseminated. Innovative entrepreneurship can be a strategy to attract investments.
- Institutional building: Human resource development, sustainable financing, avoidance of resource overlapping, integrated approach of TVET fund, enhanced political commitment, coordination among

various TVET providers and elevated roles of private sectors are the ways to advance TVET institutions.

- Recognizing prior learning and National Vocational Qualification System:A country can possess several local and indigenous occupations and skills. National Skill Testing System can be made adequately functional to attract and include people with skills through informal means.
- Coordination among TVET stakeholders: A strong linkage and coordination among the TVET stakeholders including oversight actors can be established.
- Other areas: Besides, human resource development and technological up-to-date are other areas to be considered for the development of TVET sector in Nepal.

Conclusions

The current crisis stemming from COVID-19 has not only adversely affected the TVET stream but also brought opportunities for its growth. The opportunities can be harnessed much by initiating and sustaining short-term and long-term reforms making departure from the cosmetic reforms made in the past. In this context, policy reform, infrastructure development, training, governance, institution building, and strong coordination among stakeholders can be initiated shortly. However, the government should formulate a long term plan to create a supply-driven workforce development mechanism, envisioning tiers of government such as the federal, provincial and local level along with the current practices from market demand mechanism. This requires reliable and sustainable financing in this sector. Importantly, financing in TVET can be a possible tool to reduce brain drain and enable an environment conducive to the young generation to enhance their capacity, get decent earning and live a quality life in a country. It can also be one of the important tools to address the employment and livelihood needs of the returnee migrants during and in the aftermath of COVID 19.

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Lessons from Yalta: Considerations for Post-Covid 19 Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this essay is to provide Higher Education institutions with suggestions for maintaining both economic viability and organizational credibility in a Post-Covid 19 environment. Three practical, yet important, objectives for both colleges and universities are identified in light of the pandemic and its aftermath. In particular, the essay targets both administrative and stakeholder-oriented considerations for implementation.

Keywords: Higher Education, Openness, Partnerships, Technology, Trust, Yalta

On February 4, 1945, the heads of government of the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union met to discuss the aftermath of World War II and plan for the economic and social regeneration of post-war Europe (Roberts, 2006). Although the destruction and losses associated with the war weighed heavily on the minds of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Premier Joseph Stalin, their primary goals were to reconstruct society for an age to come and form a post-war plan for global security. Throughout the meetings (there were three), frequent political positioning emerged as the "Big Three" put forth multiple options to safeguard the future (Butler, 2015). Although history confirms that the outcomes of the Yalta Conference were less than desired, the event proved solutions can emerge from carnage.

In light of the current Covid 19 pandemic and the global attempt to subdue it, it may be argued that conditions similar to those following World War II exist today. Indeed, nations are perplexed by the virus phenomenon,

blaming occurs, partisanship invades discussions, and a myriad of opinions exist in regards to both defeating and controlling a common foe. In addition, as the virus becomes more contained, the "business of recovery" comes into focus and plans for a Post-Covid 19 recovery surface.

Most assuredly, higher education institutions are not exempt from the perils of the virus and have been extremely affected by this international "enemy". As a result of the widespread prevalence of Covid 19 and its deleterious effects on the physical, mental and economic health of higher education stakeholders, the possibility of substantial changes affecting colleges and universities looms large. Notwithstanding, this essay does not focus on current happenings and events orbiting the pandemic, but targets how higher education institutions might maintain both economic viability and organizational credibility in a Post-Covid 19 age. Hence, three salient suggestions dedicated to reestablishing the post-pandemic academy are posed for higher education administration to consider.

Higher education post-Covid 19: Three considerations

It is quite possible that the "business" of higher education will be substantially altered by the social and economic effects of the Corona Virus. As currently evidenced, the debate on both micro and macro levels continues about such matters as on-campus student residency, modalities of instructional delivery and tuition rate increases or decreases. That said, I posit three prominent themes to accent the Post-Covid 19 higher education administrative landscape: the liabilities of truth spinning, possible modality-based university / corporate partnerships, and horizon thinking over bottom line preoccupations. Let us now turn to a brief discussion of each of these factors.

1. *Prohibit truth spinning at all costs*.

Truth spinning is defined as deception caused by adding or subtracting information while communicating with others (Hoy and Sweetland, 2001). Nyberg (1993) also refers to truth spinning or "varnishing the truth" as concealing or embellishing information, or disseminating partial information that one person or group knows while communicating with another. In other words, truth spinning is hybridizing the truth to gain favor, advantage or leverage over a person or group by purposefully deceiving them. To that end, truth spinning involves deception. And unfortunately, truth spinning is becoming a common tactic publicly utilized by politicians, corporate personalities, and the media.

Whether the method of truth spinning involves outright lying to a constituency, camouflaging issues, co-opting stakeholders through false enablement, refusing to report critical facts or manipulating circumstances to support the status quo or "party line", leaders of Post-Covid 19 higher education institutions must prohibit attempts at "varnishing" or spinning the truth in favor of openly communicating in honest and forthright ways.

Moreover, higher education administration must make clear that any attempts to defraud internal or external stakeholders of concise and accurate information regarding the organizational situation will not be tolerated. If Post-Covid 19 higher education institutions are to meet the challenges of reinventing campus operations dedicated to new learning platforms and respond to different and more competitive market environments, the foundation for responding must be complete trust generated by full disclosure to stakeholders. In sum, higher education administration must present the "unvarnished truth" to students, parents, faculty and support personnel via the elimination and prohibition of administrative truth spinning.

2. *Consider the possibilities of Higher Education and corporate partnerships.*

As a result of the Covid 19 Pandemic, nothing in higher education has been made clearer than the prospects of increased online learning opportunities for students. Largely due to the immediate cessation of traditional campus-based, face-to-face learning situations, virtually all viable higher education entities have either entered or increased activity in online domains. Yet one important caveat is in order. The application of increased levels of online programming is not suitable to all disciplines and a one-size-fits-all mentality will prove ineffective. Thus, a careful case-by-case analysis of both academic balance and institutional fit may prove likely before changes can occur. Nevertheless, prompted by concerns over both the spread of the virus and student welfare, most colleges and universities now include robust online learning components. Notwithstanding the laudable efforts of current higher education technology personnel to respond to this online learning crisis, Post-Covid 19 requirements for online learning will far exceed current capacities. To be sure, the realities of a Post-Covid 19 higher education business is technology, and lots of it. Sophisticated technological presentations for a very tech-savvy client base will be warranted … not the status quo. Indeed, both the depth and span of online technology (and learning) must evolve if parents are to be convinced that tuition rates for online student instruction, which are generally lower than face-to-face models, should be commensurate with those that are campus-based.

In fact, it is much more probable that modality of instruction will determine a sliding scale of tuition rates unless "new and improved" higher education online learning techniques are introduced. I agree with New York University Professor Scott Galloway's prediction that current higher education profit schemes, which unbeknownst to the general public are astronomically high (very profitable), will be reduced due to a Post-Covid 19 consumer market that doesn't invest in the premise that present online learning and campus-based endeavors are similar in both cost and benefit. In short, under the existing online learning system, higher education

institutions will be hard pressed to "sell" students on the idea that on-campus and remote experiences are the same.

I posit alternatives exist to generating revenues in down-scaling on-campus situations versus upscaling online ones. One solution to the potential "tuition turbulence" predicament possibly confronting many Tier II, Tier III and liberal arts institutions of higher education in a Post-Covid 19 environment could be an economy of scale model, whereby the recruitment of more foreign students to online programs at lower tuition rates could assist in stabilizing revenues. However, that solution is fairly risky and short-term, given that international students generally find on-site educational experiences as much more valuable. In my estimation, a more feasible solution to a viable (and consumer attractive) online higher education presence is the formation of mutually-beneficial corporate technology partnerships with colleges and universities to expand and substantially improve online programming. Without question, firms like Apple and Microsoft have the creativity, funds, personnel and structures to respond. After all, these technology giants (and others like them) have successfully cornered the minds and markets of millions of college-aged young people with their current commercial offerings. In essence, higher education needs to let the professionals do professional things that get results. Thus, rethinking the aspects of higher education, profitability and private technology partnerships to enhance the viability of a Post-Covid 19 educational marketplace seems attractive. But at what the price? What might be sacrificed by higher education? Blended branding to include corporates with universities, fewer on-campus students, reduced tuition and fees for students who pursue online degrees and the potential of private corporations having a permanent "presence" on campuses could occur. In sum, the higher education debate about the price of accepting sacrifices such as these when considering corporate technology partnerships will likely continue into the foreseeable future. That said, at this particular time, it may be better to consider sharing profits and student access than to lose them.

3. Focus on the horizon and not the bottom line.

Well-known leadership expert John C. Maxwell often refers to the business concepts of the "horizon" and the "bottom line" (Maxwell, 2008). In a Post-Covid 19 higher education environment, top administrative leaders need to refocus their thoughts from daily "bottom line" budgetary analyses and financial "damage control" scenarios to pursing the institutional "horizon" where central leadership is more preoccupied with visioning, planning and goal-orientations dedicated to taking their organizations to where their futures lie. Put simply, due to the pandemic, many higher education administrators were thrust into constantly monitoring the "bottom line" of budgets, payrolls and personnel. And this was the correct thing to do. They were forced to "manage" the situation closely. Most certainly, conquering a virus poses extreme challenges and requires emergency

management. But now is a different time requiring different views. Recovering from the pandemic now requires a shift to leading rather than managing, and concentrating on moving higher education institutions to the horizon of productivity through conceptualizing and implementing new ideas related to the future of the academy under different circumstances. In sum, the time for managing what was (controlling current practices) is concluding and the opportunity for taking higher education where it belongs (leading) is at hand.

Conclusions/ implications

Just as was the case with the Big Three leaders who exited the Yalta Conference in 1945, uncertainty about what is yet to come in a Post-Covid 19 future exits. Without question, widespread higher education change looms as a possibility. This essay presents three critical considerations for higher education administration to consider as decisions about how to proceed in a Post-Covid 19 educational environment surface. To that end, it is hoped that this treatise forms a beginning of further discussions targeting higher education environments and how they may benefit all stakeholders involved in the academy.

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The COVID-19 Crisis and Faculty Members in Higher Education: From Emergency Remote Teaching to Better Teaching through Reflection

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ABSTRACT

This brief essay highlights how the COVID-19 crisis forced many faculty members in the higher education setting to abruptly transition from face-to-face and hybrid instruction to remote teaching. We propose that incorporating systematic reflection regarding one's professional practice as a faculty member will lead to overall improved instruction regardless of future course modality and any circumstances that force modality changes.

Keywords: Emergency Remote Teaching; COVID-19; Online Instruction; Instructional Delivery; Instructional Design; Course Design; Course Modality; Course Instruction

John Dewey is credited with the quote, "We do not learn from experience… we learn from reflecting on experience." In this essay we offer a rationale and framework for reflection in higher education that instructors can apply to improve their professional practice. In particular, we note that reflection should be applied following changes to instruction due to a crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, for the purposes of improving instruction following the crisis. Reflection is situated as part of standard instructional design processes.

Like it or not, in the Spring of 2020 most higher education faculty members had to quickly move from their normal mode of instructional delivery to what Hodges et al. (2020) described as *emergency remote teaching* (ERT). Emergency remote teaching "is a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances. It involves the use of fully remote teaching solutions for instruction or education that would otherwise be delivered face-to-face or as blended or hybrid courses and that will return to that format once the crisis or emergency has abated" (Hodges et al., 2020, para. 13). Peer reviewed research about this shift to ERT is only just now beginning to find its way into journals and books; however, early indications are that many faculty members struggled for one reason or another to accept ERT (i.e., Abbot, 2020; WBUR, 2020). Hill and Moore (2020) describe a four-phase progression regarding online delivery of instruction in response to COVID-19. The progression begins with ERT, then to adding basics, preparing for a full term of online delivery, and finally arriving at a new normal phase with improved proficiency and ability to support online delivery. We posit that the professional practice of instructors in institutions of higher education should be enhanced following the COVID-19 ERT experience, or any similar situation, if they incorporate a process of reflection into their praxis.

Better Teaching Through Reflection

Most instructional design models describe a cyclic process of steps with the results of formative evaluation feeding back into earlier phases to inform revisions and improvements (see Branch & Dousay, 2015 for a comprehensive review of instructional design models). Individual instructors in content areas outside of instructional design and technology may not be aware of specific instructional design models, but a design cycle with intentional evaluation informing future efforts should not be a foreign concept to most people. Many instructional deign processes can be generically described as following an ADDIE process. ADDIE is an acronym describing phases of instructional design and development consisting of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The findings from the evaluation phase feed back into the other phases for revisions aimed at improving the learning experience under consideration. The evaluation should extend beyond the assessment of learners and should include feedback on all elements of the learning experience both for the learners and the instructors. Reflection is one way to collect evaluation information from instructors.

It is common in education to discuss the concept of *reflection.* Reflection is a "considered a cognitive process and as such can be generalised across professional contexts" (Marshall, 2019, p. 405). Despite the frequent use of the term the concept of reflection does not have a standard definition (Marshall, 2019; Nguyen, Fernandez, Karsenti, &

Charlin, 2014). For the purposes of the present paper, we will use Marshall's (2019) definition, which was the result of a synthesis of other definitions in the literature:

> "Reflection is a careful examination and bringing together of ideas to create new insight through ongoing cycles of expression and re/evaluation" (p. 411).

The authors regularly use reflection in their professional practice and intentionally did so during spring 2020 semester while ERT was widespread.

The University of New South Wales offers a course through the FutureLearn platform titled *Introduction to Enhancing Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.* In that course (FutureLearn, n.d.) a structure for reflection is offered that we believe will assist instructors as they reflect on their ERT experiences and move forward to improve their practice with online delivery or any delivery mode for that matter:

5) What worked well?
6) What did not work well?
7) What will I do the same next time?
8) What will I do differently next time?

It is then recommended (Future Learn, n.d.) that you examine your readiness by asking the following:

9) What knowledge, skills or abilities are necessary to deliver a specific learning experience?
10) To what extent do I possess those skills?
11) What do I need to do to develop or enhance those skills?
12) How will this affect the way I present that learning experience?
13) What problems might this entail that I need to anticipate and overcome?

These questions should be answered and considered by individual instructors, but also may be shared and discussed with others depending on personal contexts and the cultures in which one works.

While it may be the first impulse to revert to your previous methods and modes of instruction once COVID-19 is behind us, one must remember that COVID-19 may end, but ERT may be needed in the future for other reasons. For example, online delivery has been used for continuity of instruction efforts following earthquake (Baytiyeh, 2018) or polar vortex (Samson, 2020). Thus, again, faculty members will want to purposely reflect on what worked well and what might need improvement. Additionally, through the process of reflection, faculty members may find that there are elements of your ERT experience that can improve your pre-COVID-19 teaching practice. Instructors at the Virginia Tech Carillon School of Medicine moved a traditional, small-group, face-to-face problem-based learning curriculum online in response to COVID-19 (Virginia Tech, 2020). The

faculty are intentionally recording what works in that new delivery mode so that can inform their practice after the need for ERT has passed.

Conclusions/ Implications

Our hope is this Brief essay will shed light on the current educational issues and challenges (associated with the COVID-19 crisis) facing faculty members in the higher education setting. In addition, it is our hope that this essay will contribute to the extant literature on both technology and online teaching in the higher education setting. The COVID-19 pandemic forced many faculty members to quickly transition from face-to-face and hybrid forms of instruction to fully online remote teaching. Due to the suddenness of this transition, Hodges et al. (2020) have described this sudden shift as ERT. Through this essay, we challenge faculty members to reflect on this ERT experience, and through a continuous growth improvement mindset, identify what "went well" and what "did not go well" with regard to teaching normally face-to-face and hybrid courses fully online via remote teaching. We believe this asserted reflection will lead to better teaching regardless of the course modality, be it back to face-to-face, hybrid, or remote. Likewise, we argue such reflection will lead to better preparedness if such an epidemic or other emergency situation should happen in the future. Finally, with numerous universities and colleges now offering online versions of their face-to-face and hybrid program offerings, we see this reflection as key to serving as a faculty member in higher education in the 21st century and beyond.

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"Yeah, We All Here Tryna Flourish": A Reflection on a Symposium on Eudaimonia and Music Learning

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ABSTRACT

This article presents reflections on a symposium on eudaimonia and music learning, from the perspective of one of the organizers. The symposium had been planned as a traditional, in person event in the United States, but was held online in response to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Despite shortcomings, the video-conferencing format possibly created a more democratized liminal space that served to dissolve hierarchies and broaden participation.

Keywords: (7-8) eudaimonia, eudaimonism, flourishing, symposium, reflection, liminal, democratic,

Hosting a symposium during lockdown

On May 22 and 23, 2020, Marissa Silverman and I hosted an online symposium on eudaimonia and music learning, to bring together colleagues whose research interests coalesce around what has become a topic of sustained interest in music education scholarship (e.g., Abrahams, 2020; van der Schyff, 2020). Eudaimonia provides a generative framework for exploring issues of meaning, identity, purpose, and ethical conduct for musicians and educators (Elliott & Silverman, 2014). As Silverman and I have noted elsewhere, "the concept of 'eudaimonia' provides especially fertile ground for work in music and learning" because music makers "undertake their work and make sense of their lives and relationships in the

full richness of the joys, challenges, ambiguities, and contradictions of the world" (Smith & Silverman, 2020, p. viii). Exploring music learning through the lens of eudaimonia provides a fruitful way to discuss "aspects of how to live well and flourish—ideals which for many people music must involve making music" (Smith & Silverman, 2020, p. viii). The title of this essay is taken from a rap penned by a group of music education students studying on the Popular Music Practicum course I taught at New York University during the spring semester, 2020 after we moved to remote teaching and learning. Readers may access the song here.

Silverman and I had intended to hold the symposium in-person and on-campus at Montclair State University in New Jersey, but with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic it quickly became clear that this would not be possible, so we ran the event using Zoom. Having a Boston University Zoom account meant that we could welcome a large number of attendees without needing to worry about a time limit on meetings (although I admit to harboring probably-unfounded concerns about Zoom's willingness or capacity to let us run two, back to back, 12-hour conference days without disaster). We refunded all the pre-paid registration fees, cancelled the live music, hotel bookings, and campus catering, and advertised the event as open to all comers.

This Brief essay joins a growing body of work that reflects on internet use in music learning (Cayari, 2020; Smith et al, 2020) and on video conferencing in academia more generally (Li et al., 2020). In what follows, I provide a brief introduction to eudaimonia, then consider the symposium in terms of timing and context, my experience of tension *vis a vis* the concept of eudaimonia, and affordances of the online symposium context. In conclusion, I summarize some of the symposium experience, its limits, and its liminality.

Reflecting on the symposium

What is eudaimonia?

Eudaimonia is the phenomenon of interest in eudaimonism, a philosophy of ethics dating back to Plato, expanded upon and popularized by Aristotle, developed and Christianized by Thomas Aquinas, and framed as the pursuit of happiness by Thomas Jefferson in the United States' *Declaration of Independence* (Conklin, 2015). More recently, there are two principal, complementary schools of eudaimonism – one more individualistic (e.g. Frankel, 1959; Norton, 1976; Smith, 2016; Waterman, 1993) and one more collaborative/collective in outlook (e.g. Boyce-Tillman 2020; Elliott & Silverman, 2014; Seligman, 2011). Thinkers in both strands of inquiry are interested in addressing the question of what it means for humans to flourish (Smith & Silverman, 2020).

A challenging time for a conference on flourishing

It seemed to me ironic and arguably somewhat in poor taste to be holding an event examining the complexities of human flourishing in music learning, at a time when many music teachers and musicians, along with everyone else, were finding it terribly difficult to flourish – personally, professionally, domestically, musically, collectively. Perhaps, though, holding this small symposium was now all the more important and vital. The presenters and previously registered attendees were largely college professors used to traveling to attend conferences around the world. All conferences this summer in our field had been cancelled, including the large biennial World Conference of the International Society for Music Education, and collective disappointment on social media and even in official emails was palpable. Our small symposium would hardly fill this tremendous void, but this would hopefully be a chance for interested, available parties to connect with colleagues, engage with ideas, and immerse ourselves in the familiar, heady conference experience of new names, new faces, and an overload of ideas, while trying to concentrate on multiple unique and intense talks over a full day, sharing a drink at a (virtual) bar with old and new colleagues, and then getting up to do it again the next day.

Living the conceptual tensions of eudaimonia

A compelling feature of scholarship on eudaimonia is the tension between emphasis on the virtue of pursuing one's true purpose – akin to Maslow's *self-actualization* (1962) and Jung's *Individuation* (1933) – and the imperative to enable flourishing for others. I felt very keenly the foregrounding of this friction as I hosted two-dozen Zoom checks in the days leading up to the event and then shuttered myself in my home office room for 10 hours a day, two days in a row, feverishly monitoring and moderating the symposium in the hope that it might in some small way benefit colleagues in the profession along with other musicians and learners we serve. All the while I was ignoring and deflecting responsibilities to my family, whom I banned from streaming media at all during the symposium, lest our home WiFi and the Zoom room crumble under the demands. My wife and daughter were both, as they always are, incredibly forgiving and flexible, and even brought me mugs of tea when I ran out of time to hydrate during the scheduled five-minutes breaks in programming (we had dispensed with coffee breaks and lunch breaks, since presenters were now in so many different time zones and juggling numerous domestic and professional responsibilities, in favor of an open-door policy for people to come and go as they were able).

Unique affordances of the virtual space

I was anxiously and keenly aware of the unsettling deterritorialized and de-centered place in which we were meeting to collaborate (Pignato & Begany, 2015), but the gathering on this Zoom URL quickly began to feel

like a liminal space for sharing ideas (Tuan, 1977), akin to the "third room" phenomenon of distributed telematic collaboration (Moir et al., 2016). Also recalling Moir et al. (2016), I felt the sudden and somewhat surreal, repeated removal from that liminal space each time I took out my earbuds between sessions. It felt almost like revisiting a parallel dimension, plunging back into that Zoom room to chair successive talks – as it were, re-entering the Narnian wardrobe.

Paper sessions were each scheduled for 45 minutes: 20-25 minutes for presenting followed by 15-20 minutes of discussion. While this would present an unduly, unusually intense schedule in an ordinary, in-person event, we felt that with people dispersed across time zones from Japan to California via Scandinavia and the United Kingdom, attendees would be likely to dip in and out of sessions – a freedom afforded us all by the Zoom format and a practice which is less convenient in the classrooms and ballrooms typical of conferences, where heavy doors slamming and creaking punctuate presentations loudly and rudely, however careful and unobtrusive one may try to be. We had anticipated an in-person gathering of 32 scholars, but we welcomed 93 individuals to Zoom over the two days (while this figure is encouraging, I recognize that the depth of most interpersonal encounters via Zoom was necessarily shallower than would or could be the case in an in-person setting). A presenter from Finland was still with the group sitting by a duskily sunlit window at 1.30AM local time, and following their paper, a presenter from Japan confessed to drinking a celebratory glass of wine with us all at 6.30am Tokyo time!

The space was, then, possibly more equitable and democratic in some respects than a traditional event. Once presenters had finished sharing screens and discussion began, each attendee was represented by a thumbnail image on the screen. This format seemed to dissolve some of the hierarchy of in-person conferences, as ranks and affiliations were less visible and everyone's presence was accorded identical room on the screen and equal access to the chat box and virtual "mic". Paper contents often became secondary in the discussions, and I (in my role as moderator) frequently allowed conversation to wander, so as to democratize the space and allow attendees to flourish here, in this particular, peculiar moment – to say what they needed to say. Frequent topics of diversion included musicians and teachers in attendance trying to understand direct application of ideas in their own professional contexts: *how might we facilitate flourishing for our students, and help them to do so for their students, given the weirdness and worry of this singular time?*

Did it work, and would I do it again?

Participants in this online symposium on eudaimonia and music learning lost in-person contact, participatory live music, meals together, the sense of occasion, and the overall "buzz" that can come from traveling to

and attending an on-campus experience. As an organizer of the event, my understanding – reinforced through electronic correspondence with participants before, during, and after the event – is that attendees' perceptions reflected the pervasive sense of our not "being there," thus impeding our exploration of some of the affordances of "being apart" (Schroeder et. al, 2008; Smith et. al., 2020) – an imbalance I have herein tried to address. However, despite this I believe participants flourished to an extent in that space. We gained a more equitable and democratic conference experience that enabled the germination of a "community of response" (Pignato, 2017, p. 208), perhaps even a burgeoning community of practice (Wenger, 1998). We shared peer-learning experiences, and these surely allowed some to thrive more than others. Presenters' parents, sisters, spouses, and students all dipped into the event from time to time – something they could never do at an on-campus event in a different country with the attendant costs of travel, accommodation, sustenance, socializing, and conference registration fees.

The voices of teachers and music practitioners were as loud as, if not louder than, those of the participating professors. The discussions were less scholarly and less overtly, theoretically philosophical than they likely would have been in an institutional space dominated by those who dwell primarily in those rarefied realms. Often on the planning committees for symposia, colleagues and I ponder how we can connect to practitioners getting their hands dirty with work in the "real world," and listen to their voices and perspectives. I think we came closer to managing that on this occasion, albeit accidentally, and perhaps surprisingly, given the superficially esoteric theme of the conference.

This online symposium was certainly imperfect, in part since it was conducted as a kind of emergency response to the social conditions of spring, 2020. As such it was thus perceived by me and by participants as a kind of second-best, alternative event. But while limited, it was also liminal; while computerized, there was also community. We could not hold the event in an ivory tower, so more people gathered in a more levelling space. Maybe it was still alienating and intimidating to some, but I got the distinct impression that it might not have been. Marissa Silverman (symposium co-convener) and I are working with Dylan van der Schyff on a special issue of an open-access online journal as a follow-up to the symposium. This forum for discussion may by default keep the laity at arm's length, but hopefully this symposium opened a window on to eudaimonia that would have remained closed to many who, gladly, were able to peer through it. Numerous conversations during the symposium and correspondence with attendees afterwards seem to indicate that we inadvertently created a liminal, eudaimonic space that allowed for more flourishing for more people than would have been possible in the intended, traditional symposium

format. So, do I want to hold future online conferences like this one? I am surprised to find that I think maybe I do.

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The Covid-19 Crisis and Academic Development: Reflections on Running a Staff Development Webinar Series for Politics/IR Academics

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ABSTRACT

As Co-Chair of the UK Political Studies Association Teaching and Learning Network, the author worked on a webinar series for Politics and IR academics on teaching and learning online. The aim was to meet the development needs of academics suddenly tasked with moving into online teaching due to Covid-19, thus addressing the teaching and learning needs of students at the same time. This Brief essay highlights the key learning points.

Keywords: Covid-19, IR, politics, online teaching, staff development, webinars.

The 2020 Covid-19 pandemic tasked many Politics and IR academics across the world with moving from traditional face-to-face campus teaching to a fully online or blended model (often characterised in this context as limited in-person teaching supplemented by online provision). Many academics had never taught online before and were expected to do so with little training (Times Higher Education, 2020a). The UK Political Studies Association (PSA) Teaching and Learning Network was well-placed to support Politics/IR academics within and outside the PSA membership; the author, Co-Chair of the Network, works for one of the world's most well-known online and distance universities, The Open

University. As such, a series of webinars was developed by the Network focusing on key issues in designing and delivering teaching and learning online. The webinars were held in Zoom and offered to all PSA members, sister learned societies/organisations, and the wider academic community. This Brief essay highlights: 1) the development needs of Politics/IR academics as recognised by the webinar series, 2) the key teaching and learning needs of students identified by the series, and 3) the issues to consider when running a staff development focused webinar series for academics. While the article focuses on Politics/IR, the broader lessons learnt are applicable to other disciplines.

The development needs of politics/IR academics

The webinar series focused on the following topics: 1) the support needs of academics; 2) the support needs of students; 3) what campus universities can learn from online ones; 4) scaffolding learning/academic communities; and 5) synchronous/asynchronous teaching. The topics were chosen after listening to members at different events and inviting suggestions by email, and were often preceded by a blog post on the topic to gauge interest/feedback. It was clear that attendees were interested in broad pedagogical and design issues within a Politics/IR context (i.e. how to embed assessment, how to increase engagement in a forum, how to constructively align teaching (Biggs, 2003)), technological considerations (the different kinds of technology available, what tools work in specific contexts), as well as issues to do with support and community (of students as well as each other). In relation to the latter, a survey by Pereira et al. (2019) of 38,000 UK university students suggested that one fifth of students has a diagnosed mental health condition, over 40% were often or always worried, and half had thoughts about self-harm. The mental health of academics is also a concern, with a recent HEPI (2019) survey suggesting UK HE staff are accessing mental health services at an increasing rate. These topics were therefore essential ones to cover, particularly in the Covid-19 context. It also became apparent from informal feedback that the support and guidance Politics/IR academics received during the switch to online teaching was mixed; some received lots of guidance and development, others were left to get on with it. As such, many colleagues were relying on development/training series put on by learned societies such as the PSA, best practice blog posts, and more experienced and supportive colleagues. Significantly, in September 2020 the UK Government announced a consultation with universities and other interested parties on "the challenges and lessons learned from remote teaching and learning delivery since the start of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic" (Office for Students, 2020). While the main focus is the impact on students, the experiences of academics/teachers is also addressed in the consultation,

including barriers for staff engagement with teaching and learning. The needs of teaching staff are clearly a recognised issue across the sector.

The teaching and learning needs of students

The webinars elucidated that many colleagues understood the technology and had read the pedagogy, but were still unsure how to make it work for students in practice. Key concerns included: 1) how to improve student engagement online, 2) supporting the emotional/mental health needs of students, and 3) how to develop student communities. All very pertinent, as university leaders have identified student interaction and community as a key concern in the switch to online teaching (Times Higher Education, 2020b). It became clear that central to all of these issues is to think less about the technology available and more about what students need, the purpose of the activity they are engaging in (constructive alignment of learning activity and learning outcome (Biggs, 2003)), and how to guide them through their learning. The 'scaffolding' of learning (Maybin et al, 1992), was thus identified as crucial with communication key (between tutors and students, students and students, and in clearly explaining the task at hand), as was providing spaces for the 'non-academic' (both 'social' spaces/engagement, and 'skills'). Essentially, creating a learning environment that works for the students in an online or blended context, rather than trying to replicate a face-to-face learning environment online; thinking about how students actually engage online, what they need, what they will actually use, and what can be done online than can't in other ways (Graham, McNeil and Pettiford, 2017).

Issues to consider when running webinars

It became clear to the PSA Teaching and Learning Network that many Politics/IR academics were searching for guidance and development on online teaching in the face of Covid-19; particularly as it looks likely that an online or blended HE model may continue, at least partially, in the 20/21 academic year (Guardian, 2020). The PSA could provide the development that some universities could not, at least at such short notice; undoubtedly, such webinar series are an opportunity to raise the profile not only of the issues at hand, but also the learned society/organisation running them, something organisations more generally can take on board when planning outreach. By offering certificates of participation to PSA members who attended at least three webinars, we also tapped into the need many academics have to evidence participation in staff development, which in itself may encourage people to join the organisation (potentially another institutional and financial benefit). Learned societies considering running staff development webinars need to identify the key issues at hand, ideally by surveying members, formally or informally (the latter may be necessary in a crisis situation like Covid-19); by doing so the topics delivered are as

valuable as possible. The PSA preceded many of the webinars with blogs, often written by the same academics who delivered the webinars; we were therefore able to 'test the water' in terms of subject matter as well as build up a community of practice. We also recorded the sessions, recognising that some members would not be able to attend synchronously, due to work, family, or other demands; issues of equality and diversity should thus be considered when designing a webinar series. We also decided to open up the webinars to non-members, partly as we felt it was important to reach as many academics as possible at such a difficult time, but also in recognition of the importance of community and collegiality. A key lesson learnt, therefore, is that webinar series like this can themselves be a form of discipline-based best practice, as well as an opportunity to reach a wider audience, with the institutional benefits that potentially brings.

Conclusions/ implications

We had over 350 attendees across the webinar series.[8] While a UK based learned society, we reached academics across the world. The series would not have been possible without the volunteer presenters, the administrative and technological support provided by the main PSA office, and the agreement of sister organisations to advertise the series to their own members. The series was such a success the PSA has joined with the British International Studies Association (BISA) to run a second webinar series on online teaching and module design/production. A third PSA-run series is also planned for the autumn, on more general teaching and learning matters. Organising these sessions took a lot of time, but feedback from attendees suggests the benefits for academics are clear; the benefits to students should follow on from this. The benefits for the PSA will be felt over time.

The webinar series has shown that that there is huge demand for discipline-based development on (online) teaching and learning; the discipline bit is important, as Politics/IR may have different issues than other disciplines (the high level of classroom discussion, issues of placement learning etc). That said, it is clear that many of the issues raised in the series are applicable across academia more generally; the lessons learnt discussed in this article are therefore relevant to other disciplines. In particular:

[8] The open-access webinars can be accessed from this link: https://www.psa.ac.uk/resources/multimedia.

- Academics appreciate a safe space to get together to talk about teaching and learning; doing this on a discipline basis may be useful
- There are issues of both technology and pedagogy, with the latter most pressing. Key issues include student engagement, developing student communities, supporting the emotional/mental health needs of students, and equality and diversity
- It became clear that central to all of these issues is to think less about the technology available and more about what students need, the purpose of the activity they are engaging in, and how to guide them through their learning
- The support needs of academics are important, as well as those of students
- Issues of equality and diversity are fundamental, for students and staff.

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Doctoral Advising in COVID-19: Opportunity for Change

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ABSTRACT

Doctoral advising is a complex process. In times of uncertainty, doctoral programs offer a unique opportunity for advisors to embrace a new pedagogical and intersectional role.

Keywords: doctoral advising, higher education, university, student success

Doctoral education has many components. Common elements of a doctoral program include course work, comprehensive exams, a dissertation proposal and a dissertation defense. Although there is variation between disciplines, and among university program designs, most U.S. doctoral programs set a completion requirement between five to seven years of continuous study. Success of a student in an individual doctoral program is often linked to overlapping factors connected to discipline of study, faculty relationships, institutional design, academic readiness, family responsibilities, and financial stability. In the end, numerous elements combine to support or derail terminal degree completion (Gardner & Gopaul, 2012; West, Gokalp, Peña, Fisher & Gupton, 2011).

The doctoral journey is challenging within multiple personal constructs. Pervious research has focused on doctoral student attrition as understood through social processes and academic isolation (Golde, 2000; Baker, Pifer & Flemion, 2013). The social development of a doctoral student connected to faculty, peers and the institution can lead to decreased

attrition and higher completion rates (Gardner, 2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2010). However, what happens when an international pandemic erupts, and changes the process of social interaction?

Doctoral education is broadly defined, and encompasses multiple disciplines and acronyms to designate a terminal degree. Thus, to frame the context of this paper, we position ourselves (Creswell & Poth, 2018) within the paradigm. We are faculty at U.S. universities where we advise doctoral students in Ed.D. and Ph.D. programs. The programs in which we teach incorporate distance and asynchronous courses with hybrid and face-to-face opportunities. Our programs enroll mid to late-career adult learners who work within PK-12 schools, higher education, and business organizations.

According to Danby and Lee (2012), doctoral program design includes pedagogy, and an interactive element is embedded in doctoral student training. Teaching and learning are not separate constructs but are implicitly connected through program delivery. Learning is co-created, not only in class content, but through social connection. More so, social connection bridges to program design, and includes intentional interaction between the student and doctoral advisor (Barnes & Austin, 2008; Grady, 2012; Harding-Dekam, et al., 2012)

A relational connection between a doctoral advisor and advisee mitigates program attrition, and supports degree completion. Doctoral advisors socialize students to discipline and program designs (Barnes, 2010). Doctoral advisors make implicit elements of the curriculum explicit, and convey not only subject knowledge, but ways to integrate course content with individual research or experience (Harding-Dekam, et al., 2012). An effective advisor can smooth obstacles, and support students in maintaining an effective timeline. Regular meetings and goal setting between the student and advisor are important to creating an effective advisor/advisee relationship (Barnes et al, 2012; Shore, 2014).

Advisors provide career and intellectual guidance, but often the relationship merges into psychosocial dimensions (Gammel & Rustein-Riley, 2016; Lunsford, 2012). Due to the tenure of the relationship, and the "all in" experience of doctoral education, many advisors know their students personally. Names of partners, children, pets and parents are commonly shared between an advisee and their advisor. As doctoral advisors, we have received emails, phone calls, pictures, and texts about life celebrations and losses, financial pressures, home relocations, child graduations, and grandchildren being born. Given the scope in age of doctoral students, any life event is bound to happen. For us, relationship building is part of the doctoral pedagogy, and requires us to acknowledge how a student's life shapes and forms their doctoral experience.

COVID 19 offered an opportunity to broaden the doctoral advisee/advisor relationship, and test the boundaries of understanding. In late February 2020, U.S. colleges and universities reacted to rapidly

changing conditions related to the spread of the disease. As emails circulated regarding potential cancellation of large group events, universities struggled to create a plan that met the needs of divergent student populations. By late March, the majority of U.S. educational institutions, schools, businesses, stores and restaurants were closed to face-to-face interaction. Universities quickly pivoted to distance learning for all students. Life changed for everyone, and doctoral advising as pedagogy changed, as well.

We started to receive panicked emails from students that described multiple areas of stress shaped within the details of their lives. Students were concerned with completion dates, meeting deadlines, and planning for proposals and defenses as they attended to homeschooling children, elderly parents, fear of illness, fear of job loss, loss of income, and isolation from peers. Students who expected to have an office or library to complete their academic work were now writing on nightstands in bedrooms. In short, there were no rules to protect a student from the next arrow that might fire.

However, COVID 19 offered opportunities to expand interpersonal approaches to advising. Previously, advisor/advisee meetings happened in offices or coffee shops, but now we were meeting students in their homes via Zoom. Zoom gave glimpses into an advisee's personal work space, and captured visuals of children being fed, pets getting walked, knocks on doors, and multiple noise-producing concentration-breaking interruptions, including garbage trucks. Is it important to an advisee's relationship that the advisor knows garbage day is Thursday? Not specifically; but, according to Shore (2014), effective advising understands how life connects to academic ambitions. For the first time, as doctoral advisors, we were more fully in the life of our student versus socializing them into the life of our program.

More so, as Zoom calls froze, and technology failed, we were reminded that wi-fi is indeed, not free. Scheduling calls was complicated for some students that shared computers with family members. Other students lived in homes with more bodies than rooms, and adapted by taking phone calls outside. Connecting during COVID was an important reminder that technology, like many things, is vital but unequal.

Answers to inequality are complicated and elusive; embedded in daily life. Inequalities are also capitalized within the context of social living (Bourdieu, 1986). COVID created a unique situation where advisors balanced program requirements and student realities, and in the end, created personalized avenues for student success. Each doctoral student had a different set of problems that were magnified by loss: loss of money, loss of work, loss of time, loss of peers, loss of productivity.

Even now, as the pandemic defines a new normal within higher education, it is paramount that doctoral advisors remember the lessons learned in the early days of COVID. If we, as doctoral advisors did not know it , we learned it: things that were not equal may not be solved but

perhaps made better through equitable advising. As doctoral advisors, we are called to meet the student within the definition of themselves, not ourselves. In this way, doctoral advisors can begin to close the margins of inequality in doctoral education.

The implications of COVID are ongoing, and the final effect on U.S. higher education remains unknown. Yet, even in times of uncertainty, doctoral programs offer a unique opportunity for advisors to fully embrace a pedagogy of design (Danby & Lee, 2012). Just as the pandemic shapes and forms daily operations in grocery stores and restaurants, and reworks personal interactions; the advisor/advisee relationship must embrace an intersectional role. Doctoral advising requires being in the "now" not in the "when," and integrating the realities of life into the relationship. Orientating life experiences into learning transforms both the advisee and advisor, and creates a more diverse and supportive advising practice.

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Race(ing) towards Legal Literacy for (Im)migration amidst COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Historically and contemporarily, immigration laws have disproportionately affected immigrant faculty and students of color because such laws often inadvertently function as racial policy. (Critical) legal literacy enacted via a bottom-up approach can help to address such laws. In this paper, we argue that higher education institutions are uniquely positioned to use critical legal literacy as a tool of advocacy for immigrant faculty and students of color amidst the adverse effects of COVID-19.

Keywords: anti-racist, legal literacy, race, immigration, Black immigrant literacy, higher education, law

RACE(ING) TOWARDS LEGAL LITERACY FOR (IM)MIGRATION AMIDST COVID-19

Our attitude towards immigration reflects our faith in the American ideal. We have always believed it possible for men and women who start at the bottom to rise as far as the talent and energy allow. Neither race nor place of birth should affect their chances.
Robert F. Kennedy

When the world learned, in 2018, of the banning of citizens in five majority-Muslim nations [Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria and Yemen] from entry to the US, there was shock, outrage and outcry. On January 31, 2020, the world saw another ban from the US, evoking similar reactions. This time, Nigeria, among other nations [Eritrea, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar, Sudan and Tanzania], was targeted. A third ban was enacted on April 22, 2020, barring immigrants whose migration, it was thought, would be "detrimental to the interests of the United States" (The White House, 2020a). And as we write this essay, *The Wall Street Journal* reports an emerging order against aliens (yes, that's what we are called!) that "temporarily bar[s] new immigrants on a slate of employment-based visas, including the H-1B for high-skilled workers," citing the need to "protect unemployed Americans from the threat of competition for scarce jobs from new lawful permanent residents" (The White House, 2020b). Meanwhile, construction of the US-Mexico multibillion-dollar southern border wall continues, unaffected by COVID-19 (Lakhani, 2020).

As the Majority World (see Panelli, Punch, & Robson, 2007) laments anti-immigration laws implemented in one of the most powerful nations of the Minority World, often overlooked is the racial categorization of the people targeted by such laws. As of 2019, the majority of immigrants to the US [Mexican, Indian, Filipino, Chinese, and Vietnamese] (The Migration Policy Institute, 2020) were people of color. And Bloomberg reported in 2015 that Africans, followed by Asians, both peoples of color, were the most educated immigrant sub-populations in the United States (Bloomberg, 2015).

Recent emerging decisions regarding immigration, advanced as part of anti-immigrant US policy that inadvertently targets people of color, echoes a historical narrative of "*US immigration laws and procedures as "racial" policies"* (see Blumenfeld, 2018, p. 1). This narrative, made explicit in 1882 by excluding Chinese and other Asian immigrants, has been repeated in instances such as: (a) the "Gentleman's Agreement" to decrease Japanese immigrants in 1907; (b) The Immigration Act to prohibit immigration from Asian countries in 1917; (c) the Johnson Reed Immigration Act excluding "[B]lacks of African descent from entering the United States" and restricting immigrants from Asia, Northern and Southern Europe which included individuals from the "Hebrew race", Jews, Poles, Italians, Greeks, and Slavs in 1924; (d) the "Mexican Repatriation" efforts of 1920-1930; (e) the mass deportation of Mexicans in 1954; and (f) the legislation SB 1070 mandating that "police officers stop and question people about their immigration status if they even suspect that they may be in this country illegally, and criminalize undocumented workers who do not possess an “alien registration document"" (Blumenfeld, 2018, p. 9).

In large part, the narrative reflects how immigration law in the US inadvertently operates under the guise of supposed American freedom while

reinforcing the racialization and policing of Black and brown bodies across international boundaries. The racializing and policing of immigrants of color through the use of injurious immigration laws has created an environment of discomfort where visitors are made to feel unwelcome. Such unease is felt even by immigrants who enter the country legally and are in positions where they can contribute to national development. In some cases, these immigrants are in fact bringing in significant sums to the economy. For example, international students and scholars are known to contribute billions in fees and living expenses (Institute for Immigration Research, 2019). It is these group of immigrants (students and scholars, such as university faculty) that we are interested in highlighting in this paper, with special emphasis on those of color. As Black scholars ourselves, we focus primarily on immigrants of color, not only because we identify with these groups, but also because these recent immigration laws seem to unfairly target them.

A major issue for these Black and brown immigrant students and faculty in the academic setting is not just the discomfort, but also the sense of accompanying helplessness. They often do not know how to navigate a system where the immigration laws are seemingly set to make them uncomfortable or even force them to leave the country. It is as if they find themselves in a strange new world, a world in which they are prepared to contribute legally, but the laws are weaponized against them. Very troubling is that their colleges or universities (including, the administrators and faculty and students who are citizens) often do not seem to care sufficiently to show empathy for their plight and moreover, to advocate for them with the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). In this paper, we are calling for a greater involvement of colleges and universities in helping Black and brown immigrant students and faculty to tackle the challenges (and sometimes, even upheavals) in their lives caused by immigration laws. This, we believe, can be done by using legal literacy as a tool of advocacy for these immigrants. We believe that through legal literacy, universities can educate the immigrants to navigate this turbulent period. This tool can also be used to educate students and faculty who are citizens of the US, as well as college and university administrators. This, we believe, is important in an environment where the immigrant students and faculty need empathy within their academic community, an empathy that we believe can then lead to advocacy. Through this paper, we also make the case that it is incumbent on the university to value its immigrant students and faculty of color to the point where they take on the responsibility to provide legal literacy education to USCIS in an effort to raise sensibilities about the unjust nature of the laws leveraged and how they might best execute them. Through this paper, our intention is not just to shed light on these laws and their effects but also to put forward a tangible action (legal literacy education) that we believe can go a long way to offer relief to immigrant students and faculty of color.

Is there a role for the US academy in anti-racist immigration policies and procedures?

Across the academy, during a time when COVID-19 and current racial unrest have further made visible the stark realities of immigrant students and faculty, the majority of whom are people of color (Yancy, 2020), US academia as a whole remains under scrutiny. The Majority World watches, waiting with anticipation to see how US higher education entities will use legal literacies in ways that counter such racialization, as well as the anti-immigration stances by which they are bolstered. Kofi Annan, former Ghanaian diplomat who served as the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations from January 1997 to December 2006, and was co-recipient of the 2001 Nobel Peace Prize, declared literacy as a vehicle for supporting the rule of law (Kofi Annan Foundation, 2011). Literacy for the rule of law potentially restricts the arbitrary exercise of power by subordinating it to well-defined and established laws.

We concur with Kofi Annan and go further, asserting the need for legal literacy, "the ability to read and write legal arguments" (Peña Carranco, 2016, p. 5), which creates a general awareness about specific and applicable laws or rules that function as enforceable "legal rights and duties," as well as how their violation becomes subject to legal action (Pulikuthiyil, 2012, p. 96). We acknowledge also, the need for legal literacy that:

> goes beyond the development of a basic legal competence and implies the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and critical judgment about the substance of law, legal process and legal resources, enabling and encouraging the utilization of capacities in practice. (Manley-Casimir, Cassidy & Castell, 1986, p. 90)

For us, the extension of legal literacy -- critical legal literacy, is also important, as this dimension adds a "critical perspective to the knowledge of how the tools of legal literacy function," and observes "that the law, its concepts, and ideas may be improved by critique and also by using the tools of legal literacy to bring about progressive change within existing legal systems" (Zariski, 2014, p. 15).

Fortunately (and thankfully!), recently, numerous statements have emerged, as they often do, from institutions and organizations of higher education, as well as labor unions and associations, reaffirming a clear commitment to anti-racist policies and practices. It is therefore reassuring and reasonable to view academia as a key vehicle for enacting critical legal literacy in ways that challenge the persisting racialization of Black and brown bodies, increasingly visible via an anti-immigrant stance. This imperative is particularly compelling given that: (a) 22% of the faculty in academia are foreign-born; (b) academia is not "subject to the same numerical limits on visas as many other employers"; (c) international students contributed $36 billion dollars to the US economy in 2016-2017

alone (Institute for Immigration Research, 2019, p. 2); and (d) academia reflects 1,095,299 international students, most of whom are students of color (i.e., Chinese, Indians, South Koreans, Saudi Arabians) and whose recent increases also constitute students of color (i.e., Bangladeshi, Brazilians, Nigerians, Pakistani) (Institute of International Education, 2020).

Towards critical legal literacy for anti-racist immigration policy

In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.
Martin Luther King, Jr.

As Black Caribbean scholars, one of whom is a member of the US immigrant faculty and a former international student of color (first author), we empathize with our peers and students, many of whom have long since endured racialization against their languages and cultures as immigrants (see Smith, 2018, 2019, 2020), but who still attempt to use the legal literacies that they muster to thrive. As an immigrant population of students and faculty who now call the US home, this population works tirelessly (ask anyone you know!) but often has little to no recourse for addressing racialization (Smith, In press), grappling with what Gunnar Myrdal referred to as the "American dilemma," where "an overriding commitment to democracy, liberty, freedom, human dignity, and egalitarian values, coexist[s] alongside deep-seated patterns of racial discrimination, privileging white people, while subordinating peoples of color" (Blumenfeld, 2018, p. 12; Myrdal, 1944).

We believe that while empathy is necessary, it is not sufficient. As stated earlier, firm action must be taken by higher education institutions to support immigrant students and faculty of color. We have made the call for legal literacy to counter the scourge of what we consider racist immigration laws. Now, more than ever, immigrant populations of color within higher education are more than likely experiencing elevated levels of anxiety from both anti-immigrant and racialized rhetoric at this time. In this critical time, they will need a level of support than can be provided through critical legal literacy, which we believe should help to bring a sense of stability in the efforts of immigrant students and faculty of color to continue contributing significantly and effectively to US academic institutions. The urgency of this call is even more critical given the recent refusal of a green card to *law-abiding* Canadian immigrant and assistant professor, Dr. Julia Iafrate, despite her fight as a medical doctor on the frontlines against COVID-19 (Bista, 2020; Brito, 2020; Shoichet, 2020).

Considering the above, the question here really is how can higher education institutions ensure the provision of the critical legal literacy education of which we advocate. We believe there are several things that can be done. We believe that all faculty, students, staff and administrators must be exposed to training in legal literacy. For the various groups the

training will have different purposes but the core of the training will be to raise legal literacy levels. We believe that the immigrant student and faculty's exposure to this training would help them to heighten their awareness of the immigration realities and to help them to navigate in this challenging environment. In the case of American students, faculty, staff and administrators, this training hopefully would enable them to get an understanding (that is often nonexistent) of the plight of the immigrant student and faculty. The aim is to bring these stakeholders to the point where they can not only empathize with, but go even further to advocate for the causes of the immigrant student and faculty of color. We believe that such training should be systemic forming a part of modules in student courses, staff and student orientation and even continuing professional development programs for staff. It should no longer be sufficient for the leadership of higher education to be satisfied with the provision of the traditional curriculum in their institutions. They must now ensure that the curriculum exposes all students (immigrants and citizens) to the realities of racism against immigrants of color and presents a pedagogy that helps to challenge and combat discrimination of any kind. We further advocate that institutions and organizations in higher education such as the AAUP that often take a top-down approach to legal literacy (Fifolt, Solomon, & Owens, 2010), as well as labor unions and associations, can adopt a bottom-up approach that uses critical legal literacy, in collaboration with racialized immigration populations, to *educate-up,* challenging pervasive anti-immigration stances which adversely affect immigrant students and faculty of color. They are well positioned to do so as they:

1. Determine how they might work more actively, in consultation with the USCIS to reform national immigration laws and policies that reinforce the racialization of immigrant faculty and students of color in the United States;
2. Become more committed to the plight of immigrant faculty by actively seeking to provide legal representation for immigrant faculty and students of color who are often at the mercy of an immigration system that appears to be bolstered by systemic racism;
3. Conduct equity audits of immigration laws enacted regarding immigrant faculty and students of color with a view to negotiating with USCIS about how the adverse effects of such laws in higher education can be averted;
4. Develop a more intentional communication system surrounding legal literacy that exposes mainstream faculty, students and staff to updates regarding immigration law, the challenges it poses for immigrant faculty and students of color, and engaging mainstream populations with legal literacies needed to support the immigrant populations on their campuses.

The drastic measures recently taken to exclude people of color from migrating to the United States, much like the slave trade, wars, and civil unrest that have destroyed the familial ties of people of color for so long, continue to indefinitely separate many international faculty and students from their families. In the end, empathy matters, but it is change in our legal systems that last.

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Graduate Student Well-Being: Learning and Living During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This essay shares experiences related to graduate student well-being in the transition from face-to-face to virtual learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and amid global social unrest. The unexpected and rapid changes due to the preventive measures taken created challenges for both educators and students in the middle of the Spring 2020 semester. In navigating these challenges, we sought ways to tend to students' well-being without sacrificing educational quality. The authors discovered students needed a safe space to share their experiences and feelings, which helped them connect with each other at a deeper level and develop a sense of community.

Keywords: COVID-19, higher education, graduate students, pandemic, transition, virtual learning, well-being

The global pandemic created by the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) affected everyone's lives, organizations' operations, and institutions' functionalities significantly all over the world. The COVID-19 pandemic in the United States forced many institutions of higher education to transition from brick and mortar or face-to-face learning to online or virtual meeting platforms within the matter of one to two weeks in the middle of the semester. While online education is common in post-secondary education due to the non-traditional profile of

the majority of students, having to move from one platform to another unexpectedly and rapidly has brought some challenges both for educators and students. Transitions under normal circumstances are unsettling. Nancy Schlossberg's research (1989a, 1989b, & 1995) and creation of the transition theory explains how adults in transition often find themselves confused and benefitting from assistance. This seemingly abrupt transition challenged faculty members and students as the nation sought to minimize the virus' spread and to instead flatten the curve of cases and hospitalizations. In this reflective essay, we describe our experiences in two education courses navigating through the new pandemic adjustments while seeking not to affect the quality of the class by trying to be flexible with student work and making sure they are able to adjust to the new learning platform amid global social unrest after the murder of George Floyd by police and policy attacks for international students.

Many graduate students began working from home and trying to balance children and/or partners who are at home too. Public and private grade school students are studying from home as well, which for younger children particularly requires adult/parental instruction. This means some individuals are working from home, teaching from home, and learning online amid the traditional responsibilities of life. Yet for essential workers, the ability to work from home is non-existent, so there are students who must venture out and position themselves at a higher risk of contracting the virus for the sake of performing their much needed work tasks. With all of this occurring, it is understandable to be concerned for students' transition and well-being. "The time needed to achieve successful integration varies with the person and the transition" (Patton, Renn, Guido, & Quaye, 2016, p. 38). These variances challenge educators to create an environment where students' feel welcomed and there is an ethic of care for their overall well-being. One's well-being encompasses more than just feeling well. Well-being is defined by one's experience with health, happiness, and prosperity including "good mental health, high life satisfaction, a sense of meaning or purpose, and ability to manage stress" (Davis, 2019, para 1). During a pandemic, social unrest, and transition in learning platforms, what is students' well-being? This question leads to reflection on class facilitation and ways in which the instructor led the classes through a major and ongoing transitional period.

Reflections on class facilitation

Graduate education comes with its own set of anxieties and academic concerns. For 32 graduate students including 7 international

and 2 Black students studying education at a private institution in the Southwest, the transition from learning face-to-face to learning online was a relatively smooth one in regard to technological access and utilizing previously existing tools such as Zoom, Blackboard, and Kaltura. Yet, e-mails regarding university grade policy changes, along with providing extensions based on a student's individual circumstance and transition, were less easily addressed. The degree to which one's life is altered is the hallmark of a transition. Students' lives were drastically altered numerous ways unforeseeable at the start of the semester. Students shared how 2020 was a year of tragedy and trauma, beginning with the loss of basketball legend Kobe Bryant, followed by the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, the murder of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the increased push for the Black Lives Matter movement, and the attack on international students for simply trying to study abroad during a pandemic. The first six months of the year were filled with life-altering changes that affect well-being. Moreover, "Unfortunately, well-being appears to be in decline, at least in the U.S. And increasing your well-being can be tough without knowing what to do and how to do it" (Davis, 2019, para 2). Being mindful of the student's well-being in the midst of unexpected changes in their learning, we focused on ways to provide a safe space for students to be able to share freely during class meetings online. The authors developed a short survey consisting of open-ended questions designed to gauge how students were doing overall and implemented the online survey twice during the remainder of the semester.

As part of the survey, we asked the graduate students questions in order to better understand how their learning is affected by online instruction. Students reported to faculty in a technology check-in survey as 100% possessing WiFi at their primary residence and only 16% relying on access to a smartphone for the Internet. The availability of technology among graduate students somewhat varies from undergraduate students who are more likely to utilize their smartphone or another type of hand-held device. This is indicative of the nature of graduate study in general as oftentimes courses and related assignments require easy access to scholarly databases and journals. However, while the access to technology may have involved minimal concern, the logistical and emotional effects of the pandemic and social unrest on their educational experience varied greatly.

The survey results showed, in March, more than half of the students (55%) expressed they were stressed, concerned, homesick, and lonely while the rest were feeling positive and grateful. When the survey was distributed again in April, 40% of the students expressed they were

struggling, while the rest were feeling okay or great. International students expressed their concern over the pandemic and the emotional challenges it brought for them: “I am really worried about the situation we are in today (coronavirus) and feel homesick” and “I would feel better getting through this time with my family” are illustrative examples of international students’ responses to how they felt. Being away from home and not being able to go back due to the health risks and flights being cancelled created stress and homesickness for them when combined with the social unrest happening at the same time. The multiple and ongoing protests across the world centering on racial injustice affected students’ moods, priorities, and focus. This was evident in student comments in relation to the class such as, “it’s the only time I get to forget about work and the stress of being stuck at home” or “it helps me feel connected.”

In response to the first survey, one approach utilized in classes was to allocate time in the beginning of each class to ‘check-in.’ Students were free to talk about what they wanted to during these check-ins. Under normal circumstances and in face-to-face environments the need for such sharing space would be less. The need for this open communication was great during this pandemic as we realized sharing with each other helped students to decompress and center themselves. Engaging in conversations with peers helped students to see they were not alone in their struggles due to the pandemic and having a safe space allowed them to feel free to share their experiences. As we noticed the impact of the check-in sessions in the beginning of each class, we did not restrict the sessions to a certain time-limit.

During these sessions, students talked about their emotional challenges. Focusing and trying to keep up were the major challenges that students encountered as they tried to adjust to the situation and finish out the semester. One student shared that “the distractions from this pandemic has made it harder to focus” while another described how their life looked by saying, “Keeping up with everything online now. Work, my daughter’s work, schoolwork.” Considering the survey results and the nature of conversations, we believe that check-in sessions played a role in this decline in the number of students who were struggling. We also noticed the virtual learning platform combined with the nature of the conversations allowed for creating a sense of community quickly in the class.

Conclusion

It is important for educators to understand the challenges students encounter during transitions and particularly during a pandemic

with a “Stay Home, Work Safe” order. Dialogue and conversation--between instructor and student and between students--becomes even more meaningful. Graduate students’ well-being, especially for international students away from home, is critical. Educators who provide an outlet for students to express their concern, confusion, and worry are allowing students to be themselves and to demonstrate their social-emotional and psycho-social sides. There is more to life than academic study, especially when students feel their academic pursuits are being attacked. For international students during this time period, the requirements for face to face learning style and the percentage of allowable online learning posed a threat. Institutions had to consciously and creatively find ways to support international graduate students during the pandemic and not limit their academic access. Other beneficial insight from personal observation is ensuring the syllabi and course outline detail assignment deadlines clearly, checking in with students individually to inquire how they and their families are doing, welcoming the cameo appearances of animals and family members during online class time, and allocating time for the slight delay between speakers all help to create an environment that promotes healthy transition and well-being. The class should be a space where students learn and feel supported always, but it is especially important during a pandemic affecting millions of people globally. We recommend educators and graduate students alike foster learning and living that centers on students’ well-being.

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Considering Karma: Reviving Student Agency Amid Pandemic Disempowerment

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ABSTRACT

As pandemic lockdowns creep onwards to the end of 2020 many of my higher education students have become disempowered and despondent. In a bid to revive their agency and resilience a postgraduate class was offered this essay for critique. Karma is examined from contemporary understandings, and historical, and spiritual contexts, including some specifics from a Buddhist perspective where the intentions that impel actions become the prime determinants of resulting effects. Agentic attention to causality, interconnection and intention, endemic in global epistemologies, is presented as an empowering consideration regarding individual and collective activities to future researchers in the human sciences.

Keywords: agency; Buddhism; causality; karma; interconnection

My university is in the far north of Australia. The majority (70%) of our students study online from urban, rural and remote localities across the country. The Australian academic year begins in March (when containment of the pandemic first became critical) and concludes in November (where movement across borders of states, even suburbs, and meeting people remains tightly contained). So, for the entire year's duration my students have been living and studying in various degrees of lockdown and social isolation. The year has been characterized by withdrawal: from courses, units, and (online) social engagement. My Master of Education Global Learning (MEDGL) *Research Methods* unit has seen Semester 1

withdrawals up to 42% up from 23% in 2019, and Semester 2 withdrawals at 50% up from 18% the previous year. Lockdown delivered quality assignments initially, study anchored and offered purpose, but now fatigue has set in. My students tell me they are exhausted. In the unit we explore philosophies and paradigms from global perspectives. I wrote the essay below as a primer for discussion, that might also offer potentiality to re-assert agency, wellbeing and globally aware research.

A synoptic overview of karma

We live in a world where change is pervasive, constant and invariably dramatic. We also live in a world that is intrinsically interconnected, and it is from these two irrefutable principles that karma can be understood. They are experienced viscerally in this year of pandemic – where we have isolated *because* of global connections – and have borne witness to life-changing events and anthropogenic environmental catastrophes. As we reel from these effects it becomes timely to consider what we can create. Keen attention to karma potentially offers means for empowerment, and a countermeasure to grief, loneliness and rage. While notions of karma are ubiquitous, 'What goes around comes around' highly reductive understanding has limited utility These partial understandings emphasize results of actions and are not particularly helpful. Karma is about cause and effect relationships. Looking closer into causality and what I/ we can do can provide a more productive way forward.

The word karma derives from the Sanskrit root *kr* to do, and literally means 'action', 'doing', and describes a process. Karma remains an established pillar of Indic spiritualities: Hindu (both monistic and pantheistic schools), Jain, Sikh and Buddhist. The wisdom of interdependent cause-effect relationship is widespread, rooted in millennia, and remains a pluralistic theory. The seminal ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus' legacy of fragmented aphorisms suggest interconnection, "it is wise to agree that all things are one" (DK B50) and flux, "On those who enter the same rivers, ever different waters flow" (DKB12). Although Greek philosophy took a monist trajectory thereafter, Heidegger and Nietzsche both looked back to Heraclitus to find richness in his abstruse fragments to justify an ontology for human-centered inquiry, process philosophy and ethical discernment (author, 2013). Observance of interdependent cause-effect relationships too are features of Indigenous Australian, and indigenous and eco-spiritualities generally (Yunkaporta, 2019). Definite effects of ignorant, hateful and desire-filled actions, as well as positive actions, is also germane throughout the Bible: Matthew 13: 3-8; in Job 4:8, Galatians 6:7, Proverbs 18:24, Acts 5:3, and the centrality of individual choice in Deuteronomy 30: 19-20 .

According to the Buddha a deep understanding of karma presents a key to living happier lives. His teachings (the Dharma) were premised on the recognition that dissatisfaction and suffering is pervasive in this causal

world. Despite best efforts, happiness does not remain a constant lived experience for anybody. Myriad disappointments, irritations, outrages, highs, triumphs, successes and other vexations are inevitable. How these are navigated, and crucially how these types of results are created, and avoided, is where awareness of karma is astute. Karma awareness helps to reconcile multitudinous temporal individualities, with the vagaries of the world at large. "[T]he law of karma is not regarded as rigid and mechanical, but rather flexible, fluid and dynamic. Nevertheless there are relatively stable repeated patterns that arise from this collection of impersonal, ever-changing and conditioned events or processes, that form what we regard as a person's 'character" (Harvey, 2000, p. 24). Basically, it is the same universal algorithm, with individual choice.

From a Dharma perspective, individual agency provides the determinant function. Explicitly, karma means only 'volitional action', not all action, but never solely the effect alone (Rahula, 1978). *Motivations* are the drivers behind activity, whether these be thoughts, words or body actions. Awareness of motivations creates acumen for choice, self-determination and integrity. Entertaining the notion that cause-effect relationship pertains to psychological terrains as it does to all the physical operations on the planet presents a dispassionate rationale for ethical activity. The time-span between motivation, action and result is rarely instantaneous, and other pervading conditions can add to the fuzziness. Nevertheless, the equation still stands. What goes around *will* come around. Hence, begin with mindful attention. While to rail against injustices might be right, if impelled by anger or hatred inner and outer disturbances are exacerbated.

Wisdom is required to skillfully negotiate the complex array of motivations, choices, conditions, and manifest or possible activities. According to the Dharma, wisdom is cultivated across three tiers: by thought, study, and deep insight knowledge developed through meditation. In this way, for any person who recognizes dissatisfaction in themselves and seeks peace and happiness, openness to karma is heuristic (Humphreys, 2013).

This worldview aims for holistic development through intellectual and emotional balance. Meditation is instrumental in the intellectual development and the cultivation of wisdom. Subsequent mindful awareness refined in the process can facilitate control and choice for ethical conduct. These by default allay propensity for negative repercussions and lead to more peaceful and happier experiences for self and others. The Dalai Lama explains, that given all beings are connected and generally share the same sorts of predicaments, what happens internally and in the external world is connected, and it is therefore possible to both observe and predict potential effects. From this reasoning compassion is not only justified, it is the only plausible response. "Once we have understood our own place, we can

extend that understanding to others and thereby come to feel deep compassion" (Gyatso, 2000, p. 27). In this schema wisdom and compassion become meta-ethical values from which various other values, such as generosity, kindness, patience, honesty, are subsumed. Understanding karma provides a practical guide for realizing our 'best selves' and for positioning ourselves as social researchers in research with social benefit.

Karmic awareness is a call to assert human agency and Bandura's (2018) assessment (forethought, self-reactiveness and self-reflection) helps to clarify. '[F]orethought enables people to transcend the dictates of their immediate environment and to shape and regulate the present to realize desired futures' (p.130) and actions determined. Self-reflectiveness is a metacognitive capability whereby agents 'reflect on their efficacy to realize given challenges, the soundness of their thoughts and actions, their values, and the meaning and morality of their pursuits' (p.131). Bandura also recognizes that agency is individual, collective and cross-cultural. "Not only are cultures not monolithic entities, but they are no longer insular. Global connectivity is shrinking cross-cultural uniqueness. Successful functioning requires an agentic blend of the different modes of agency" (pp.131-132).

Conclusion

Lived experience through the pandemic, with concomitant societal and environmental upheavals, has affirmed our interconnectedness, and subsequent individual and collective responsibilities. Interconnection and causality, karma, provides scope to bridge perceived divisions across philosophies, religions, cultures and researcher positionality and to enrich ethical discussion and practice in higher education to better equip future researchers to respond to our time.

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Remote Engineering Education Under COVID-19 Pandemic Environment

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ABSTRACT

As a result of the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, engineering curriculums that were taught in-person for decades were forcibly transitioned into a remote-learning environment in such a short time that instructors and students alike could not adequately consider how to replicate the efficacy and efficiency of in-person learning to the remote learning environment. In this essay, the problem of effective replication is studied from the perspective of emotional experiences that lead to effective learning. Through this review, the authors hope to enlighten instructors and students about simple and effective practices that can be implemented in this harsh environment and to mitigate the effect that COVID-19 will inevitably have on the effectiveness and enrollment of engineering undergraduate curriculums.

Keywords: COVID-19, online education, engineering education, emotional experiences

During the COVID-19 pandemic, engineering courses in the U.S. were redesigned for a remote-learning environment. This transition was difficult considering the necessity of significant lab courses for engineering curriculums to teach online, the lack of resources for instructors to successfully transition a course to a remote-learning environment, and

student's unfamiliarity with a remote-learning environment. It is challenging to deliver lab courses, a core part of undergraduate engineering curriculums required by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) for program accreditation, in a remote-learning environment.

While there are many challenges in making effective lab courses, even for in-person learning environments, some programs have started to offer purely remote-learning environments in recent years. The few ABET-accredited undergraduate engineering programs that have fully remote offerings have developed such a program through a phased approach over several years with significant up-front financial and human-resource investment from the universities or have kept their respective programs to a small handful of participants (e.g., Penn State University, B.S. Electrical Engineering online program). As a result of the circumstances and uncertainty brought about by COVID-19, engineering curriculums have adapted a core part of their curriculum abruptly which results in profound effects on the academic development of engineering undergraduates for years to come.

Considering the suddenness and lack of preparedness, it is not unreasonable to expect that at least for some students, strong negative emotions may have arose as they adjusted to the hurried and unfamiliar learning situation during these unpredictable times. These students' unprecedented learning experiences could have been exacerbated by academic stress and other stress factors such as reduced face-to-face social interactions, limited networking with college personnel (faculty, staff, and peers), longer response time for communication via e-mail or other online platforms, and extended hours of screen time (Adnan & Anwar, 2020).

It is possible that this current change in delivery of engineering coursework will have substantial long-term effects on engineering students, and the increase in psychological stressors may lead to substantial increases in disengagement with lectures and other instructional activities. In other words, the continuation of these instructional changes may cause substantially increased stress levels for students that ultimately impact well-being, academic emotions, and college retention (Heo & Han, 2018; Muljana & Luo, 2019; Ramo et al., 2020).

Therefore, the success of engineering education for both the near and long-term future depends on providing students a positive learning experience during the establishment of this new normal of remote engineering education. It is imperative for engineering educators to understand students' learning experiences associated with academic emotions during online education in order to support and maintain students' learning and academic performance. Thus, it is urgent to understand online technical engineering education where engineering educators are rapidly responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Engineering students, like others in STEM disciplines, often take challenging courses that involve problem-solving, working with others, and hands-on labs. A national survey conducted at the end of Spring 2020's semester surveyed students' experiences in STEM courses. Although fewer than half of students expressed dissatisfaction with their learning after their courses went online, students' open-ended responses to their greatest challenges indicate they have issues with staying motivated without the structure of a class routine, they miss the presence of their instructors and peers, and the loss of authentic, hands-on experiences makes learning more difficult (Means & Neisler, 2020).

The abrupt change to remote learning has impacted students and while some findings suggest that students did quickly adjust and are continuing to do well with this new technology-delivered instruction, there are also students who report they are struggling and feeling disengaged (Ramo et al., 2020). The remainder of this essay addresses the significance of engineering students' challenges and needs during online engineering instruction by reviewing the evidence of factors that make for more efficient, effective remote and online instructional practices. The discussion may also apply more widely to other disciplines involved in remote education.

Proposed Remedies through Analysis of Emotional Factors

The emotional experiences of students that are identified as "academic emotions" is a topic of interest because they delineate normal emotional experiences from those that directly link to academic learning, instruction, and achievement (Pekrun et al., 2002). The literature on academic emotions within the field of educational research and its application to online education informed by the instructional design acknowledges the importance of emotional regulation as well as instructional strategies in online engineering education.

Emotions influence a wide range of cognitive and motivational processes such as perception, attention, learning, decision-making, and problem-solving. A sense of lack of control or a negative learning experience is likely to produce negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, hopelessness, shame, or boredom (Pekrun & Stephens, 2009). They addressed classroom activities and school achievement situations that are associated with students' emotions. Pekrun's academic emotions could be applied usefully to remote instruction of engineering by explaining the emotional experience associated with learning in a remote-learning environment.

During this pandemic, we can assume that engineering students are experiencing various emotions, both positive and negative, that are related to various aspects of remote instructional activities, communication with instructors, and interactions with peers. Because most engineering courses

were developed and delivered offline before the pandemic, there is a high chance that the shift to online platforms resulted in students experiencing various challenges that can result in negative emotions.

In a preliminary study of engineering students' mental health and wellness, Danowitz and Beddoes (2018) found that engineering students suffer certain mental health issues at a higher rate than other US students. They reported that intense negative emotions discourage individuals from being engaged in learning and we should consider that engineering students may experience disengagement and amotivation with the shift to remote engineering courses. In addition, Lee and Adam (2016) investigated the three aspects of negative emotions (e.g., stress, anxiety, and depression) on engineering students. The authors reported cognitive interventions such as the openness mindset and positive thinking will reduce students' negative emotions. In addition, Kim and Hodges (2012) studied college students' emotions, motivation, and achievement in an online remedial math course, and whether a brief intervention focused on emotion regulation would significantly improve the treatment group's learning outcomes. Results indicated the intervention helped students maintain positive emotions such as enjoyment and pride during their learning, which increased their motivation and engagement, though not their actual achievement relative to control group students. This study suggests that the idea of interventions for students to regulate emotional arousal will eventually enhance their learning.

Further, Angelaki and Mavroidis (2013) investigated the role of emotions in an online distance learning program for students who were new to online learning. These learners frequently expressed various emotions, both positive and negative, during their online learning experiences. The authors reported students' interactions with all components of the program as forming an "emotional climate" that influenced students' learning. Results showed that a positive emotional climate, created in part by positive social relationships with their instructor and fellow learners, mitigated the negative emotional arousals. Additionally, Tempelaar et al. (2012) showed that positive emotions such as enjoyment and happiness contributed to effective learning in an online statistics course, and negative emotions such as boredom and hopelessness were a significant hindrance for online learning compared to face-to-face learning environments.

Severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) resulted in an infectious spread that prompted educators to experiment with pedagogical approaches within the teaching and learning of science and engineering courses. Due to SARS, Low et al. (2006) investigated the teaching of science and engineering courses in virtual laboratory settings by utilizing the MATLAB-based QUANSER training kit at the SIM University (UniSIM). They reported a virtual laboratory environment that effectively allowed students

to interact with a remotely set up ECG measurement system at the UniSIM Bioelectronics Laboratory.

Conclusion

Although it is more relevant to engage this research with online engineering education, it has not yet been fully mined for its insights about the particular emotional and learning experience of engineering students in the novel and suddenly implemented remote learning and online learning environments resulting from the pandemic. In addition, they reported that online learning environments demand learners to be more self-motivated and self-regulated in order to have similar learning outcomes to face-to-face settings. Lehman et al. (2012) claimed that the nature of computer-mediated learning environments often triggers confusion in learners as they encounter technical difficulties and program-based obstacles. Interestingly, they reported that negative emotions can be beneficial to eliciting states of cognitive disequilibrium. Given the heavily hands-on, team-based, and activity-based courses that are characteristic of the engineering undergraduate curriculum, the emotional challenges students are facing need further investigation.

In conclusion, the contagion and virulence of COVID-19 has impacted the world and all aspects of education which resulted in drastic sanitizing and social distancing. Whether individuals are on the front lines or working from home, the entire world is struggling to adjust to the new normal and envisioning an uncertain future. Technological adaptations have emerged, for example, online social gatherings and virtual meetings, but it is not clear what long-term educational plans and adaptations will need to be made. As an education community, we have a particular role and responsibility to design, implement and evaluate this transition. How best to address the academic intellectual and emotional needs of engineering students must be considered when designing new instructional practices. This essay intended to provide insights about online education and students' emotional experiences with the goal of helping both students and instructors. Ultimately, as educators, we should ensure that we continuously provide quality education and share this vision with students so that they can envision and pursue a just society and build a more resilient worldwide community during this unprecedented pandemic time.

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Challenges and Opportunities for Teaching Students with Disabilities During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2020), school closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have affected over 1.5 billion students and families. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented multiple challenges for teaching students with disabilities in an online instructional environment, but there are also opportunities for collaboration, training, and communication for special educators to meet the needs of their students.

Keywords: *accessibility, collaboration, special education, technology, training*

School closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have forced school leaders to shift to providing traditional instruction in an online environment. While online learning is not a new concept in the field of education, the quick shift of moving traditional education to a virtual setting was a daunting task in a short amount of time. Transitioning to a virtual setting forced many educators to learn new technologies and skills and caused stress among teachers and students. In addition to moving to an online learning environment during the COVID-19 pandemic, special educators were faced with multiple challenges ranging from equity issues for students, providing instruction in a virtual environment, and providing special education services as determined in student individual education plans

(IEPs). However, the bigger the challenge, the bigger the opportunity for special educators as they learn to virtually teach in a pandemic world.

Methodology

To explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic of teaching students with disabilities, due to restrictions on social distancing and travel, the remote focus group method was chosen for this study. The participants were recruited through reaching out to members from a special education caucus group from a professional education association, who serve in a variety of educational settings including special education teachers and related service providers (e.g., school psychologists, speech therapists, occupational therapists). A total of thirty-five participants (9 men, 26 women) shared in three remote focus groups. The demographic make-up of the participants was 26% European American male, 58% European American female, 11% African American female, and 5% Latin American female.

The researcher served as moderator for the remote focus groups which allowed fluid discussions to flow organically on the topic and allowed opportunities for sharing personal experiences of special educators during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants were asked to share their experiences and challenges of teaching with students with disabilities in a virtual instructional environment. The remote focus group method allowed participants to express their views, opinions, and experiences which provided the researcher an opportunity to gain valuable insights for the present study.

Challenges in an Online Instructional Environment

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed equity issues and challenges faced by all students, but especially for students with disabilities (Kaden, 2020; Sullivan et al., 2020; Tindle et al., 2017). A lack of equity is exhibited by the disproportionate access to technology and internet access for students who live in rural or low-income communities (Fishbane & Tomer, 2020). Anderson (2019) found that for families earning less than $30,000 per year, only 56% have access to broadband. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) stated that 13.8% or slightly over 3.1 million households do not have access to broadband connections in their homes which causes challenges to students being able to appropriately engage in an online learning environment (Fishbane & Tomer, 2020). Teachers reported that almost 86% of their students had difficulties with internet access while 64% of students did not have appropriate technology devices needed for an online learning environment (Hamilton et al., 2020). In the same study, 38% of teachers also reported having inadequate access to the internet or technology. In focus groups, led by the author, participants stated that they were frustrated and discouraged with the lack of student and

parent engagement. They felt that a lack of access to technology and internet access contributed to a portion of this disengagement.

Educators have learned that providing instruction in a classroom setting and providing instruction in an online setting is not only different but challenging (Young & Donovan, 2020). In an online instructional environment, one difficulty faced by special educators is the ability to adequately provide special education services for students with disabilities, especially those with multiple or more significant disabilities. Many students with disabilities struggle with an online learning schedule because they need a more structured learning environment and interactions with their peers and teachers. This challenge is increasingly more difficult for students with disabilities who need access to such services as speech, occupational, or physical therapies (Schaeffer, 2020). Providing accessibility for students who are deaf or have hearing impairments as well as those with visual impairments in an online instructional environment is another challenge facing educators (Tandy & Meacham, 2009; Debevc et al., 2011; Chowdhuri, et al., 2012; Alsadoon & Turkestani, 2020). Shahenn and Watulak (2019) stated, "Inaccessible technologies are as problematic for disabled people as inaccessible buildings" (p. 187). Examples of accessibility issues include a lack of sign language interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing, a lack of screen readers for those who have visual impairments or learning disabilities and providing captioning for English Language Learners.

Educators who lack technology training and resources face many barriers when teaching students with disabilities in an online environment. Hamilton et al. (2020) reported that 42% of teachers reported difficulty in receiving adequate support and guidance for working with students with disabilities. In the author-led remote focus group, participants shared that they struggled with the following: learning new technology, learning management systems, and how to provide online instruction, especially to students with disabilities. As a result of these challenges, educators are concerned that students with disabilities may experience a lack of progress due to a lack of providing much needed special education services.

A lack of consistent guidance in state and local education agencies regarding compliance to special education procedures is another challenge facing special educators. As of 2017, 84% of states had no established or unclear policies concerning IEPs in virtual settings (Tindle et al., 2017). Tindle et al. (2017) also reported that twenty-two states had varying policies regarding accessibility and guidance for special educators. Special educators also noted that attempting to develop and implement IEPs in an online environment was much more difficult than in a traditional school setting (Tindle et al., 2017). In the author-led remote focus group, participants noted the same struggles and described being frustrated with the lack of

consistency and confused by the guidance from their districts and state educational agencies as it relates to providing special education services.

Opportunities and Implications for Practice

As states and local education agencies plan for online education for students with disabilities in a pandemic world, they must recognize there are multiple opportunities that lay before them. This provides multiple opportunities for special educators to meet the needs of their students. Local education agencies and teacher preparation programs should provide training on the importance of socio-emotional learning, relationship building, collegiality, parent collaboration, and internet tools and safety (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2020; Smith et al., 2016). These opportunities have the potential for special educators to best meet the needs of their students and help them achieve their outcomes for success.

One opportunity is in the area of equity for technology and internet access. Local education agencies should survey families to determine accessibility of technology and internet access (Young & Donovan, 2020). From these survey results, local education agencies can determine whether to provide computers, hotspots, or other technology devices to students for online education. Reich et al. (2020) recommended that when considering curriculum materials in online learning, schools should also incorporate non-digital alternatives (e.g., public television, printed packets) in addition to digital platforms such as Google Classroom or Khan Academy. Training in providing instruction in a virtual or alternative environment (e.g. home) using curriculum-based instructional activities, should be provided to educators so that they can ensure that students are working towards goals and objectives to meet outcomes.

Educators should consider incorporating the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) to provide accessibility for all students in an online instructional environment, but especially for students with disabilities. UDL is equitable because of its accessibility to students, flexible in use because it accommodates a wide range of learners and simple to use (Burgstahler, 2009). UDL provides a framework to remove barriers from instruction instead of providing accommodations through the principles of multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement (Schreffler et al., 2019). For example, educators can incorporate multiple means of representation by providing instruction through online activities, incorporating radio, podcast, or television broadcasts of academic content (Bender, 2020). An example of incorporating multiple means of action and expression would be providing students with flexibility for when and how they complete their schoolwork (Cook & Grant-Davis, 2020; Kaden, 2020).

A second opportunity is in the area of special education policies and procedures. Federal and state education agencies should provide more

consistent guidance for providing special education services in a pandemic world in order to ensure that students with disabilities are provided with services and instruction (Reich et al., 2020). The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) provides guidance that school districts must provide access to educational opportunities, including a free and appropriate public education, and special education services to students with disabilities if it provides educational opportunities for the general school population (OSEP, 2020). State and local education agencies should maintain consistent communication and clarity for expectations for providing special education services through guidance documents and websites (Young & Donovan, 2020). Local education agencies should ensure that special educators have manageable caseloads so that they can effectively provide services. Educators should be concerned about compliance with special education laws and guidance, but also focus on outcomes for students with disabilities.

With challenges come opportunities. The pandemic crisis has provided educators with several challenges in providing learning in a virtual environment. There are more opportunities to expand their instructional repertoire by implementing various instructional methods by engaging students using virtual learning strategies and platforms, incorporating the principles of UDL, inviting collaboration with fellow educators, and maintaining communication with students and parents. School administrators and systems must seize the opportunity to ensure that educators are prepared for teaching in a pandemic world and focus their efforts to provide more technology resources and training as well as prepare clear and consistent guidance for delivering special education services for students with disabilities.

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Moving Beyond the Statements: The Need for Action to Address Structural Racism at Predominantly White Institutions

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ABSTRACT

Higher education may once again be at a crossroad with the racial climate in the United States and what that means for college campuses. Consequently, institutions of higher education must commit to ensuring a supportive organizational structure for the social and psychosocial well-being of Black students and guaranteeing support resources for the psychological well-being of Black students. Such efforts require significant and enduring structural changes within institutions of higher education that should be ongoing and consistent.

Keywords: Black students, campus policies, equity, inclusion, racism, racial equality

As the protests for racial equality and justice unfold in the United States, so has the presence of comments filled with hateful words and ideologies regarding Black people and communities. In the news, there are reports and incidents of this type of commentary coming from incoming students, current students, as well as faculty and staff at predominantly white institutions (PWIs) who are White. Institutions of higher education have addressed these circumstances differently with some withdrawing admission and scholarships from the incoming student and some others pointing out the fact that the first amendment limits institutional action while

simultaneously condemning hatred. Of course, racially motivated biases and incidents have occurred on college campuses prior; but now, people are more vigilant and willing to share such stories with the public. In fact, according to National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data, of the total reported on campus hate crimes in 2016, race was the most frequent category of motivating bias associated with the three most common types of hate crimes reported—vandalism, intimidation, and simple assault—accounting for 38% of reported vandalisms, 40% of reported intimidations and 42% of reported simple assaults (Musu et. al, 2019). The current challenge for higher education institutions is how to more effectively address these actions and behaviors on campus and the associated psychosocial consequences on those most impacted. To begin, policies and actions that adequately address racially motivated campus incidents, discrimination, and campus unrest as well as provide psychosocial support and a safe environment to Black faculty, staff and students on campus have to be paramount.

The nationwide protests once again present our country—and each one of us—with the need to confront the continuing legacy of slavery and segregation in America and our interiority that sustains racism and hatred. Racism became institutionalized in the culture and structure of the United States through a process of legalization that systematically subjugated and exploited Africans who were enslaved, regulating them to a subordinate position that included marginalization and discrimination (Tourse et al., 2018). Each new generation of African Americans inherited this enduring framework of racial inequality and enduring racism that has infiltrated their family dynamics, economics, generational wealth, education, and social capital. Damages done to African Americans did not end with slavery, but persisted for another one hundred years in the form of legal segregation to present-day discrimination, which also included violence and coercion from Whites, an unjust judicial system, income and economic losses, and oppression (Feagin, 2004). The fight for civil rights and legal equality of African Americans –petitioning the courts and the federal government for relief against the discriminatory treatment of private or state actors (Loury, 1998)– may have changed separate but equal, removed Jim Crow laws and the Black Codes, and set parameters for fair employment, but it did not change mindsets and the discriminatory treatment of African Americans. The election of Donald Trump in 2016 only highlighted these preexisting hostile attitudes toward African Americans, leading to their increased levels of stress and anxiety (Williams & Medlock, 2017).

What must not be missed is the fact that PWIs will now more than likely have to deal with requests for more action toward racial equality from Blacks and allies within the campus community even more so than in the past, and will have to move beyond platitudes and simply talking around the edges about racial equality and racism. Higher education is often viewed as

a producer of knowledge and an utopian space beyond racial inequality (Johnson & Joseph-Salisbury, 2018); however, "academe is deeply implicated in maintaining and perpetuating the conditions that give rise to racial microaggressions" (p. 143) and is a "site of oppression, resistance, and transformation" (Stockdill & Danaco, 2012, p. 1) like other institutions. Ultimately, we must not forget that higher education was not set up to welcome diversity and inclusion and although change has occurred, that change came with excluded groups fighting to gain entry that included lawsuits, protesting, sit-ins, sleep-ins, and hunger strikes (Simmons, 2002).

Higher education institutions should clearly acknowledge their commitment to become actively engaged in efforts to ensure racial equality and justice in all areas of society, but specifically on campus. This commitment should be two-fold— ensuring a supportive organizational structure for the social and psychosocial well-being of Black students and guaranteeing support resources for the psychological well-being of Black students. Having statements and institutional missions that encourage fair treatment and respect for everyone and an acceptance of differences while working toward greater inclusion is a start. However, such statements do not negate previous incidents and existing unwelcoming environments. What matters most is what action will take place now after a declaration of awareness about inequality, biases, and discrimination for Blacks in the campus community.

Although change can begin with dialogue, actions must be deliberate that support Black students, including a supportive campus climate where acts of racism and discrimination are not normalized, and the students have a voice. As the relationship between racial bias, attitudes, and perceptions is directly related to the climate and culture of an organization, diversity goals, equity, inclusion, and social justice must be integrated into the campus culture to build a more positive campus climate for Black students. The cultures and structures for accountability to diversity goals and the roles in advancing (or maintaining) disparities (Kezar & Eckel, 2002) and the configuration of external influences, structural characteristics of the institution and group relations, and institutionalized ideologies (Hurtado, 1992) must also be examined.

Institutions should also invest in efforts to establish a support system to address the psychological and psychosocial consequences of students experiencing and witnessing racism and discrimination. Seeing and hearing disparaging comments about a dimension of who you are, of which you cannot hide, can have a detrimental impact on the psychological and psychosocial well-being of individuals, which must be taken into account when addressing structural racism in higher education. Currie and colleagues (2012) found that the most common psychological reactions for students experiencing discrimination was to feel a sense of helplessness and hopelessness. As reiterated by a student participant in their study, "Being a

minority is like being in a cage with no help. Sometimes it's better to accept than to fight" (Currie et al., 2012, p. 622). The psychological stress students experiencing racism and discrimination on the college campus can be perceived as taxing or exceeding their resources and endangering their well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Racial battle fatigue (RBF) has been used to describe such experiences of students of color in postsecondary settings, which affirms that the cumulative, negative effect of racial microaggressions causes them to often become physically and emotionally drained (Smith, 2009). Higher levels of perceived racial discrimination have also been related to lower levels of psychological adjustment (Jackson et al., 2012). Therefore, institutions of higher education should proactively develop culturally competent, accommodating, and multi-faceted efforts that can support Black students who are dealing with psychological stress and distress due to what is occurring in the news and on campus related to race relations and discrimination. Such efforts can include providing access to culturally competent counselors and spaces Black students can share their thoughts freely and safely; having processes in place when students experience discrimination that will thoroughly investigate reported issues; instituting mandatory initiatives that can help prepare all members of the campus to learn about and confront racial inequity and injustice through a systemic approach; and creating opportunities for all students to engage in cross-racial interactions as well as cultural experiences and exploration to broaden their worldview. The goal is to create a campus racial climate that is welcoming for all students and where all students can benefit from racial pluralism (Smith et al., 2007). Key institutional agents' willingness to provide students with holistic support may be a critical factor in the success of racial minority students in college and this support might be critical because it can foster racial minority students' trust in the agents' ability and desire to help them to find the necessary information and support to resolve their issues (Museus & Neville, 2012). Ultimately, the campus community should be aware of and prepare to address the psychological and psychosocial impact that racism, discrimination and racial tensions cause and the consequences when there is a lack of institutional support for those most impacted.

Two factors perpetuate racism and inequality— one is our internal dimensions and the other is the institutional structures, such as in higher education. Higher education can play a role in addressing both. As PWIs move forward to address racial inequities and discrimination and offer support to those most affected by them, many must first begin with admitting that past efforts to address racism on their campuses, although often well meaning, have been focused on superficial changes (e.g., having diversity committees without money or influence, adding diversity to the strategic plan and student evaluations, and including inclusion in mission statements) while sustaining the status quo.

Hosting listening sessions, instituting a special task force, implementing efforts to increase the recruitment of Black students, asking the campus community to volunteer to participate in sensitivity and diversity training, and conducting a climate survey without follow-up are common reactions to addressing requests for improving campus climate for racial minorities that only scratch the surface of what is needed. Purposeful and decisive actions are needed that hold individuals accountable and illustrate power to enact and support real change. What is needed will have to move beyond just implementing reactionary measures to a controversial racial incident that comes under public scrutiny, which loses interest and funding once the spotlight is gone or a new issue arises. Leaders will need to participate in real work toward equality and equity and not expect Black faculty, staff, and student leaders to take the lead, but to be a part of the decision-making process. However, as Brown (2004) speculated, even if people are in agreement with the principles of diversity, they may be reluctant to change and, in practice, are content to leave things as they are. This school of thought can no longer be an option if campus leaders desire to meet the current challenges and make a real change. More than ever, there is a need for significant and enduring structural changes within institutions of higher education.

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The Intersection of Faculty Success and Student Success

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ABSTRACT

With discreet limits on time to commit to their work, full-time faculty at research institutions are pulled in many directions in pursuit of tenure and promotion. In the existing rewards structure, student success may be de-emphasized and considered a lower priority than research output. This essay re-frames the relationship between student success and faculty success, suggesting that the two can inform each other as faculty pursue tenure and promotion.

Keywords: faculty, student success, promotion and tenure

Retention, promotion, and tenure at research universities are built upon a rewards system that emphasizes faculty research productivity through publication (Bergeron, Ostroff, Schroeder, & Block, 2014). With great variety related to institutional type, teaching and institutional and professional service are also valued, but often to a lesser extent (Price & Cotten, 2006). While this essay focuses specifically on tenure-track faculty at research institutions, contract faculty and faculty at other types of institutions have greater expectations for teaching and service. Regardless of institution and position type, faculty have significant demands on their time in three areas: research, teaching, and service. At the same time, institutions are asking more of faculty in terms of supporting student engagement and student success. How can faculty with significant research expectations also support student success within the limits of their time? This essay explores the connection between student success and faculty

success in circumstances when faculty success is tied significantly to research productivity.

Student success in terms of retention, graduation, and even post-graduation outcomes is a growing focus among institutions of higher education (Kuh, Ikenberry, Jankowski, Cain, Ewell, Hutchings, Kinzie, 2016). While institutions typically frame student success in terms of measurable outcomes, college students describe success differently, recognizing not just the end goal of graduation but also their college experience as key in their success. Jennings, Lovett, Cuba, Swingle, and Lindkvist (2013) found that college freshmen initially express their goals for college success around four themes: academic achievement, social and residential life, life management, and academic engagement. The authors followed college students for four years and saw that the importance of each area grew or waned over their time, but students consistently described academic achievement as their primary goal with social aspects of college life also meaningful to them.

If students largely define their success in terms of academic achievement and institutions define student success largely as persistence and graduation, how can faculty support student success while also pursuing their own success within the established rewards structure? How can supporting student success also support faculty success in research, teaching and service? Faculty content expertise deepened through research and knowledge-sharing skills honed through teaching and mentoring are discussed below as ways faculty can link their success with student success.

First, content expertise can be an important factor in student success. Content expertise is linked to research expertise; when faculty teach courses that are closely related to their research areas, students benefit from their deep knowledge of that content. Student motivation is an important factor in student learning and faculty with deep content expertise and passion for their research can build classrooms and learning experiences that engage students and help them see the value of what they are learning (Ambrose, Bridges, DiPetro, Lovett, & Norman, 2010). Faculty with content expertise, supported by their research expertise, engage students in deeper learning which contributes to student academic achievement.

Students need instructors who are engaging content experts and have both content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987). Effective teaching through pedagogical content knowledge and content expertise work cooperatively to promote student learning and student academic success. Faculty teaching in their research areas also have the opportunity to work out new ideas, get feedback on ideas, and improve knowledge-sharing skills. Teaching can support a faculty member's research dissemination by preparing them for sharing their discoveries. The ability to clearly communicate research findings and share findings with an audience outside the content area are skills faculty develop through teaching

that can support their success in research. Grant applications, writing research articles, and sharing findings at conferences require the ability to distill many years of knowledge and research into consumable quantities—a skill practiced when helping students understand difficult concepts.

In these ways, research and teaching are linked; deep content knowledge gained through research can positively impact student success while the ability to share complex information with simplicity can contribute to faculty success. Faculty and student success are further connected through service expectations for faculty. At research institutions, service is likely the least of the three priorities for faculty in pursuit of tenure, but it is required, nonetheless (Price & Cotten, 2006). Faculty interested in student success can use their service time to mentor students, advise student groups, and support student growth outside the classroom. Student success supported through faculty service can also bolster faculty success in terms of research. Faculty can choose to include students in their research, giving students opportunities to learn research skills while also supporting faculty research. Faculty may also choose to mentor students who are applying for prestigious post-graduate fellowships. More broadly, faculty can serve the institution through creating new programs to recruit new students or better prepare students for life after college. Faculty who want to link student success and their own plans for tenure and promotion can take a strategic approach to service by using their expertise to mentor and lead students while also building a compelling case for tenure.

Faculty do not have to segment their work lives into three separate and distinct buckets of research, teaching, and service. Faculty success and student success are not in opposition to or independent of each other. Instead, faculty success and student success are intertwined such that faculty can pursue excellence in research, teaching, and service and apply their success in those areas to support student success.

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When Extraordinary Circumstances Yield Exceptional Consequences: The Importance of Readiness, Receptiveness, and Responsiveness

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ABSTRACT

During her last semester prior to retirement, a university professor of teacher education supervised 15 interns enrolled in a preparation program and college department different from the professor's usual program and department due to changes in the college's preparation program student enrollment and faculty availability. The ever-changing, extraordinary circumstances experienced by the interns and supervisor during the 2020 spring semester illuminate the vital responsibilities of readiness to teach, receptiveness to feedback, and responsiveness to expectations (Gallavan & Merritt, 2018). Established on authentic expressions and exchanges of trust, efficacy, agency, and cultural humility [TEACH], their shared journeys yielded exceptional consequences for both the interns and the supervisor enriched by the supervisor's insights and inspirations as teacher educator, co-constructivist, and instructional coach.

Keywords: co-constructivism, internship, instructional coach, readiness, receptiveness, responsiveness, supervision

The 2019 fall semester began my last semester as an educator. Culminating 25 years as a teacher educator and college administrator preceded by 20 years as a classroom teacher and school administrator,

I felt fully satisfied and fortunately situated for the next, new adventures in my life. My future looked good. Mid-semester, the university announced a retirement incentive for which I was eligible if I delayed my retirement to the 2020 spring semester. The financial package appealed, and my next, new adventures could wait six more months. My future looked even better.

Given my decision to delay retirement, I was unable to teach my usual course load. Understandably, those courses had been reassigned, so I was offered the opportunity to teach different courses in a different program, different department, and different format. After 15 years of teaching graduate K-12 MAT candidates online, I would be supervising undergraduate K-5 elementary education candidates face-to-face during Internship I. Undergraduate elementary education candidates complete their programs as cohorts, interacting primarily with the same faculty and same candidates with whom they have become acquainted during three previous semesters. All courses are conducted face-to-face, and candidates have become accustomed to specific procedures. In the prior semester, candidates, i.e., interns, had been assigned to classrooms to observe one teacher one day per week, ultimately, teaching a small group of students three times. During Internship I, interns visit classrooms 1.5 days per week and will teach five observed lessons among multiple other field-based assignments. Conversely, the MAT candidates I had been teaching for 15 years online were taught by ten different faculty with approximately half of the candidates were teaching in their own classrooms on provisional licenses. I was curious to delve into the differences between the graduate MAT candidates and the undergraduate elementary education candidates.

During my career in education, I have continued to refine a foundation based on three responsibilities that I try to teach, model, and apply to my self-efficacy: readiness to teach, receptiveness to feedback, and responsiveness to expectations (Gallavan & Merritt, 2018). The capacity to guide and support other people in our lives reciprocated as we listen to and reflect on the guidance and support that we receive from other people equips and empowers us to grow and mature through meaningful transitions. I have discovered that when teachers and learners co-construct expectations, individualization and innovation inspire learners to exceed initial expectations. Everyone benefits significantly by investing first in the people, second in the possibilities, and third in the production. Too often, teaching and learning occur in the reverse order. Relying on my foundation, I began my last semester with the undergraduate elementary education interns as a capstone for my career.

The first few weeks of Internship I, I scheduled time in each intern's classroom facilitating quiet conversations as the intern and I observed the classroom and teacher, partnered with additional, lengthier time spent with

each intern outside of the classroom processing our classroom observations and the intern's discoveries. Additionally, weekly I met with the five interns placed in each of three elementary schools as a small group to preview expectations, answer questions, and, most importantly, calm uncertainties related to their classroom teaching and course assignments. Through my accessibility and acceptance, the interns and I became comfortable with one another easily and established trusting relationships quickly as we embarked on our shared journeys. Supervision provided me the ideal opportunity to learn from and with teacher candidates through their lived experiences. Indeed, my future looked like the best.

Halfway through the semester, mid-March 2020, our lives changed abruptly and completely due to the pandemic; the interns and I were sent home. University courses transitioned to online platforms, and field experiences had to be reconfigured. More significantly, interns needed comprehensive reassurance supporting them personally, pedagogically, and professionally. I did not anticipate the importance of my foundations of readiness to teach, receptiveness to feedback, and responsiveness to expectations for my interns or for me.

The opportunity to supervise undergraduate elementary education Internship I interns was exciting! As my own mentor in higher education emphasized, I brought years of education, experience, and expertise as an elementary and middle level classroom teacher and as a teacher educator grounded on co-constructivism. I ascribed to Piaget's research that purports learning is actively built on prior knowledge as learners are introduced to and integrate new information (McLeod, 2019) in ways that are developmentally appropriate and relevant; learners are motivated to maintain equilibrium, especially when encountering incoherent or inconsistent information (Proulx, 2006). Overlapping with Piaget's research, I also credit Vygotsky's research that identified the essential role that the sociocultural context plays in the Zone of Proximal Development contributing to the process of meaning making (McLeod, 2019). Purposeful engagement in cognitive equilibrium and sociocultural contexts creates environments of rich and powerful learning individually, among peers, and with the teacher.

Additionally, I am an instructional coach, i.e., "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creating process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential" (International Coach Federation, 2020, para 9). Combining co-constructivism with instructional coaching provided an ideal milieu as an intern supervisor to apply the frame I have developed. Labeled TEACH, this frame is an acronym for my basics of learning, living, and lifting others: trust, efficacy, agency, and cultural humility i.e., the "ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identify that are most important to the person" (Hook et al., 2013; p. 2). Although the

expectations of Internship I had been written to fulfill the state's teacher excellence support system, integrating TEACH advanced proficiencies previously unknown to or uninvestigated by the interns. First, I modeled each of these constructs as I visited interns individually and in groups; second, I used the words to connect their prior knowledge and experiences with their new knowledge and experiences to pursue equilibrium during our conversations. Third, I emphasized the words bridging their purposes with their practices to ensure meaning making.

Throughout this process, interns appeared to grow, develop, and learn as they reflected on their readiness to teach, receptiveness to feedback, and their responsiveness to expectations. However, initially they seemed surprised when I began using co-constructivist strategies, practicing coaching techniques, and sharing TEACH; they were not accustomed to anyone ensuring them voice, choice, and inclusion during decision-making and helping them recognize their own comfort, confidence, and competence. As one intern candidly shared with me, "No one has treated me as an equal with the freedoms and responsibilities that I should and could be developing as a teacher." Similar comments were echoed by interns, which reassured me that my approaches were effective.

As the semester began, and as the newcomer to the undergraduate elementary education teacher preparation program, I completed each course expectation before introducing the assignment. Immediately, I recognized that the instructions and assessments could be strengthened in clarity, comprehension, and context, so I rewrote instructions and developed detailed rubrics aligned with program instructions and rubrics. I guided the interns with these supplemental documents and integrated the purpose, presence, and power of TEACH. My goal was to immerse interns into a holistic learning experience, mindfully supporting their acceptance of their individual personal characteristics, pedagogical capacities, and professional commitments. Soon, interns' advancements associated with readiness to teach, receptiveness to feedback, and responsiveness to expectations were clearly evident during classroom observations, reflection conversations, and assignment completion. Interns became more assured both in and out of classrooms and were beginning to recognize their own transformations. Successfully, interns completed writing professional growth plans (to be implemented throughout the semester in their classrooms) and teaching their first observed learning experiences.

In mid-March, when interns and I were sent home, the transition to our online experiences began with urgent attention to each intern's comfort, situation, and needs. Within the first few days, I emailed the 15 interns as a group with general information coupled with emailing each intern to schedule Zoom and/or telephone conversations. Committed to continuing the rapport established with each intern was paramount. The energy dedicated to each intern's personal, pedagogical, and professional co-

constructed knowledge and sociocultural context during the first half of the semester enabled us to expand and enrich both the teaching and the learning in ways that equipped and empowered each intern and for me to glean exceptional consequences from these extraordinary circumstances.

As we navigated the second half of the semester, interns conquered the second observed learning experience (conducted in their homes), wrote their professional growth plan reflections (with modifications), and completed a new assignment that we co-constructed as a group to replace an expectation originally intended to be conducted in their classrooms. Our collaboration in planning and differentiating outcomes to accommodate each intern (Kise, 2017) generated links to and visibility of trust, efficacy, agency, and cultural humility. Transitioning to online teaching and learning augmented the interns' readiness to teach, receptiveness to feedback, and responsiveness to expectations as well as my own learning about teaching with unanticipated discoveries.

During finals week, Internship I supervisors were required to meet with each intern, provide observations, and share evaluations. However, aligned with co-constructivism and coaching, I asked each intern to engage in a shared conversation and describe her greater strengths and lesser strengths (rather than weaknesses) in relationship to the prescribed observation criteria. As each intern self-assessed openly and honestly, collaboratively we delved into the intern's readiness to teach, receptiveness to feedback, and responsiveness to expectations. Through their authentic reflections, all 15 interns confirmed their transformations had exceeded their anticipations both in the classroom and online as they described the values of TEACH for themselves and their K-5 students. Now, as they wait for the 2020 fall semester and Internship II, the interns and I continue to communicate via email and Zoom to nurture their readiness, receptiveness, and responsiveness.

The 2020 spring semester certainly yielded exceptional consequences associated with my newfound readiness through learning, receptiveness through listening, and responsiveness through lifting. The experiences stretched and strengthened my outlook and openness toward possible paths. I am renewed in knowing that my future endeavors will include unique, most likely previously unexplored, opportunities for me to guide, support, and celebrate adults in pursuit of their (and my) own next, new adventures.

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COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter: Examining Anti-Asian Racism and Anti-Blackness in US Education

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ABSTRACT

The intersection of COVID-19 and the murder of George Floyd has refocused attention on the hitherto hidden, but pervasive, impacts of race and racism in the US. As this essay will argue, examining anti-Asian racism and anti-Blackness in the context of COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter movement, allow a deeper understanding of how white supremacy operates in institutions of higher education and in US society. While universities have a critical role and responsibility to spearhead transformative justice and change, racial capitalism is still at work, whereby profits are prioritized over delivering equitable educational experiences for students and the health of all its constituents. School closures in spring 2020 and reopening plans for fall 2020 are used to illustrate racial capitalism in higher education.

Keywords: Anti-Asian Racism, Anti-Blackness, Black Lives Matter, COVID-19, Higher Education, Model Minority Myth, Racial Capitalism, White Supremacy

The surge of COVID-19 and resurgence of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement due to a continuum of murders and use of excessive force on unarmed Black and Brown bodies—most recently George Floyd,

Breonna Taylor, Jacob Blake, and Deon Kay—and primarily by white police officers, has brought the United States to a moment of racial reckoning. These events reveal the impact of white supremacist systems and racism in every walk of US society, including education spaces, where students of color are more vulnerable to discrimination and more often experience inequitable access to education. Most higher education institutions have ostentatiously committed themselves to antiracism efforts, and yet, there has been little evidence to show actual change in the institutional power structures in addressing systemic racism. In this regard, distinguishing between racism, Sinophobia, anti-Asian racism and anti-Blackness allow for a closer scrutiny to expose overt and covert white supremacist structures and the ways they manifest in education settings. School closures due to COVID-19 and fall reopening plans offer two illustrations to further understand how this distinction and the notion of racial capitalism exposes structural inequities and white supremacy. Originally coined by Cedric J. Robinson (1983), *racial capitalism* centers the systemic ways in which capitalism continues to create and sustain racial inequities.

Starting in February 2020, widespread transmission of COVID-19 in the US led to school building closures, affecting at least 50.8 million public school students (Education Week, 2020), and over 1,100 colleges and universities in all 50 states cancelled in-person classes or shifted to online-only instruction (Smalley, 2020). In higher education, the sudden school closures meant for some students, lost housing, income, and food, as well as repercussions for student loan debts and financial aid. International students experienced additional barriers (Smalley, 2020). Community colleges, tribal colleges, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were further impacted, with the majority of students they serve affected by socioeconomic barriers that put them at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 (Mccaskill & King, 2020). Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that Latinx and African-American residents are three times more likely to become infected than their white neighbors, and are nearly twice as likely to die from the virus as white residents (Oppel Jr. et al., 2020). This unequal impact is due to systemic racism that historically denied access to healthy environments and the entrenched bias within healthcare and housing systems. For the African American community, the continued impact of enslavement, redlining, and Jim Crow laws is how racial capitalism works to have a fundamental impact on health inequities in the time of COVID-19 (Pirtle, 2020). The concept of racial capitalism offers valuable insights in understanding anti-Blackness and anti-Asian racism embedded within school closures and reopenings due to COVID-19.

Conversely, pledging commitment to antiracism efforts following George Floyd's murder and the fall reopening plans of many institutions, unravel the many gaps in addressing racism and systemic change. Antiracist

efforts, limited to statements, resources, and even curriculum changes, fall short in examining institutions as systems--questioning who holds power and what values they uphold. When we consider the fall reopening plans of many Ivy League institutions, profits seem to outweigh the delivery of equitable educational experiences and the health of all constituents. Across institutions of higher education, the dilemma between starting classes in person to remain financially viable versus laying off faculty and staff with reductions in enrollment, speaks to a larger question of capitalism or, more aptly, racial capitalism. The costs of classes being borne unfairly by students choosing in-person learning formats, should classes shift to remote format, raises the question as to how far institutions will go in terms of actually changing inequitable systems. Schools such as Harvard and Yale University, where students pay the same tuition amount for in person and remote instruction, without options to get refunds if classes go remote (Carey, 2020; Kristoffersen, 2020), point to how finances influence decisions. The import of such decisions also varies across tribal and community colleges, public and private universities, and the students they serve (Harper, 2020).

Another outcome of COVID-19 is a resurgence of Sinophobia in the US. The "Stop AAPI Hate Reporting Center" (2020) recorded more than 2300 reports of racist incidents against AAPI, including micro-aggressions, bullying, harassment, hate speech, and violence since January 2020. News outlets such as CNN initially referred to the virus as the "Wuhan virus" (Griffiths & Gan, 2020) and the "Chinese coronavirus" (Christensen & Senthilingam, 2020). In addition to using the same references, President Trump refers to COVID-19 as the "kung flu" (Nakamura, 2020). Such insensitive references serve to ascribe blame and justify discrimination against Asians. UC Berkeley, which has 34% Asian and Pacific Islander students ("UC Berkeley Quick Facts," 2020), came under scrutiny when its health services initially listed xenophobia as a "common" reaction to COVID-19. After much backlash, the post was taken down (Chiu, 2020).

Sinophobia at "the intersection of fear and hatred of China" (Billé, 2015, p. 10) is a throwback to the sentiments that sanctified the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which denied entry to Chinese immigrants to the US and the "yellow peril" stereotype that has plagued east Asians immigrating to the US for centuries: That they are dirty, disease-infested people who cannot be trusted (Tessler et al., 2020). Unsurprisingly, these are categorizations that remain at the root of anti-Black racism as well. Anti-Asian sentiments and acts were then disproportionately borne by those who look phenotypically Chinese. The recording of racist acts as anti-Asian incidents than Sinophobic incidents towards the beginning of the pandemic (Lee, 2020; Pan, 2020; Pomfret, 2020) obscures the disparate impact of COVID-19 racism within Asian American communities. Recent immigration restrictions curtailing legal immigration and the rescinded attempt to send back international students taking online courses (Trump,

2020) are part of a larger, insidious move to use the pandemic to expand on racist immigration policies. Another flaw in this homogenization of Asian Americans is the lack of awareness about the unequal impact of COVID-19 within Asian communities. For example, in California, Filipino Americans had a 40% mortality rate among Asian Americans in comparison to 3.3% US mortality rates, despite being only 25% of the state's population (Wong, 2020). In contrast, for Indian Americans, job losses, financial worries, and the immigration ban were the primary stressors in the wake of COVID-19 (Kumar, 2020).

The distinction of Anti-Asian and Sinophobic racism is also important to unpack the myth of the model minority. Coined by Yuji Ichioka and Emma Gee in 1968, the term "Asian American" was meant to mobilize a collective identity to combat orientalist definitions and racial injustice (Kambhampaty, 2020). Soon, the model minority myth, the overgeneralization that Asian Americans achieve universal educational and occupational success, rose to prominence (Poon et al., 2016). The myth suggested Asian Americans were intelligent, quiet and obedient, and capable of overcoming disadvantages through strong family values and hard work. They were also considered "averse to challenging authority, adaptive, assimilationist, demure, shy, and isolated," (Yi et al., 2020, p. 20), which made them "models" for other minorities. This myth homogenizes Asian Americans as a uniform group disregarding the different histories of oppression, resources, and opportunities with which sub-groups of Asian Americans immigrated and contributes to racial exclusion from research, policy, and practice considerations that might better support distinct Asian American communities in education. It has also been used as a political tool by white supremacists to invalidate claims of systemic racism against non-Asian American People of Color and has advanced the deficit orientation that communities of color were to blame for inequalities in the first place (Yi et al., 2020). The recent Justice Department's charge against Yale University discriminating against Asian and white students in violation of civil rights law (Hartocollis, 2020), and the 2014 lawsuit filed by Asian American students against Harvard University's affirmative action, funded by right-wing activist Edward Blum, is an "example of how white power perpetuates anti-Blackness within Asian communities at the expense of Black people" (Ramirez, 2020, para. 7). Conversely, examining anti-Blackness allows scrutiny of "affirmative action" in terms of the inclusion of Black people, both as faculty and students, and how the "inclusion" of non-Black People of Color can be weaponized to exclude Black people.

> In educational institutions, Jared Sexton's (2008) analysis of multiracialism in relation to anti-Blackness is useful to consider how schools pit the academic success of (some) Asian American students against and above the academic difficulties of Black students. Here, schools can be celebrated as diverse despite the

absence of Black students in the building and / or in the higher academic tracks. (Dumas, 2016, pp. 16-17)

Taking note of the complicity of Tou Thao, a police officer of Hmong ethnicity, in the murder of George Floyd (Westerman et al., 2020), endorses the need to distinguish between racism and anti-Blackness, and to uncover how white supremacy invisibly operates within Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) communities. Anti-Blackness lies at the core of the many Asian Americans opposing the Black Lives Matter protests as "looting and rioting" (Mishra, 2020) and conforming to the model minority stereotype.

Further illustrating the outcomes of anti-Blackness, William A. Smith (2004) introduced the conceptual framework of racial battle fatigue, "a response to the distressing mental/emotional conditions that result from facing racism daily" (p. 180) in both education and in society at large. The impact of COVID-19 and heightened levels of stress following George Floyd's murder further exacerbated the disparity in impact on BIPOC students and faculty. One of the first surveys of a USA-wide sample of 725 full-time college students on COVID-19-related experiences in Spring 2020 revealed that of the 9.2% who experienced discrimination in the sample, 65.7% were Asian/Asian American (Cohen et al., 2020). A community sample of the Household Pulse Survey distributed by the US Census (2020) indicated that the demonstrations and debate following George Floyd's murder has exacted a disproportionate emotional and mental toll, with rates of anxiety and depression almost triple for Black people and Asian Americans in comparison to white and Latinx Americans (Fowers & Wan, 2020). A recent study measuring the impact of publicized incidents of police violence on "racially underrepresented" college students at various colleges and universities in the U.S. showed that students displayed symptoms consistent with post-traumatic stress disorder (Campbell & Valera, 2020). The invariant nature of how racial stressors affect BIPOCs points to the crucial need to distinguish between racism and anti-Blackness. Comparing these research findings with both spring closures and fall reopenings in 2020, and the racial toll experienced by BIPOC students, staff, and faculty, vis-a-vis those who profit from those decisions, reveal the ways in which racial capitalism operates in higher education.

The current moment of racial reckoning highlights the urgency for non-Black People of Color to build solidarities with the Black Lives Matter movement in resisting racist tropes, exposing inequities, and demanding reparations. Shared experiences of othering and racism in the wake of COVID-19 has created a common ground of solidarity that Asian Americans and African Americans can forge against white supremacy. The rise of movements, such as *Asian Americans Advancing Justice*, *Asians for Black Lives Matter*, and *Letters for BLM* addressing Asian American family circles spearheaded by students of Asian descent, point to a changing

dynamic within the community to break away from the model minority stereotypes underpinned by anti-Blackness.

Within institutions of higher education, efforts to spearhead antiracism through training, hiring practices, and revisiting curricula—while welcome—does not negate the fact "that most presidents, senior administrators, and trustees/regents at colleges and universities are white" (Harper, 2020, "Racialization of Input" section). Reopening plans, especially with in-person options, place the highest risk of loss on constituents of color, from loss of tuition to loss of life, as did school closures due to COVID-19. Financial trouble exacerbated by COVID-19 closures and the lack of federal funding, have had devastating consequences for tribal and community colleges, again disparately affecting communities of color (Bull & Goldrick-Rab, 2020; Jaschik, 2020). Moving beyond antiracism, which is often educational for white constituents, it is important to integrate ethnic studies and cultures of the global majority to decolonize and counteract white supremacist epistemologies. Scrutinizing the ways in which racism and capitalism entwine to sustain white supremacy in institutions of higher education is important for understanding, countering and reinventing a new system where each person is valued equally. Mobilization of coalitions among BIPOCs and those who support such efforts across faculty, students, and staff is an important step towards equality in higher education spaces.

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Are they Paying Attention, or are they Shoe-shopping? Evidence from Online Learning

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ABSTRACT

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, schools across the nation made an abrupt transition to teaching online as states instituted stay-at-home measures. This mixed methods study examines the attentiveness of adult learners in an online Doctorate of Education program. Three main findings emerged: 1) online courses where the students and instructor all are logged on to Zoom synchronously had higher average attentiveness compared to hybrid format courses where some students are physically in the classroom and some are on zoom; 2) average attentiveness was higher during the synchronous portion of classes with an asynchronous portion compared to fully synchronous online classes; and 3) average attentiveness was lower for class segments of over 30 minutes than class segments under 30 minutes.

Keywords: mixed methods, online attentiveness, online learning, Zoom

Online learning platforms offer flexibility in delivery of instruction and learning, at all levels of education. In response to the coronavirus pandemic, many schools across the nation made an abrupt transition to teaching online as states instituted stay-at-home measures (Molnar, 2020; Education Week 2020a). Online platforms were implemented in schools across the country, turning school into a distance learning experience for 55 million students (Superville, 2020). One popular platform, Zoom - the 7th most widely used

communication tool in the nation, according to Molnar (2020) - has the ability to have students log on using video and audio for full group instruction, as well as small group work or individual meetings with the teacher through Zoom's "breakout" room feature. Outlets such as Education Week have since featured numerous tips for online instruction (see, for example, Herold, 2020; Mitchell, 2020; Ferlazzo, 2020), as well as warning stories about lack of online security (Lieberman, 2020a; Rauf, 2020), scattershot rigorous online implementation (Superville, 2020a; Schwartz, 2020a), low teacher morale (Johnson, 2020; Will, 2020a), woeful student engagement (Education Week, 2020b; Prothero, 2020; Schwartz, 2020b; Will, 2020b) and increased inequities when some students lack reliable internet access or available devices from which to join online forums (Gewertz, 2020; Lieberman, 2020c; Lieberman, 2020d).

In addition to the flurry of anecdotal stories, research prior to the pandemic has found techniques to monitor and motivate students in face to face classrooms do not necessarily translate to similar levels of attentiveness in online learners (Gillett-Swan, 2017; Szpunar, Moulton & Schacter, 2013). Barriers to online attentiveness can include the technology capabilities of the student and the instructor, the length of the lecture or class, and how the information lends itself to an online format (Holley and Oliver, 2010; Orland and Attard, 2015; Risko, et al., 2012). Lack of teacher training and experience in using teaching strategies specific to online learners can negatively impact student engagement and attentiveness (Crawford-Ferre and Weist, 2012; Fish and Wickersham, 2009; Milman, 2014; Risko, et al., 2012).

This study addressed the following research questions:

1) Is there a statistical difference between average attentiveness in courses in which all students participate via zoom compared with courses in which some students are in a physical classroom and some join via zoom? What accounts for any differences?
2) Is there a statistical difference between average attentiveness in courses with an asynchronous portion compared with courses that are fully synchronous? What accounts for any differences?
3) Is there a statistical difference between average attentiveness in class segments of different lengths? What accounts for any differences?

Methods and findings

To answer the above research questions, we employed a sequential mixed-methods approach (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004): quantitative data to assess differences in attentiveness in different conditions and focus groups to help explain what accounts for any differences. The quantitative data examined the attentiveness of two cohorts of students (n = 30 students) in a Doctorate of Education (D.Ed) program over the online learning

platform Zoom. Attentiveness data were collected from 18 courses, with (typically) 10 sessions per course and included a total of 6827 individual attentiveness score segments, calculated by Zoom as the percentage of time each student had the Zoom window open as the primary window (i.e., not opened in the background, with an email browser open in front of the Zoom window). We analyzed the attentiveness data generated by Zoom to see if there was a difference in the average attentiveness of students in various learning contexts. The weighted average was calculated within each individual class period for each individual student.

Next, we conducted focus to help explain the quantitative findings. All 30 D.Ed. students were invited via email to participate. Nine students volunteered to participate, including students from both cohorts. Three focus groups were conducted, with two to four participants per group for a total of nine participants. The focus groups followed a semi-structured protocol (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2013) developed by our research team and each lasted approximately 50 minutes. Participants were asked to reflect broadly on their experience over Zoom in the D.Ed. program, with instructions to give specific examples of attentiveness or lack of attentiveness focused not on individual course content or instructors, but the Zoom platform at large. The focus groups did not discuss the quantitative findings, but asked the participants to reflect on their attentiveness in the range class formats - fully synchronous, partly asynchronous, fully over Zoom, and hybrid – and to consider their attentiveness during class segments of different times. The focus groups were conducted via Zoom to accommodate the dispersed nature of students in the program who live and work across the state, with one research team member who is a student in the D.Ed. program leading the focus groups. The focus groups were recorded for accuracy and transcribed verbatim for analysis; transcripts were coded deductively (Miles, et al., 2013) to uncover themes aimed at shining a light on the quantitative findings (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

Analysis showed (see Figure 1) that online courses where all of the students as well as the instructor are logged on to Zoom synchronously had slightly statistically significantly higher average attentiveness ($M = 0.80$, $SD = 0.18$) compared to hybrid format courses ($M=0.76$, $SD=0.21$) where some students are physically in the classroom and some are on zoom. Qualitative findings from the focus groups helped explain this finding. Participants described feeling isolated from the instructor and the in-person students in classes where only a portion of the students joined via Zoom. For example, one participant reported that “professors can forget about the Zoom students if they are not on Zoom themselves,” focusing on the in-person attendees.

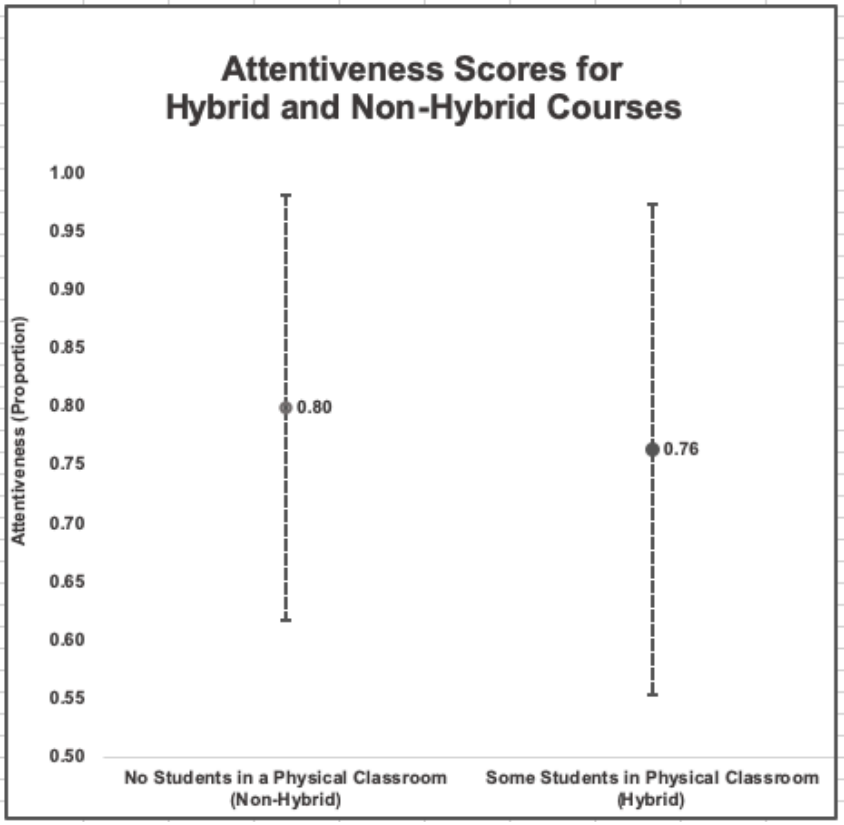

Figure 1. Attentiveness scores for hybrid and non-hybrid courses

Analysis for research question 2 showed (see Figure 2) that average attentiveness was likewise slightly statistically significantly higher (M= 0.80, SD=0.19) during the synchronous portion of class in courses with an asynchronous class portion compared to courses with a fully synchronous online format (M=0.77, SD=.20). Qualitative findings from the focus groups confirmed this finding. Participants reported that they often multi-tasked during classes that did not have an asynchronous portion, and therefore required them to log on to Zoom for three hours. Participants also reported a preference for this flipped classroom approach, with a pre-recorded portion, so that they could "do it at your own pace in your own speed and then you come to class and it's like applied and in-depth" during the synchronous portion on Zoom. As one participant put it, "That way our live synchronous can be more concentrated to the salient points."

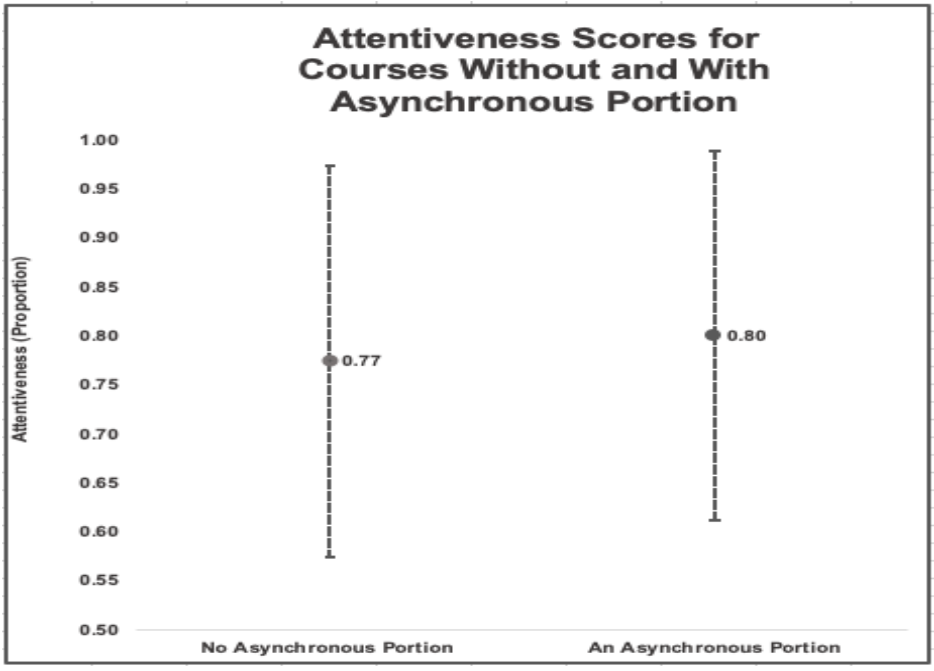

Figure 2. Attentiveness scores with and without asynchronous portions

Finally, analysis for research question 3 showed (see Figure 3) that average attentiveness was statistically significantly lower for class segments of over 30 mins (0.76) than class segments under 30 mins (0.90). Focus group participants helped explain this finding. There was broad consensus that class lectures or discussions that lasted over 30 minutes were prone to reduced attentiveness, noting that the online platform has the additional challenge of maintaining engagement when logging on in isolation. "Things that keep me engaged are when we're participating and we are going to do a small group." Students reported feeling more engaged when they are assigned to a breakout room, and given a task, rather that listening to straight lecture through the class time. A theme regarding attentiveness emerged from the breakout rooms—that if the professor used solely lecture as the pedagogical approach, there was very little that could keep the students focused the whole time. One participant indicated that "it just comes down to people who tend to lecture the whole time. On Zoom there are professors who would also just lecture the whole time in person as well."

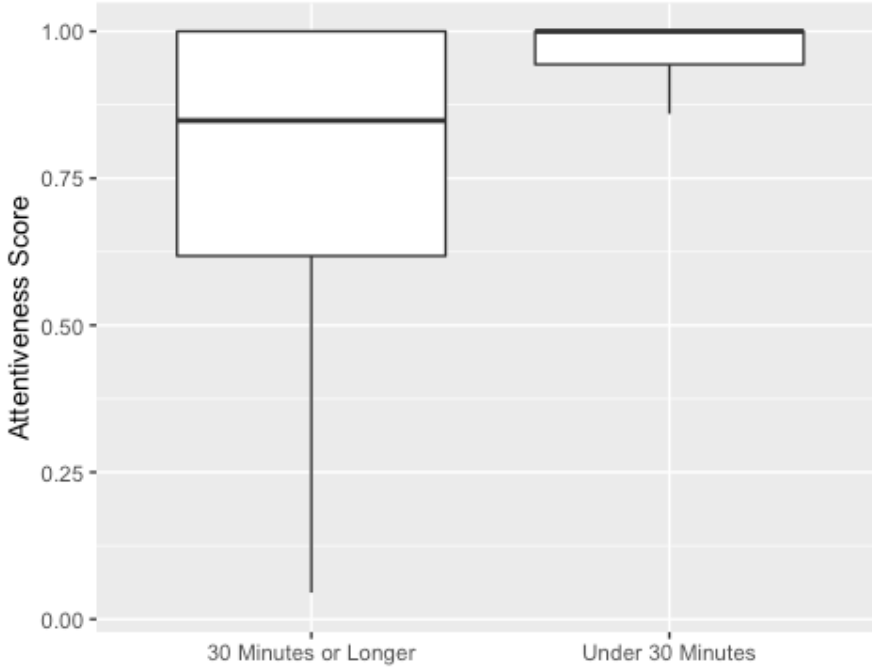

Figure 3. Attentiveness by length of class segment

Conclusions and implications

As schools plan for fall re-openings and weigh the benefits of using distance learning during the lingering COVID 19 pandemic (Lieberman, 2020b; Bailey and Hess, 2020), findings from this exploratory study can help schools tailor format and instructional choices to maximize attentiveness. One implication of our findings is that students are less attentive when they are on Zoom while other students are in a physical classroom with the instructor. As schools consider social distancing options in response to the pandemic (Blad, 2020; Superville, 2020b; Maxwell, 2020), our results would indicate it may be better to have all students attend via an online platform rather than having some online and some in person. Further, our findings highlight a reduced attentiveness during lecture portions of synchronous only classes, a finding that schools may want to consider when planning for the fall. Offering a mix of asynchronous self-paced learning and synchronous discussion and small group time may result in greater attentiveness than meeting live for long periods of time. Finally, synchronous sessions should include short class segments – a short lecturer followed by partner work, for example, as our participants reported multi-tasking when any single class segment extended beyond 30 minutes.

Distance learning has definite benefits, whether in a statewide D.Ed program or for K-12 schools trying to continue teaching and learning during

a pandemic. Lessons learned from this mixed methods study can help inform planning and class delivery to ensure that students are attentive during online classes. Although individual teachers may have personal preferences to how they want to engage with online teaching, the findings reported here suggest that there are clear attentiveness gains in avoiding hybrid learning environments, keeping online segments under 30 minutes, and limiting the overall duration of online classes. Rather than leaving it up to individual teachers, schools and school districts can reduce confusion by implementing consistent guidelines for online delivery. New York City public schools, which plans to implement blended learning for some students and remote learning for others, recently delayed the start of the school year amid threats from the teachers union to strike (Jorgensen and Culliton, 2020), concerned that starting school without clear guidance would cause "one of the biggest debacles in history," as decried teachers' union leader Michael Mulgrew (Closson, 2020).

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