Chris R. Glass · Krishna Bista *Editors*

Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education

For The Future Generations of International Students

OJED JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Springer

Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education

Chris R. Glass · Krishna Bista
Editors

Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education

For The Future Generations of International Students

Springer

Editors
Chris R. Glass
Boston College
Boston, MA, USA

Krishna Bista
Morgan State University
Baltimore, MD, USA

ISBN 978-3-030-93864-2 ISBN 978-3-030-93865-9 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to editors and colleagues at the STAR Scholars Network. We also appreciate the support of colleagues whom we worked with over the years at the Open Journals in Education, a consortium of the professional journals, the Comparative and International Education Society's Study Abroad and International Students SIG, and the *Journal of International Students.*

We would also like to acknowledge the help of all the scholars who were involved in this project and, more specifically, the authors and reviewers that took part in the review process. Without their support, this book would not have become a reality. At Morgan State University, Dr. Krishna Bista would like to thank his colleagues for their encouragement and support including graduate students and graduate assistants in the Department of Advanced Studies, Leadership, and Policy. Dr. Chris R. Glass would like to thank his colleagues at Boston College and at Old Dominion University.

We also thank the following reviewers who assisted us in reviewing manuscripts received for this book. It could not be possible to finalize the selected chapters without their evaluations and constructive feedback.

Chapter Reviewers:

Susan Boafo-Arthur

Helen Bond

Charles Brown

Ella Carter

Santiago Castiello-Gutiérrez

Maria Cinque

Yang Gao

Helen Hazen

Ran Hu

Jacob Kelley

Jie Li

Mingxuan Liang

Kamil Luczaj

Crystal London

Melissa Kaye Mace

Norah Al Musharraf

Lien Pham

Zachary Taylor

We would like to thank the following colleagues for their feedback on an early draft of this book as well for their endorsements:

- Dawn Joseph, Associate Professor, Deakin University, Victoria, Australia
- Cheryl Matherly, Vice President/Vice Provost, International Affairs, Lehigh University, Pennsylvania, USA
- Aliya Kuzhabekova, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Education, Nazarbayev University, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan
- Santiago Castiello-Gutiérrez, Center for the Study of Higher Education, The University of Arizona, Tucson Arizona, USA
- Rahul Choudaha, Principal Researcher, DrEducation, Washington DC Area, USA

Praises for Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education

"This compelling book captures multiple theoretical lenses across three thematic domains. Chapters employ mixed methodologies raising awareness about issues of agency and inclusion in higher education. The valuable analysis of the chapters brings a critical understanding of the intersectionality of family and communities, race, citizenship and migration, and diversity, inclusion, and accessibility, making it an accessible and highly commended read for policymakers, academics, and students."

—Dawn Joseph, *Associate Professor, Deakin University, Victoria, Australia*

* * *

"This is a timely book.Reimagining Internationalization and International Initiatives at Historically Black College and Universities fills a significant gap in our discussion of internationalization of higher education.It provides a much-needed scholarly examination of the ways in which internationalization supports and advances the mission of HBCUs and, importantly, of the particular strategies used by these institutions."

—Cheryl Matherly, *Vice President/Vice Provost, International Affairs Lehigh University, Pennsylvania, USA*

* * *

"Covering diverse topics ranging from the role of family and parental status in study abroad experiences to the cost of international mobility and the ways the mobility is shaped by the intersection of race, ethnicity, nationality, physical and linguistic ability, this timely and thought-provoking collection of studies from around the world brings an important contribution to the recent scholarly discussions about inequality, neoliberalism, and neocolonialism in international higher education."

—Aliya Kuzhabekova, *Associate Professor, Graduate School of Education Nazarbayev University, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan*

"International education is becoming more diverse than ever; notions of mostly affluent, traditionally college-aged students from certain countries being able to study overseas are quickly being debunked by new data. Still, research on education abroad and international students is highly concentrated on the experiences and background of the dominant majority of participants. Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education for New Generations of International Students is both a compilation of emerging empirical studies on non-traditional populations and approaches as well as an invitation to rethink our paradigms around international education."

—Santiago Castiello-Gutiérrez, *Center for the Study of Higher Education The University of Arizona, Tucson Arizona, USA*

* * *

"Few academic endeavors have addressed the complexity of student experiences in the way this book does. The diversity and expertise of authors offer timely insights into the widening inequality in the internationalization of higher education."

—Rahul Choudaha, *Principal Researcher, DrEducation Washington DC Area, USA*

* * *

"From decision-making of international students to unethical practices of study abroad agencies. The book delivers on the promise to catalyze the debate on reimagining mobility in higher education by building on a well balanced collection of topics and approaches."

—Miloslav Bahna, *Senior Researcher, Institute for Sociology, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava, Slovakia*

* * *

"By illuminating dynamic and intersectional roles of ascribed and avowed student identities from multiple research perspectives, the chapters in this book provide valuable insight for ethically responsive change-makers striving to better serve the needs of globally diverse students."

—Tiffany Viggiano, *Admissions Practitioner & Scholar, Co-President of Fulbright Association Oregon Chapter, Oregon, USA*

"With its wide-ranging chapters, this book sheds light on previously under-researched aspects of the international student experience, such as students' experiences in non-traditional destinations, students with disabilities, and the role of educational agents. This volume will help scholars stay on top of emerging topics in the field."

—Elizabeth Buckner, *Assistant Professor, Higher Education, University of Toronto, ON, Canada*

* * *

"This book is an integral piece of the timely and much-needed dialogue on the issues of equity and diversity in international education and student mobility. It provides invaluable insights into international students' experiences and gives voice to those students who are underrepresented in higher education across a variety of geographical contexts. This is a must-read for both researchers and educators, as well as university leaders who are interested in creating more inclusive and welcoming learning environments for an increasingly diverse international student population."

—Veronika Rozhenkova, *Postdoctoral Scholars, University of California Irvine, USA*

* * *

"Exploring the severe impact of COVID 19 as an unprecedented pandemic in human history, this book contains the latest thinking on the role of higher education in developing more equitable higher education programs all around the world. Cutting-edge research within the role of policies and resources of higher education during and post-COVID era offers a roadmap to the possible niche-creating worldwide future problems posed by global warming, providing valuable insight from several countries."

—Hatice Altun, *Lecturer in the School of Foreign Languages, Pamukkale University, Denizli, Turkey*

Book Blurb

This book explores emerging populations of mobile international students in order to consider innovative and inclusive approaches for a more equitable and socially just higher education for new generations of international students. It offers critical reflections on the intersections of race, place, and space at universities hosting international students across multiple geographic and cultural contexts. The volume is designed to catalyze debate on how international student learning and exchange needs to be reimagined for new generations of students in a world of increasing complexity and virtual mobility. International student mobility in higher education is intended to serve as an educational experience that speaks to the need for more interculturally sensitive and globally competent learners. However, internationalization practices like study abroad have increasingly been influenced by neoliberalism, and dynamics of commodification and consumerism, emphasizing the private benefits of such experiences in terms of the social and economic benefits to individual participants. This raises the question of inequality in such internationalization practices; who is benefitting from it? As post-secondary institutions around the world become more and more internationalized, what are the undesirable effects of these developments? Given the rapid expansion of research on both internationalization and inequality in higher education, it is foreseeable that this book will become a much-referenced text within the field and profession.

Chris R. Glass, Ph.D., is Professor of the Practice in the Lynch School of Education and Human Development at Boston College, Massachusetts, USA

Krishna Bista, Ed.D., is Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Advanced Studies, Leadership and Policy at Morgan State University, Maryland, USA

Introduction

Chris R. Glass and Krishna Bista

Practically every article on international student mobility begins with the same ritualistic prologue: a reference to the sheer volume of the millions of international students crossing borders for higher education. The introduction to this book will not do that because such an emphasis is misleading. The emphasis on international student enrollment fits the evermore metrics-driven higher education institutions, with rankings used to determine who is moving up in the league tables to citation metrics used to measure the impact of research. Universities send press releases when their ranking increases; journals trumpet their impact factors when they increase; and international educators take pride in the numbers of international students they serve.

There is a perverse logic to the quantification of higher education. Not only do numbers reduce an inherently complex and all-too-human endeavor to digits; it seems progress is measured as moving 'up' and quality often comes at the expense of another in a zero-sum game. Further, the inherent logic is that there is limitless capacity of the current higher education system. The logic assumes limitless capacity for growth.

Not only is this all-too-common approach to international student mobility deeply flawed; it creates an entirely inaccurate picture of the future and the deep challenges ahead for humanity. There is clear evidence that the capacities of the planet are reaching their limits and that the current political or economic system is reaching a breaking point. The current system was designed for wealthy and White student populations, far removed from the diverse and dynamic demographics of today's international students. Too often issues of barriers to access and inclusion are not flaws of the system; they are features of it.

This book is a reckoning with that reality such that an alternative path might be developed. The authors in this volume seek to highlight the deep challenges, injustices, and unsustainability of the current system for international students. They seek not to reduce International student mobility to metrics of enrollment over time but intersections of race, place, and space. The authors illuminate how to understand migration for education, not through rational-choice theory of a single actor, but as journeys that involve families and communities.

The dynamics of race in migration for education are all-to-present in the lived experiences of access and inclusion. Belonging is often not a matter of being welcomed on campus, but a matter of international students organizing to make a space where their contributions are valued and welcomed. Oft-discussed ‘challenges of adjustment’ are simply the experience of confronting historic barriers constructed by institutions and inheriting the legacies of colonialism.

The data that dominates how we measure international student growth reduces their origins to a single place, their inclusion to a single space, and their identities to a single race when it is clear the on-the-ground realities are far more complex. International students’ origins, identities, and involvements span across multiple geographic and cultural contexts simultaneously. Their belonging is multi-rooted across places and spaces that include their universities, but also communities and cultures not captured by a single country of origin.

Their experience of race is multifaceted: they are often thrust unexpectedly into the racial dynamics of their institution. They experience the legacies of colonialism and White supremacy; they feel the pain of such legacies in their bodies, which can impact their mental health and well-being. Multiple identities intersect and intertwine to create double, or even triple, barriers to full inclusion of their university. International students form communities, build solidarity, and create spaces for themselves and others where they belong.

Much is lost when the precarious future of international student mobility is assumed to be like the past. In the not-too-distant future, we face the potential of a climate crisis that poses an existential threat to the survival of humans and the planet.The authors in this book provide research and evidence to imagine alternative futures and create a more humane world.

The chapters are rich and nuanced in exploring intersections of race, place, and space. Rather than atomizing students, they explore social and cultural dynamics of family and community, race and migration, and inclusion and accessibility. They illustrate complex and capacious identities across multiple geographies and cultures. And, importantly, they fearlessly reckon with the injustices of the current system in outlining alternative visions for the future.

Part I explores the role of parenting, families, and marriage in migratory experiences in pursuit of a better future through education. The next part expands the lens to consider dynamics of multiple identities of race and citizenship across contexts—from Sweden, Latvia, to Great Britain. The final part draws these threads together by providing a holistic exploration of accessibility and inclusion for populations of international students often under-explored in the research literature.

We hope the evidence outlined in the book prompts difficult discussions of the intersections of race, citizenship, and migration in your context. We hope the recommendations for policy and practice provide a basis to catalyze change to reconstruct alternative futures and build a more humane and sustainable world. We cannot be certain what the future of international student mobility may bring; we can be certain that what we do today will create that future.

Contents

About the Editors

Chris R. Glass, Ph.D., is Professor of the Practice in the Lynch School of Education and Human Development at Boston College, USA. Previously, he was an Associate Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Educational Foundations & Leadership at Old Dominion University, Virginia. His research and writing focus on issues of equity and sustainability in international higher education and community colleges. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of International Students* and the Co-Editor of the *Routledge Studies in the Global Student Mobility* book series. He was the recipient of the NAFSA Innovative Research in International Education Award in 2016, and he currently serves as Vice President of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) Study Abroad and International Students SIG. His research has been published in the *International Journal of Educational Development, Studies in Higher Education*, *Higher Education Research & Development, Compare*, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, and the *Journal of Studies in International Education.*

Krishna Bista, Ed.D., is a Professor of Higher Education in the Department of Advanced Studies, Leadership and Policy at Morgan State University, Maryland. He is the Founding Editor of the *Journal of International Students*, a quarterly publication in international education and the Co-Editor of the Routledge Studies in the Global Student Mobility book series. He is also the Founding Chair of the Study Abroad and International Students SIG at the Comparative and International Education Society. His latest books are *Inequalities in Study Abroad and Student Mobility*, w/Kommers, (Routledge, 2021), *Higher Education in Nepal*, w/Sharma and Raby (Routledge, 2020), and *Global Perspectives on International Experiences in Higher Education* (Routledge, 2019).

List of Figures

List of Tables

Part I
Family and Communities

Chapter 1
Passion, Parenting, or Something Else? A Cross-Cultural Analysis of University Students' Academic Decision-Making

Emily P. Schell

Abstract Research on American students' academic decision-making primarily focuses on the role of academic passion in a student's choice of major or graduate program. Recent scholarship also acknowledges the importance of parental influence in this decision-making process, particularly for international students from collectivist cultures. Previous studies, however, fail to account for other factors. Through 31 interviews with European American, Chinese American, and Chinese international undergraduate and graduate students, this study seeks to better understand other factors at work in academic decision-making. Although passion influenced European American students' decision-making and parenting influenced their Chinese international peers, financial security, desire to impact communities, peer influence, and self-efficacy also played prominent roles. These findings suggest that mainstream academic advising, which continues to emphasize academic passion, does not match the motivations of U.S. universities' increasingly diverse students. By acknowledging these other factors, university advisors may better support diverse students in their academic decision-making.

Keywords Academic decision-making · Culturally responsive advising · Higher education · Immigration · Qualitative methods

1.1 Introduction

We often ask university students: "What are you studying?" Yet, we rarely ask an equally important question: "How did you decide on this course of study?" Choosing a major or graduate program is a key step in a student's educational and career trajectory. For many students, this choice lays the foundation for their future and shapes the mindset through which they see the world (Galotti, 1999). It is therefore critical that university personnel understand the decision-making process through which students arrive at this choice in order to best support this process. Previous

E. P. Schell (✉)
Stanford University, Stanford, CA, USA
e-mail: eschell@stanford.edu

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_1

research has reduced this complex process to five factors: academic passion (i.e., "a strong, consistent interest" in an academic subject Vallerand, 2012); parental influence; socioeconomic status; gender; and race. University personnel, such as academic advisors, further oversimplify this process by solely emphasizing the role of academic passion (Han & Ling, 2016; White, 2015). In response to this oversimplification, I have chosen to delve into the potential motivations underpinning students' academic decision-making. Utilizing semi-structured interviews of 31 European American, Chinese American, and Chinese international undergraduate and graduate students at seven U.S. institutions, I seek to answer the following two questions: (1) what factors influence university students' academic decision-making; and (2) how do these factors differ across the populations in my sample?

1.2 Background

I opt to focus on European American, Chinese American, and Chinese international students because of their markedly different cultural backgrounds. These different backgrounds enable me to understand a broader spectrum of motivations underpinning students' academic decisions. Additionally, while some previous studies have analyzed Chinese international students' decision-making (as discussed in the Literature Review below), few studies address the decision-making processes of their Chinese American peers. These Chinese American students represent a sizable percentage of immigrants at most four-year universities (Zong & Batalova, 2017). These students have also spent the majority (if not all) of their lives navigating two different cultural terrains (Berry, 1997), which renders their decision-making processes unique from those of their Chinese international and European American peers. This study therefore provides an important contribution to the field's understanding of diverse students' academic decision-making.

Although American and Chinese cultures differ in numerous ways, I focus my analysis on one primary difference: individualism versus collectivism (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis et al., 1988). Individualism has served as the bedrock of mainstream American culture since the mid-1700s. While America has undergone many changes, its fundamental emphasis on the individual and the importance of liberty, independence, and self-reliance remains unchanged (Williams, 1967). In contrast, Chinese culture is grounded in collectivism. Collectivism's roots in China trace back to a neo-Confucian tradition lionizing filial piety and the family as the primary social unit (Ikels, 2004). In an individualist culture, such as the U.S., individuals are expected to make decisions primarily based on their own interests, with the potential for input from trusted others. In a collectivist culture, such as China, individuals are expected to make decisions collaboratively with other stakeholders, such as parents and mentors, with the potential for personal interest to play a part. Chinese American students may find themselves torn between these two distinct modes of decision-making as they navigate the complexities of acculturation (Berry, 1997).

American and Chinese universities have also adopted markedly different approaches to cultivating students, which can—and, as I find, does—manifest in markedly different academic decision-making processes. At U.S. universities, increased enrollment and diversity, student displeasure, and political unrest ushered in a new model for student cultivation by the 1980s: the student-as-client model (Rudolf, 1990). This model continues to drive American university decision-making today, contributing to increased investments in student support staff, such as advisors (Saichaie & Morphew, 2014). Chinese higher education saw a similar increase in enrollment in the 1980s as China recovered from its Cultural Revolution. Chinese institutions, however, neither experienced nor tolerated student protests that led their American counterparts to pivot towards supporting and appeasing students (Li, 2004). China instead mobilized its institutions and students as important assets in a national project to bolster China's position as a global superpower. Ministry of Education initiatives, such as the "Double First-Class University Plan," funneled immense resources to select public universities to support their research capacities and improve graduates' competitiveness in the global job market (Peters & Besley, 2018). These well-funded public universities admit students primarily based on their National College Entrance Examination (*gaokao*) scores (Liu, 2013). In contrast, American universities generally rely on a "holistic review" that takes into account personal essays, reference letters, and extracurricular activities in addition to grades and test scores (Hoover, 2013).

Such cultural and historical contexts lay the groundwork for different decision-making trajectories for students. U.S. institutions, with their holistic review that integrates students' academic interests and skills, encourage undergraduates to explore various paths based on their interests. To help guide students through this exploration process, first-year undergraduates are often paired with faculty, peer, and/or staff advisors (White, 2015). Although graduate students begin their journey with greater specialization than undergraduates, they still undergo an exploratory process to find a research group or career specialization that best aligns with their interests (Lei & Chuang, 2010). Conversely, Chinese institutions, with their test-based system, encourage undergraduates to choose a major based on their Liberal Arts or Natural Sciences specialization on the *gaokao*. Chinese graduate students are similarly given less flexibility in their academic decision-making and have few opportunities to move based on personal interest once placed in a research group or career specialization (Huang, 2012).

This comparison of U.S. and Chinese universities is not normative. Each approach suits different students—a debate beyond the scope of my paper. Nevertheless, understanding students' cultural, historical, and social contexts is important because students bring these unique identities with them to their universities and academic decision-making.

1.3 Literature Review

As U.S. universities continue to build diverse classes of students, scholars have sought to understand the academic decision-making processes of these students. A large body of work has emerged from this inquiry, covering topics such as the role of gender in students' choice of STEM (Shapiro & Sax, 2011), barriers to entry for Latinx and Black students in STEM (McGee & Bentley, 2017), and the role of socioeconomic status in selecting a major (Cox, 2016). The literature focuses narrowly on five factors informing students' academic decisions (academic passion, parents, gender, race, and socioeconomic status), but overlooks other important factors.

Research on the populations in my study—European American, Chinese diaspora, and East Asian students more broadly—focuses on an even smaller number of factors. Scholars primarily invoke the conceptual framework of individualism versus collectivism to emphasize the role academic passion plays in European American students' choices and the role parents play in Chinese international students' choices (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In a comparative, quantitative study of European American and East Asian undergraduates, Tracey and Robbins (2006) find that "interest-major" congruence (the degree to which one's academic interests inform one's choice of major) is higher among European Americans than their East Asian peers. The researchers do not investigate other potential factors; they isolate academic interest as the sole factor for which a major could have congruence. Adams, Pryor, and Adams' oft-cited (1994) quantitative study of first-year undergraduates also finds that interest is a particularly important factor in choice of major. Their sample, however, predominantly consists of European American students. Studies of Chinese international students' decision-making typically emphasize the authoritarian nature of Chinese parenting (e.g., Kagitcibasi, 2012), giving what some scholars, such as Chao (1995), argue is an outsized impression of parents' influence over their children's decisions. In their quantitative study, Hou et al. (2013) find that such Chinese parents' authoritarian parenting styles correlate with lower parental emotional warmth, which in turn makes it more difficult for undergraduates to feel as if they are making academic decisions that satisfy themselves as well as their families.

To date, few studies analyze the decision-making processes of Asian American or Chinese American university students. Research that addresses these students tends to place their decision-making process on the continuum between the passion-driven process of their European American peers and the parent-driven process of their Chinese international peers (e.g., Jose et al., 2000; Liew et al., 2014). For instance, in Song and Glick's (2004) comparative, quantitative study of Asian American and European American undergraduates, researchers focus narrowly on family influence, academic passion, and assimilation in shaping students' choice of major. They find few differences in the motivational factors of Asian American and European American men, but lower levels of academic passion in women who are "less assimilated." Interestingly, another comparative, quantitative study of Chinese American, European American, and Latinx American high school seniors finds that Chinese American students were most likely to make academic and social decisions based on their “search for life meaning” (Kiang & Fuligni, 2009). These findings raise the question: if Chinese American students are making meaningful academic decisions, but they are not necessarily making them on the basis of academic passion, what are the factors driving their decisions?

U.S. universities fail to address this question. As institutions embedded in mainstream American culture, universities place singular emphasis on the individualist norms of independence and passion-seeking as “culturally appropriate ways of being a university student” (Stephens et al., 2012). Even before students arrive on campus, universities convey these norms through advertisements (Han & Ling, 2016) and applications that ask students to identify their academic passion(s) (Wilson, 2007). During the pivotal early years of students’ undergraduate or graduate experiences, universities immerse students in this messaging through academic advising focused on helping students “follow or find their passion(s)” (Ford, 2005; White, 2015). A recent mixed methods study of first-year advising finds that faculty advisors tend to focus their conversations narrowly on academic passion, often struggling to broaden the scope of their questioning to other relevant facets of their advisee’s life (Smith, forthcoming). These norms of independence and passion-seeking continue to percolate throughout students’ university experiences, serving as a backdrop for their next educational or career steps (Jachimowicz, 2019). When universities emphasize passion, while students value other factors, certain students may experience a culture clash—or “mismatch” (Stephens et al., 2012)—with their institutions. As discussed below, my study finds support for this outcome.

1.4 Research Method

1.4.1 Conceptual Framework

My study has two goals: (1) to add nuance to the simplistic picture of academic decision-making presented in the literature; and (2) to explore the implications of the potential mismatch between universities’ institutional norms and students’ personal norms for academic decision-making, particularly in the context of advising. To accomplish these goals, I utilize the conceptual frameworks of individualism versus collectivism (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, 2010) and cultural mismatch (Stephens et al., 2012).

It is important to note that the framework of individualism versus collectivism is complex and the subject of several robust debates in cross-cultural research (see Brewer & Chen, 2007). Some scholars, such as Hofstede (1980) and Leung (1989), argue that the difference between individualism and collectivism manifests at the level of culture. Other scholars, such as Markus and Kitayama (1991, 2010), argue that the difference manifests at the level of the individual as a result of a web of interactions between individuals, institutions, and cultural ideas (see Markus & Kitayama’s, 2010 culture cycle). Focusing on the individual level of analysis, another debate concerns whether this framework shapes self-representation (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991) or broader values and belief sets through which one views the world (e.g., Triandis et al., 1988). Yet another debate regards conceptualizations of the "collective." Some scholars, such as Hui (1988), set forth five ingroups (i.e., spouse, family, neighbors, friends/peers, and co-workers) in their measures of the collective, whereas others limit their conceptualization to only family (e.g., Rhee et al., 1996) or a select subgroup of ingroups. I will not wade further into these complex debates, as such distinctions are beyond the scope of this paper.

I adopt the version of individualism versus collectivism used by Markus and Kitayama (1991, 2010) because my work concerns students' decision-making—a process necessarily studied at the level of the individual, as opposed to the level of culture. Furthermore, cultural mismatch, the other framework utilized in my analysis, entails that individuals must interact with the institutions of the culture they currently occupy, which aligns with Markus and Kitayama's (2010) culture cycle discussed above. I also conceptualize the "collective" ingroups for my students as family and peers, recognizing that many of these students may not yet have spouses, consistent neighbors, or co-workers.

Accordingly, in the context of my study, individualism dictates that students who have had more interaction with mainstream American culture make academic decisions based on a sense of independence and a desire to pursue or find their unique passion(s). Collectivism dictates that students who have had more interaction with Chinese culture actively seek the advice of others, particularly mentors, and weigh that advice heavily in their decision-making process. Cultural mismatch posits that an individual's success is contingent upon the match or mismatch between institutional and personal cultural norms (Stephens et al., 2012). Applying Stephens and her colleagues' construct to the experiences in my study, a cultural match occurs when a student whose personal norm of following their academic passion matches their institution's norms of individualism and passion-seeking. A cultural mismatch occurs when a student's lack of clearly identified passion(s) or collaborative mode of decision-making clashes with their institution's norms. The latter student may feel as if their institution does not value their mode of decision-making, giving the student an impression that they do not belong.

1.4.2 Participants

From April to May 2018, I conducted 31 semi-structured interviews of undergraduate and graduate students at seven public and private universities on the East and West coasts. All seven universities are four-year residential institutions ranging in national rank and financial status. I recruited students via snowball sampling to participate in a mixed methods study, which first entailed an online quantitative questionnaire (Goodman, 1961). From the questionnaire homepage, students opted to participate in an hour-long interview. From this "opt-in" group, I selected students to ensure a mix of cultural identities, student types, and disciplinary backgrounds (see Table 1.1 for student demographics).

While graduate students are further along in their educational trajectory than undergraduates and cannot enter their institutions academically "undecided," I chose to include them in my study because they still undergo an academic decision-making process. Graduate students are also underrepresented in the literature, making their inclusion an important step towards better understanding academic decision-making at the graduate level.

Table 1.1 Breakdown of student demographics

	Number	Sample % (N = 31)
Cultural Identity (Self-identified)		
European American	12	39
Chinese American	13	42
Chinese international	6	19
Gender		
Female	18	58
Male	13	42
Undergraduate/Graduate		
Undergraduate	23	74
Graduate	8	26
University type		
Private	18	58
Public	13	42
Discipline*		
STEM	19	61
Non-STEM**	17	55
Graduate program type		N = 8
Doctoral/masters***	4	50
Professional	4	50

* *Please note* These percentages add up to more than 100% because some undergraduate students were pursuing a double-major. In those cases, I counted both majors

** *Please note* Based on consensus in the field, I include Psychology in my classification of STEM disciplines, whereas Economics falls under my classification of non-STEM disciplines

*** *Please note* I place MBA in the category of doctoral/masters program type

1.4.3 Methods

Unlike the studies cited above, I opted for qualitative methods in response to the literature's limited view of the potential factors underpinning academic decisions. Leveraging the inductive, interpretive approach of interviewing, rather than the deductive, close-ended approach of surveys, allowed me to view my participants' academic decision-making process from their perspective, remaining open to novel factors and avoiding a priori assumptions (Elwood & Martin, 2000). In designing my 30-question interview protocol, I incorporated a range of question types, including informational, evaluation, and hypothetical questions as well as one card ranking activity. This protocol addressed students' personal, family, and community motivations for pursuing their course of study. I validated question order and content through pilot tests with five students from my target populations. In line with the iterative, evolving nature of qualitative research, I reevaluated my protocol throughout data collection (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Data analysis entailed transcribing the interviews, creating and amending a codebook, two passes of coding with an undergraduate research assistant (Kappa coefficient = 0.67), and consistent documentation of coding decision-making through analytic memoranda. My final codebook included descriptive, interpretive, categorical, in vivo, and metaphorical codes derived from the literature, five pilot interviews, and the 31 interviews comprising my data set (Miles & Huberman, 1994). These steps together increased the credibility and replicability of my analysis.

1.5 Results

As Figs. 1.1 and 1.2 show, my research finds some support for earlier literature linking passion to European American students and parenting to Chinese international students. In a card-ranking activity that required students to rank the importance of nine factors in their academic decision-making, 83% of European American students ranked intellectual enjoyment among their top four factors. 83% of Chinese international students ranked family wishes among their top four factors compared to only 17% and 43% of European American and Chinese American students, respectively. However, passion also played a prominent role for many Chinese international students: 66% placed intellectual enjoyment among their top four factors as well.

Regardless of cultural background, students rarely exhibited passion towards their course of study in the manner the literature suggests. Many students spoke at length about enjoying their course of study, but only two European American students used the term "passion" (or other similarly elevated phrases) to describe their interest. While most students did not describe themselves as passionate, some students described behavior consistent with academic passion. For example, one European American graduate student, Jared, described his cognitive state while working on his dissertation:

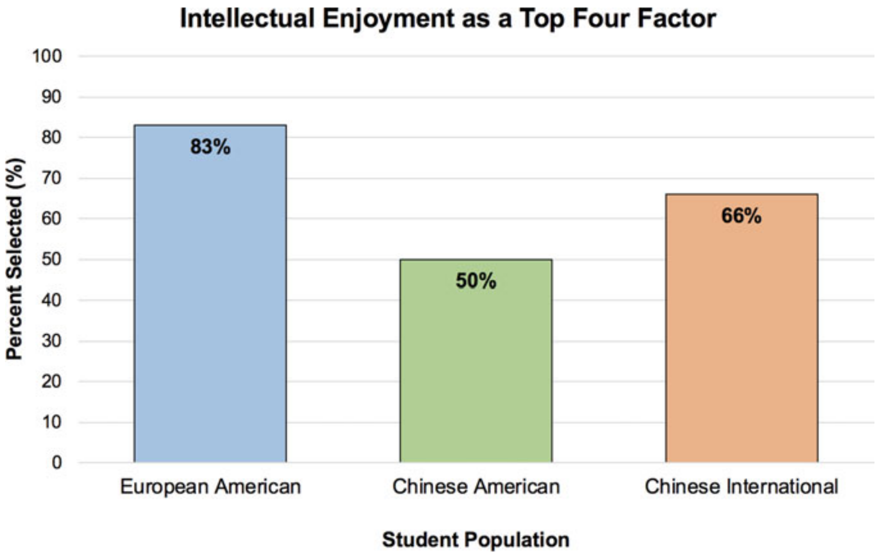

Fig. 1.1 Comparison of student responses to card ranking activity (regarding the importance of intellectual enjoyment to their academic decision-making)

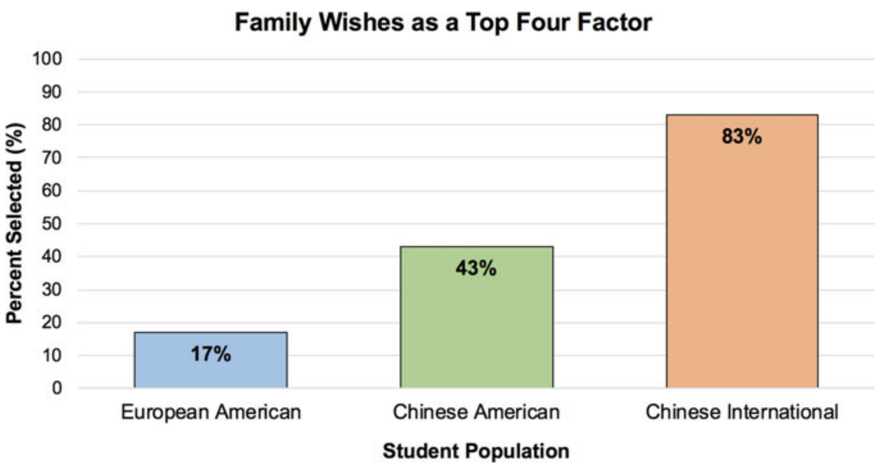

Fig. 1.2 Comparison of student responses to card ranking activity (regarding the importance of family wishes to their academic decision-making)

> It's just kind of fun… like having ten cups of coffee. Just this intellectual rush. You feel these endorphins...like, "Oh man, this is the coolest thing ever." Like for the next week I'm not coming out of my room. I'm just going to study all that I can about this thing. That is just the feeling that I get from enjoying it.

Jared, along with many other academically interested students across all three groups, never explicitly used the language of academic passion. Nevertheless, he is clearly a student with a “strong, consistent interest” in his discipline (Vallerand, 2012).

The literature’s conceptualization of academic passion as something one “finds or follows” (White, 2015) also fails to represent the lived experiences of many of the students in my study. While some of the European American students had academic interests identified prior to college, most of the Chinese American and international students developed their “passion” through a series of “happy accidents.” One Chinese American undergraduate, Janet, described the serendipitous process of finding her major:

> I didn’t know anything about my cultural background because I didn’t read the news as much, and so I decided to take a class that my friend recommended. It was Introduction to East Asian Studies. So I took that and that kind of opened up the possibilities of, like, I’m actually really interested in this.

Janet later described behaviors characteristic of an academically passionate student, such as being “unable to tear [her]self from readings” and “bugging [her] friends” with what she learned.

Parental influence similarly played a more complex role than the literature suggests. Although many Chinese American and Chinese international students acknowledged a tendency towards authoritarian parenting in their Chinese or East Asian immigrant communities, most did not describe their parents’ involvement in those terms. Martin, a Chinese American undergraduate, explained that his parents actually sought to avoid an authoritarian approach:

> I was raised in an immigrant town with a lot of 1st and 2nd-generation Asian Americans, so the pressure to succeed and succeed in certain fields is very high. I think my parents were very cognizant of that when we moved here…like that they wanted success for me, but not in that way. My friends and I like to call [these other parents] “helicopter Tiger Parents.”

Another Chinese American graduate student, Landon, described receiving pressure to pursue certain academic paths from community members and other parents, but never received pressure about his chosen academic path from his own parents.

Rather than an emotionally cold, parent-driven decision-making process (*a* la Hou et al. (2013)), most of my “collectivist-leaning” students recounted warm, collaborative decision-making processes with parents. For some parents, such as those of Zola, a Chinese international graduate student, this collaboration meant pushing back on Zola’s desire to pursue literary arts in favor of a program that would yield greater financial stability. For other parents, such as those of Helen, a Chinese American undergraduate, this collaboration entailed expressing concerns about her decision to pursue computer science based on perceptions of sexism in the field. In many cases, parents and children reached a compromise. For example, Jack, a Chinese international graduate student, pursued an undergraduate degree in history in exchange for completing a more STEM-oriented master’s program of which his mother approved. These examples bolster the arguments of scholars such as Chao

(1995) by showing that, even within family-oriented, collectivist cultures, children have room to advocate for their interests in academic negotiations with parents.

In focusing narrowly on the role of academic passion and parents in the academic decision-making process, scholars as well as university practitioners fail to account for a variety of other factors that emerge from my interviews. As Fig. 1.3 summarizes, financial security, desire to make community impact, peer influence, and self-efficacy were all at least as important in students' decision-making. Optional Practical Training (OPT), a U.S. immigration program that allows student visa holders to stay in the U.S. for further job training after graduation, was not included in Fig. 1.3 because it was unique to Chinese international students. Although OPT was not salient to the non-international students, its importance to international students should not be overlooked. The program's allowance of two years of OPT for STEM degree holders compared to only one year for non-STEM holders pushed four of the six international students in my sample towards STEM degrees. With the exception of OPT, the listed factors were of similar relative importance across all three groups, although they manifested themselves in different behaviors or mindsets depending on the group.

Low-income European American and Chinese international students behaved as the literature suggests (e.g., Cox, 2016); these students selected academic paths that provided sufficient financial security. Low-income Chinese international students faced the additional pressure of pursuing a field that led to a high-paying and secure career, as their status as U.S. residents hinged on holding a job visa. In contrast, low-income Chinese American students behaved differently than expected. These students "felt free to explore" (Janet, Chinese American undergraduate) because, as degree holders, they would already enjoy greater social mobility than their parents.

All three groups placed equal weight on helping their communities. European American and Chinese American students tended to define community in a global sense, whereas Chinese international students tended to define community in more localized terms. Adrian, a European American undergraduate, described his rationale for changing his major from philosophy to a self-designed major in "Critical Thought and Global Social Inquiry:"

> Whereas I enjoy philosophy almost as much, I think there are other topics that are a lot more impactful and relevant to global questions like justice, minorities, integration, and all those other things. I think there's a bigger place to contribute to the world with [my self-designed major] than with philosophy.

Adrian drew upon individualism's ethos of personal agency in imagining the global impact he might achieve. Conversely, Ashley, a Chinese international undergraduate studying pre-law, stressed how much it meant to her that her eventual career would allow her to "contribute to [her] little family community."

Some students actively sought course recommendations from their peers, but most students were influenced by their peers only passively. Chinese American and Chinese international students in particular used peer performance as a benchmark for academic success. As Zola, a Chinese international graduate student, explained, the "tighter-knit the peer group," the more acutely students felt "pressure to stack

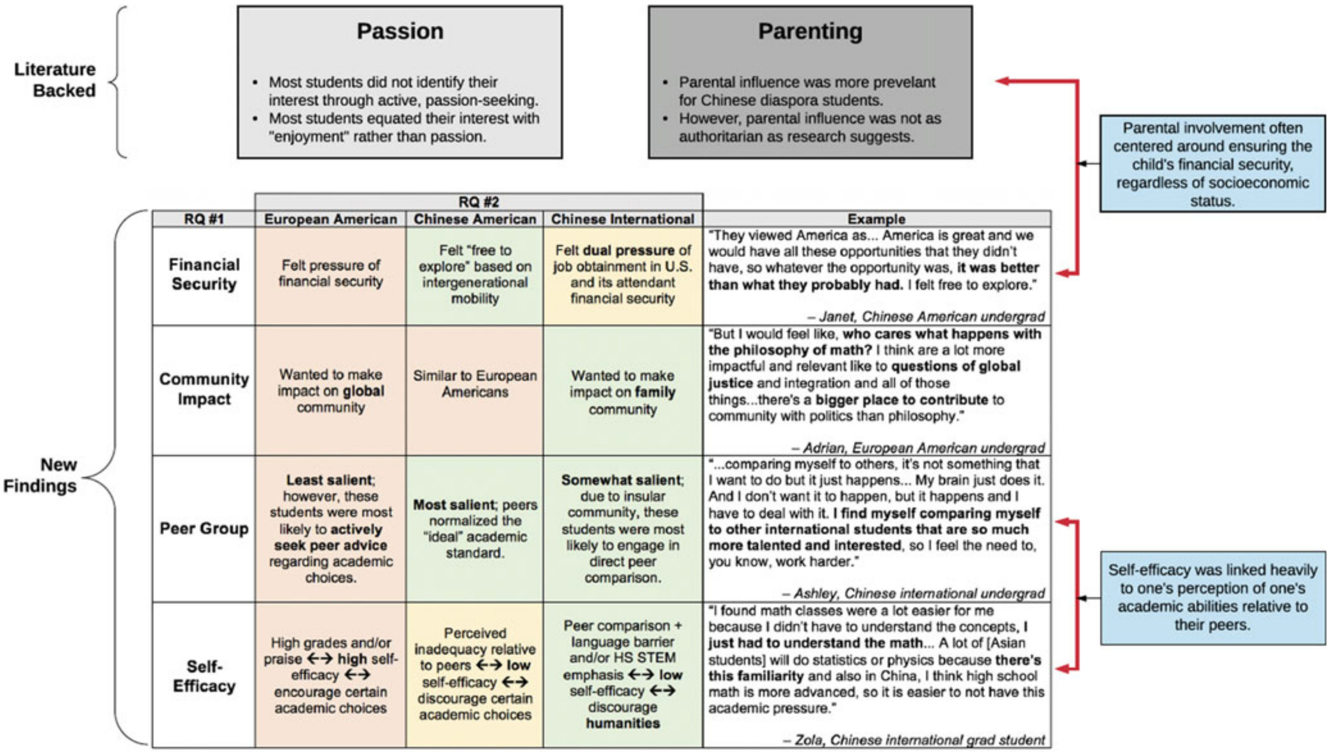

Fig. 1.3 Summary of qualitative findings

up." These peer comparisons impacted students' feelings of self-efficacy, which in turn encouraged or discouraged them from pursuing certain fields.

Although students often referred to multiple factors in tandem, this specific combination of factors—peer influence and self-efficacy—arose most frequently in my interviews (see Fig. 1.3). The impact of this combination varied by group, however. For Chinese international students, their heightened awareness of where they "stack[ed] up" among their "tight knit" peer group highlighted personal "insufficiencies" (Ashley, Chinese international undergraduate). Consequently, these students were more likely to describe their skills in terms of deficiencies, citing low self-efficacy in English or the humanities as reasons for pursuing STEM. Jack, one of the few Chinese international undergraduates studying history, described this mentality within his own friend circle:

> When I tell my international peers that I'm studying history… often their response is "I would never imagine myself taking a course in the humanities, I think it would be too hard to read books or write papers." I think most of the time I was met with admiration, which actually probably strengthened my interest in what I studied. Being a little different felt good in some sense.

In contrast, European American and Chinese American students, less burdened by peer comparison, viewed their skills in terms of assets, letting previous success in coursework reinforce their choice of major or graduate program.

1.6 Discussion

Universities have multiple outlets through which they communicate institutional norms concerning academic decision-making, such as the advertisements, applications, and advising discussed above. While each of these outlets is worthy of further exploration, I focus my discussion on academic advising. More specifically, I focus on faculty advising, a form of advising through which faculty support small groups of early-stage undergraduate or graduate students, because such advising is the foundation of American academic advising (White, 2015) and the only model consistent across all seven institutions in my study. As part of the post-1980's shift to a student-as-client model, American universities entrust faculty advisors with the responsibility of supporting students in their academic decision-making. This relationship typically culminates in an advisee's selection of major(s) or graduate specialization(s). In this role, advisors become primary agents in communicating institutional norms to students; by corollary, they also become one of the earliest and main sites at which a cultural match or mismatch between institution and student occurs.

For the European American and portion of Chinese American students who identify with an individualist American culture, institutional norms that emphasize independence and "following one's passion" may align with their personal norms. These students are more likely to experience academic advising as a cultural match. In theory, advising should therefore prove most helpful for these students. However, my findings indicate that these students are also the least likely to seek such advising. For example, Adrian, the European American undergraduate with a self-designed major, entered college with passions in philosophy, politics, and religious studies already identified. Rather than rely on his advisor's recommendation to pursue a double or triple major, he eschewed traditional disciplinary boundaries to forge a unique academic path. Other students, such as Clayton, a European American graduate student, thought it strange to seek advice on academics from his parents, let alone his faculty advisor.

The "individualist-leaning" students in my sample were not all as extreme in their desire to find their unique path as Adrian or in their dedication to self-reliance as Clayton. While these students may be more likely to embrace their advising relationships, they might not find the advice they receive particularly helpful. For example, Jared, the European American graduate student who exudes academic passion, but does not think of himself in those terms, might not see himself represented in the "passionate student" advisors describe. Janet, the Chinese American undergraduate who "found her passion" by chance, might not connect with the self-directed approach to passion-seeking that advisors champion. Upon receiving advice that does not match their form of academic passion or mode of "finding" it, these students may disengage from their advising relationships.

On the other hand, Chinese international and some Chinese American students, whose collectivist culture emphasizes collaborative decision-making, might find it more natural to utilize academic advising. Yet, when asked about who they consulted to assist in their academic decision-making process, not one of the 19 Chinese American or international students mentioned an academic advisor. Further research reveals that many Chinese international undergraduates turn to external advising agencies to help them select majors (Lin & Liu, 2019) and many Chinese American students turn to older peers for this advice (Kim, 2009). Why are these students choosing to go outside their institutions or to seek help from informal peer networks when their institutions already provide such support?

This question is complex. Advising is a delicate relationship that takes time and effort from both parties, and there are many reasons why this relationship may not work well. However, my findings suggest that an important reason lies in advising that emphasizes academic passion at the expense of other factors that are more salient to students. This failure to acknowledge students' motivations could contribute to students perceiving that advisors are not putting in the effort to understand or value their mode of academic decision-making. As a result, students may increasingly withdraw from university advising relationships and, as Lin and Liu (2019) and Kim (2009) find, create external advising relationships that are more conducive to their needs, cultural or otherwise.

Even more concerningly, this cultural mismatch could convey to students that they are deficient or do not belong. For example, Sarah, a Chinese international graduate student, discussed her turmoil upon realizing that "on average, [her] passion [wa]s probably less than most of [her] lab-mates." Fearing what her faculty advisor would think if she shared this passion "deficiency" with him, Sarah chose to hide her internal struggle and suffered silently through five years of her doctoral program. Another

Chinese international undergraduate, Ashley, discussed the stigma of “not being autonomous in [her] major choice” and relying on family input, even though this mode of decision-making made her happiest. While these two examples are extreme, they expose a pernicious side to institutional norms that are culturally biased in favor of individualism and that might be alienating to students from diverse backgrounds.

1.7 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

One should interpret these findings in light of my study’s limitations, of which three are worth noting. First, although I tried to recruit students from four-year institutions of diverse standing, four of the seven institutions are considered elite universities. The students in my sample may not be representative of all American university students. Second, while I gained a greater diversity of opinion by speaking to students at different stages in their educational trajectories, I recognize that time could distort students’ recollection of their academic decision-making. Third, even though the conceptual framework of individualism versus collectivism has been the predominant framework in cross-cultural research, with over a third of cross-cultural studies citing this framework as an explanation for observed differences (Brewer & Chen, 2007), my study indicates that a new framework may prove better suited to address the complexities of students’ academic decision-making processes. Many students did not align with purely individualist or collectivist approaches to academic decision-making. For example, the 66% of Chinese international students who selected intellectual enjoyment as a critical factor in their decision-making diverge from the mode of decision-making that a collectivist framework suggests. In spite of these limitations, my study represents an important step towards better understanding and supporting the academic decision-making process of diverse international and immigrant students.

To address these limitations, future research could recruit students from a more diverse set of institutions, such as non-elite universities or community colleges, the latter of which have been acutely understudied. Future work could also focus on recruiting students in the process of picking their major(s) or graduate specialization(s). Additionally, future studies could explore alternative conceptual frameworks. For example, how could the observed increases in intercultural competence and adaptivity that result from study abroad experiences (Nielsen, 2020) help scholars understand the 66% of students from a collectivist background who appeared to embrace both intellectual enjoyment and family wishes in their decision-making process? How could the exploratory, open-ended nature of emerging adult development (Arnett, 2000) help scholars understand students’ “serendipitous” or even haphazard processes for identifying their academic interest(s)?

1.8 Implications

This study suggests that institutional norms of "following or finding one's passion" require reexamination in order to take into account different approaches to academic decision-making. Advising, advertising, and applications that reflect and legitimize the varied pathways to major(s) or graduate program(s) may support and attract more students, such as the international and immigrant students in my study. Furthermore, since universities are already committed to investing in student support services, such as advising, it is in university administrators' best interests that these investments are well spent.

Building on the work of others, my study indicates ways to strengthen these investments, particularly for international and immigrant students. For example, recent studies of peer advising or "buddy" programs that group international students with domestic students with international experience indicate that such programs help international students integrate into their new institution's cultural norms, while still acknowledging and supporting the personal norms that students bring to the institutional space (Campbell, 2012; Nilsson, 2019). Studies of peer advising programs that leverage previously informal immigrant and first-generation student networks show similar levels of success in supporting the integration and persistence of immigrant undergraduates throughout their four years of college (Oberoi, 2016; Swecker et al., 2013). In light of these positive findings, a wide range of universities, from Columbia University to the University of Nebraska at Omaha, have incorporated some form of peer advising or "buddy" programs for their international and/or immigrant students to supplement their existing faculty advising. As my study and others (e.g., Kim, 2009; Lin & Liu, 2019) indicate, many international and immigrant students are not finding a cultural match in their relationships with faculty advisors, which may render these relationships less effective in helping students navigate their university journeys. Peer advising programs show promise in providing the match these students seek.

References

Adams, S., Pryor, L., & Adams, S. (1994). Attraction and retention of high-aptitude students in accounting: An exploratory longitudinal study. *Issues in Accounting Education, 9*(1), 30–45.

Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist, 55*(5), 469–480. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.5.469

Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology, 46*(1), 5–34. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.1997.tb01087.x

Brewer, M. B., & Chen, Y.-R. (2007). Where (who) are collectives in collectivism? Toward conceptual clarification of individualism and collectivism. *Psychological Review, 114*(1), 133–151. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.114.1.133

Campbell, N. (2012). Promoting intercultural contact on campus: A project to connect and engage international and host students. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 16*(3), 205–227. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315311403936

Chao, R. K. (1995). Chinese and European American cultural models of the self reflected in mothers' childrearing beliefs. *Ethos, 23*, 328–354. https://doi.org/10.1525/eth.1995.23.3.02a00030

Cox, R. D. (2016). Complicating conditions: Obstacles and interruptions to low-income students' college "choices." *The Journal of Higher Education, 87*(1), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2016.11777392

Elwood, S., & Martin, D. (2000). "Placing" interviews: Location and scales of power in qualitative research. *Professional Geographer, 52*, 649–657. https://doi.org/10.1111/0033-0124.00253

Ford, J. (2005). NACADA example university handbook. *National Academic Advising Association Journal*. https://nacada.ksu.edu/portals/0/Clearinghouse/AdvisingIssues/Example_Univ_Handbook.pdf.

Galotti, K. M. (1999). Making a "major" real-life decision: College students choosing an academic major. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 91*(2), 379–400. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.91.2.379

Goodman, L. A. (1961). Snowball sampling. *The Annals of Mathematical Statistics, 32*(1), 148–170. https://doi.org/10.1214/aoms/1177705148

Han, J., & Ling, J. (2016). Emotional appeal in recruitment advertising and applicant attraction: Unpacking national cultural differences. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 37*(8), 1202–1223. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2099

Hofstede, G. (1980). Culture and organizations. *International Studies of Management & Organization, 10*(4), 15–41. https://doi.org/10.1080/00208825.1980.11656300

Hoover, E. (2013, November 18). The uncommon rise of the Common App. Chronicle of Higher Education. https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-uncommon-rise-of-the-common-app/.

Hou, C., Wu, L., & Liu, Z. (2013). Parental emotional warmth and career decision-making difficulties: A model of intellectual-cultural orientation and conscientiousness. *Social Behavior and Personality, 41*(8), 1387–1398. https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2013.41.8.1387

Huang, Y. (2012). Transitioning challenges faced by Chinese graduate students. *Adult Learning, 23*(3), 138–147. https://doi.org/10.1177/1045159512452861

Hui, C. H. (1988). Measurement of individualism-collectivism. *Journal of Research in Personality, 22*(1), 17–36. https://doi.org/10.1016/0092-6566(88)90022-0

Ikels, C. (2004). *Filial piety: Practice and discourse in contemporary East Asia.* Stanford University Press.

Jachimowicz, J. (2019, October 15). *3 reasons it's so hard to "follow your passion."* https://hbr.org/2019/10/3-reasons-its-so-hard-to-follow-your-passion.

Jose, P. E., Huntsinger, C. S., Huntsinger, P. R., & Liaw, F. (2000). Parental values and practices relevant to young children's social development in Taiwan and the U.S. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 31*, 677–702. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022100031006002

Kagitcibasi, C. (2012). Sociocultural change and integrative syntheses in human development: Autonomous-related self and social–cognitive competence. *Child Development Perspectives, 6*, 5–11. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-8606.2011.00173.x

Kiang, L., & Fuligni, A. J. (2009). Meaning in life as a mediator of ethnic identity and adjustment among adolescents from Latin, Asian, and European American backgrounds. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 39*(11), 1253–1264. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-009-9475-z

Kim, E. (2009). Navigating college life: The role of peer networks in first-year college adaptation experience of minority immigrant students. *Journal of the First-Year Experience & Students in Transition, 21*(2), 9–34.

Lei, S., & Chuang, N. (2010). Demographic factors influencing selection of an ideal graduate institution: A literature review with recommendations for implementation. *College Student Journal, 44*(1), 84–96.

Leung, K. (1989). Cross-cultural differences: Individual-level vs. culture-level analysis. *International Journal of Psychology*, *24*(2–6), 703–719. https://doi.org/10.1080/00207598908247840

Li, L. (2004). China's higher education reform 1998–2003: A summary. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 5*(1), 14–22. https://doi.org/10.1007/bf03026275

Liew, J., Kwok, O., Chang, Y., Chang, B. W., & Yeh, Y. (2014). Parental autonomy support predicts academic achievement through emotion-related self-regulation and adaptive skills in Chinese American adolescents. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 5*(3), 214–222. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0034787

Lin, X., & Liu, W. (2019). Intercultural advising for Chinese international students: A reflective inquiry. *Globalisation, Societies and Education, 17*(2), 220–230. https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2019.1583092

Liu, Y. (2013). Meritocracy and the Gaokao: A survey study of higher education selection and socio-economic participation in East China. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 34*(5–6), 868–887. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2013.816237

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review, 98*(2), 224–253. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033295X.98.2.224

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (2010). Cultures and Selves. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 5*(4), 420–430. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610375557

McGee, E., & Bentley, L. (2017). The equity ethic: Black and Latinx college students reengineering their STEM careers toward justice. *American Journal of Education, 124*(1), 1–36. https://doi.org/10.1086/693954

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook.* Sage.

Nielsen, N. (2020). *The erasmus learning journey: Students' experiences from a mobility period Abroad*. Retrieved from http://su.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1464241&dswid=6069.

Nilsson, P. A. (2019). The Buddy Programme: Integration and social support for international students. *Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education*, *11*, 36–43. https://doi.org/10.32674/jcihe.v11iWinter.1095.

Oberoi, A. (2016, December). Mentoring for first-generation immigrant and refugee youth. National Mentoring Resource Center. http://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/images/PDF/ImmigrantRefugeeYouth_Population_Review.pdf.

Peters, M. A., & Besley, T. (2018). China's double first-class university strategy: 双一流. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 50*(12), 1075–1079. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2018.1438822

Rhee, E., Uleman, J. S., & Lee, H. K. (1996). Variations in collectivism and individualism by ingroup and culture: Confirmatory factor analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 71*(5), 1037–1054. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.71.5.1037

Rudolf, F. (1990). *The American college and university: A history* (2nd ed.). Knopf.

Saichaie, K., & Morphew, C. C. (2014). What college and university websites reveal about the purposes of higher education. *The Journal of Higher Education, 85*(4), 499–530. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2014.11777338

Shapiro, C. A., & Sax, L. J. (2011). Major selection and persistence for women in STEM. *New Directions for Institutional Research, 2011*(152), 5–18. https://doi.org/10.1002/ir.404

Song, C., & Glick, J. E. (2004). College attendance and choice of college majors among Asian-American students. *Social Science Quarterly, 85*(5), 1401–1421. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0038-4941.2004.00283.x

Stephens, N. M., Fryberg, S. A., Markus, H. R., Johnson, C. S., & Covarrubias, R. (2012). Unseen disadvantage: How American universities' focus on independence undermines the academic performance of first-generation college students. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 102*(6), 1178–1197. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027143

Swecker, H. K., Fifolt, M., & Searby, L. (2013). Academic advising and first-generation college students: A quantitative study on student retention. *NACADA Journal*, *33*(1), 46–53. https://doi.org/10.12930/nacada-13-192

Tracey, T., & Robbins, S. B. (2006). The interest-major congruence and college success relation: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 69*(1), 64–89. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2005.11.003

Triandis, H. C., Bontempo, R., Villareal, M. J., Asai, M., & Lucca, N. (1988). Individualism and collectivism: Cross-cultural perspectives on self-ingroup relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54*(2), 323. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.54.2.323

Vallerand, R. J. (2012). The role of passion in sustainable psychological well-being. *Psych Well-Being, 2*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/2211-1522-2-1.

White, E. (2015). Academic advising in higher education: A place at the core. *The Journal of General Education, 64*(4), 263–277. https://doi.org/10.5325/jgeneeduc.64.4.0263

Williams, R. M. (1967). Individual and group values. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 371*(1), 20–37. https://doi.org/10.1177/000271626737100102

Wilson, L. (2007). Great American schools: The power of culture and passion. *Educational Horizons, 86*(1), 35–44. www.jstor.org/stable/42923707.

Zong, J., & Batalova, J. (2017, September 29). *Chinese immigrants in the United States in 2016*. Migration Policy Institute. https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/chinese-immigrants-united-states-2016.

Emily P. Schell is a doctoral student in Developmental and Psychological Sciences at the Graduate School of Education at Stanford University. Her major research interests focus on how university students make academic decisions and creating more supportive academic advising frameworks for increasingly diverse student bodies.

Chapter 2
Study Abroad for Students from Families Without Experience of International Education

Susan Oguro and Anne Maree Payne

Abstract This chapter investigates the concerns and strategies of study abroad students whose families have not had experience of international education. As this cohort is underrepresented in the research literature, this study undertook individual interviews with 31 students to generate a qualitative data set identifying students' key concerns about costs, culture and language issues in their study abroad program. Significantly, the study revealed the students' substantial resourcefulness and resilience in responding to these concerns, despite having no family experience to draw on. These findings highlight the need to avoid positioning such study abroad students in terms of what they might lack in their family backgrounds and to acknowledge their resourcefulness in dealing with inevitable challenges in the programs they undertake. The chapter addresses the ongoing need for universities to understand diverse student backgrounds, in order to provide appropriate support and information to demystify the experience of studying abroad for all students.

Keywords International education · Mobility · Resilience · Study abroad · Widening participation

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the experiences of study abroad students who are the first member of their family to undertake an international education program as part of their university studies. There is wide-ranging research into the experience of students who are the first member of their family to attend college or university (often referred to as 'first generation' students) identifying particular challenges they may face in terms of access, participation, retention and success when compared to students whose families have previously completed university study (Jehangir, 2010; King

S. Oguro (✉) · A. M. Payne
University of Technology Sydney, Sydney, Australia
e-mail: susan.oguro@uts.edu.au

A. M. Payne
e-mail: anne-maree.payne@uts.edu.au

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_2

et al., 2015; O'Shea et al., 2017). To extend these understandings of the impact of family backgrounds on students' higher education experiences, this chapter focusses on whether being from a family without experience of studying internationally poses any specific challenges to students undertaking a study abroad program and how students navigate these challenges.

Understanding diverse student experiences is important if universities seek to maximize study abroad participation by all students, irrespective of family experience of international education. The multiple benefits of study abroad include greater overall retention and success at university (Richard et al., 2017); students' development of intercultural understandings (Jackson & Oguro, 2018); and enhanced rates of employment on graduation (Farrugia & Sanger, 2017; Potts, 2015) so it is important that all students are supported to access the opportunities. To expand participation in study abroad, the experiences of diverse student groups need to be understood, including those who have not grown up with stories of what it is like to study abroad. This chapter addresses this through a qualitative study of the experiences of 31 students at a comprehensive university in Australia enrolled in a degree program incorporating a one-year study abroad program. The students were the first in their families to undertake an international education program and their collected experiences can expand understandings in the higher education sector of this particular group of students.

2.2 Literature Review

Over the past two decades there has been consistent worldwide growth in the numbers of students studying internationally for at least a component of their degree program (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2019) and there is some evidence of growing diversity among study abroad cohorts (Institute for International Education, 2019). Studies which have examined the family profiles of students undertaking study abroad have included a focus on students who are the first members of their family to study at university (first generation students) and have found lower participation rates amongst these students (Brux & Fry, 2010; Martinez et al., 2009; Simon & Ainsworth, 2012; Stroud, 2010; Sweeney, 2013). While not specifically focussed on the study abroad component of a university degree, an overarching theme in studies of students who are the first members of their families at university is the portrayal of these students negatively. Spiegler and Bednarek's (2013) review of 70 studies in the field concluded that the students are generally positioned as "at risk" (p. 329) and having difficulties in the university environment. However, more recently, this deficit positioning of students is being challenged in the literature (Devlin, 2013; Garrison & Gardner, 2012; Greenwald, 2012; O'Shea, 2019). This study into the experiences of a cohort of study abroad students without family experience of international education to utilize draws on this literature to avoid positioning these students only in terms of what they lack.

Research into students' concerns about a study abroad experience has identified a diverse and intertwined set of issues with multiple possible sources. One common and significant concern is the cost of study abroad, identified in studies across a range of contexts (Finn & Darmody, 2017; Harvey et al., 2016; Salisbury et al., 2009; Whatley, 2017). Further student concerns identified in the research literature include engaging with other cultures (Brux & Fry, 2010; Jones et al., 2016; Sweeney, 2013); maintaining ties to family and home community (Beerkens et al., 2016; Finn & Darmody, 2017; Van Mol & Timmermann, 2014); safety (Brux & Fry, 2010); academic programs issues (Beerkens et al., 2016; Brux & Fry, 2010); and engaging in a foreign language community (Beerkens et al., 2016; Harvey et al., 2016; Lörz et al., 2015). This extensive collection of concerns identified in the research literature relates to study abroad students in general, but informs the study reported in this chapter focusing in particular on the experience of students from families without experience of study abroad.

The theoretical literature informing this study includes Bourdieu's (1986) forms of capital theory, commonly used in educational research to interpret how students' economic, social and cultural capital impacts on their educational experience. These "capitals" also provide a useful lens to examine students' concerns around study abroad identified in the empirical literature outlined above, namely concerns about finances, family, culture and language. Students' economic capital (income, wealth, assets, financial security) can be seen to enable them to address the costs of participation in study abroad, while their social capital (networks, social groups, relationships) offers them transgenerational knowledge and information (Ball et al., 2002; Lareau, 2000) to allay their concerns. Cultural capital (skills, tastes, knowledge and self-image) encompasses aspects such as familiarity with international travel, previous cross-cultural experiences and the confidence and aspiration to participate in study abroad. Murphy-Lejeune's (2002) 'mobility capital' applied the notion of capital to the international education context and adds to the theoretical framework of this study. She identified students' family and personal histories; previous mobility experience (including language competence); adaptation to other cultures; and personality features as the four key elements of mobility capital.

2.3 Research Method

This research study involved students enrolled at a large urban Australian university in an undergraduate degree course which includes a compulsory year (two semesters) of study abroad. The aim of the research was to investigate any particular concerns students from families without study abroad experience might have and how they respond to these challenges. The study collected a qualitative data set of recounted student experiences using semi-structured individual interviews with 31 study abroad students who self-identified as being from families without experience of international education programs. Although the inclusion of a qualitative, narrative research method is complex and time-consuming, it was considered necessary as students' personal histories, cultural traditions, aspirations and experiences impact on them "in ways that are neither uniform nor predictable" (Rizvi, 2005, p. 81).

2.3.1 Participants

To collect a broad spectrum of student experience, the study collected data from students at multiple stages of the degree program. The particular undergraduate course is a double degree program requiring five years (ten semesters) of study. However, in the fourth year of the program, students study abroad at one of the university's partner institutions in thirteen countries worldwide. This study included students in years 1–3 preparing for their future study abroad year, as well as from students in their fifth year who had recently returned from their year abroad. Year 4 students were excluded as they were away at the time on study abroad. Including this range of students addresses Dall'Alba and Sidhu's (2015) argument that most previous research has focused on students intending to study abroad rather than those who have actually participated. However, it should be noted while data was collected from students across different year groups to consider a range of experiences, the research reported here was not seeking to compare these students to each other.

The study was approved by the university's Ethics Committee and students' participation was voluntary. Students were recruited via a call distributed to the full cohort of 1247 students enrolled in the degree program seeking the participation of students who were the first members of their family to undertake study abroad. Of the 31 students who volunteered and were interviewed, twenty were preparing for a future study abroad year and eleven had returned from their study abroad in the previous year. Table 2.1 provides an overview of the numbers of student participants and their study abroad locations.

The locations outlined in Table 2.1 are generally representative of typical patterns of study abroad location choice across the program, namely that European locations are most commonly chosen, followed by locations in Asia and then in the Americas.

2.3.2 Data Collection

The interviews with students were semi-structured, conducted individually and digitally recorded, with an average duration of 35 min. Students were questioned about their backgrounds, concerns about studying abroad and, in the case of the fifth-year students returned from a year abroad, their experiences overseas. Thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998) of the interview data extracted common themes and significant trends. In addition to these inductive themes, a priori themes identified from issues and theories in the academic literature (Ryan & Bernard, 2003) also informed the analysis. Repetition of issues across multiple interviews was an important method for theme identification, as well as actively exploring points of difference. In the

Table 2.1 Study Abroad locations and numbers of students

Study abroad locations	Number of students
Germany	6
France	4
Switzerland	4
China	3
Japan	3
Chile	2
Argentina	2
Colombia	1
Costa Rica	1
Italy	1
Latino-USA	1
Mexico	1
Québec, Canada	1
Spain	1

reporting of student responses below, pseudonyms, year of study and their study abroad country are noted.

2.4 Results

The thematic analysis of the data yielded the key areas of concerns raised by the students as well as evidence of their overriding resilience in responses to these challenges. The section below firstly outlines the students' concerns categorized into the three areas of finances, culture and language; followed by examples of the demonstrated resilience.

2.4.1 Financial Concerns

As noted in the literature review, numerous studies have identified the expense of study abroad as a significant concern for all students. Our interview data confirmed this and unsurprisingly also identified that costs became increasingly of concern as students' date of departure approached. While students in the year directly before study abroad had more definite strategies in place to fund their trip, students from all years reported they were personally contributing towards the costs, had a specific savings plan and many were working several jobs in the years leading up to the study abroad period. Some also reported relying on financial support from parents for at least some of the cost. Overall, a sense of confidence was evident in the responses, exemplified in one student's comment that she had *"planned it out"* by having a permanent part-time job and planning to work while she was abroad (Sophie, Third Year, France). However, maintaining paid positions while concurrently studying full-time in the semesters leading to the study abroad year also proved challenging for some students. One spoke about her own and her parents' concerns: *"They think I've been working a bit too much, I didn't do my best in uni last semester but I have to save this certain amount to be safe when I go overseas"* (Mariana, Second Year, France).

The students widely reported accessing the financial support available from the university or through government loans, which addressed a proportion of the cost. Additional strategies reported were the plans some students had to work part-time while abroad, however, this option was not consistently available as rights to work differed across the study abroad countries. Being mindful of cost of living when choosing a study abroad location was also a strategy reported by some students such as Maxine (Fifth Year, Chile), who had returned from her year abroad and reported her success in managing the costs through careful budgeting and strategic choice of a relatively inexpensive study abroad destination.

2.4.2 Cultural Concerns

Culture was expected to emerge as a concern as the research literature highlighted how students' perceptions of their abilities to navigate other cultures impact on study abroad participation. For students preparing for their year abroad, Winnie's comment that *"I will have to embrace the culture, adapt*" (Third Year, France) captured the awareness students had that cultural issues are inevitable and will need to be addressed as part of a study abroad experience. Most fifth-returned year students relayed their experiences of initial culture shock, the challenges they had in negotiating life in a new country, but the overall success they experienced looking back on their year abroad.

However, many of the returned students also reported feeling challenged by cultural values they had encountered in their host society which they found unacceptable, with the term "*stressful"* often occurring in their accounts. In particular, racism was a theme raised by many students across all years, with some third-year students concerned by the possibility of encountering racist attitudes while abroad, and some fifth-year students reporting the racism they had personally encountered or observed.

2.4.3 Language Concerns

As all the study abroad location options for the students in this program are in non-Anglophone societies where the students need to communicate in a second language, it is unsurprising that all students raised concerns about language. The experiences of the fifth-year students who had returned from a year abroad provided examples of specific challenges when studying and living in a non-Anglophone social context. Each had at least two years (four semesters) of language studies completed prior to departure which prepared them to an extent. However they still reported significant challenges, as illustrated by the experience of Diana (Fifth Year, Colombia): *"I had quite good academic Spanish, but when we first got to Colombia it was really confronting how fast people spoke, the slang they used, the accent and everything…so I think that was a bit bewildering at first"*. Most of the fifth year students also described the shock they initially felt on arrival: *"I found it daunting when I got there, it was intense"* (Leo, Fifth Year, China) and feeling unprepared for the academic requirements: *"I was in no way equipped to handle studying in another language"* (Tiana, Fifth Year, Italy). However, as in the case of the cultural concerns identified, students' overall evaluation when anticipating their future study abroad year or having completed the year, was that language challenges were unavoidable but could be navigated.

2.4.4 Resilience

The findings presented above cover the key concerns raised by the study abroad students concerning cost, culture and language. However, the process of thematic analysis of the participants' responses also identified a general disposition towards rising to the inevitable challenges of study abroad and a demonstration of resilience. While the Year 1–3 students expressed apprehension about the challenges ahead, a general sense of confidence to deal with any issues that arose was also evident. For example, one student who reported having never travelled internationally before defiantly stated: *"I'm not going to spend the whole year moping and feeling negative"* (Chloe, Third Year, Japan). This positivity was common and exemplified in other students' comments such as Scarlett (Second Year, Argentina) who even though she had many questions and concerns, commented that she would *"just figure it out"* or Justine (Second Year, Germany) who acknowledged that while she felt daunted, she was also *"…up for the challenge."*

2.5 Discussion

The findings from this study highlight the key concerns expressed by a group of study abroad students from families without experience of international study, a cohort largely underrepresented in the research literature. Although the study comprised a relatively small sample size, the rich qualitative data set collected through extensive interviews has allowed for the collation of the experiences of students leading up to study abroad and also of students who have completed their year abroad.

The overriding concern of all the study abroad students related to the cost of the experience. While this confirms findings in previous studies of study abroad students in general, the strategies identified in this group of students from families without experience of study abroad to manage their financial issues were wide-ranging. They were highly motivated and committed to their course of study and showed resilience in financing their study abroad experience through extensive forward planning and careful savings plans. The students all described how they were accessing and benefitting from the funding initiatives in the sector (including university and government grants or loans) and these appeared successful in addressing the cost of study abroad as an upfront barrier to participation among the students enrolled. This evidence does not however address other students whose knowledge of such grants or loans is limited and therefore do not consider even enrolling in a degree course which includes a study abroad program.

While some of the students in the study were able to receive financial support from their family, the majority were personally contributing significantly towards the costs of their study abroad. Many described working several jobs alongside their studies. Given that the study abroad period was their fourth year of study, they had a long period to accumulate funds, a curriculum factor which can benefit all students. In addition, the availability of study abroad locations with lower costs of living also benefitted some of the students who made strategic choices to reduce pressure on their finances.

The other key concerns identified by students in the study related to culture and language issues, reflecting findings in the literature on broader cohorts of study abroad students. Concerns about racism in particular have been identified (e.g.: Brux & Fry, 2010) which can constrain participation in study abroad by students who belong to racial, ethnic or ethno-religious groups which are a minority in the host society. The fears expressed by some of the students in this study that they may experience racism and discrimination while on study abroad is a timely reminder of the need for universities to acknowledge the issue for all students and to provide support, for example by drawing on the resources offered by organisations such as Diversity Abroad (2020).

The widespread language concerns expressed by the students in this study highlight a reticence identified in previous research (Netz, 2015; Van Mol & Timmermann, 2014) that students who feel their foreign language skills are inadequate might lack the confidence for study abroad. For this cohort, while their degree program included four semesters of language study prior to the study abroad period, their responses showed this was still inadequate for the situations they needed to navigate at unversity and in their host society. The experiences of the students from families without direct knowledge of study abroad successfully completing a year of studying and living in a non-Anglophone environment highlight their resilience to persevere in a challenging linguistic environment. These findings confirm the research into the experience of other groups of students who are first in their families to attend university, namely that they are highly capable when given opportunities to participate and the support required to succeed (Devlin et al., 2012).

There is a degree of complexity and uncertainty in undertaking study abroad, and the ability to deal with this is an essential aspect of the resilience and success of this group of study abroad students who could not draw on immediate family experiences. Rather than interpreting this lack of prior family experience as problematic, the students' experiences collected in this study indicate that many have incredible resilience, a spirit of adventure, resourcefulness and a strong desire to push their personal limits. Students variously expressed their love of travel, interest in learning about other cultures, determination to succeed in their language studies, desire for independence, and positive mindset to overcome any difficulties that might arise during their study abroad year. Their dispositions strongly align with Murphy-Lejeune's (2002) description of the key characteristics of "travelling personalities" (p. 67), including curiosity, openness to others, autonomy, language competence, the urge to travel, and the capacity to easily move and adapt to new environments (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002).

As has been argued in the research literature from a range of contexts (eg: Devlin, 2013; Garrison & Gardner, 2012; O'Shea et al., 2016), there is a need to avoid positioning students, including study abroad students, only in terms of what they might lack in their family backgrounds. Instead, we need to understand their resourcefulness in dealing with inevitable challenges in the program of study they have chosen. Universities should therefore prioritise their efforts on removing the structural and institutional barriers that may limit the ability of students to access, participate and succeed in study abroad.

2.6 Conclusion

This qualitative study has explored the experiences of study abroad students from families without direct knowledge of study abroad programs, to investigate the concerns these students face and their response to these challenges. The findings of this research indicate that these respondents were concerned primarily about financial issues, potential cultural issues and language proficiency issues relating to their study abroad. However, they demonstrated significant resourcefulness in implementing strategies to address areas of concern that might otherwise have posed a barrier to their participation or successful completion. In particular, they implemented an array of strategies to address the financial costs associated with their study abroad program, and demonstrated resilience in dealing with the issues they actually encountered while on study abroad.

The resourcefulness and resilience of this particular group of students notwithstanding, this research points to the clear need at an institutional level to acknowledge the diversity of student backgrounds, and to continue to work to minimise the barriers and address the concerns that might prevent all students from participating in study abroad. This is particularly important to ensure that the benefits of international programs are available on an equitable basis to all students. Our findings indicate that the students enrolled in courses with a study abroad component are largely aware of and are accessing the financial and other institutional supports available to them. However, further research is needed to identify the concerns and barriers for students from families without family experience of study abroad who do not enrol in such programs, to understand their particular circumstances. Through a better understanding of student experiences of study abroad, particularly those of students without family knowledge to draw on, higher education institutions can provide the appropriate support and information to demystify the experience of studying abroad for all students, enabling them to participate in greater numbers and with greater ease.

References

Ball, S., Davies, J., David, M., & Reay, D. (2002). 'Classification' and 'Judgement': Social class and the 'cognitive structures' of choice of higher education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 23*(1), 51–72.

Beerkens, M., Souto-Otero, M., de Wit, H., & Huisman, J. (2016). Similar students and different countries? An analysis of the barriers and drivers for Erasmus participation in seven countries. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 20*(2), 184–204. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315315595703

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood Press.

Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development.* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Brux, J. M., & Fry, B. (2010). Multicultural students in study Abroad: Their interests, their issues, and their constraints. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 15*(5), 508–527. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315309342486

Dall'Alba, G., & Sidhu, R. (2015). Australian undergraduate students on the move: experiencing outbound mobility. *Studies in Higher Education, 40*(4), 721–744. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2013.842212.

Devlin, M., Kift, S., Nelson, K., Smith, L., & McKay, J. (2012). *Effective teaching and support of students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds: Resources for Australian higher education.* Office for Learning and Teaching, Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education.

Devlin, M. (2013). Bridging socio-cultural incongruity: Conceptualising the success of students from low socio-economic status backgrounds in Australian higher education. *Studies in Higher Education, 38*(6), 939–949. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2011.613991.

Diversity Abroad. (2020). *Resources & Services.* https://www.diversitynetwork.org/page/ResourcesServices.

Farrugia, C., & Sanger, J. (2017). *Gaining an employment edge: the impact of study Abroad on 21st century skills & career prospects in the United States, 2013–2016*. Institute of International Education.

Finn, M., & Darmody, M. (2017). Examining student immobility: A study of Irish undergraduate students. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 39*(4), 423–434. https://doi.org.au/10.1080/1360080X.2017.1335265.

Garrison, N. J., & Gardner, D. S. (2012). *Assets first generation college students bring to the higher education setting*. The Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), Las Vegas, USA.

Greenwald, R. (2012). Think of first-generation students as pioneers, not problems. *The Chronicle of Higher Education, 59*(12). https://www.chronicle.com/article/Think-of-First-Generation/135710.

Harvey, A., Sellar, S., Mekonnen Molla, T., Baroutsis, A., Cakitaki, B., Tellefson, J., et al. (2016). *Globalization opportunities for low socio-economic status and regional students*. La Trobe University.

Institute for International Education. (2019). *Open doors*. Institute for International Education. https://www.iie.org/Research-and-Insights/Open-Doors.

Jackson, J., & Oguro, S. (Eds.). (2018). *Intercultural interventions in study Abroad*. Routledge.

Jehangir, R. (2010). *Higher education and first-generation students*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Jones, B. T., Power, A., Gray, T., Downey, G., Hall, T., & Son, T. (2016). If you build it, they may not come: Why Australian university students do not take part in outbound mobility experiences. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice, 13*(3), 1–15.

King, S., Luzeckyj, A., McCann, B., & Graham, C. (2015). *Exploring the experience of being first-in-family at university: A 2014 student equity in higher education research grants project*. National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education, Curtin University.

Lareau, A. (2000). *Advantage: Social class and parental intervention in elementary education*. Falmer Press.

Lörz, M., Netz, N., & Quast, H. (2015). Why do students from underprivileged families less often intend to study abroad? *Higher Education*, 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-015-9943-1.

Martinez, M. D., Ranjeet, B., & Marx, H. A. (2009). Creating study Abroad opportunities for first-generation college students. In R. Lewin (Ed.), *The handbook of practice and research in study Abroad* (pp. 527–542). Routledge.

Murphy-Lejeune, E. (2002). *Student mobility and narrative in Europe*. Routledge.

Netz, N. (2015). What deters students from studying Abroad? Evidence from four European countries and its implications for higher education policy. *Higher Education Policy, 28*(2), 151–174. http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/hep.2013.37.

O'Shea, S. (2019). Crossing boundaries: Rethinking the ways that first-in-family students navigate 'barriers' to higher education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2019.1668746.

O'Shea, S., May, J., Stone, C., & Delahunty, J. (2017). *First-in-family students, university experience & family life*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2019). *Education at a glance 2019: OECD Indicators*. OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/f8d7880d-en.

O'Shea, S., Lysaght, P., Roberts, J., & Harwood, V. (2016, 2016/03/03). Shifting the blame in higher education – social inclusion and deficit discourses. *Higher Education Research & Development, 35*(2), 322–336. http://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2015.1087388.

Potts, D. (2015). Understanding the early career benefits of learning Abroad programs. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 19*(5), 441–459. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315315579241.

Richard, N., Lowe, R., & Hanks, C. (2017). *Gone international: Mobility works*. Universities UK International.

Rizvi, F. (2005). International education and the production of cosmopolitan identities. In A. Arimato, F. Huang, K. Yokoyama, & D. Hiroshima (Eds.), *Globalization and higher education* (pp. 77–92). Research Institute of Higher Education.

Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Data management and analysis methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 769–802). Sage.

Salisbury, M. H., Umbach, P. D., Paulsen, M. B., & Pascarella, E. T. (2009). Going global: understanding the choice process of the intent to study Abroad. *Research in Higher Education, 50*(2), 119–143. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-008-9111-x

Simon, J., & Ainsworth, J. W. (2012). Race and socioeconomic status differences in study Abroad participation: The role of habitus, social networks, and cultural capital. *ISRN Education*, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.5402/2012/413896.

Spiegler, T., & Bednarek, A. (2013). First-generation students: what we ask, what we know and what it means: an international review of the state of research. *International Studies in Sociology of Education, 23*(4), 318–337. https://doi.org/10.1080/09620214.2013.815441.

Stroud, A. H. (2010). Who plans (Not) to study Abroad? An examination of U.S. student intent. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 14*(5), 491–507. https://doi.org/:10.1177/1028315309357942.

Sweeney, K. (2013). Inclusive excellence and underrepresentation of students of color in study Abroad. *Frontiers: The interdisciplinary journal of study Abroad, XXIII*(Fall), 1–21.

Van Mol, C., & Timmermann, C. (2014). should i stay or should i go? An analysis of the determinants of intra-european student mobility. *Population, Space and Place, 20*(5), 465–479. https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.1833.

Whatley, M. (2017). Financing study Abroad: An exploration of the influence of financial factors on student study abroad patterns. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 21*(5), 431–449. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315317697798.

Susan Oguro is an Associate Professor in the School of International Studies and Education at the University of Technology Sydney, Australia. Her major research interests lie in the area of international and intercultural education, languages pedagogy and student mentoring.

Anne Maree Payne is a sessional academic and researcher in the School of Communication at the University of Technology Sydney, Australia, where she teaches a range of subjects relating to gender, diversity, citizenship and sociology. Prior to undertaking her Ph.D., she had extensive experience managing student access, equity and inclusion programs in higher education.

Chapter 3
Understanding the Needs and Perception of Married Chinese Female International Students at a Canadian University: A Feminist Phenomenological Inquiry

Lin Ge and Douglas Brown

Abstract This study investigates specifically married Chinese female international students' perceptions of the gender-based and culture-based challenges they are facing during their study in a Canadian university and their coping strategies. Feminist standpoint theory as a theoretical framework is employed to delve into their recognition of the role of social and historical location in shaping their identities and perceptions. The participants in this study are eight married female Chinese students enrolled in a Canadian university in the age range from 30 to 50 years. A feminist phenomenological inquiry is utilized to probe the group's lived experience. In-depth interviews with the participants identify the specific contributions as well as insights gained from their experiences. This study uncovers gaps in the areas of motivation, knowledge, and organizational barriers in married Chinese female students' experience. Special recommendations and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Keywords Feminist phenomenology · Feminist standpoint theory · Married Chinese female international students · Internationalization

3.1 Introduction

Strong gender codes and performative roles are embedded in Chinese culture. For thousands of years, due to the restricted traditional ethics, Chinese women have not had independent personalities, social statuses, or access to education. Arguably, Chinese women have often been indentured to their male counterparts, occupying marginalized locations in society. Since the 'reform' and the opening up of Chinese society, many things have changed. The Chinese government has attached great

L. Ge (✉) · D. Brown
University of Regina, Regina, Canada
e-mail: gelin200@uregina.ca

D. Brown
e-mail: Douglas.Brown@uregina.ca

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_3

importance to the legal protection of women's rights and education. The 1982 constitution established the principle of an equal right to education for men and women (Li, n.d.), and with the expansion of higher education, opportunities for women enrolled in Chinese universities have gradually increased. By 2010, the proportion of women in university rose to 45.6%, while the sex ratio fell to 119.5 (Zhang, 2017). These changes have led to the spilling over of Chinese national boundaries and China has now become the largest single source of international students studying in the US, Canada, and other Western countries (Chao, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2019). Chinese females (married or single) comprise part of this international student group.

Historically, males have been more likely to go abroad to study rather than females; and this cultural practice was accepted as being appropriate since China rewarded women and men differently. Allowing males greater access to advanced education seemed natural, especially when studying abroad (Ogbonnaya, 2010).

In any case, Chinese females have made significant strides, with greater numbers going abroad to study every year. Still, challenges are present and patriarchy exists in all cultures. Women have to fight to enjoy the advantages that men normally hold, and Chinese female international students are no exception. Chinese female international students face multiple challenges and barriers such as the assumption of sex differences based on psychological and physical stereotyping. As the members of this group try to improve their opportunities and the opportunities for their families, they face impediments that may be situational (parental and marital), personal, or cross-cultural. Specifically, married Chinese women attempting to study abroad often meet resistance from their husbands, in-laws, or parents with a claim that they are ignoring their responsibilities. For example, a common adage notes that men should be 'based on society', and women should be 'based on family'. Another common phrase, "doing better than marrying," is popular in China (Sun, 2005). Women's housework is still considered a priority in any functional family setting.

The underpinnings for a cultural system are generally shaped by thoughts and practices. Chinese females have been socialized by their parents and society to accept sexist thinking and parental roles (Wotherspoon, 2014). They feel obligated to be the primary caregiver for their children. Chinese women are more likely to take their children with them when they study abroad but often experience difficulties in obtaining the needed financial and emotional support abroad. Their chosen partners are at the centre of the discussion, as Hooks (2000) wrote, the logic of male domination is intact, whether or not men are present in the home.

When arriving abroad, international students can expect further challenges. For example, adjusting to a Western educational system and wrestling with a Western culture are far from easy (Yang, 2010; Zhao & McDougall, 2008). The difficulties include language acquisition, following academic protocols, and dealing with cultural and social factors (Ge et al., 2019). The married Chinese female international students face triple pressures with the cross-cultural adjustment, gender-based stereotypes from China and the host country, and their families (marital status and parental status).

These situations suggest a need for further research into the authentic experiences (and subjective understandings) of married Chinese female international students.

In this study, a holistic inquiry into the individuals' experiences, the aim of the research is to identify the main challenges faced by the group of female students during their studies at a Canadian university. The research also examines how the university accommodates this minority group and what coping strategies are used. This research hopes to give a voice to the group, and more attention within the existing structure. The findings may have an impact on the educational and social policies and practices, and university protocols that consider the complexities of female group identities (without impinging on other vulnerable groups).

3.1.1 Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

1. Why did the married female Chinese international students choose to study abroad? How do they perceive and interpret their lived experiences at this university?
2. What are the gender-based challenges and adjustments experienced by married female Chinese international students during their study (cultural, personal, and situational aspects)? What coping strategies are used by the group to handle their challenges?

3.2 Literature Review

3.2.1 International Female Students in North America

Overall, the number of international female students has been increasing. In the US, international female students comprise 45% of the total international student body of universities (Institute of International Education, 2009). According to Canadian data, the percentage of international female students has increased from 4.7% in 2001, to 7.4% in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2009). In Canada, the percentage of international female students enrolled in master's degree programs increased from 35% in 1992 to 41% in 2008. Doctorate-level students have shown a higher increase from about 25% in 1992 to over 33% in 2008 (Statistics Canada, 2016).

In the disciplinary fields chosen, international female students are most often enrolled in business, management, public administration, science, and engineering. Conversely, enrollment in education and other related fields fell from 1992 to 2008 (Statistics Canada, 2016). In Canada, Chinese students are the main source of international students attending post-secondary institutions (Statistics Canada, 2016), and Chinese female students represented a large percentage of the international female students.

3.2.2 Challenges Faced by International Female Students

In the literature, many studies have identified the challenges confronting this group (e.g., identity positions involving academics, gender, religion, race, culture, and socialization). For example, Dutta (2012) described the "liminal" (p. xi) state status, which female international students face in engineering programs. The author claimed that for international women, the "liminal" period manifested itself permanently, so that the female international students suffer from invisibility and vulnerability in their chosen programs. Language barriers are still the main barrier for international female students. For example, Chinese traditional pedagogy contributes negatively to the adaptation and success of Chinese female international students (e.g., Ching et al., 2017). They feel it is hard to speak out and show their presence in the classroom (e.g., Lin et al., 2019; Wu et al., 2015). They must also deal with pressures from social life, housing, and cultural shock in the host country (e.g., Li, 2016; Oramas et al., 2018).

Some studies have focused on how international female students need to meet their challenging conditions (e.g., inherent perceptions of family and social roles) to sustain their workable public identities (e.g., Le et al., 2016). Aidoo (2012) claimed that gender factors influenced the relationship between international and local students. For other authors, female international students are more likely to be discouraged, anxious, and stressed, compared to their male counterparts (Beaver & Tuck, 1998; Hodgson & Simoni, 1995). In another study, female international graduate students tended to feel marginalized due to a lack of peer support (Ge et al., 2019). Popadink (2008) implemented a qualitative approach and reported the difficulties in heterosexual relationships experienced by female international students. Bonazzo and Wong (2007) examined four Japanese female students who suffered from discrimination, prejudice, and stereotyping.

Some studies have centered on how female international students retain and change their native culture with its values, norms, and language (Davis et al., 1993). Galloway and Jenkins (2005) described the marital status and country of origin as barriers for female international students in their adaptation to studying in private and religious-affiliated universities.

A few studies specifically centralize Chinese international female students. For example, Ge et al (2019) examined the challenges they faced in a Canadian university. The female participants indicated that they often suffered from the effects of traditional patriarchal viewpoints. Married female students need to balance their studies with the needs of their children and husbands. In the study, female participants felt that gender discrimination was an issue; for instance, textbooks, course content/readings, and recommended journal articles were based on male perspectives. Kutting (2012) looked at the advising experiences of mainland Chinese students and the subsequent influences on their doctoral programs. The barriers and challenges that influence everyday existence were considered, along with the individual perceptions that were carried through the programs. Ogbonaya (2010) researched the experiences of international female doctoral students at an American university. One of the selected participants was from China. The author illustrated the challenges being faced by the participants in terms of academic intention, knowledge, and organization.

3.2.3 *Strategies Used by International Female Students*

A series of studies explored the successful coping strategies used by international female students. The strategies included adjustment strategies based on social support, family support, and mentorship (Ge et al., 2019; Ogbonaya, 2011). Other coping and adaptive measures included positive supervisory relationships (Chapman & Sork, 2001). This included team-based support groups such as counseling and psychological guidance (Ku et al., 2008) and institutional support systems like curriculum design and faculty members' cultural training (Alazzi & Chiodo, 2006; Ge et al., 2019).

Unfortunately, in the above-mentioned studies, the female international students were regarded as a homogenous group. Married female international students were not specifically identified or treated as a sub-group, and consequently, they were not considered separately. In the present study, the lived experiences of married Chinese female international students attending a Canadian university were considered. The group's needs and experiences were explored while recognizing their social and historical location as epistemic agents (i.e., knowledge and existential foundations based on a series of lived experiences).

3.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical formulation developed in a study will help focus on all of the subsequent steps in the design and performance of the proposed inquiry (Egbert & Sanden, 2014). In this study, feminist standpoint theory guides and influences the researchers' research design, data statistics, and making sense of the findings. Feminist standpoint theory proposes that marginalized groups, being socially situated, are more likely to be aware of things and ask questions than are non-marginalized groups. Research that is concerned with power relations should start with the lived experiences of the marginalized (Harding, 1993). Therefore, the present study is especially focused on married Chinese female international students, as an extremely marginalized group, with the aim to explore their multiple challenges and needs. From feminist standpoint theory, the beginning of achieving knowledge is from a standpoint that is emerging. "A standpoint is an achieved collective identity or consciousness" (Bowell, n.d). Accordingly, this research regards women's place and narratives as a starting point for this inquiry (Harding, 2004). The process of women achieving knowledge would therefore begin when their standpoint begins to emerge (Bowell, n.d). In this study, the researchers deeply analyzed the participants' narratives, standpoints, social locations, and identities to facilitate a change in their status quo.

3.4 Methodology

Feminist standpoint theorists have advocated that the lived experiences of marginalized women should be the beginning of scientific inquiries (Harding, 2004). Thus, from the above theoretical orientation, the methodological choice is specifically directed to a feminist phenomenological inquiry. Feminist phenomenology aims to apply phenomenological methods to feminist analyses of social and political questions about gender (Ryman & Fulfer, 2013). Hence, feminist phenomenology, as a sub-field of the phenomenological school of thought, is linked to the primary principle of phenomenological inquiries. Researchers need to collect data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon while bracketing out the researchers' biases and experiences. The textual and structural descriptions are then combined to create an overall essence of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). Nevertheless, "phenomenology is feminist as long as it includes questions related to gendered experience and sexual difference with its field of study." (Simms & Stawarska, 2013, p. 6) In the present study, the researchers attempt to clarify how gender impacts married Chinese female international students' lived experience and their understandings and standpoints of the experiences. Accordingly, a feminist phenomenological inquiry is more likely to make the voices of these individuals heard.

3.4.1 Research Setting

The setting for the study is a medium-sized university located in a Canadian prairie province. The University of Regina is committed to internationalization and draws more than 50% of its graduate students from abroad (Statistics Canada, 2016). The rate of undergraduate international enrollment makes up about 14% of the student body (Statistics Canada, 2016).

3.4.2 Study Participants

Eight married Chinese international heterosexual female students (Table 3.1) from eight Chinese provinces (enrolled in this university) participated in the study. Most of the participants were in the process of earning their bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees in various fields (i.e., nursing, sociology, geology, psychology, education, and petroleum engineering). Two participants have since graduated (one returned to China; the other is pursuing her studies in the US). The participants were given pseudonyms to maintain their confidentiality. Homogenous sampling was used. Married Chinese international female students (specifically those in research settings) have a number of traits in common, including language, marital status, and study location (Creswell, 2007). The participants' ages ranged from 30 to 50 years.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of the participants

Academic fields	Age	Spouse's companionship	Parental Status	Program
Nursing	31	Partnered	No children	Bachelor
Petroleum engineering	48	Partnered	One son	Master
Education	38	Separated	One son	Doctor
Psychology	30	Partnered	One son	Bachelor
Geology	50	Separated	One son	Doctor
Sociology	37	Separated	One daughter	Master
Petroleum engineering (graduated)	30	Partnered	No children	Master
Education (graduated)	31	Separated	One daughter	Master

3.4.3 Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews were used to understand the challenges faced by Chinese international female students in their programs. Semi-structured interviews also allow the researcher to have more leverage for decoding larger narrative texts based on past experiences (van Manen, 1992). Six 30-min interviews were conducted in sessions that spanned one month. They were held at locations where the participants felt comfortable. Two interviews were conducted via video chat, following the participant's graduation. Participant consent forms were signed and a digital audio-recorder was used to record the conversations. Mandarin Chinese was used for all of the interviews. The participants were required to answer questions or communicate their experiences with the goal to provide a full narrative. Transcripts were translated into English.

3.4.4 Limitations

While a large number of Chinese female international students are studying in Canada, this study specifically focused on those who were enrolled in a Canadian university. Because of the different situations in different provinces, the results from this study are not generalizable. Further, this study, which only included eight participants, could produce different results if the sample size was increased. In addition, because the Chinese language was used to gather the research data and the transcripts were then translated into English, some information may have been omitted or misunderstood by English speakers.

3.5 Findings

As previously mentioned, the data sources included semi-structured interviews, unstructured conversations, and archival research material. The data was analyzed and coded, and the organized information was sorted into relevant themes. Through constant comparisons, the complete dataset was confirmed and the findings were corroborated according to the overarching research questions.

3.5.1 Purpose and Early Resistance While Studying Abroad

According to the participants' narratives, *self-improvement* was the top reason for studying abroad. Given the advancement of their education status, the respondents emphasized autonomy and choice as significant variables in building their futures. Foreign study was to allow them this as the participants expressed their strong desire to elevate themselves. As Lisa reported, "I look forward to feeling something different outside of China … witnessing the Canadian university educational system. I can get some new ideas in student management."

Linda stated, "Before proceeding to the degree, I was a government worker with a stable income. But I yearn for trying something new and interesting. Furthermore, I love my son and am glad to be a role model who strives for his education following his dream."

C*hild development* was also posited as being important by most of the participants. Given their role as a mother, the respondents felt obligated to their children's life and education. International exposure was also emphasized. As Emily expressed,

> You know what; I was a senior engineer with a master's degree, working in the oil field for 24 years. Studying is not my main purpose, indeed; instead, pursuing a better education environment for my son drove me to come here.

Linda concurred, "My son can experience different educational environments instead of only being subjected to the highly competitive academic culture in China.

Family unification was another reason given for international study. Some respondents followed their spouses abroad. A husband was viewed as the family head, with his priorities exceeding those familiar to the wife. Many had given up good careers in China to stay united with their traveling husbands; this was true even in cases where the wife commanded greater job status and remuneration. Jennifer stated,

> …The main reason for me to come here is to reunite with my husband. My husband has been studying as a Ph.D. at the university. I want to preserve our marriage. I have no other choice. I must sacrifice for the reunion. In China, I already got a master's degree. At the university, it is hard for me to find a well-matched major, to my previous major, except for some similar ones...

Lily stated, "My husband has been studying in the United States, I hope to reunite with him. Also, universities in Canada do not need GRE scores so it relieves my burden of preparing to go overseas."

As noted above, a strong gender divide, and servicing the cultural treatment of males and females exists in China. Males are valued more than females; females traditionally serve the principal role in reproduction and nurturing a stable family environment (He, 2001). Many respondents experienced gender-based resistance from families, and communities, when going abroad.

Societal resistance is a common theme. Compared with males, females have more difficulties getting promoted in the workplace, even when they work harder and display a greater ability. Women often strive to elevate themselves by studying abroad, though by doing so, they may lose their jobs. As Linda stated, "I had to resign my job when I decided to pursue my degree… (this is) based on the rules of the Chinese government, which means I already lost my future financial resources."

Family resistance (spouses and other family members) is also a common theme. As Jennifer stated,

> I got lots of resistance from my family members before coming here. I already had a good employment offer with a good salary but I gave (it) up to going abroad. My parents complained that, as a female, I should enjoy my family more instead of pushing myself into trouble. They thought it was unnecessary to do so.

Emily expressed regret, commenting that she should have looked after her parents, as their only daughter. Linda mused that, as a form of resistance, her husband did not provide any financial support. She had to bear the entire financial burden.

3.5.2 Challenges Based on Gender During the Participant's Study Abroad (English Proficiency, Academic Barriers, and Adjustment Barriers)

According to the participants' narratives, *English proficiency* is an overwhelming barrier to cultural assimilation. The participants felt frustrated by language concerns and some expressed a mild form of depression that they attributed to language challenges. This was true in all facets of engagement – speech, writing, reading, accents, critical thinking, and pronunciation. Moreover, the married women seemed to have more difficulties in meeting the requirements of full proficiency. Some of the reasons included: age, family commitments, and gender. Emily stated,

> I am 48 years old. Women of this age usually suffer from bad sleep and lapses of memory. Therefore, I must spend more time learning English. Even so, the result is still not good. I always feel so frustrated. The worst is when I have a class at the university. I am always distracted because I worry if my son is eating and sleeping well; if his homework is finished. Although I know my husband stays with him. You know, men always are careless in looking after kids.

Jennifer expanded on this,

> …I seem to be dumb and deaf because I am unable to speak out and understand what teachers are teaching. I always have (psychological) tension and worry; others cannot understand me.

> Even so, female individuals must accept most of the responsibilities of families. Sometimes, you must sacrifice for families. We cannot completely devote to our study as with male individuals. We must put children on the top priority. When children are sick or something like that, we have to care for them first and put other important things aside.

Academic barriers were also emphasized by the participants; for example, the gap between academic expectation and academic achievement (e.g., heavy workload, class participation, academic culture). The participants all understood the effects of their social locations; they were aware of their positioning as married Chinese females, and the effect it had on their academic skills and performance. Lisa had a doctoral degree in China with rich teaching experiences in middle schools and universities. As a student, she was endeavoring to meet the requirements for her second Ph.D. Lisa expressed a desire to acquire 'cutting-edge' academic research and achievements. Language, however, was a problem. For Lisa, some professors' accents were difficult to understand, leading to some confusion in classroom procedures and understanding the content. Presenting research was also a problem. Even though Lisa's research projects were advanced and compelling, she could not present them. Linda commented about her heavy workload during her tenure:

> …You know, my major was not English for my bachelor's degree, which means I must both learn English and study for my Ph.D. degree. Almost every day I spend five or six hours reading books and articles and writing my assignments. But I always learn so slow that I cannot grasp the main ideas in books or articles (at one time), so I have to read them several times. I feel extremely stressed. The worse is that I must cook for my son, even when a new idea comes into my mind. I may forget what I am supposed to write before I come back to my writing.

Lily's major was engineering. With this discipline, she claimed to have done the same experiments and physical labor as her male colleagues. Experiments were given a priority in her faculty, so she had to move heavy jars from a warehouse to the laboratory without help from others. Lily identified this as an academic barrier, even though such a barrier could easily be resolved. She also emphasized that effective communication with supervisors was a perennial challenge. "If one cannot receive instruction from supervisors one cannot receive positive instructions or suggestions." This is a disadvantage to students. Improvement was difficult and laborious. Academic commitments were delayed (papers and revisions).

Jennifer shared her 'socially awkward' experiences in the Canadian academic culture. Her academic advancement was deterred by confusing 'manners and protocols':

> …It is hard for me to adapt to the classroom here. In my previous learning experience, students would listen to what teachers are teaching in the classroom, instead of questioning teachers straightforward in class. This shows disrespect to teachers. It is very hard for me to balance my studies and family…

As mothers, almost all of the participants thought they were concerned more with their families. Thus, they suspended their studies when confronted with a family crisis, such as husbands being sick or other emergencies. They explained that a woman's energy and stress tolerance was limited; they were often too exhausted to balance studies and family. As Lan commented, "As a mother, I must balance my family and research. I am facing pressure. The long separation from my husband has led to some trauma. I tried to forget and make my situation move forward. But my study is the top priority and I am at a loss to balance both." Lily added:

> I am currently paying for my studies and living expenses by my savings; they are not enough for me to support my study and life. More seriously, I do not have enough time to undertake any full-time or part-time jobs off campus because I must look after my son, who is living with me now. Based on the situation, I applied for a TA. Financially, this would be more convenient to care for my son. My limited financial situation has remarkably impacted my ability to pay for my education unaided.

*Community adjustment barriers (*socializing and cultural shock) were also a concern. Four participants were willing to actively integrate into the local community. They argued that this was an effective way for them and their children to enact change to reduce the perceived gap between self and the local culture. For example, Lan always encouraged her son to communicate and make friends with local students. She deemed she could guide her son in a healthier direction. On weekends, she took her son to a church, talking with local people. In turn, people invited them to have dinner in their houses. Emily also hung out with her local friends two or three times a month. At times, she volunteered for local events and activities, contributing to the community.

Conversely, the other four participants responded that they did not have enough time to integrate effectively as they had to maintain their studies and the needs of their children and spouses. They were overwhelmed and under great pressure to meet these demands. Further community engagement was not an option, despite attempting to overcome the obstacles (e.g., lifestyle, language, and interpersonal relationships). The respondents felt smothered, and found it difficult to vent their anxieties. Free counseling services at the university did not work well for them; language problems and culture challenges were two of the reasons given for the shortcomings (most counselors did not have the necessary cross-cultural experience and training).

The respondents used different approaches to ease tensions (running, chatting, and medication). For example, Jennifer felt a busy schedule masked her anxiety though this strategy was not particularly effective. Fei found interpersonal communication difficult. She had few friends, because she had to attend to her courses in the evening, and then care for her son (i.e., checking his homework while completing housework for the next day). Sometimes, Fei had to spend extra money to find a babysitter for her son when the demands of studying took precedent. She stated that counselling support (as offered) was of little service.

Linda also commented on the challenges:

> Due to cultural shock, we cannot immerse into their life and culture. After all, we grew up in a different culture. What they are talking about is far away from my life and culture. I do not know what I should say, albeit, I am eager to join them.

In addition, the respondents felt that their children, unavoidably, experienced similar problems. Mothers spoke of racism and discrimination as occurring in many aspects of Canadian life. They explained that Chinese parents play an important role in a child's socialization and education. The participants felt relatively powerless in executing their perceived roles as caregiver and parent. This was particularly true for children traumatized by daily cultural challenges, such as discrimination. Some parents found this extremely stressful. Linda gave an example, and while doing so, she appeared visibly hurt and distressed, even though the event transpired more than a year ago:

> I received a phone call from my son's elementary school. The person at the other end of the line said my son was involved in an incident where he was overheard threatening violence against others. Two teachers said my son built a bomb. I could not believe this so I explained that it must be a joke, or perhaps a misunderstanding. They would not listen to what I was saying. The teachers commented that my "son is very smart," so he knew what he was doing. They gave no further information and the school processed the incident as a security threat. Then I asked for an appointment with the principal. The person was rude and commented that it was too late. The police had been contacted and an investigation was ongoing. The police arrived at my home the next day. There were no transcripts or documents exchanged, only the verbal testimony of the teacher. I told myself I should calm down. I questioned my son when he returned home from school. My son said that his teacher asked him if anything interesting happened on that weekend. My son shared a story with the teacher. He said he played with his friend and picked up a special rock. The teacher, however, told the principal that my son said he built a bomb. The teacher said he learned to build it online. I was angry but I persuaded my son that all the teachers loved you. I emailed that teacher and principal communicating my apprehension. I thought that some evidence would be necessary to proceed with the investigation. This was not true. The teacher never even emailed me back for an explanation. The principal responded to me the next day but continued to place blame on my son. My apartment was searched, and my son threatened. There was talk of a school transfer or some sort of official reprisal.

Interestingly, Linda described this so-called misunderstanding as cultural, rather than as a discriminatory act. She tried to relax and move forward. After all, she wanted to successfully finish her degree. Linda felt that too much controversy would be counterproductive.

3.5.3 Advice to the University

Respondents were asked how the university should or could change. Six participants provided feedback, while two abstained. The respondents discussed family solidarity, counseling services, advising relationship, culturally sensitive training, faculty/staff members, and lodging. Lisa thought that family and professional counselling would go a long way in assisting new international families to make the adjustment:

> Counseling for married international female students, perhaps monthly, would help. Many Chinese students are too timid to secure counseling, although they are facing stress. It is difficult for them to speak out. If the university can offer this sort of service, it will be helpful. Women centers offer help for female students; however, for married Chinese female students, it is often difficult for them to seek out these supports. Counselling clubs would be more practical or effective.

Ran thought that the "university should provide students with low-rent housing, and a dining room, like Chinese universities." This could help in relieving the financial burden. Lily wished that students and supervisors could engage in more meaningful conversations. She commented that supervisors were often not qualified to instruct the students in their chosen area. She claimed that married Chinese female students desperately needed to finish programs on time. Particularly given the challenges faced (e.g., age, sexual identity, family burden). Linda mentioned that faculty/staff members such as counselors would serve better if given better training in the needs of international clients. Ultimately, the university needs to provide better supports for culturally disadvantaged groups. Thus, when they or their children, suffer from an unexpected discrimination or labeling, the university would be well positioned to help.

3.6 Discussion and Conclusion

Drawing on the findings from the semi-structured interviews and unstructured conversations, the married Chinese female international students are clearly facing a multitude of obstacles when studying abroad. The participants identified many challenges that stand in the way of their success. Many of the challenges are theirs alone, so that married Chinese students are categorically distinct and deserve more consideration. The participants not only spoke about the barriers but offered suggestions for how they can be better served by the host institution. Issues and suggestions are thematically organized below into three parts. The first section examines student motivation, the *why am I here* element to international study. Gender obviously comes into play here. The second part explores cultural and gender-based barriers, or impediments mitigating successful program completion. The third section formulates discussion around the participants' suggestions and insight.

3.6.1 Motivation and Resistance to Studying Abroad

From the above findings, self-improvement, child enrichment, and family unification are proffered as three substantive justifications for studying abroad. Arguably, married Chinese women are caught between the old and the new in negotiating their social realities. Traditional beliefs and protocols hold married Chinese women accountable to strong patriarchal values and structures. At the same time, feminist discourses have penetrated Chinese society, at home and from the West.

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, 70 years ago, women have met new opportunities face-on. To a significant degree, women have access to education, personal development, and independence. Publicly, opportunities exist that were not present before. This is no-more true than in the world of work. Formerly, "conventional" fields that were preserved for men are now open to women. Nevertheless, problems persist. The private sphere remains the domain of the male. The 'double-day' is a female prerogative and Chinese women are frequently saddled with the responsibilities of both home and the workplace. Women cannot fully experience themselves as positive social actors charting "their course through life, though they are constantly told that they can do so." (Ritzer, 2017, p. 369) They have to abide by the dictates of the dominant culture, and their charges – the household, children, and husbands.

Ritzer (2017) noted that "people in interactions (frequently) hold other people 'accountable' for behaving in ways that are expected or useful or understandable." (p. 337) That is, a dominant culture usually creates politics where "difference becomes a conceptual tool for justifying arrangements of oppression." (Ritzer, 2017, p. 353) Consequently, when married Chinese female students break with their more traditional fields of social engagement and seek greater freedom and autonomy, backlash is most certainly the result. It is inevitable that these same spirited individuals will suffer resistance from both the family and the larger society. The threats are real, such as unemployment, family dysfunction, deterioration of marital relationship, and abuse. Despite this, married Chinese women remain determined.

3.6.2 Barriers While Studying Abroad

Williams (1970) noted that "a language is a standard form of communication for the transmission of cultural norms" (as cited by Davis et al., 1993, p. 10). As international students, married Chinese female students unavoidably experience the two-pronged effect of language and culture, which have an impact on both their goals and their success. Language and cultural acquisition remain a burden to these students. Responsibilities in both the public and private spheres are daunting, but married Chinese women must do it all. They complain of fatigue, stress, and even age. The women in this study, after all, are far from elderly, but they identify their age as an impediment. The participants see themselves at risk of memory loss, insomnia, and anxiety (The Xinhua News Agency, 2009).

For this study, all of the participants were above 30 years old, which means that their physiological conditions could serve as a disadvantage. As Shen said,

> I tried my best to learn English, but the result let me down, as I frequently experienced poor sleep and memory lapses. I participated in the IELTS five times. I did not pass. I had to take the ESL program that almost made me nuts.

All of the participants expressed a need to manage stress; most thought they were not successful, despite the potential harm associated with prolonged exposure (American Psychological Association, 2011). Confronting the conflict between family and studies, the respondents attended one thing at the cost of another.

In addition, individuals trained to study had to recalibrate or re-hone those skills. The respondents had to learn new skills, follow unfamiliar protocols, and do so without seeming obvious. The participants adopted new ways of running seminars, orchestrated interactive presentations, wrestled with the ideals of individuality, while learning how to think critically. Jennifer stated:

> At the university, it is hard for me to find a well-matched major to my previous major, except for some similar ones. So I have to apply for similar ones and experienced trouble during my degree. In the beginning, it felt so hard. I frequently cried. However, I had to force myself to accept all. I strongly long for participating in the classroom discussion; However, what they are talking about is so far away from my life and culture. I feel isolated.

Gender identity and family considerations also affect a student's opportunities for success. For example, some participants occupying traditionally male dominated fields (like engineering) compete with individuals on a so-called level playing field. The respondents experience higher degrees of performance overload and stress than do the men (Duxbury & Higgins, 2003). The individuals live distracted lives and all of their efforts come at the expense of others. The students were asked to rank and value various facets of their daily existence. For instance, Linda was the sole caregiver for her son, which detracted her attention away from her studies. In addition, Linda's husband opposed her life choice and cut her financial support. This left her no choice than to apply for an assistantship, involving 120 h of her scarce time.

All of the participants had little time left for social intercourse. Mixing socially with others is a primary need for all individuals (Cole, 2019). Socializing leads to happiness and mitigates psychological stress (Cain, 2019). For the respondents, however, personal needs were the first to go, including all forms of fraternization, whether friendship based or otherwise. The individuals then ignored basic drives for companionship to address their priorities. The married Chinese female students were more likely to become anxious or depressed than their younger single counterparts. These women had left behind familiar surroundings and strong social networks (as well as their country of origin), to struggle in a foreign reality. As Jennifer said,

> I mainly make friends with Chinese people. Due to cultural shock, we cannot immerse into their life and culture. After all, we grow up under a different culture. I always experience psychological tension and worry; others cannot understand me. I always face the threat of mental breakdown.

Lan mentioned that,

> I love my son and am glad to be a role model for him, striving for further education. He follows dreams, facing a lifetime. I actively participate in some social activities, helping him to adapt to a new environment (as soon as possible). I feel exhausted with my study sometimes.

Moreover, experiencing attenuated interpersonal relationships and deep psychological challenges (without effective recourse to compensate), the group remains vulnerable and at risk. Linda's and her son's encounter with the school system left her scared and mistrusting. She has sleeping problems. The worse is that she does not know where she can find help. She even experiences difficulties in identifying the nature of the infraction. Did she imagine the abuse? Or was this a cruel and slowly enacted form of racist abuse?

3.6.3 *Insights*

A "women's place" is a key aspect in a feminist phenomenological inquiry. Through participation, the respondents etched out a social position within the larger fabric of Canadian society. Significant social meaning structures, or themes, evolve out of these exchanges as the respondents attempted to articulate their worlds conceptually—in two languages. Occupying a standpoint (social location), these individuals become knowing subjects (in their own right); more than merely objects to be known by others (Harding, 2004). Therefore, based on the nature of their lived experiences, the respondents become sensitized to the status quo in considering the complexities of their situated gendered identities. They try to make their voices heard (feigning silence), attempt to enact change, and improve their situation. Life can be difficult in the research setting, in family interactions, counseling services, community relationships, social exchanges, advising relationships, and cultural engagement. The needs are evident and they call upon the university and the larger social to adapt (e.g., sensitive training faculty/staff members, community and university, services, etc.).

3.7 Recommendations

Several recommendations focus on the effectiveness of stakeholders to facilitate choices and changes through programs and counseling to honor the complexities of the women's identities.

The first recommendation is to train cross-cultural empathy for faculty/staff members, which means they can make an effort to participate in the individuals' experiences, to understand and emotionally relate to their perspectives (Ogden, 2006). In particular, counselors can have spiritual interlocutory counseling by considering gender and cultural differences.

The second recommendation is to offer counseling sessions and caring clubs for married international female students at certain intervals to ease their tensions and avoid serious mental problems from happening to them. Women's centers can provide effective aid when married Chinese female students and their children have problems.

The third recommendation is to give them a more flexible schedule of learning, creating an inclusive environment for them when they have a class with their children, and provide family bursaries to help relieve their financial burden and to allow them to wholeheartedly focus on their studies.

References

The Xinhua News Agency. (2009). Memory loss in young people is a sign of sub-health. http://www.gov.cn/fwxx//jk/2009-09/03/content_1407833.htm.

Aidoo, B. (2012). *An examination of mature interpersonal relationships among international and American college students*. The University of Southern Mississippi.

Alazzi, K., & Chiodo, J. (2006). Uncovering problems and identifying coping strategies of Middle Eastern university students. *International Education, 35*(2), 65–83.

Beaver, B., & Tuck, B. (1998). The adjustment of overseas students at a tertiary institution in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies, 33*(2), 167–179.

Bonazzo, C., & Wong, J. Y. (2007). Japanese international female students' experience of discrimination, prejudice, and stereotypes. *College Students Journal, 41*(3), 631–639.

Bowell, T. (n.d.). Feminist standpoint theory. *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://www.iep.utm.edu/fem-stan/.

Cain, S. (2019). When does socializing make you happier? *Quiet Revolution*. https://www.quietrev.com/when-does-socializing-make-you-happier/.

Chao, C. G. (2016). Decision making for Chinese students to receive their higher education in the U.S. *International Journal of Higher Education*, *5*(1), 28–37.

Chapman, V. L., & Sork, T. (2001). Confessing regulation or telling secrets? Opening up the conversation on graduate supervision. *Adult Education Quarterly, 51*(2), 94–107.

Ching, Y. R., Renes, S. L., McMurrow, S., Simpson, J., & Strange, A. T. (2017). Challenges facing Chinese international students studying in the United States. *Educational Research and Reviews, 12*(8), 473–482. http//:doi.org/10.5897/ERR2016.3106.

Cole, N. L. (January 2019). Understanding socialization in sociology: Overview and discussion of a key sociological concept**.** *ThoughtCo*. https://www.thoughtco.com/socialization-in-sociology-4104466.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd Ed.). Sage.

Davis. W. J., Dodds, B. J., & Thomas, T. (1993). *Culture practice of female international students*. ERIC. 19.

Dutta, D. (2012). *Sustaining liminality: Experiences and negotiations of international females in U.S. engineering graduate programs* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Purdue University, Lafayette, IN.

Duxbury, L., & Higgins, C. (2003). *Work-life conflict in Canada in the new millennium: A status report*. Health Canada.

Egbert, J., & Sanden, S. (2014). *Foundations of education research*. Routledge.

Galloway, F. J., & Jenkins, J. R. (2005). The adjustment problems faced by international students in the United States: A comparison of international students and administrative perceptions at two private, religiously affiliated universities. *NASPA Journal, 42*(2), 175–187.

Ge, L., Brown, D., & Durst, D. (2019). Chinese international students' experiences in a Canadian university: Ethnographic inquiry with gender comparison. *Journal of International Students, 9*(2), 582–612.

Harding, S. (1993). Ch. 3: Rethinking standpoint epistemology: What is strong objectivity? In *Feminist Epistemologies* (pp. 49–82). Routledge.

Harding, S (Ed). (2004). *The feminist standpoint theory reader: Intellectual and political controversies*. Routledge.

He, Q. (2001). An analysis on the social environment of women's changing status in China. *Modern China Studies, 2001*(2). http://www.modernchinastudies.org/us/issues/past-issues/73-mcs-2001-issue-2/574-2012-01-03-12-11-52.html

Hodgson, C. S., & Simoni, J. M. (1995). Graduate student academic and psychological functioning. *Journal of College Student Development, 36*(3), 244–253.

Hooks, B. (2000). *Feminist theory: From margin to center* (2nd edn). South End Press.

Institute of International Education. (2009). *Open doors: 2007/2008. Report on* 151 *international student enrollment*. http://opendoors.iienetwork.org.

Ku, H., Lahman, M. K. E., Yeh, H., & Cheng, Y. (2008). Into the academy: Preparing and mentoring international students. *Educational Tech Research Development, 56,* 365–377. http://ebscohost.com.

Kutting, M. Y. (2012). *Doctoral advising: A grounded theory exploration of female mainland Chinese international students* (Doctoral dissertation). ERIC database (ED548993).

Le, T. A., LaCost, B. Y., & Wismer, M. (2016). International female graduate students' experience at a Midwestern university: Sense of belonging and identity of development. *Journal of International Students, 6*(1), 128–152.

Li, Z. (2016). *Chinese international students attending American universities: How can we help you? A qualitative study on Chinese international students' acculturation experiences* (Publication No.5872) [Doctoral dissertation, Brigham Young University] BYU Scholars Archive Thesis and Dissertations.

Li, Z. (n.d.). Chinese women's right to education: Practice and reflection. *EuChina Human Rights Network.* http//:ww.nuigalway.ie/sites/eu-china.../seminars/.../li%20zhong-chn.do.

Lin, X., Su, S., & McElwain, A. (2019). Academic stressors as predictors of achievement goal orientations of American and ESL international students. *Journal of International Students*, *9*(4), 1134–1154. https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v9i4.752.

van Manen, M. (1992). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy.* The Althous Press.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* Sage.

Ogbonaya, A. I. (2010). *A learner analysis of international female doctoral students' experiences at an American university* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of North Colorado, Greeley.

Ogden, A. C. (2006). Ethnographic inquiry: Reframing the learning core of education abroad. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad, 13*, 87–112.

Oramas, J. E., Gringarten, H., & Mitchell, L. (2018). Chinese students in U.S. universities: A qualitative study of cross-cultural learning experiences, transition and adaptation. *Journal of International & Interdisciplinary Business Research, 5*(3), 20–40.

Popadink, N. E. (2008). Intimate relationship of female international students. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 36*(4), 206–218.

Ritzer, G. (2017). *Modern sociological theory: The major schools.* Sage.

Ryman, E., & Fulfer, K. (June 2013). What is feminist phenomenology? *Rotman Institution of Philosophy.* https://www.rotman.uwo.ca/what-is-feminist-phenomenology/.

Simms, E. M., & Stawarska, B. (2013). Introduction: Concepts and methods in interdisciplinary feminist phenomenology. *Janus Head.* http://www.janushead.org/13-1/SimmsStawarska.pdf.

Statistics Canada. (2009). A changing portrait of international students in Canadian universities. http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-004-x/2009005/article/11405-eng.htm.

Statistics Canada. (2016). *Study in Canada. Government of Canada: Ottawa, ON.* http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/china-chine/study-etudie/index.aspx?lang=eng

Statistics Canada. (2019). Canadian postsecondary enrolments and graduates, 2016/2017. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181128/dq181128c-eng.htm.

American Psychological Association. (2011). Stress and gender. http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2011/gender.aspx.

Sun, Y. (2005). The status and rights of Chinese women in the family. *Modern China Studies.* https://www.modernchinastudies.org/cn/issues/past-issues/90-mcs-2005-issue-4/936-2012-01-05-15-34-56.html.

Wotherspoon, T. (2014). *The sociology of education in Canada: Critical perspectives.* Oxford University Press.

Wu, H. P., Garza, E., & Guzman, N. (2015). International student's challenge and adjustment to college. *Education Research International*, 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1155/2015/202753.

Yang, L. X. (2010). Doing a group presentation: Negotiations and challenges experienced by five Chinese ESL students of commerce at a Canadian university. *Language Teaching Research, 14*(2), 141–160.

Zhang, Y. F. (2017). The proportion of the population in higher education has risen to a new level. *China Social Science Daily.* http://www.cssn.cn/sf/bwsfsh/201705/t20170503_3506482.shtml.

Zhao, N. X., & McDougall, D. (2008). Cultural influences on Chinese students' asynchronous online learning in a Canadian university. *Journal of Distance Education, 22*(2), 59–80.

Lin Ge PhD in Education, is a Research Coordinator at the Social Policy Research Centre, University of Regina, Canada. Her research interest lies in marginalized groups' education research, higher education research, trans-cultural education research, and the social and philosophical foundation of education research.

Douglas Brown PhD, is an Associate Professor in the Social Studies Education, University of Regina, Canada. His major research interests lie in the area of policy and the critical agenda, and social and philosophical foundation of education research.

Part II
Race, Citizenship, and Migration

Chapter 4
Developing Intercultural Citizenship in a Study Abroad Context: Voices of International Postgraduate Students in Britain

Anas Hajar and Ali Ait Si Mhamed

Abstract This chapter documents seven Kazakhstani postgraduate students' study abroad experiences to discover whether and to what extent they were able to develop intercultural citizenship after their one-year stay in the UK. Intercultural citizenship refers to 'the extension of citizenship beyond national borders, through recognition of the global scale of social relations, the need to respect and value diversity, and participation in and responsibility to communities at multiple levels from the local to the global' (Baker & Fang, 2020, p. 3). The qualitative data revealed that the time away from Kazakhstan, combined with the experience of contact with other nationalities, enabled many participants to look at Kazakhstan and its culture more objectively. This increased objectivity resulted in them developing greater tolerance of cultural differences, respecting different opinions (e.g., attitudes toward LGBT individuals) and learning to be comfortable in multicultural environments. Nevertheless, some participants articulated limitations to their ability to develop their intercultural citizenship, including their attempts to match idealised 'native speaker' norms and experiencing racism based on their usage of English and presumed ethnicity. This chapter concludes by stressing the need for intercultural interventions in all phases of study abroad to foster and cultivate students' sense of intercultural citizenship.

Keywords Intercultural citizenship · Internationalisation of higher education · Study abroad · Kazakhstani postgraduate students · A qualitative inquiry

4.1 Introduction

The number of students choosing to study outside their home country for all or part of their tertiary education is on the rise. By 2025, more than seven million tertiary-level students are expected to gain some form of international education experience,

A. Hajar (✉) · A. A. S. Mhamed
Graduate School of Education, Nazarbayev University, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan
e-mail: anas.hajar@nu.edu.kz

A. A. S. Mhamed
e-mail: ali.mhamed@nu.edu.kz

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_4

up from 1.3 million in 1990 (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2021). The United Kingdom (UK) is regarded as the main destination country for many international students; 19% of the UK's total student body were non-UK nationals in 2017–2018 (UKCISA, 2019). The Higher Education Statistics Agency (2019) in the UK indicated that 1,215 international Kazakhstani students, the focus of the present study, were registered at UK universities for the academic year 2018/2019. The literature on international education is abundant with definitions of the construct "study abroad". Benson et al.'s (2013), for instance, defines study abroad as 'any period spent overseas, for which study is part of the purpose' (p. 3). Studying abroad has the potential to contribute to the personal, sociocultural, linguistic, and academic development. Consequently, international students need to be perceived as complete people with whole lives instead of separating their minds, bodies, and social behaviours into separate domains of inquiry (Hajar, 2020a) As Jackson and Oguro (2018) suggested, a study sojourn abroad can be one of the most exciting events in a student's life, because the experience can lead to them expand their knowledge of their own specialisation, in addition to acquiring a 'significant development in intercultural competence, second-language proficiency, global-mindedness, and personal growth' (p. 4). Nevertheless, there is no conclusive evidence indicating whether or how this can happen, and sojourn outcomes are highly variable. Baker and Fang (2019), for instance, pointed out that 'study-abroad experiences do not by themselves guarantee development in intercultural awareness and citizenship' without the appropriate preparation, support, evaluation and reflection (p. 7). Therefore, a growing number of study abroad specialists (e.g. Jackson, 2020; Kinginger, 2019) have been calling for more investigations that delve into the development of intercultural/global citizenship of international students.

This chapter reports on a qualitative study of seven Kazakhstani postgraduate students' reflections and assessment of their international educational experiences in the UK after their immediate re-entry into Kazakhstan. Special focus was on the development of their intercultural citizenship after their one-year stay in the UK. The concept of intercultural citizenship here refers to 'the extension of citizenship beyond national borders, through recognition of the global scale of social relations, the need to respect and value diversity, and participation in and responsibility to communities at multiple levels from the local to the global' (Baker & Fang, 2020, p. 3). This chapter is organised into four sections. It begins with an overview of previous research on international students' study-abroad experiences and their relationship to the development of intercultural citizenship. The chapter then gives details of the current study—its aims, a description of the participants, methodology and data analysis. The third section presents the results obtained from a series of individual, semi-structured interviews with the participants. This chapter closes with reflections on the importance of introducing formal education on intercultural citizenship and pedagogical interventions to all phases of study abroad to avoid student sojourners having unrealistic or impractical goals and to encourage them to cultivate meaningful intercultural relationships.

4.2 Intercultural Citizenship and the Internationalisation of Higher Education

With accelerated globalisation and the push for internationalisation across the globe, there has been a dramatic increase in higher education institutions that seek to encourage students towards developing more responsible global citizenship and intercultural communicative competence. As Knight (2004) pointed out, the process of internationalisation in higher education entails integrating 'an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education' (p. 11). Intercultural communicative competence, according to Jackson (2020), refers to the ability of second language speakers to communicate effectively and appropriately with individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (e.g., communication between a Kazakhstani second language speaker of English and a Chinese second language speaker of English or a first language speaker of English from the United Kingdom). It goes beyond communicating messages and exchanging information to establishing and maintaining relationships. Intercultural communicative competence runs in parallel to other concepts such as 'global citizenship', 'intercultural citizenship', or 'cultural awareness', which are commonly used terms in documents describing the goals or missions of educational institutions. Intercultural communicative competence is perceived by some scholars as 'the ability to acknowledge, respect, tolerate, and integrate cultural differences that qualifies one for enlightened global citizenship' (Chen & Starosta, 2006, p. 357). Baker and Fang (2020) also suggest that the fostering of intercultural citizenship to be an important added value of international educational experience necessitates learning about others and producing 'activity in the community at a range of scales going beyond the national' (p. 3). In this sense, intercultural citizenship emphasises multiculturalism and equality, personal growth and the development of an intercultural mindset which respects and values diversity and rejects prejudice (see Baker & Fang, 2019; Byram, 2020; Wagner & Byram, 2017).

While the enrichment of international students' identity as intercultural citizens during their study abroad is advocated by many host institutions, the findings of some empirical studies show that simply being present in the host culture is no guarantee that participants will seek out intercultural encounters or enhance their intercultural competence or develop a more intercultural identity (e.g., Baker & Fang, 2020; Fang & Baker, 2018; Hajar, 2019; 2020b; Jackson, 2014; Schartner, 2016). Jackson (2014), for example, found that many international students spend most of their free time conversing in their first language with co-nationals either face-to-face or online and may even return home with 'reinforced stereotypes of host nationals, identity misalignments, and a myriad of questions about their intercultural interactions' (p. 43). Elsewhere, Jackson (2018) argued that many representatives of host institutions make exaggerated claims in their promotional material for international students—that their institution will enable them to become 'more global-minded and interculturally competent while enhancing their L2 skills in an exciting, often pristine, environment', without adopting adequate intercultural interventions (p. 367).

Intercultural interventions are ‘intentional and deliberate pedagogical approaches, activated throughout the study abroad cycle (before, during, and after), that are designed to enhance students’ intercultural competence’ (Paige & Vande Berg, 2012, pp. 29–30).

Baker and Fang (2020) point out that research into intercultural citizenship is still at an early stage and little evidence exists concerning the development of international students’ intercultural citizenship identity as a result of their study abroad experience. Of these few studies, one conducted by Hajar (2020b) qualitatively examined the perceptions and experiences of Arab international students concerning intercultural citizenship during their study in the UK. He found that most participants did not identify themselves as intercultural citizens at the beginning of their study abroad; they anticipated that they would be capable of making friends mainly with British nationals and speak English like native speakers after spending a limited time period in the UK without undertaking any strategic behaviour. They were also reticent about mingling with other international students from different cultural backgrounds, in the belief that building a strong relationship with Asian peers would not have a beneficial effect on their English language proficiency or even academic development. However, some participants in Hajar’s (2020b) study gradually developed an intercultural citizen identity through their openness to other cultures, along with intensification of their ties with multinational social networks. One participant (Lina), for instance, stated that she strengthened her relationship with one of her Indian classmates, who was a poet and became a valuable source of encouragement for Lina to read more widely, especially poetry, as well as expand her knowledge of other cultures.

In specific relation to the group of students in this study, Kazakhstani international students, there has been no empirical research specifically focusing on these students’ international academic experiences and their development of intercultural citizenship while studying abroad. Therefore, the study reported in this chapter aims to help bridge this lacuna in the existing literature. Kazakhstan is the largest Central Asian country and a former Soviet republic that geographically extends from the Caspian Sea in the west to the Altai Mountains at its eastern borders with China and Russia. In post-Soviet Kazakhstan, the Kazakhstan government decided in 2007 to promote the use of three languages in Kazakhstan: Kazakh as the official state language, Russian as the language of interethnic communication and English as the language of the country’s progress, and integration into the global cultural economy (Karabassova, 2021). After independence in 1991, the Kazakhstan government launched the Bolashak (Kazakh for ‘future’) scholarship in 1993, to enable high-performing students to attend top colleges and universities abroad (Sagintayeva & Jumakulov, 2015). The Bolashak scholarship is a merit-based grant, including full tuition fees and cost of living expenses. Si Mhamed et al. (2018) point out that nearly half of all Bolashak graduates attended universities in the UK (41.37%, N = 4,497), followed by the United States and Canada (26.32%, N = 2,861). From the start of the programme in 1993 until 2018, the Bolashak scholarship was awarded to 12,898 students from Kazakhstan (Si Mhamed et al, 2018).

4.3 Study Details

The present qualitative study is the first empirical study to explore a group of Kazakhstani postgraduate students' reflections and assessment of their international educational experience in the UK upon their re-entry into Kazakhstan. Special focus was on whether and to what extent the students, in their view, became more open-minded and interculturally aware, that is, whether their sojourn abroad supported their intercultural development. The study, exploratory in nature, was guided by the following research question: *To what extent did the participants develop an awareness of and/or identity as intercultural citizens as a result of their international sojourn?*

The present study centered on seven participants, five female and two male, between 24 and 29 years of age. In light of the sensitive information to be uncovered, the researchers were particularly conscious of the need for anonymity. Therefore, the participants are referred to by the following pseudonyms: Amirbek, Aylin, Camila, Darkhan, Moldir, Saule and Sofia. All are Kazakh citizens and won the Bolashak scholarship to complete their postgraduate studies in the UK in the same area as their undergraduate specialisation. They had not lived outside Kazakhstan before their arrival in the UK. They studied at three UK universities in Coventry, Edinburgh, and London. While Amirbek and Camila did their master's degrees in Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching, the other participants' postgraduate programme was in Business and Management. None of the participants were known to the researchers prior to the data collection stage. The participants were recruited two weeks after their return to Kazakhstan, with the help of a Postdoctoral Research Fellow who completed her studies at a UK university and was working at a Kazakhstani university.

The data for this qualitative study were collected between 05 January and 30 April 2020 after gaining informed consent. Three semi-structured, in-depth interviews with each participant were conducted in English by the two authors themselves, recorded and transcribed verbatim. The first two interviews with each participant took place in a quiet room at the university where the authors of this paper are employed, while the last interview was conducted via Skype or Zoom to ensure the safety of the participants during the coronavirus pandemic. Each interview lasted between 45 min to one hour. The use of several interviews with each participant helped the researchers illuminate meaning, develop their understanding of what each participant said and to seek examples from their international educational experience and the development of their intercultural citizenship (for a sample of the interview schedule, see Appendix A). The researchers also conducted member checks, that is, they gave the participants transcripts of their interviews to review and asked them to indicate if the interviews accurately represented their perceptions and experiences. Clarke and Braun (2013) systematic guidelines for conducting thematic analysis (TA) were adopted to analyse the semi-structured interviews. TA is 'a method for identifying and interpreting patterns of meaning (themes) across qualitative data' in rich detail (Clarke & Braun, 2013, p. 218). The researchers familiarised themselves with the data through reading and re-reading the interview transcripts, considering both the surface and hidden meanings of the participants' words. The data were then coded to generate initial codes relating to the aims of the research study question. After this, codes that shared common features were collated to generate themes and subthemes. The next section provides extracts under each theme to illustrate the participants' in-depth accounts of their experiences.

4.4 Findings

4.4.1 Instances of Participants' Developing Their Intercultural Citizenship

The interviews demonstrated that participants had varied degrees of familiarity and understanding with intercultural citizenship. Most of them indicated that they did not consider themselves to be intercultural citizens at the beginning of their stay in the UK, which might be partially explained by their lack of prior travel experience and the absence of any pre-sojourn preparation by their home institutions in Kazakhstan. However, they gradually developed their concept of intercultural citizenship by, for example, respecting different opinions (e.g., attitudes toward LGBT individuals and women's duties), developing tolerance of cultural differences through engaging mainly with other international students (e.g., learning about traditional customs, food habits and the greetings used by individuals from different countries) and feeling changed as a person. In Extract 1, Sofia indicated that living in a society that welcomes the LGBT community made her gradually become more tolerant and accepting of the rights of homosexuals.

Extract 1:

> As I came from a conservative family, I used not to accept the LGBT community. In the first few months of my stay in the UK, I was shocked when I found homosexual people received support there. My university, for instance, put the rainbow flag atop the Senate House, celebrating the LGBT community across the university. I gradually realised that I had to accept others and not to judge anyone according to their sexual or religious orientations. My study abroad helped me start to think outside the box. (Sofia, 1st interview)

Extracts 2–3 reveal how the participants fostered their intercultural competence and developed an identity as an intercultural citizen during their international educational experiences. They did so by involving themselves in intercultural activities organised by the international students themselves, rather than by their host institutions. Such student-led sharing of meetings displayed their willingness of being more open-minded and interested in engaging with others as well as being more tolerant of difference.

Extract 2:

> Our cohort, both male and female students from different countries, celebrated International Women's Day on March 8th. We exchanged many interesting ideas about women's achievements and equality from cultural perspectives…Some female classmates were touched when my Kazakhstani peer and I gave them flowers and some gifts. We told them it is the way we celebrate Women's Day in Kazakhstan. Such activities are essential to strengthen our multicultural friendships… I have become more open-minded. I now think of myself, not as a citizen of one country, but a citizen of the world. (Saule, 2nd interview)

Extract 3:

> I used to have only Kazakh and Russian friends, but now I have Scottish, Chinese, Arab, and African friends….I started to feel myself more like a global citizen. Our master's group sometimes used to meet in a café on Saturdays. We talked about our academic assignments and also about our traditional dishes, customs and favourite places in our countries. After those meetings I noticed that many of them became familiar with Astana and Almaty and were curious to know about Kazakhstan. I also broadened my knowledge about Zambia, for instance. I now know about its exact location, some important places and how people dress for their weddings…if I meet someone from Syria or Thailand, I can talk about their country, or about their food. (Moldir, 2nd interview)

4.4.2 Limitations to Developing Intercultural Citizenship

The data analysis showed that some participants had articulated instances that curtailed their ability to develop as intercultural citizens, including attempts to match idealised 'native speaker' norms, lack of formal education related to intercultural communication before and during their study abroad; becoming more interculturally competent and globally-minded was not part of their motivation for studying abroad, and they experienced racism based on their usage of English and presumed ethnicity. More precisely, all the participants reported that their home institution in Kazakhstan did not provide them with any pre-departure orientation; they were sent abroad without any intercultural guidance or preparation for the use of language and culture-learning strategies, or any support in setting realistic sojourn goals. Aylin explains this point in Extract 4.

Extract 4:

> The only support I got from my home institution was two letters of recommendation written by my professors. I didn't know it is important to be acquainted with my target institution and the life on campus. (Aylin, 2nd interview)

The data analysis also revealed that apart from Camila, none of the participants received formal intercultural citizenship education during their stay in Britain. In Extract 5, Camila reported that one of the elective modules taught on her master's programme—the "Teaching for Intercultural Competence Module"- helped her to gain in-depth knowledge and understanding of the notion of intercultural communicative competence and global orientations towards English.

Extract 5:

> I had an optional module related to intercultural communicative competence. One of the advantages of this module is that it helped me not to be judgmental. I used to consider my Chinese classmates as arrogant because they tended to ignore me. I was offended because I didn't understand why they acted like that. In this module, I had many interesting discussions with my peers from different nationalities. I discovered that I was wrong because my Chinese classmates believed that they shouldn't have bothered me while I was revising the materials of our sessions. (Camila, 3rd interview)

One participant, Darkhan, indicated that the development of multicultural friendships and global perspectives through international educational experience was not part of his motivation for or during his study abroad, especially since his family accompanied him, and his financial situation was not good enough for him to hang out with other cultural groups (Extract 6). Therefore, Darkhan tended to minimise his involvement in cocurricular activities during his stay in the UK in favour of focusing on his academic needs.

Extract 6:

> I came to London with my wife and son to get my master's degree and go back to Kazakhstan. Building close relationships with British and multinational people was not my priority…In London, life is expensive and hectic. I spent most of my monthly stipend on accommodation and living costs. (Darkhan, 2nd interview)

Two participants (Amirbek and Aylin) described how their experiences with racism and misidentification based on their usage of English and their presumed ethnicity had an effect on the development of their concept of intercultural citizenship, causing them to be less engaged with intercultural groups, both in class and outside, especially in the first period of their stay abroad. The concept of 'linguistic racism' refers to 'the violation of one' s fundamental human rights based on how one speaks certain languages and how one's entitlements are denied and discriminated against in both institutional and non-institutional settings due to how one speaks English and other additional languages' (Dovchin 2020a, p. 2). Extract 7 exemplifies this point.

Extract 7:

> Many people in the UK thought that I was Chinese. It is a problem for most Kazakhstani students in the UK…I felt upset when somebody, even the Chinese students, started using Chinese with me…Once I was waiting for the coach heading to Manchester, one local guy made racist comments to me like "why do you, Chinese people, come to the UK. You do not even speak English well"…Such incidents made me reluctant to communicate with others in the first few months of my stay in the UK. I felt that my English was not good as I have an Asian accent. (Amirbek, 3rd interview)

A theme that emerged from the data was that although study abroad experiences helped most participants develop their appreciation of intercultural engagement, some still conceived of themselves as predominantly learners of English, mainly because of the superficiality of their interactions with British people, which made it difficult for them to improve their British accents. Camila made the following comment regarding this point:

Extract 8:

> I still see myself as a learner in English. It was my own fault because I didn't make use of the opportunity of living in England. I wanted to sound native-like, particularly the BBC accent. This goal couldn't be achieved without building constructive relationships with English-speaking people. I used to hang out with fellow Kazakhstani friends, and friends from China, Bulgaria, Jordan, and Indonesia. (Camila, 2nd interview)

4.5 Discussion and Implications

The study reported in this chapter investigated the development of intercultural citizenship in Kazakhstani international students in UK higher education. Similar to the findings of Baker' and Fang's (2019, 2020) study with Chinese international students in the UK, most of the participants expressed favourable attitudes towards the notion of intercultural citizenship and felt that their time away from their homeland, combined with the experience of contact with other nationalities and other cultures, gave them the distance necessary to look at Kazakhstan and its culture more objectively. This increased objectivity resulted in them developing tolerance of cultural differences, respecting different opinions (e.g., attitudes toward LGBT individuals) and learning to be comfortable in multicultural environments. However, this development was not universal among the participants, with some students reporting a lack of opportunity to develop, and others rejecting the notion of intercultural citizenship as an identity. This uneven development is not surprising in face of the participants' limited, if not absence, of any formal education in intercultural citizenship or pedagogical interventions in all phases of their study abroad experience. Many host institutions provided little or no intercultural interventions during the sojourn and international students are expected to quickly adjust and fit into the new environment without any help.

Some study abroad specialists (e.g., Jackson, 2018, 2020; Jackson & Oguro, 2018; Lou et al., 2012; Plews & Misfeldt, 2018), therefore, underline the need for integrating systematic intercultural interventions throughout the study abroad cycle (before, during, and after) to prepare student sojourners for possible adjustment challenges and help them fully optimise their intercultural learning and engagement both in their home environment and abroad. That is, intercultural educators from both home and host institutions need to work together to support intercultural students' learning and engagement. Jackson (2020), for instance, points out that students who plan to venture abroad should be provided with a variety of pre-sojourn preparations (e.g., a series of workshops and well-designed intercultural education courses) by intercultural educators to enable them to set realistic sojourn goals, clarify myths and misconceptions about study abroad (e.g., automatic personal transformation) and propel them to higher levels of intercultural sensitivity and engagement. In courses like these, detailed profiles of the participants, including their readiness for intercultural learning and sojourn goals, are essential to tailor the curriculum or intervention plan to their needs (Jackson, 2020). During the sojourn, intercultural educators and student unions should arrange regular debriefings and ask international students to write diaries and reflect on their positive intercultural interactions as well as any communication breakdowns (see Jackson & Oguro, 2018). The actual process of writing about their sojourn experiences can be cathartic in itself. Based on her empirical study on three Chinese university students immediately after their semester-long exchange programme in the UK, Du (2019) suggested that home country institutions should encourage study abroad returnees to sustain the intercultural citizenship identity they experienced by organising a series of guided reflection sessions so they can critically share their experiences with future sojourners, and help them set realistic goals for further language and intercultural enhancement, and for personal growth. Critical intercultural education can also help returnees serve as buddies or partners for inbound international exchange students in their institutions.

While most participants in the present study indicated how they exercised their agency, giving several instances of how and when they became more global-minded and interculturally competent while enhancing their English language skills in the UK, two participants (Amirbek and Aylin) explicitly described their experience of racism based on their usage of English and even their ethnicity, and this in turn-especially in the first period of their study abroad—caused them to keep their intercultural interactions with both host and multinational social networks to a minimum. The bullying they experienced because of their ethnic accent or ethnicity seemed to lead them to develop an inferiority complex regarding what they perceived to be their inadequate British accented English. In her qualitative study with 9 international students from China, Hong Kong, Mongolia, Singapore, Somalia, Ukraine, and Vietnam in Australia, Dovchin (2020a) found that almost all the participants had experienced two main types of linguistic racism: 'ethnic accent bullying' (i.e. bullying of speakers from ethnically and linguistically different backgrounds due to their biographical English accent) and 'linguistic stereotyping' (i.e. predefined negative assumptions imposed on English speakers based on their race and ethnicity) (p. 3–4). The combination of these two practices caused many participants to experience psychological inferiority complexes leading to depression, social withdrawal, low self-esteem, fear, anxiety and apprehension when speaking English (Dovchin, 2020a). This finding is illuminating in that reminds us of the importance of investigating what linguistic racism—the practices that aim to confirm, normalise and reformulate the uneven linguistic power between language users—can actually inflict on international students, and the role that educators in the host countries should play in minimising this. This issue is particularly relevant to international students with Asian backgrounds during the COVID-19 pandemic, since it is claimed the virus spread from there to other parts of the world. Former US president, Donald Trump, referred to COVID-19 as the "Chinese virus" on March 16, 2020, and this has increasingly been used across social media platforms (Lyu et al., 2020). As Dovchin (2020b) remarks, as the COVID-19 pandemic extends, 'explicit forms of verbal abuse are illustrative of the linguistic racism that people of Asian background are forced to encounter' (p. 1).

This chapter has provided new information from a group of Kazakhstani postgraduate students' reflections and assessment of their international education experience in the UK after their immediate return to Kazakhstan. Special focus was on the development of their concepts of their intercultural citizenship identity as a result of their study abroad. Nevertheless, a limitation of the study is that it only used semi-structured interviews as a research method and relied on a small number of Asian international students from a Kazakhstani background as the research participants. Future studies that examine the impact of a study abroad experience on international students' intercultural development and engagement in various phases of the study abroad cycle (i.e., from the pre-sojourn phase until return) would enrich the database available. It is also important to use different research methods such as questionnaires, interviews and narrative writing to gather data, rather than just one information source. Multiple data sources add both breadth and depth to a needs analysis and offer a stronger way of validating the findings obtained from each individual source.

Appendix A Indicative Interview Protocol

1. Why did you decide to complete your study in the UK?
2. How did you come to the UK (i.e. at your own expense or were you granted a scholarship)?
3. Have elements of the host country become part of your identity? Do you feel more like a global citizen after living abroad? How?
4. While abroad did you see yourself as an ambassador of Kazakhstan? If yes, how did you feel in that role?
5. Compared with your first week abroad, how did you feel at the end of your stay? Did you fit in? How did you feel about leaving?
6. Did your intercultural communication skills improve after studying and living abroad? Why or why not? What areas improved? What areas do you wish to improve further?
7. How important are English skills to intercultural communication?
8. What is most interesting or intriguing for you in interacting with people from other cultures?
9. How much do you think you know about your host country, culture and people?

References

Baker, W., & Fang, F. (2019). From English language learners to intercultural citizens: Chinese student sojourners' development of intercultural citizenship in ELT and EMI programmes. *British Council ELT Research Papers*, 18(4).

Baker, W., & Fang, F. (2020). 'So maybe I'm a global citizen': Developing intercultural citizenship in English medium education. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2020.1748045.

Byram, M. (2020). *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence: Revisited*. Multilingual Matters.

Chen, G. M., & Starosta, W. J. (2006). Intercultural awareness. In L.A. Samovar, R.E. Porter, & E.R. McDaniel (Eds.), *Intercultural communication: A reader* (pp. 357–366). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners*. Sage.

Dovchin, S. (2020a). The psychological damages of linguistic racism and international students in Australia. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2020.1759504.

Dovchin, S. (2020b). Introduction to special issue: linguistic racism. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 1-5. https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2020.1778630.

Du, X. (2019). The impact of semester-abroad experiences on post-sojourn L2 motivation. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *9*(1), 117–155. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5485-7283.

Fang, F., & Baker, W. (2018). 'A more inclusive mind towards the world': English language teaching and study abroad in China from intercultural citizenship and English as a lingua franca perspectives. *Language Teaching Research, 22*(5), 608–624. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168817718574

Hajar, A. (2019). *International students challenges, strategies and future vision: A socio-dynamic perspective.* Multilingual Matters.

Hajar, A. (2020a). Arab sojourner expectations, academic socialisation and strategy use on a pre-sessional English programme in Britain. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, *15*(3), 221–239. https://doi.org/10.1080/1554480X.2019.1696200.

Hajar, A. (2020b). Shifting learning strategies and future selves of Arab postgraduate students in Britain: a qualitative inquiry. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2020.1739051.

Jackson, J. (2020). *Introducing language and intercultural communication* (2nd edn). Routledge.

Jackson, J. (2014). The process of becoming reflexive and intercultural: Navigating study abroad and reentry experience. In J. Byrd-Clark & F. Dervin (Eds.), *Reflexivity in language and intercultural education* (pp. 43–63). Routledge.

Jackson, J. (2018). Intervening in the intercultural learning of L2 study abroad students: From research to practice. *Language Teaching, 51*(3), 365–382. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444816000392

Jackson, J., & Oguro, S. (2018). Introduction: Enhancing and extending study abroad learning through intercultural interventions. In J. Jackson & S. Oguro (Eds.), *Intercultural interventions in study abroad* (pp. 4–25). Routledge.

Karabassova, L. (2021). English-medium education reform in Kazakhstan: Comparative study of educational change across two contexts in one country. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2021.1884436.

Kinginger, C. (2019). Four questions for the next generation of study abroad researchers. In M. Howard (Ed.), *Study abroad, second-language acquisition and interculturality* (pp. 263–278). Multilingual Matters.

Knight, J. (2004). Internationalization remodeled: Definition, approaches, and rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 8*(1), 5–31. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315303260832

Lou, K. H., Vande Berg, M., & Paige, R. M. (2012). Intervening in study learning abroad: Closing insights. In M. Vande Berg, R. M. Paige & K. H. Lou (Eds.), *Student learning abroad, what our students are learning, what they're not, and what we can do about it* (pp. 411–419). Stylus Publishing.

Lyu, H., Chen, L., Luo, J., & Wang, Y. (2020). Sense and sensibility: Characterizing social media users regarding the use of controversial terms for COVID-19. *IEEE Trans. Big Data.* https://covid-19.conacyt.mx/jspui/bitstream/1000/1890/1/1100781.pdf.

OECD. (2021). International student mobility (indicator). Retrieved February 25, 2021, from https://doi.org/10.1787/4bcf6fc3-en

Paige, R. M., & Vande Berg, M. (2012). Why students are and are not learning abroad. In Paige, R. M., Vande Berg, M., & K. H. Lou (Eds.), *Student learning Abroad: What our students are learning, what they're not and what we can do about it* (pp. 29−59). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Plews, J. L., & Misfeldt, K. (2018). *Second language study abroad: Programming, pedagogy, and participant engagement*. Springer International Publishing.

Sagintayeva, A., & Jumakulov, Z. (2015). Kazakhstan's Bolashak scholarship program. *International Higher Education, 79*, 21–23. https://doi.org/10.6017/ihe.2015.79.5846

Schartner, A. (2016). The effect of study abroad on intercultural competence: A longitudinal case study of international postgraduate students at a British university. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 37*(4), 402–418. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2015.1073737

Si Mhamed, A., Atanu, R., Kasa, R., Shamatov, D., Tajik, M. A., Kerimkulova, S., et al. (2018). The Bolashak international scholarship program: An evaluation of effectiveness through analysis of costs and benefits (an unpublished report).

UK Council for International Student Affairs. (2019). International student statistics: UK higher education. London: UKCISA. Retrieved October 1, 2020, from https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Research-Policy/Statistics/International-student-statistics-UKhigher-education.

Wagner, M., & Byram, M. (2017). Intercultural citizenship. In Y. Y. Kim (Ed.), *The international encyclopedia of intercultural communication* (pp. 1–6). Wiley.

Anas Hajar is a graduate of Warwick University holding a PhD in Language Education. He worked as a Postdoctoral Research and Teaching Fellow at Warwick, Coventry and Christ Church Universities in the UK and at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in Hong Kong SAR. He is currently an Associate Professor of Multilingual Education at Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan. He is particularly interested in motivational issues in language learning and intercultural engagement. He also works in the areas of internationalization and education abroad, language learning strategies and shadow education.

Ali Ait Si Mhamed is currently an Associate Professor at Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education in Kazakhstan. He received his PhD in Comparative and International Higher Education in the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo, USA. His professional expertise includes program director, Research Chair, quality assurance Chair, and accreditation lead. He has a list of publications in high indexed journals. His research record includes studies of higher education in the USA, Morocco, Egypt, Baltic States, and Central Asia. His recent projects are related to cost benefit analysis of education and higher education programs in Baltic States and Kazakhstan.

Chapter 5
A Second-Class Teacher: The Case of a Student of color's English Teaching Experiences During Study-Abroad

Yukari Takimoto Amos

Abstract Because white students dominate in participation in study-abroad, students of color's experiences are under-researched. This chapter delineates what they really experience during study-abroad by focusing on one African American male student's English teaching experiences in Japan. Since whiteness is not only normalized but also explicitly preferred in the ELT (English language teaching) profession in Asia in general, the participant's non-whiteness was taken as the absence of symbolic capital the teachers at the host school wanted to access. This perceived absence, unfortunately, lead to the participant being treated as a non-ideal ELT instructor. The white students who participated in the same study-abroad, on the other hand, were all treated as ideal ELT instructors and received effective mentoring from and collaboration with the teachers at the host school. The chapter highlights the importance of discussions of frequently neglected topic in study-abroad: the effects of participants' race, in particular, how their race affects how they access to and interact with the members of the host country, and how such access and interactions affect their learning experiences.

Keywords ELT instructors · Inequality · Race · Symbolic capital · Students of color · Whiteness

5.1 Introduction

As the world has become increasingly more connected, it becomes imperative to build "bridges of tolerance and respect for other cultures" (Kramsch, 2002, p. 272). Intercultural competence should be an important graduate outcome in a globalized world. The recent popularity of overseas student teaching/practicum in U.S. teacher education is believed to be one affirmative step that can be used to prepare students with global intercultural competence. Indeed, studies have found that study-abroad experiences make a positive impact on college students. For example, research on

Y. T. Amos (✉)
Central Washington University, Ellensburg, WS, USA

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_5

specifically study-abroad “teaching” experiences revealed that participants developed empathy towards English learners (Pilonieta et al., 2017; Zhao et al., 2009) and multicultural inclusive pedagogy (Alfaro, 2008; Jiang & DeVillar, 2011), and increased confidence and a better appreciation and respect for different cultures (Pence & Macgillivray, 2008; Zhao et al., 2009). Overall, the experiences helped the students’ intercultural development (Marx & Moss, 2011; Smolcic & Katunich, 2017).

Participation rate in study-abroad, however, significantly differs by race/ethnicity. In the 2016–17 academic year, the number of American students who studied-abroad increased to 332,727 (National Association of Foreign Student Advisors, 2019). Among these students, 71% were white, 10% were Latina/o, 8% were Asian, 6% were African American, and 4% were multi-racial students. Latina/o and African American students’ participation rates were lower than their post-secondary enrolment rates (Latina/o students, 18% and African American students, 14%) (NAFSA, 2019).

Because study-abroad programs are mainly designed for white students (Blake et al., 2019; Goldoni, 2017) due to their dominant participation rate, studies on college students’ study-abroad experiences heavily concentrate on white students. As a result, the experiences of students of color are under-researched. Among the few studies that dealt with students of color’s study-abroad experiences, some reported that the participants experienced discrimination and discomfort due to their race and national origin (Craig, 2010; Malewski & Phillion, 2009; Maundeni, 2001). Willis (2015), for example, detailed 19 African American women’s experiences of microaggressions both by their white peers and in-country hosts during study-abroad. Feelings of exclusion have been widely cited in the literature among students of color who studied-abroad (Hardaway, 2010; Gaines, 2012). Some students felt ignored and disrespected and found these experiences to be shocking and unfair. Their experiences make a sharp contrast with those of white students who primarily reported positive experiences. Since teacher education in the U.S. remains predominantly white, teacher candidates of color’s study-abroad experiences are rarely known. This chapter attempts to uncover what they really experience during study-abroad by delineating one African American male student’s English teaching experiences in Japan.

5.2 Race and ELT in Asia

Due to its role as the language of commerce, English is a pathway to a good career and social success (Piller & Cho, 2013). Throughout Asia, English competency is recognized as advantageous, and governments and citizens have invested heavily in English language education (Hewson, 2018).

Because of the history of British colonialism and American imperialism in the world, both race and nativeness are elements of “the idealized native speaker” (Romney, 2010, p. 19) of English. Strother (2007) contends that a preference for white native speakers in the ELT profession is widespread. This idealization reflects upon the inaccurate but prevalent assumption that only white people are native speakers of English. People of color may not be accepted as native speakers. Due to this fallacy, if one is not white or a native speaker, one needs to go to great length to establish credibility in front of students. This situation fundamentally advantages white native speakers while rendering those who are non-white as less desirable "others," thus creating an unequal environment. In the profession that normalizes a native speaker fallacy and white privilege, ELT instructors of color are, by default, denied participation on equal grounds with white instructors (Canagarajah, 1999).

Ironically, the ELT profession itself plays a significant role in circulating the belief that English should be taught, preferably, by white native speakers, creating fertile ground for racialized discourses. Therefore, the economic success of the ELT profession depends on how much whiteness is endorsed as a marketing tool. In Asia where the English language education is vigorously promoted, whiteness and native speaker status are considered as the prime qualifications to obtain work (Mahboob & Golden, 2013; Sung, 2011). Preferential practices towards white ELT instructors and discriminatory practices against ELT instructors of color in recruiting and in the workplace are omnipresent. In the review of online teacher recruitment spaces, Ruecker and Ives (2015) reported that young enthusiastic white native speakers of English are overwhelmingly and explicitly desired as ELT instructors. Ramjattan (2015) revealed that ELT instructors of color were told that they lacked the right aesthetic (e.g. looking white) needed to inspire learners. ELT instructors of color are also frequently denied teaching positions or receive lower wages than their white counterparts (Braine, 2010; Kubota & Fujimoto, 2013).

As consumers in the ELT profession, students themselves actively reproduce the racialized discourses. It is well-known that many Asian people prefer white instructors of English (Amin, 1997; Golombek & Jordan, 2005). University students in Thailand, for example, implied a bias in favor of white instructors, including non-native speakers, and held negative attitudes towards non-white or African American teachers (Wilkinson, 2016). This could be a reflection of the U.S. entertainment industry that culturally and linguistically essentializes Blackness in hip-hop music and Hollywood movies (Jenks, 2017), thus rendering African American speakers of English as less desirable. Furthermore, the ELT profession in Asia overwhelmingly uses white actors in advertisements. This custom reinforces the false idea that white people speak the best English. Whiteness, in summary, is a valued and indispensable commodity in the ELT profession in Asia.

5.3 Investigating an African American Male Student's English Teaching Experiences

5.3.1 Purpose of the Study

Pipitone (2018) claims that study-abroad has historically reproduced hierarchies of power and colonialism, perpetuating views of an exotic cultural "other," and turning "global citizenship" into a commodity. On top of this problematic trend, participants in overseas student-teaching/practica, popular in teacher education in the U.S., frequently require students to teach English or in English regardless of their certification area because of language constraints (Smolcic & Katunich, 2017). As the literature clearly suggests, whiteness is normalized and explicitly desired in the ELT profession in Asia. Teaching English or in English during study-abroad in Asia necessarily reinforces the white, colonial gaze, and the false idea that English is a white language. Therefore, giving voice to participants of color who are excluded, undervalued, and disadvantaged during English teaching study-abroad becomes important. This chapter delineates an African American male student's English teaching experiences in Japan with a focus on his interactions with the Japanese teachers at the school where he taught.

5.3.2 Methods

5.3.2.1 Participant and Setting

The study reports about Luke (all the names of people used in the study are pseudonyms), an African American male undergraduate student who was in the teacher education program in a four-year-university in the U.S. (To protect the identities of those who are mentioned in the study, some information has been intentionally fictionalized). During his third year at college, Luke participated in a three-month-long English teaching practicum in Tokyo, Japan with four white students from the same university. None of the study-abroad participants spoke the local language. I was the university supervisor of the study-abroad. Our communications were primarily conducted via emails and videos because I resided in the U.S. for the duration of their study-abroad except for one trip to their school in Tokyo to observe their teaching.

The mid-size public elementary school where they taught, "Sakura Elementary School," aggressively endorsed English language education, thus initially welcomed Luke and his fellow participants, all native speakers of English. Several native speakers of English, all white Americans, had previously been employed at school. Other than these several native speaking instructors, all the teachers at Sakura Elementary were Japanese: some spoke fairly good English, while others did not speak English, or had modest competency in the language. Luke and the other participants were all assigned to different Japanese mentor teachers who all taught English at school: Luke was assigned to Mr. Kaneshima, and Mr. Kaneshima's fourth-grade classroom became his homeroom.

A single-case study is seen by some researchers as being too narrow (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). However, it allows researchers to investigate in depth, which leads to theory building.

5.3.2.2 Procedure

Luke's experiences were elicited using a counter-storytelling methodology critical race theory (CRT) uses. CRT premises that racism is omnipresent, pervasive, and ingrained in society and recognizes that people of color's experiential knowledge is legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination (Solórzano & Yosso, 2009). Thus, CRT uses counter-storytelling as a means of telling untold stories as well as a method of analysis (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). I formally interviewed Luke three times: almost at the end of his practicum, right after he came back from Japan, and approximately year later. These interviews (approximately one hour each) were tape-recorded and subsequently transcribed. I also collected weekly journal entries in which Luke wrote how he felt about what had happened at school as well as his final reflection paper.

To ensure neutrality and objectivity, I began analyzing the data after his graduation. First, I did open coding of Luke's interview transcript and his writings to conceptualize the data line by line (Charmaz, 2006) and created categories. My observational notes were also analyzed at this time. Then, I sorted the categories into common groupings to make larger categories. These larger categories represented Luke's overall experiences during study-abroad.

5.4 Race, English Teaching, and Interactions with Teachers

Luke loved teaching in Japan. His pupils were all enthusiastic about learning English from him, and he enjoyed creating lessons for them despite the time he needed to spend every day. However, his interactions with teachers at Sakura Elementary were stifled.

5.4.1 Cold Mentoring Relationship

Mentor teachers play a significant role in shaping the practicum experiences of their mentees by overseeing the latter's daily activities and conferencing with and evaluating their performance over time (Nguyen, 2009). Cross-cultural mentoring, when individuals with different racial/ethnic background establish a mentoring relationship, is particularly difficult to sustain (McCoy et al., 2015). Furthermore, not all mentor teacher-mentee matches are successful. Tensions and conflicts may arise between the two parties. With emotional support and an open line of communications and feedback, a positive mentoring relationship is attainable (Izadinia, 2016).

Luke recounted the first encounter with Mr. Kaneshima: "Mr. Kaneshima looked shocked when he saw my face. Sakura Elementary has never had a non-white teacher before. I was the first." Luke's recount is similar to that of an African American female ELT instructor in South Korea. She said, "As soon as I arrived, I could see the look of disappointment on their faces" (Jenks, 2017, p. 97). Although we never know why Mr. Kaneshima was in shock, Luke interpreted it as a sign that Mr. Kaneshima was expecting someone white as his mentee. Instead of greeting with warmth, Mr. Kaneshima bluntly and quickly gave Luke the textbook, papers, and school schedule for the year without having any meaningful conversations with him. Luke felt, "Man, what did I get myself into? Is this because I'm not white?" The first encounter with Mr. Kaneshima planted a seed on Luke that he was not a white teacher as well as what that would entail.

Cold and blunt interactions with Mr. Kaneshima never thawed during the study-abroad. After observing Mr. Kaneshima's teaching for four days, Luke began teaching solo from the fifth day of his arrival. Mr. Kaneshima advised Luke: "This is your classroom. Do whatever you want." At first, Luke appreciated trust and a degree of freedom given by Mr. Kaneshima and felt excited about being in charge of the class as many student teachers do (Patrick, 2013). However, a free reign still needs to be limited by a mentor teacher who can provide strategies, impart knowledge, and show emotional support (Izadinia, 2016) to be successful, particularly because Luke was a student teacher.

Despite his confidence, Luke soon realized that he desperately needed Mr. Kaneshima's guidance because he found himself at a loss in class. The area Luke needed the most help from Mr. Kaneshima was the background information about each pupil in the classroom, particularly each pupil's academic English level. Knowing students is the most important and fundamental element of teaching as it is pivotal to developing good student–teacher relationship (Santoro & Kennedy, 2016). Luke kept asking questions to Mr. Kaneshima about the pupils, but his answer was always terse: he never elaborated. Moreover, he acted kind of annoyed in Luke's eyes. Mr. Kaneshima would brush off, "I don't know. So and so is the highest and the lowest."

Another area Luke was desperate to improve was grammar teaching. The textbook Sakura Elementary used schoolwide was strictly grammar-based. He was supposed to teach complex tenses such as the past continuous tense to the elementary pupils who were all English learners. Luke admitted: "I've found it very hard to teach English. As a native speaker, rules come natural to me. I needed to figure out creative ways to teach these rules, but I struggled." Unfortunately, Mr. Kaneshima was nowhere to be found both in and outside the classroom. Luke made a bitter face: "Mr. Kaneshima was never in the classroom with me. He wasn't there as much as I needed him to be. His philosophy was 'sink or swim' basically. There was hardly any interaction between us." Because the guidance from Mr. Kaneshima was not available, and they "kind of avoided each other," Luke ended up spending a significant amount of time researching, on the Internet, for the answers to grammar questions and teaching tips all by himself.

Almost at the end of the study-abroad, I physically observed Luke's teaching at Sakura Elementary with Mr. Kaneshima's presence. It was obvious that Luke had made a good amount of lesson preparation: a costume, power point slides, handouts, a game, etc. Before the lesson, Luke was told by Mr. Kaneshima to play a game at the beginning of the lesson rather than in the middle as Luke had planned. Luke ended up keeping his way, which made Mr. Kaneshima unhappy. After the lesson, Mr. Kaneshima gave Luke rare feedback: one critique after another, such as Luke refused to take Mr. Kaneshima's suggestion about the game, he did not reach the pupils at their personal level, and his lesson was too "American." Later, Luke confessed that he did not want to respond to Mr. Kaneshima's critiques because he knew Mr. Kaneshima would put him in the worst scenario if he had done so. He also added, "For the past three months, I have been doing this way all by myself without any guidance from Mr. Kaneshima. I was comfortable with the way I have been doing." Luke's defiance clearly illustrates that there was definitely a tension between him and Mr. Kaneshima, as Luke described, "There was a curtain drawn in between us."

Towards the end of the study-abroad, Luke was highly emotional:

I've got to the point that I like the fact that Mr. Kaneshima was not in class. For the entire time, he could have been in class helping me. There was never animosity like words being shared to one another at all. Sometimes, I wonder if I had had a different mentor, I would have had different experiences. Because Mr. Kaneshima wasn't there, I needed to learn a lot all by myself.

Luke summarized the study-abroad experiences as a "self-learning process" as he learned about himself and his teaching style as a teacher all by himself. Although Luke was appreciative of this opportunity, he admitted that he sometimes wondered why Mr. Kaneshima was so cold to him. He pondered: "There was never a moment when I felt that Mr. Kaneshima was treating me so cold because I was not white. I never felt that way. I sometimes wondered though. But, it wouldn't be so obvious."

5.4.2 Differential Treatments

His being a non-white and its concomitant "marked" ELT instructor status never escaped from Luke's mind. Although he was never able to clearly materialize a connection between Mr. Kaneshima's cold mentoring and his marked ELT status, he indisputably realized that he was treated differently from the fellow white participants by the teachers, including Mr. Kaneshima, at Sakura Elementary.

According to Luke, other participants, all white, had good experiences at Sakura Elementary. One participant, Paul, in particular, forged an excellent relationship with his mentor, Mr. Hashimoto. Paul would talk to Mr. Hashimoto down deep whenever he needed guidance from Mr. Hashimoto. Mr. Hashimoto would comfort Paul whenever the latter felt, "I can't do it! I need help!" When I was in the observation trip, I witnessed Paul and Mr. Hashimoto constantly chatting with each other with smiles in a close physical proximity, while I never witnessed the same between Luke and Mr. Kaneshima.

It became clear to Luke that Mr. Kaneshima liked Paul more than him. For example, sometimes, the study-abroad participants and the teachers went out for lunch together. Mr. Kaneshima would incessantly talk to Paul to the degree that even Paul could not keep up with. It also became clear that Mr. Kaneshima intentionally avoided Luke. One time, Paul delivered a message from Mr. Kaneshima to Luke: "Mr. Kaneshima is wondering if you're mad at him or not." Upon receiving this message, Luke was frustrated: "Then, why doesn't he talk to me directly?" Paul, it turned out, made friends with many teachers at Sakura Elementary, while friendships with the teachers never developed for Luke.

At first, Luke attributed Paul's popularity and his own unpopularity among the teachers, particularly, Mr. Kaneshima, to their personalities: Luke was reserved and quiet, while Paul was outgoing and talkative. Gradually, his viewpoint changed. Luke was shocked to witness the teachers asking for photos with the study-abroad participants, but not with him. When Luke was in a teachers' lounge, nobody ever said, "How are you?" upon passing. Luke began feeling uncomfortable with the gaze he received in and outside of school: people would stare at him. Luke's conclusion after all of these experiences was: "I'm not common at all over here. I'm dark. I'm not welcomed." This conclusion was particularly painful to Luke who had always felt that he was "very light" in the U.S. Further, it evidences "a double whammy" (Brux & Fry, 2010)—he was different from others in the group and different from the people of the host country.

When Paul was promised a job at Sakura Elementary in the middle of the study-abroad, Luke's doubts became concrete: "Paul is the epitome of Americans. The picture of Americans. I'm not an ideal American. I'm not the picture. I would never get a job offer because I'm not white." With the marked ELT status comes the assumption of undesirableness and inferiority in comparison to the fellow white participants. Luke felt that not much had been expected of him in spite of all the work he did in Mr. Kaneshima's classroom. This low expectation could explain Mr. Kaneshima's harsh critiques of Luke's teaching and his "sink or swim" style of mentoring as white normativity in the ELT profession dictates who would provide good and bad language teaching (Jenks, 2017).

Reflecting upon the entire experiences during the study-abroad, Luke concluded: "My experiences were not as picture-pretty as Paul and others. I was certainly privileged as a native speaker. But, I was not as privileged as my fellow white students."

Luke's conclusion highlights the existence of a perceived hierarchy between him and other participants of the study-abroad, with him being subordinate.

5.5 Discussion and Implications

Thomas (2013) problematizes a tendency of U.S. study-abroad scholarships that implies a relational/positional relationship of markedness and normativity (unmarked/normal vs. marked/problematic) between two groups: white students and students of color. In English teaching and study-abroad programs in Japan, this relational/positional relationship is not only reified but also exacerbated, leading to unequal experiences between white and minority participants.

In Luke's case, it appears that he was perceived and treated as a non-ideal ELT instructor by the teachers at Sakura Elementary who idealized white ELT instructors. The cold mentoring Luke received from Mr. Kaneshima and differential treatment the teachers displayed towards Luke in comparison to his fellow white participants seem to indicate that the teachers gravitated towards the value of symbolic capital that the white participants possessed as ELT instructors. Bourdieu (1986) defines symbolic capital as "cultural and social value that accrues from the engagement in practices and access to resources not primarily recognized as economic, but which provide social and economic power to those who engage in and possess such practices/resources" (cited in Thomas, 2013, p. 377). Luke's non-whiteness, it seems, was perceived as the absence of the "right" symbolic capital the teachers wished to access, despite the fact that he was a native speaker of English. If analyzed from this angle, also no mentoring, collaboration, and interaction with Luke on the part of the teachers at Sakura Elementary makes sense.

The teachers' actions, although unintentional and not planned, gave Luke and his fellow white participants different material effects. Because of the absence of effective mentoring, Luke ended up in preparing for lessons with little guidance, while Paul engaged himself in collaborative preparations with his mentor teacher. Although the time and effort Luke spent to prepare for lessons surely made him a better teacher, guidance Paul received from his mentor teacher surely made him a better teacher as well. Witnessing Paul's popularity among the teachers in contrast to his own unpopularity affected not only Luke's confidence as an ELT instructor but also his overall access to resources the teachers at Sakura Elementary possessed. In other words, the teachers may have wanted to access the symbolic capital the white participants, like Paul, possessed as white ELT instructors, while on the other hand, the study-abroad participants themselves benefited from accessing the knowledge, skills, and experiences the teachers at Sakura Elementary possessed to make themselves better teachers. To the white participants, this access was bilateral. However, to Luke, this access was denied in both ways.

Luke's experiences remind us of the importance of discussions of frequently neglected topic in study-abroad: the effects of participants' race, in particular, how their race affects how they access to and interact with the members of the host country, and how such access and interactions affect their learning experiences. This neglect is partially a result of the dominant participation rate of white students in study-abroad. However, it is also reinforced by the fact that many of the discourses associated with study-abroad in the U.S. are images of whiteness and privilege (Gore, 2005), thus subliminally but effectively excludes students of color as legitimate participants. In this situation, students of color who participate in study-abroad are relationally and disproportionately compared and contrasted to a normalized white population (Thomas, 2013); thus students of color's "different" experiences from white participants during study-abroad are attributed to the former's deficiency at the individual level. After all, if white students have good experiences in the same space – the same location in the same host country – at the same time, an uncritical observer would ask why students of color cannot experience the same?

In order to promote and diversify student participation in study-abroad and ensure that there is little inequality in experiences between white students and students of color, participants' race must be brought into the planning programs of the university and the local host. This is particularly important in the ELT profession where global dominance of whiteness is not only normalized but also explicitly preferred. Luke's experiences clearly suggest how the absence of race-related discussions between the program and the host before and during the study-abroad created not only unequal experiences but also had psychologically and educationally damaging effects on him. Fundamentally, his case implies that the implicit association with whiteness in study-abroad programs must be unravelled in order for participants of color to experience the quality of learning experiences white students take for granted.

Acknowledgement I would like to thank my husband, Daniel Miles Amos, for our many discussions of this article and for his editorial suggestions.

References

Alfaro, C. (2008). Global student teaching experiences: Stories bridging cultural and inter-cultural difference. *Multicultural Education, 15*(4), 20–26.

Amin, N. (1997). Race and the identity of the non-native ESL teacher. *TESOL Quarterly, 31*(3), 580–583.

Blake, D., Gasman, M., Esmieu, P. 'L.', Castro Samayoa, A., & Cener, J. (2019). Culturally relevant study abroad for students of color: Lessons from the Frederick Douglass Global Fellowship in London. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education.* http://dx.doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000112.

Braine, G. (2010). *Nonnative speaker English teachers: Research, pedagogy, and professional growth.* Routledge.

Brux, J. M., & Fry, B. (2010). Multicultural students in study abroad: Their interests, their issues, and their constraints. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 14*(5), 508–527.

Canagarajah, S. (1999). Interrogating the "native speaker fallacy": Non-linguistic roots, non-pedagogical results. In G. Braine (Ed.), *Non-native educators in English language teaching* (pp. 77–92). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage.

Craig, I. (2010). Anonymous sojourners: Mapping the territory of Caribbean experiences of immersion for language learning. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, *19*, 125–149.

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2017). *Critical race theory: An introduction* (3rd ed.). University Press.

Gaines, N. (2012). *Exploring the perceptions of study abroad among black undergraduates at historically black colleges and universities* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH.

Goldoni, F. (2017). Race, ethnicity, class and identity: Implications for study abroad. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education, 16*(5), 328–341.

Golombek, P., & Jordan, S. R. (2005). Becoming 'black lambs' not 'parrots': A poststructuralist orientation to intelligibility and identity. *TESOL Quarterly, 39*(3), 513–533.

Gore, J. E. (2005). *Dominant beliefs and alternative voices: Discourse, belief, and gender in American study abroad*. Routledge.

Hardaway, J. (2010). *M.E.E.T me for cheese and chocolate: My European experiences and travel*. Xlibris.

Hewson, D. (2018). Profit and prejudice: A critique of private English language education in Vietnam. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 39*(6), 811–826.

Izadinia, M. (2016). Student teachers' and mentor teachers' perceptions and expectations of a mentoring relationship: Do they match or clash? *Professional Development in Education, 42*(3), 387–402.

Jenks, C. J. (2017). *Race and ethnicity in English language teaching: Korea in focus*. Multilingual Matters.

Jiang, B., & DeVillar, R. A. (2011). Effects of school and cultural contexts on student teaching abroad outcomes: Insights from U.S. student teachers in Belize, China, and Mexico. *Action in Teacher Education*, *33*(1), 47–62.

Kramsch, C. (2002). In search of the intercultural. *Journal of Sociolinguistics, 6*(2), 275–285.

Kubota, R., & Fujimoto, D. (2013). Racialized native speakers: Voices of Japanese American English language professionals. In S. A. Houghton & D. J. Rivers (Eds.), *Native-speakerism in Japan: Intergroup dynamics in foreign language education* (pp. 196–206). Multilingual Matters.

Mahboob, A., & Golden, R. (2013). Looking for native speakers of English: Discrimination in English language teaching job advertisements. *Voices in Asia Journal, 1*(1), 72–81.

Malewski, E., & Phillion, J. (2009). International field experiences: The impact of class, gender and race on the perceptions and experiences of preservice teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(1), 52–60.

Marx, H., & Moss, D. M. (2011). Please mind the culture gap: Intercultural development during a teacher education study abroad program. *Journal of Teacher Education, 62*(1), 35–47.

Maundeni, T. (2001). The role of social networks in the adjustment of African students to British society: Student perceptions. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 4*(3), 253–276.

McCoy, D. L., Winkle-Wagner, R., & Luedke, C. L. (2015). Colorblind mentoring? Exploring white faculty mentoring students of color. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 8*(4), 225–242.

National Association of Foreign Student Advisors (NAFSA). (2019). *Trends in U.S. study abroad*. https://www.nafsa.org/Policy_and_Advocacy/Policy_Resources/Policy_Trends_and_Data/Trends_in_U_S__Study_Abroad/.

Nguyen, H. T. (2009). An inquiry-based practicum model: What knowledge, practices, and relationships typify empowering teaching and learning experiences for student teachers, cooperating teachers and college supervisors? *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*, 655–662.

Patrick, R. (2013). "Don't rock the boat": Conflicting mentor and pre-service teacher narratives of professional experience. *The Australian Educational Researcher, 40*(2), 207–226.

Pence, H. M., & Macgillivray, I. K. (2008). The impact of international field experience on preservice teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 24*, 14–25.

Piller, I., & Cho, J. (2013). Neoliberalism as language policy. *Language in Society, 42*(1), 23–44.

Pilonieta, P., Medina, A. L., & Hathaway, J. I. (2017). The impact of a study abroad experience on preservice teachers' dispositions and plans for teaching English language learners. *The Teacher Educator, 52*(1), 22–38.

Pipitone, J. M. (2018). Place as pedagogy: Toward study abroad for social change. *Journal of Experiential Education, 41*(1), 54–74.

Ramjattan, V. A. (2015). Lacking the right aesthetic: Everyday employment discrimination in Toronto private language schools. *Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, 34*(8), 692–704.

Romney, M. (2010). The colour of English. In A. Mahboob (Ed.), *The NNEST lens: Non native English speakers in TESOL* (pp. 18–34). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Ruecker, T., & Ives, L. (2015). White native English speakers needed: The rhetorical construction of privilege in online teacher recruitment spaces. *TESOL Quarterly, 49*(4), 733–756.

Santoro, N., & Kennedy, A. (2016). How is cultural diversity positioned in teacher professional standards? An international analysis. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 44*(3), 208–223.

Savin-Baden, M., & Major, C. H. (2013). *Qualitative research: The essential guide to theory and practice.* Routledge.

Smolcic, E., & Katunich, J. (2017). Teachers crossing borders: A review of the research into cultural immersion field experience for teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 62*, 47–59.

Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2009). Critical race methodology: Counter-storytelling as an analytical framework for educational research. In E. Taylor, D. Gillborn, & G. Ladson-Billings (Eds.), *Foundations of critical race theory in education* (pp. 131–147). Routledge.

Strother, J. (July 9, 2007). Ethnic bias seen in South Korea teaching hiring. http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyID=11826937.

Sung, C. C. M. (2011). Race and native speakers in ELT: Parents' perspectives in Hong Kong. *English Today, 27*(3), 25–29.

Thomas, M. (2013). The problematization of racial/ethnic minority student participation in U.S. study abroad. *Applied Linguistics Review*, *4*(2), 365–390.

Wilkinson, M. T. (2016). What do they think of me? A semi-ethnographic investigation into student stereotypes and biases towards teachers. *The New English Teachers, 10*(1), 20–41.

Willis, T. Y. (2015). "And still we rise…": Microaggressions and intersectionality in the study abroad experiences of Black women. *Frontiers, 26*, 209–230.

Zhao, Y., Meyers, L., & Meyers, B. (2009). Cross-cultural immersion in China: Preparing pre-service elementary teachers to work with diverse student populations in the United States. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education, 37*(3), 295–317.

Yukari Takimoto Amos Ph.D., is a professor in the Department of Education, Development, Teaching and Learning at Central Washington University (CWU) where she teaches multicultural education and TESL-related classes. Her research interests include teachers of color's experiences, studies of immigrant students' English language learning, international students at American universities, studies of Japanese as a second language among immigrants in Japan, and the dispositions of pre-service teachers' in the United States towards cultural and linguistic diversity. In 2019, Yukari received the Distinguished Professor of Research Accomplishment Award from CWU.

Chapter 6
Juggling the Costs of Higher Education Abroad: Voices of International Students from Latvia

Rita Kaša

Abstract This chapter examines how international students from Latvia fund their higher education abroad. Evidence in this chapter comes from 20 qualitative semi-structured interviews with international undergraduate and graduate students from Latvia who pursued higher education degrees in Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, France, Poland, Sweden, and the United States. Each of these countries has a different higher education tuition policy, offering insights on how international students navigate through higher education systems with different costs. Findings reveal that most international students from Latvia combine several sources of funding at once because of the absence of a single sufficiently large source of money. To fund their higher education abroad, they draw on scholarships, family resources, loans, and personal earnings. The socioeconomic background of students presents a framework within which they strategize about covering higher education costs abroad. Findings confirm that even free higher education costs money as students need to provide for their living expenses. What matters, however, is the affordability of these costs and possibilities for students to access sources of funding. The chapter concludes with a discussion about how international student mobility re-sets the socioeconomic constraints students may face accessing higher education and what does this mean for the education system of a sending country.

Keywords International students · Equity · Higher education access · Higher education finance · Europe

R. Kaša (✉)
Assistant Professor at Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan
e-mail: rita.kasa@nu.edu.kz

Research Fellow at University of Latvia Institute of Sociology and Philosophy and Stockholm School of Economics in Riga, Latvia, Nazarbayev University, University of Latvia, Stockholm School of Economics in Riga, Nur-Sultan, Riga, Kazakhstan

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_6

6.1 Introduction

Access to higher education depends on the availability of funding for students who stay to study in their own countries and equally so for internationally bound students. Research shows that unaffordable higher education deters students from seeking higher education abroad (Caruso & de Wit, 2014), while optimal tuition levels encourage international student enrollment (Lange, 2013). Yet, what is an optimal level of tuition depends on the student access to funding for covering this tuition. Governmental scholarships for international students are one source of funding (Dassin et al., 2018; Perna et al., 2014). However numerous (Perna et al., 2014), these scholarships are very selective and insufficient in numbers to ensure higher education access to over four million students who study abroad (OECD, 2017). Thus, the question is how international students fund their higher education abroad?

Research on financial aspects of international student mobility tends to have an institutional focus by either examining how students from abroad contribute to the budgets of universities (e.g., Bound et al., 2020) or how governmental policies of higher education funding link to student migration (e.g., Haussen & Uebelmesser, 2016). Personal perspectives of internationally mobile degree-seeking students on questions of higher education funding are examined less often (Kaša, 2019). This chapter extends this line of inquiry. It examines how international students from Latvia, a country in the periphery of the European Union (EU), strategize to afford higher education abroad. Drawing on qualitative interviews with students from Latvia who, at the time of data collection, had recently graduated or still pursuing higher education degrees in eight different countries, this chapter explores how personal socioeconomic contexts of these students conditioned their reasoning about higher education affordability and access.

Focus on this group of international students is beneficial because they bring to the table stories of a socioeconomic context underrepresented in research on international student mobility. A comprehensive review of international student mobility research by Mwangi and colleagues (2018) shows this direction of studies has been dominated by a heavy policy focus on Western Europe and quantitative analysis of student experiences in North America. Also, international students from Latvia represent a segment of a very mobile population from East to West, and sometimes back (Kahanec & Zimmermann, 2009). This context gives international students from Latvia access to cultural capital which might not be available to students in settled Western European communities. Drawing on insights from mostly British research, Brooks and Waters (2013) observe:

> …while the financing of higher education is fundamental to the debates about mobile students …, it does not determine mobility in any straightforward manner … only a relatively small and privileged group of people are likely to take up the opportunity of overseas study and thus gain the inter-cultural skills required of the “global graduate” (p. 151).

As this chapter shows, this is different for international students from Latvia. Socioeconomic characteristics of students do not limit their aspirations to study abroad. They frame, however, approaches of these students to accessing funding for studies in Great Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Poland, Germany, Sweden, and the United States.

To situate research findings presented in this chapter on how international students afford higher education abroad, it proceeds with a review of literature that describes the international mobility context for students from the periphery of Europe to countries in the West. The literature review also outlines higher education funding policies in the countries of destination for international students whose experiences are presented in this chapter. Findings on how international students from Latvia fund their higher education abroad and how they define higher education affordability are presented after the description of methodology in this study. The chapter concludes with a discussion about how international student mobility re-sets the socioeconomic constraints students may face accessing higher education and what does this mean for the education system of a sending country.

6.2 Literature Review

6.2.1 The Context for International Student Mobility from the Periphery of Europe

Research conducted in Western European contexts consistently shows that international student mobility is socially selective (Brooks & Waters, 2011; Lorz et al., 2016; Netz & Finger, 2016). Internationally mobile students typically come from privileged as opposed to underprivileged backgrounds. Trends in international student mobility in Western European contexts seem to reflect trends in national education systems where educational attainment is linked to the socioeconomic status of students (Kim et al., 2019). Such analysis was not available for international degree-seeking students for countries, including Latvia, that joined the EU in 2004 and after.

A key difference between old Western democracies and countries that established and re-established themselves on the geopolitical map after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, is the exacerbated context of emigration in which international student mobility takes place. Since 2000, countries that form the Eastern border of the EU have been losing their population due to emigration mostly to Western European countries (Hazans, 2019). This includes Latvia, which restored its independence in 1990 (Auers, 2015) and is international students sending country in the focus of this chapter. Between 2000 and 2013, the country's population declined by 17%, two-thirds of which was due to emigration (Hazans, 2019).

Hazans (2019) observes that going abroad has become "an integral part of the Latvian national identity. Emigration, actual or planned, is 'the new normal'" (p. 65). This is the context in which international student mobility should be examined when applying East to West perspective within Europe. This is in stark contrast to the UK, one of the main destination countries for international students from Latvia (Kaša, 2015). In the UK, students choose to stay closer to their parental home to attend university (Brooks & Waters, 2013). Even though some research suggests that mobility for education can be viewed as an elite practice, Brooks and Waters (2013) review evidence that shows that degree mobile students abroad do not necessarily possess economic capital. Cultural and social capital (Vryonides, 2007) is a strong contributor to students seeking higher education abroad.

Related to the concept of cultural capital is the concept of "mobility capital" that internationally mobile students possess (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002, p. 51). It is a subset of human capital that enables individuals to enhance their skills as a result of experiences gained living abroad. An important feature of mobility capital is the influence of family and peers who share experiences and aspirations of traveling and studying in other countries. International students from Latvia draw on this capital, even if unconsciously when making their higher education choices. Lenses of economic, social, and cultural capital are used to interpret higher education access among international students from Latvia in this chapter.

6.2.2 *Higher Education Affordability and Access in Europe and the US*

The accessibility of higher education for students depends on the availability of funding as well as whether the costs of higher education are affordable (Johnstone, 2001). Governmental subsidization of higher education sets conditions for affordability and accessibility of higher education. International students in Europe are typically expected to pay higher education fees than local students. In the EU context, this concept of an international student applies to students from non-EU countries. International students who are citizens of the EU countries are exempt from increased tuition payments. According to the EU policy, EU citizens can study in any member state according to the same rules as the local nationals (European Commission, 2011). Thus, students from Latvia in the Netherlands, for example, can access all the same benefits and pay the same fees as Dutch students. This influences the choice of the destination countries for intra-European international students since tuition fee and student financial aid policies vary from country to country in Europe (Lulle & Buzinska, 2017). This section outlines the broad characteristics of these policies in the UK, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Poland, Germany, and Sweden. Conditions for higher education access in the US are outlined as well due to the relevance of the focus of this chapter.

Universities in the UK have some of the highest costing studies in Europe. Higher education costs in Great Britain's countries of England and Wales for international students from the EU before Brexit comprised several tens of thousands of euros, tuition, and costs of living included. International students from the EU incurred lower higher education expenses for a Bachelor's degree in Northern Ireland because of more affordable tuition fees and in Scotland where there was no tuition fee (Eurydice, 2015). Access to higher education in the UK was provided through income-contingent student loans, deferring tuition payment and linking repayment of the debt to graduate income (Marginson, 2018).

Compared to the UK, tuition fees in the Netherlands were much lower but still relatively high in the context of other European countries (Eurydice, 2015). More affordable tuition fees, access to subsidized student loans and a scholarship as well as the availability of university programs in English medium of instruction were important factors facilitating higher education access for students from other European nations.

Higher education funding policies in Belgium, France, Germany, Poland, and Sweden provided European international students with a possibility to study for low tuition or no tuition at all (European Commission/ EACEA/ Eurydice, 2017). In these countries, student living costs posed a larger share of expenses associated with higher education than tuition fees. Insufficient student financial aid to cover these costs burdened access to higher education in some of these countries. About half of all students in Europe who worked paid jobs did that to afford their higher education (German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies, 2018).

On average, affordability of higher education in Europe is higher than in the US where students accumulate excessive loans to complete their higher education degree (Barr et al., 2019). Access and affordability of higher education for international students in the US depend on how they are funded. A review of fees charged to international students in the US shows varied situation across states and universities (Krsmanovic et al., 2018). It suggests that if international students are not recipients of competitive institutional or governmental scholarships, they can only afford higher education in the US relying on family and other private resources which may constitute a student debt of thousands of dollars.

6.3 Methodology

Data in this chapter comes from qualitative semi-structured interviews with 20 participants from Latvia who at the time of data collection were students or recent graduates of a university abroad (see Table 6.1 in Appendix). Interviews were conducted from January 2014 until May 2015 in the scope of the research project *The Emigrant Communities of Latvia: National identity, transnational relations, and diaspora politics* financed by the European Social Fund. Thirteen graduate and seven undergraduate students and graduates were recruited applying snowball sampling. The snowball sampling approach was chosen as it was the most effective for recruiting participants among the dispersed international student population. The researcher was looking to diversify the sample of participants by ethnicity, the country, program, and level of studies and asked the initial participants for referrals which would reflect this diversity. One initial participant was recruited using personal contacts of the researcher, five initial participants were recruited using a referral from colleagues in the research

Table 6.1 Characteristics of research participants at the time of the interview

Research participant	Age	Country of foreign studies	Level of HE studies abroad	Area of studies	Period of studies abroad	Source of funding for HE abroad	Total HE costs abroad in euro*
Karlis	26	USA	BSc, MSc	International relations	2007–2011; 2004–2016	Grant of the host country government, a grant of the host HEI, personal income	298,245 euro for tuition fee and living expenses
Liene	24	Belgium	MSc	Communication sciences	2012–2014	Family, personal savings, and income	1,200 euro tuition fee, living costs paid by family, amount not available
Jekabs	25	France	BSc	Humanities	2013–2016	Personal income, a grant of the host country government, family	No tuition fee, living costs 700 euro per month
Anastasija	21	Poland	MSc	Philology	2014–2016	Family, personal savings	No tuition fee, living costs 200 euro per month
Daniels	28	Germany	MSc	Finance	2011–2013	Grant of the host country government	No tuition fee, living costs 1,000 euro per month
Valdis	21	Germany	BSc	Ports and shipping management	2012–2016	Family, personal income	4,000 euro tuition fee, living expenses 300 euro per month

(continued)

Table 6.1 (continued)

Research participant	Age	Country of foreign studies	Level of HE studies abroad	Area of studies	Period of studies abroad	Source of funding for HE abroad	Total HE costs abroad in euro*
Margarita	28	Sweden	MSc	Finance and business management	2009–2011	Personal savings, family, grants of foreign philanthropists	No tuition fee, living expenses 500 euro per month
Inga	26	Netherlands	MSc	Cultural economics	2010–2012	Family, personal income	3,400 euro tuition fee, living expenses 700 euro per month
Laila	27	Netherlands	MSc	Communications and marketing	2010–2012	A student loan from the host country government, student loan from the government of Latvia	1,800 euro for tuition fee, 15,000 euro for living expenses in total
Evelina	24	Netherlands	BSc, MSc	Economics	2009–2012; 2012–2013	Family, personal income, a grant of the host country government	6,600 euro tuition fee, living expenses 1,000 euro per month
Andris	24	Netherlands	BSc, MSc	Finance and business management	2009–2012; 2013–2014	Family, personal income	6,250 euro tuition fee and 35,750 euro living expenses in total
Madara	27	Netherlands	MSc	Music	2013–2015	Grant of the host country government, personal income	3,700 euro tuition fee and living expenses 1,000 euro per month

(continued)

Table 6.1 (continued)

Research participant	Age	Country of foreign studies	Level of HE studies abroad	Area of studies	Period of studies abroad	Source of funding for HE abroad	Total HE costs abroad in euro*
Melanija	24	Netherlands	BSc, MSc	Business and management	2009–2012; 2012–2013	Family	6,800 euro tuition fee and living expenses 1,000 euro per month
Juris	26	Great Britain	BSc, MSc	Biological anthropology	2007–2012; 2012–2013	A student loan from the host country government, family	22,325 euro tuition fee, living expenses 1,395 euro per month
Zane	26	Great Britain	BSc	Management sciences	2007–2010	Student loan from the host country government, company in Latvia, family, personal income	12,558 euro tuition fee, living expenses 559 euro per month
Edvins	26	Great Britain	BSc	Decision sciences and management	2007–2010	A student loan from the host country government, family	13,268 euro tuition fee, information on living costs not available
Modris	26	Great Britain	BSc	Philosophy, politics, and economics	2009–2012	A student loan from the government of Latvia, student loan from the host country government	12,569 euro tuition fee, living expenses 21,337 euro in total

(continued)

Table 6.1 (continued)

Research participant	Age	Country of foreign studies	Level of HE studies abroad	Area of studies	Period of studies abroad	Source of funding for HE abroad	Total HE costs abroad in euro*
Dana	22	Great Britain	BSc	Journalism	2011–2014	Family from a personal loan, personal income, student loan from the host country government	14,808 euro tuition fee, living expenses 450 euro per month
Aleksandrs	20	Great Britain	BSc	Informatics and information sciences	2012–2015	Family, personal savings, student loan from the host country government	37,709 euro tuition fee, living expenses 29,329 euro in total
Renate	39	Great Britain	MSc, PhD	Social sciences	2003–2005; 2005–2012	A student loan from the government of Latvia, personal savings and income, scholarship of foreign philanthropists	29,288 euro tuition fee, living expenses 837 euro per month

Source The author

* Currency conversion of higher education costs other than Euro are based on the exchange rate set by the Bank of Latvia on 18.05.2015 for GBP 0.716, LVL 0.703, and for USD 1.14

Bio

project on Latvian emigrant communities (Kaša & Mieriņa, 2019). The remaining 14 participants were identified throughout the referral from the initial research participants. The researcher contacted referred participants and interviewed those who agreed to participate in the study.

6.4 Findings

6.4.1 Juggling the Costs of Higher Education Abroad

Stories of all international students from Latvia, even those who could fall back on the financial support from their family, revealed a degree of uncertainty about how they will be able to access higher education abroad. These stories also revealed that higher education access required international students to be reflective and resourceful to pay for their higher education in more affordable ways. Taking on or avoiding student debt, fitting or not fitting a profile of a student who would qualify for a scholarship, working or looking for a job to supplement their student budget, relying on a family, and being frugal were all strategies used by the international students from Latvia to fund their higher education costs abroad. These stories told in their voices follow.

6.4.2 Going into Student Debt and Avoiding It

"Juris" and "Edvins" both enrolled in prestigious Russel Group universities in the UK right after completing a high-school in Latvia. They planned to cover their higher education expenses with the help of their families and a student loan by the British government available to all students from the EU at that time.

After the first year of studies, Juris stopped using the loan to cover the tuition fee. He explained:

> [Initially] it was not clear how reliable the family support will be. I was saving money [for a university]. My family was also saved. [I borrowed a British student loan] to ensure, that I do not [run out of options] in the first year paying my living expenses and tuition if suddenly family resources run out. In the second and third year of studies, the situation had become stable.

All following university costs in the UK except the first year, Juris covered with the family's support, not taking a student loan.

Edvins had a different strategy. He used funding from the family's budget to pay tuition for only the first year of studies. To cover tuition fee for the remaining years of university, Edvins borrowed the British government's student loan. "When I found out about this opportunity in Great Britain, I realized that there is no need to consider any other way [for covering higher education costs. The system [of student loans in

Great Britain] is ideal," Edvins praised the income-contingent student loans program of Great Britain which links student debt repayment to the graduate income.

Taking or not taking a student loan for both Juris and Edvins was a choice because they could rely on the economic capital of their families as a safety net. Such a safety net was not there for "Modris", an undergraduate student of Economics at a prestigious university in the Southeast of England. When he learned about being admitted to this university, the question about how to pay for this education became pressing. Modris remembered: "My family in Latvia could provide me with zero financial support. So, I had to acquire all higher education funding through student loans." To finance his international higher education, Modris combined student loans provided by the British and Latvian government. He used a British governmental student loan to cover three years of tuition fees. To cover even higher living expenses in England, Modris borrowed from the governmental student loans program in Latvia. As a result, his diploma came with almost 34 thousand euros in student debt.

Despite receiving competitive philanthropic scholarships, spending all her prior work savings, and working along with the studies in the UK, Renate also earned her doctorate at one of the top 10 universities globally, with a bill of over 25 thousand euros in student loans from the governmental program in Latvia. Dana, a journalism student at a regional university, struggling to make ends meet during the first year of studies was only able to stay in school thanks to a commercial loan her mom borrowed from a bank.

All in all, access to higher education in the UK for students from Latvia was only possible if there were family resources or a combination of various sources, which always included a student loan, to pay all the costs of university and living. For students from better-off economic backgrounds taking a student loan was a rational choice while for students with limited help from home it was an option of survival for staying at a university abroad.

For those Latvian students who opted for the Netherlands, student loans could be avoided if funding from other sources came through. Like for "Andris", a graduate of the business program at a university in Rotterdam. He chose the Netherlands exactly because with the help of his family he could manage to receive education avoiding student loans. Initially, he had considered Canada as a possible place for studies because due to the international employment of his parents, he had graduated a high-school there. However, the costs of Canadian universities were beyond the means of his family and Andris did not want to take a loan.

Not being able to rely on her family who was hard hit by the Great Recession of 2009, a communications and marketing student in the Netherlands "Laila" took out two loans for almost 17 thousand euros. She borrowed 15 thousand euros from the government of the Netherlands to cover the costs of living and 1800 euros from the governmental loan in Latvia to pay for her tuition.

6.4.3 Work and Scholarships to Pay for University

Because of the intensity of the studies, Laila could not work to support herself during the studies in the Netherlands and did not have a chance to qualify for a scholarship. It worked out differently for "Evelina", who obtained her undergraduate and graduate degrees in the Netherlands. Describing her choice of the country of studies, Evelina shared: "England seemed a little bit too expensive for me. Some of my best friends studied in England and … they did not seem to be happy about this decision." Decisive for choosing the Netherlands was the international recognizability of the university as well as "the possibility to obtain a stipend if a student works eight hours a week". When Evelina arrived in the Netherlands to study economics, she realized that "finding a job was not easy". Thus, Evelina's parents covered all her higher education costs during the first year of studies. Finally, by the end of the first year, Evelina with the help of her friend found a part-time job in a hotel. Starting that moment, Evelina was covering her living costs, while her parents continued paying the tuition fee and Evelina's tickets for visiting Latvia.

The stipend provided by the Dutch government which Evelina was receiving during her Bachelor's degree studies consisted of two components. One was the basic scholarship of 250 Euros awarded to the EU students who work a specific number of hours and pay taxes associated with the employment. The second component was additional 250 Euros income-based scholarship awarded to Evelina because her parents' income was below a certain threshold set in the Netherlands.

The same scholarship from the Dutch government was awarded to "Madara" who at the time of the interview was a Master's student in a conservatory in Amsterdam. Madara's experience also confirmed that information about this scholarship to students from other EU countries was not easily available. For Madara it took many phone calls to find out what she needs to do to qualify for the scholarship. For Evelina the source of this knowledge was another international student "because Dutch students they do not know this information; they know that they are receiving a stipend because they are Dutch". An additional difficulty in the application process for the scholarship was the paperwork which was all conducted in the Dutch language. "As a first-year student, when you do not know any Dutch, the situation [with applying for the scholarship] is so-so. But my friend [an international student from England] helped a lot," said Evelina.

Information about scholarship opportunities is easier to access when international students compete for places in international scholarship programs, suggests the experience of "Karlis" who pursued a Bachelor and Master's degree at an Ivy League university in the US. Higher education costs in the US compared to Europe, are very high. However, due to the availability of scholarships to qualifying international students, these costs to a student are affordable. Kārlis said:

> [Availability] of funding [to pay for the university] for me was the most important. When I asked about the funding for studies in England at the British Council [in Latvia], I was told that even though tuition in England is lower [than in the US], there is no support available for covering the costs of living. My family could not afford this [to cover living costs in England] at all, and I started to inquire about [studies in] America. In the 11th grade [one

year before high-school graduation] I got very lucky … one of the US foundations covered all university application expenses for six people [from Latvia].

Karlis applied for this opportunity and succeeded. He sent his application to five universities in the US: "I chose five universities, five universities sent an acceptance letter, four of them with a full scholarship." Full university scholarship covered four years of undergraduate study tuition and living. Karlis worked part-time and paid with this money two trips home to Latvia per year. After finishing the undergraduate program, he continued his studies in a Master's degree program at the same university also funded by scholarships. This time the money came from two sources—the university and as a competitive scholarship to international students from the US government. As the result, Karlis, a student from a family with no economic capital to support higher education abroad, graduated from one of the most expensive universities on the East coast of the US with no student debt at all.

A similar lucky experience of being able to fund his entire education abroad from the scholarship was for "Daniel" pursuing a Master's degree in finance. He acknowledged that receiving a scholarship was decisive in his choice of Germany as the country of studies. Since Germany offered public higher education free of charge, the scholarship Daniel received paid for all his living costs.

6.4.4 Free Higher Education Still Needs Money

Even though in many European countries higher education is free because there is no tuition, it still costs because students need to pay for their housing, food, and all other daily needs. Acquiring funding for these purposes can be just as challenging.

Similar to Daniel, another student in Germany who pursued a degree in maritime shipping, "Viktor" acknowledged: "There are broad opportunities in this sector in Germany because there are very many [shipping] companies. … Also, it is rather advantageous to study in Germany because of the way studies are funded there." Low university fees and living costs in the region where Victor studied made higher education abroad more affordable than it would have been in his hometown Riga with similar higher education opportunities. Viktors' parents helped him cover part of university and living costs during the first two years of studies. The rest of the expenses Viktors covered from part-time jobs at the university, as well as from income he had saved during his internship in the Netherlands.

Income from part-time employment at the city opera and teaching English at a university, as well as modest parental support, was enough for "Jekabs", a musicology student in France, to cover all living costs and student loan payments for the previous higher education degree from Latvia. Although there was no tuition fee at his French university, there was an annual registration fee. Jekabs, however, was relieved from this payment because he was receiving the family income-based social stipend.

In Sweden, there was no tuition fee but living costs would require taking a student loan or coming up with some other funding. "Margarita", a student in the business and management program did just that. Relying on her savings from prior work, part-time employment during studies, philanthropic scholarships and to a lesser extent parental support, she was able to acquire a Master's degree without taking out a student loan to support her living expenses.

No tuition, but also no stipend in Poland for "Anastasija" studying Slovak philology, required frugal personal spending. Expenses for room and board she was paying with the help of parents and personal savings. At the time of the interview for this research, Anastasija was looking for a job related to her studies to supplement her budget.

Income from part-time jobs and prior savings covered "student-friendly" tuition fee and daily expenses for "Liene" studying communications in Belgium. The highest expense of renting the room was not an issue for Liene because she was able to stay with one of her parents who worked in Brussels. Liene recalled:

> I was trying to calculate all the time, how much [studying abroad] costs, where and how. It happened that my father went to Brussels because of work …. Since there was a place to live, I only had to look, whether there is anything [at universities] that interests me. So, I did. I found a study program … which I could afford to pay from my savings.

As these stories of international students from Latvia in different European countries and the US show, studies abroad are only possible if there are means to cover all costs of higher education which include tuition and living expenses.

6.5 Discussion and Conclusions

Access to education at home or abroad depends on the ability of students to cover their higher education expenses for the degree abroad. Thus, while the decision to engage in international student mobility is conditioned by cultural and social capital (Brooks & Waters, 2011; Lorz et al., 2016; Netz & Finger, 2016; Vryonides, 2007), economic capital determines whether the student can cover higher education costs abroad. When the family does not have the economic capital to sponsor the higher education of a student abroad, access to other sources of funding is crucial.

Findings in this chapter reveal the importance of the social network of international students in acquiring knowledge about sources of funding for higher education access and affordability. Research that examines social networks of international students suggests that they form a strong community and support each other with knowledge (Montgomery & McDowell, 2008). The current chapter demonstrates this practice concerning accessing student financial aid in the country of studies. Latvian international students relied on insights from peers in their community to obtain information on how to acquire a scholarship improving affordability of higher education.

Affordability of higher education is the actual amount a student needs to pay for education (Johnstone, 2003). Countries with no tuition provide a more affordable option of higher education and Latvian students as EU citizens recognize this opportunity (Lulle & Buzinska, 2017). More affordable higher education abroad as compared to similar education at home works as a push and pull mechanism for Latvian international students making their choices of higher education, evidence in this chapter shows. However, affordability of tuition does not address the issue of student living costs as a barrier to higher education access.

Research findings in this chapter on Latvian international students show that the costs of daily living constitute even a larger share of higher education expenses than tuition fee. This confirms the axiom that students can only study when there are financial means to cover daily living expenses (Ziderman & Albrecht, 1995). Living costs present a barrier to higher education access if an international student does not possess the means to cover these expenses. This chapter shows that international students from Latvia who cannot draw on financial support from their families and do not have access to scholarships, go into student debt to be able to study, or they seek ways to combine funding from multiple other sources.

International students from Latvia represent a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. A unifying characteristic for students represented in this chapter is higher education aspirations and belonging to the nation where "emigration, actual or planned, is 'the new normal'" (Hazans, 2019, p. 65). It is not an exaggeration to say that everyone in Latvia knows someone or about someone in their social group who is or has been abroad for work or studies. This indicates that international education mobility in Latvia is not an elite practice and contrasts findings from Western European countries (Brooks & Waters, 2013). Cultural capital associated with international mobility can be accessed rather easily in Latvia by all who aspire to higher education.

At the same time, international student mobility does not automatically re-set the socioeconomic constraints students may face accessing higher education. Students from backgrounds with more solid economic capital are in a better position to meet higher education costs than other international students because of the financial cushion that their family can provide and alleviate financial uncertainty.

Whether students are studying at home or abroad, the availability of sufficient student financial aid is crucial for higher education access. Affordability of higher education due to financial aid can make a substantial difference in the choice of students to study in their home country or go abroad. For higher education systems such as Latvia, which send more students abroad than attract from other countries, this poses an unprecedented pressure to engage in speedy system transformation to ensure that universities have enough students not just to sustain but to develop their operations.

Funding Acknowledgement This article was developed in the framework of a research project "Exploring Well-Being and Social Integration in the Context of Liquid Migration: A Longitudinal Approach", project No. lzp-2018/1–0042, funded by the Latvian Council of Science.

References

Auers, D. (2015). *Comparative politics and government of the Baltic states: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the 21st Century*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Barr, N., Chapman, B., Dearden, L., & Dynarski, S. (2019). The US college loans system: Lessons from Australia and England. *Economics of Education Review 71*, 32–48. https://ezproxy.nu.edu.kz:2364/10.1016/j.econedurev.2018.07.007.

Boeije, H. (2010). *Analysis in qualitative research.* Sage.

Bound, J., Braga, B., Khanna, G., & Turner, S. (2020). A passage to America: University funding and international students. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, 12*(1), 97–126.

Brooks, R., & Waters, J. (2011). Fees, funding and overseas study: Mobile UK students and educational inequalities. *Sociological Research Online, 16*(2).

Brooks, R., & Waters, J. (2013). 'Global graduates', student mobility and the funding of higher education. In D. Heller & C. Callender (Eds.), *Student financing of higher education: A comparative perspective* (pp. 137–154). Routledge.

Caruso, R., & de Wit, H. (2014). *Determinants of mobility of students in Europe: Empirical evidence for the period 1998–2009.* https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/59086/.

European Commission. (2011). *Your rights as a mobile student: A guide to the rights of mobile students in the European Union*. Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/youthonthemove/.

Dassin, J., Marsh, R., & Mawer, M. (Eds.). (2018). *International scholarships in higher education: Pathways to social change.* Palgrave Macmillan.

European Commission/ EACEA/ Eurydice. (2017). *National student fee and support systems in European higher education 2017/ 2018. Eurydice Facts and Figures.* Retrieved from https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c052429f-b92e-11e7-a7f8-01aa75ed71a1/language-en.

Eurydice (2015). *National student fee and support systems in European higher education, 2014/15.*Retrieved from http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/facts_and_figures/fees_support.pdf.

Haussen, T., & Uebelmesser, S. (2016). Student and graduate migration and its effect on the financing of higher education. *Education Economics, 24*(5–6), 573–591. Retrieved from https://ezproxy.nu.edu.kz:2364/http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cede20.

Hazans, M. (2019). Emigration from Latvia: A brief history and driving forces in the twenty-first century. In R. Kaša & I. Mieriņa (Eds.), *The emigrant communities from Latvia: National identity, transnational belonging, and diaspora politics* (pp. 35–68). Springer.

Johnstone, B. (2001). Those "out of control" costs. In P. Altbach, B. Johnstone, & P. Gumport (Eds.), *In defense of American public university* (pp. 144–178). The John Hopkins University Press.

Johnstone, B. (2003). Cost sharing in higher education: Tuition, financial assistance and accessibility in comparative perspective. *Czech Sociological Review, 39*(3), 351–374.

Kahanec, M., & Zimmermann, F. (2009). *EU labor markets after post-enlargement migration.* Springer.

Kaša, R. (2015). Latvijas studentu augstākās izglītības studiju finansēšana ārzemēs [Financing higher education abroad among students from Latvia]. In I. Mieriņa (Ed.), *Latvijas emigrantu kopienas: cerību diaspora* [Emigrant communities of Latvia: Diaspora of hope] (pp. 93–107). LU Filozofijas un sociologijas institūts.

Kaša, R., & Mieriņa, I. (Eds.). (2019). *The emigrant communities from Latvia: National identity, transnational belonging, and diaspora politics.* Springer.

Kim, S., Cho, H., & Kim, L. (2019). Socioeconomic status and academic outcomes in developing countries: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research, 89*(6), 875–916.

Krsmanovic, M., King, K., & Sabina, L. (2018). *Where is the equity? Different states, different hurdles and rules for international students. Affordability of and access to U.S. higher education for international students.* Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED597560.

Lange, T. (2013). Return migration of foreign students and non-resident tuition fees. *Journal of Population Economics, 26*, 703–718.

Lorz, M., Netz, N., & Quast, H. (2016). Why do students from underprivileged families less often intend to study abroad. *Higher Education, 72*, 153–174.

Lulle, A., & Buzinska, L. (2017). Between a 'student abroad' and 'being from Latvia': Inequalities of access, prestige, and foreign-earned cultural capital. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 43*(8), 1362–1378. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1300336

Marginson, S. (2018). Global trends in higher education financing: The United Kingdom. *International Journal of Educational Development, 58,* 26–36. https://ezproxy.nu.edu:2364/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2017.03.0088.

Murphy-Lejeune, E. (2002). *Student mobility and narrative in Europe: The new strangers.* Routledge.

Mwangi, G., Latafat, S., Hammond, S., Kommers, S., Thoma, H., Berger, J., & Blanco-Romirez, G. (2018). Criticality in international higher education research: A critical discourse analysis of higher education journals. *Higher Education, 76*, 1091–1107.

Netz, N., & Finger, C. (2016). New horizontal inequalities in German higher education? Social selectivity of studying abroad between 1991 and 2012. *Sociology of Education, 89*(20), 79–98.

OECD. (2017). *Education at a glance 2017: OECD indicators.* OECD Publishing.

Perna, L., Orosz, K., Jumakulov, B., Kishkentayeva, Z., Ashirbekov, A., & Kishkentayeva, M. (2014). Promoting human capital development: A typology of international scholarship programmes in higher education. *Educational Researcher, 43*(2), 63–73.

German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science Studies. (2018). *Social and economic conditions of student life in Europe. Eurostudent VI 2016 – 2018: Synopsys of indicators.* Retrieved from https://www.eurostudent.eu/publications#result_anker.

Vryonides, M. (2007). Social and cultural capital in educational research: Issues of operationalization and measurement. *British Educational Research Journal, 33*(6), 867–885.

Ziderman, A., & Albrecht, D. (1995). *Financing universities in developing countries.* The Falmer Press.

Rita Kaša holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Education from the State University of New York in Buffalo, USA. Her research interests concern educational policy, finance, and governance with a special focus on equity in educational access. She is an Assistant Professor at Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education in Kazakhstan, and a Research Fellow at Stockholm School of Economics in Riga and University of Latvia Institute of Sociology and Philosophy in Latvia.

Chapter 7
Emerging Destinations for New Generations of Swedish Students Studying Abroad

Per A. Nilsson and Thomas Blom

Abstract The number of Swedish students temporarily studying in another country to receive a post-secondary education amounts annually to approximately 22,000 students. The study aims to give some indications of where outbound Swedish students have spent their time and money studying abroad since the turn of the millennium. What are the popular study destinations? What are students looking for? Will their interest in studying abroad change post-COVID-19? The results show that English-speaking countries are attractive to Swedish outbound students. Top destinations are the UK and US. Countries such as Poland, Canada, Switzerland, Japan, the Netherlands, Latvia, South Korea and Singapore are growing in popularity. It is noticeable that big cities attract Swedish outbound students. Large metropoles can offer many prestigious Higher Education Institutions (HEI). Popular cities for Swedish outbound students are London, Copenhagen, Riga, Singapore and Sydney.

Keywords Outbound students · Sweden · Studying-abroad tourism

7.1 Introduction

Pre-COVID-19 the international student enrolment has for many Higher Education Institutions (HEI) been a success story. Historically, the number of students studying in another country to obtain a post-secondary education has grown significantly due to the globalization of post-secondary education. This has led to greater possibilities for students wanting to study abroad thanks to an integration of curricula across borders, and has also increased possibilities for an international exchange of students and

P. A. Nilsson (✉)
Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden
e-mail: per.a.nilsson@umu.se

T. Blom
Karlstad University, Karlstad, Sweden
e-mail: thomas.blom@kau.se

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_7

staff. We are arguing in this chapter that international student mobility post-COVID-19 should be viewed in a historic context when discussing the long-term effects of mobility.

Many young adults in the European/Western context have had a desire to explore the world by traveling, working, and/or studying abroad (Nilsson, 2019). Some scholars have recognized that the growth of youth travel includes a blend of traveler types, such as the tourist, the volunteer, the language student, the exchange student, and the intern (Richards, 2015). In addition to experiencing new places and other cultures, primarily from an individual perspective, Fong (2011) emphasizes that it is also important from a human capital perspective for students to show potential employers' ambitions for a global outreach obtained by studying abroad. Other factors are better purchasing power, cheaper airline tickets, a worldwide connectivity and opening of new routes (Hall, 2005a, b).

This study scrutinizes outbound Swedish students who take with them a study loan. Thus, the interpretation is that the students will relocate to other places temporarily, implying at least an ambition to return to their place of departure, in this case Sweden. Studying abroad at the post-secondary level includes categories such as degree student, exchange student, and language student. A degree student is one who arranges their own education at a foreign HEI. An exchange student studies abroad within the framework of an exchange program organized by the HEI in Sweden via an agreement with a foreign university; the studies abroad can be recognized as part of the student's education in Sweden. A language student is one who is studying a foreign language abroad.

Swedes can receive financial support for studies abroad, provided by the Swedish Board of Student Finance (CSN—Centrala studiestödsnämnden), thus offering them an opportunity many students in the world are lacking (CIMO, 2013). Outbound Swedish students are somewhat privileged, as HEIs in the Nordic countries are publicly funded, with strong influence from egalitarian traditions viewing them as an important pillar in the building of a welfare system (Börjesson et al., 2014). This also includes studying abroad having been conceptualized as an asset to the country as well as an opportunity for the student to have an international experience.

This study aims to learn more about what attracts Swedish outbound students who temporarily study abroad, covering a period of two decades. Internationalization of education is an individual experience, but also an issue on the political agenda in Sweden. The Government has proposed a new national strategy, emphasizing the need to include international perspectives in post-secondary education (SOU, 2018). When exploring descriptive data from the study aid system (CSN), a number of questions can be addressed:

- What are the popular study destinations for Swedes studying abroad?
- Does data reveal information about barriers hindering mobility and/or drivers of mobility?
- Can we say anything about the future of international student mobility?

7.2 Literature Review

Youth travel can be seen in a broad context of mobility. Mobility and mobile practice are described by Cresswell (2010) as a *motive force* that answers the question of why a person moves. There is a degree of necessity in relation to mobility when choosing to move or not. A student can either be pushed to move, or move due to personal choice. Motive force can be applied to a student before they actually move: there are positive forces serving as pull factors, such as wanting to study abroad or at a particular HEI; and there are negative forces serving as push factors, such as a lack of study opportunities at home or wanting to leave one's country. *Velocity* is a concept referring to how quickly a person can move. Being able to get somewhere quickly is increasingly associated with exclusivity—as something for those who have the resources. Thus, velocity suggests inequalities such as students' socioeconomic background and what they can afford in relation to tuition fees, living costs, transportation, etc. As a *routine*, mobility, as part of the reproduction of everyday life, can be conceptualized as a *rhythm*. For international students, a global intervention can change the rhythm—interrupt or disturb it—when they want to travel to a study destination abroad; for instance, through tightened visa regulations targeting international students from specific countries. The idea of a *route* implies that mobility does not happen evenly over a continuous space. Some studies have found that students describe mobility as an intensely personal *experience* (Nilsson et al., 2019; Papatsiba, 2005). As *friction*, mobility can be stopped or slowed down, as well as increase when transportation costs decrease or new routes are opened.

There are many categories of students who take part in international travel. Knight (2012) identifies six groups of students: (i) moving to a foreign country to enroll and complete a full degree at a host institution; (ii) studying within their home institution's degree program while undertaking a short-term (one semester or one year) mobility experience in a foreign country at a foreign institution, or at a branch campus of their home institution; (iii) enrolling in an education program involving two or more HEIs or providers working collaboratively to offer a degree program; (iv) conducting research or fieldwork in fulfilment of a degree program at their home institution; (v) participating in a required or optional internship, placement, or work fulfilment for a degree program at their home institution; (vi) undertaking a required or optional study tour, summer program, cultural or language course, conference, or workshop.

The significance of the place where a student chooses to study, relatively speaking, is largely analogous to how a tourist reasons when choosing a traditional tourist trip. The different attributes and the identity of a place generate a value that is perceived as attractive and, furthermore, create expectations (e.g. Relph, 1976; Rose, 1995; Tilley, 2006). For this reason, Plog (1974, 2001) attempts to understand why destinations and resorts rise and fall in popularity. Destinations attract different groups of consumers/tourists. Analogously, it can be assumed that different study destinations, i.e. the city or region where a university is located, attract different students. Jonsson (2003) showed that some Swedish students were attracted by study destinations far from Sweden. Others, mostly less experienced travelers, looked for options closer to their home university. The conclusion Plog draws is that different personality characteristics determine travel patterns and preferences. It might be the most adventurous and internationally experienced students who are attracted to enrolling in studying abroad, as an opportunity for exploration. The choices students make about mobility are individualistic, and it seems as if they place a very high value on their choice of country in which to study. Swedish studies have shown that the country is more important than the study destination (Jonsson, 2003) and, furthermore, that for most students the study destination is more important than the university itself (Nilsson, 2019).

Over time, the attractiveness of a destination can change (e.g. Plog, 1974, 2001). In general, stories in various forms about what a place can offer are significant for the tourism industry. Analogously, this is true when students make their final choice of the place of study (e.g. Jonsson, 2003; Nilsson, 2019). Morgan, Lugosi, and Ritchie (2010) emphasize that stories about places and the experiences available there consist mainly of three factors: (i) how the place—in this case, the university—is marketed; (ii) tourists' (or former students') own stories; and (iii) stories and actions of those who represent the place and the university. Some scholars argue that the significance of the story through previous students' experiences is a particularly important factor, as these stories consolidate the value of the place and the university, shaping the image and attractiveness of the place (Bosangit, McCabe & Hibbert, 2009).

7.3 Research Method

The Swedish Board of Student Finance (CSN) is the government agency that manages Swedish student finance; i.e., grants and loans for studies. Its database contains information on all Swedes studying at HEIs who receive CSN aid: approximately 300,000 Swedes study with financial aid each semester, which corresponds to 71 percent of all Swedish students (CSN, 2020). These numbers include both domestic students and those studying abroad. This study was guided by a desire to explore studying abroad among Swedish outbound students, using descriptive analysis of information from the CSN database. Descriptive statistics are used to describe the basic features of Swedish outbound students, and the data makes it possible to scrutinize studying abroad on an aggregate level over a period of two decades. Hence, in this study an approach has been chosen that attempts to account for change over a longer period, from the 2001/2002 academic year until 2019/2020. This allows for a comparison of mobility patterns among Swedish outbound students and an assessment of any change that may have occurred.

Furthermore, the data presented includes any type of study financial aid paid during the selected time period. It should be noted that this study only discusses Swedish outbound students who take with them grants and loans for studying abroad, and does not cover all the aspects and specific dimensions of being a foreign student.

7.4 Results

Swedish study loans enable approximately 22,000 outbound students annually (corresponding approximately to the size of a fairly large Swedish university) to study abroad. The vast majority of those who study abroad are female, which corresponds approximately to the female share of the total student population, 60 percent (CSN, 2019). Table 7.1, include one academic year during the pandemics (COVID-19) 2020/2021. It is noticeable the drop of outbound Swedish students, with two exceptions Latvia and Denmark.

English-speaking countries are attractive to Swedish outbound students, for whom the US and the UK are the reigning champions of countries to study in (Table 7.1). Swedish students are most likely to be enrolled in HEIs with a recognized high academic standard, most of them on the QS World University Ranking list (Table 7.2). Thus, being an English-speaking country seems to be a major attraction for Swedes. We find some countries—for instance Germany, which has a large number of prestigious universities spread out across many cities—to not be as popular among Swedish outbound students as one would imagine, even though Germany is an economic powerhouse of Europe. There are studies indicating that countries that speak the same language as international students have much larger flows of these

Table 7.1 Top study destinations. countries with more than 400 Swedish outbound students

		Academic year/Number of students		
	2001/2002	2009/2010	2019/2020	2020/2021
UK	4973	5008	3904	3553
USA	4947	4416	3674	2305
Australia	2528	1911	1489	795
Poland	114	1012	1195	1150
Danmark	1054	2085	1019	1038
Netherlands	364	482	906	703
Spain	3762	1744	776	529
Germany	1183	1078	775	587
France	2461	1450	683	478
Italy	1067	804	629	442
Norway	697	669	669	586
Canada	373	449	590	172
Switzerland	298	456	481	473
Japan	124	770	440	185
Latvia	4	72	482	585
Singapore	73	234	413	19
S.. Korea	15	129	402	179

Source CSN (2021)

Table 7.2 Top HEIs with more than 100 outbound Swedish students enrolled in post-secondary education for academic year 2019/2020

Higher education institution (HEI)	City, country	Number of students	QS World University Ranking
Rīga Stradiņš University	Riga, Latvia	461	Yes
Copenhagen Business School	Copenhagen, Denmark	404	Yes
Santa Monica College	Santa Monica, USA	381	N/A
Medical University of Gdansk	Gdansk, Poland	350	Yes
Lithuanian Univ of Health Sciences	Kaunas, Lithuania	231	Yes
Nanyang Technological University	Singapore	187	Yes
Santa Barbara City College	Santa Barbara, USA	182	N/A
University of Aberdeen	Aberdeen, UK	166	Yes
Copenhagen University	Copenhagen, Denmark	159	Yes
National University of Singapore	Singapore	157	Yes
University of Edinburgh	Edinburgh, UK	157	Yes
University van Amsterdam	Amsterdam, Netherlands	138	Yes
University of Varmia and Masuria	Olsztyn, Poland	135	N/A
University College London	London, UK	133	Yes
University of Glasgow	Glasgow, UK	124	Yes
The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts	Copenhagen, Denmark	121	Yes
Politecnico di Milano	Milan, Italy	117	Yes
Kings College London	London, UK	110	Yes
Wroclaw Medical University	Wroclaw, Poland	109	Yes
Kyung Hee University	Seoul, South Korea	108	Yes
University of Sydney	Sydney, Australia	100	Yes

Source CSN (2020)

students than those that do not share the same language (Abbot & Silles, 2016). To some extent this is also true for Swedes studying in countries like Denmark and Norway.

Most Swedes have a good proficiency in English due to the fact that English is mandatory in Swedish schools from the third grade. The outbound students want to be able to study in English and they have a desire to become fluent in a language they already have a good knowledge of (Nilsson, 2019). Still, language seems to be an issue. The choice of countries for language students can give us an indication about the preferences of Swedes, even though language students are a bisad group, in comparison to the whole student population due to their interest in learning a foreign languages. Language students chose to study in countries like Spain, Japan, France, USA and South Korea (CSN, 2020). When scrutinizing the language studied the CSN data shows Spanish (23%), English (22%), Japanese (15%), French (11%), Korean (8%) and German (8%).

As shown, the US and the UK take the top spots for Swedish students studying abroad (Table 7.1). This indicates that Swedish outbound students prefer to study in English-speaking countries or where the courses are taught predominantly in English. However, countries like Poland, Canada, Switzerland, Japan, the Netherlands, Latvia, South Korea and Singapore are on the rise (Table 7.1). The increasing numbers of Swedes studying in Poland can be explained by the fact that 968 Swedes studied at medical schools in Poland, out of a total of 2,071 Swedes at medical schools abroad during the 2018/2019 academic year (CSN, 2019). A year later 852 medical students studied in Poland out of a total of 1,946 medical students abroad (CSN, 2020). The Swedish students are mainly studying in English at foreign Medical Schools. Countries like the US and the UK have been top destinations for decades, but have lost some of their attractiveness among outbound Swedish students. However, growth is noticeable among Swedes studying in Asia. Most HEIs in Asia offer many courses taught in English. The number of Swedish students studying in Asia has grown by approximately 500 percent, starting at 400 students during the 2001/2002 academic year and growing to 2,148 two decades later, amounting to approximately 10 percent of Swedish outbound students (CSN, 2020). The decline in students particularly in Spain and France can be explained by a change in regulations in 2015 allowing only a limited number of language courses to be eligible for grants and loans for studying abroad.

It is noticeable that big cities attract Swedish outbound students (Table 7.3). Large metropoles can also offer many prestigious HEIs. Copenhagen, Denmark, is the largest capital city among the Nordic countries, and for this reason is attractive to Swedes. More than 400 Swedish students studied medicine in Riga, Latvia, in 2020. We know that Asia is growing in popularity among outbound Swedish students. Some more or less target life outside academia, such as students studying at community colleges in Santa Monica and Santa Barbara in the US. While a diploma from a community college is not a recognized degree in the Swedish higher education system (CSN, 2018), the vast majority of students study at well recognized HEIs around the world (Table 7.2).

Table 7.3 Popular cities for Swedish outbound students at the post-secondary level

City, country	Number of students 2018/2019	Number of students 2019/2020	Total both academic years
London, UK	1,497	1,441	2,938
Copenhagen, Denmark	803	837	1,640
Riga, Latvia	481	463	944
Singapore	413	436	849
Sydney, Australia	413	426	839
Santa Monica, USA	381	353	734
Gdansk, Poland	369	388	757
Paris, France	326	334	660
Seoul, South Korea	320	303	623
Oslo, Norway	309	321	630
Amsterdam, Netherlands	297	285	582
Barcelona, Spain	278	282	560
Milan, Italy	267	231	498
Edinburgh, UK	256	300	556
Glasgow, UK	254	260	514
Berlin, Germany	249	254	503
Kaunas, Lithuania	232	181	413
Tokyo, Japan	227	243	470
Santa Barbara, USA	212	279	491
Dublin, Ireland	203	141	344
New York, USA	201	235	436

Source CSN (2019, 2020)

7.5 Discussion and Conclusion

The findings indicate that Swedish outbound students prefer to study in English-speaking countries, with those such as the US and the UK being top destinations for decades. However, a decline in this is noticeable since the turn of the millennium and instead a growth in popularity is observed among other countries, mainly in Asia. It seems as if big, vibrant cities attract Swedish outbound students.

The decision to study abroad is complex for the student and many aspects are included, for instance the choice of country and the HEI. Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) identified knowledge and awareness of the host country, personal recommendations, cost issues, environment, geographic proximity, and social links as being of great importance in this decision. We know from other studies that students are looking for experiences and training in different parts of the world and, word-of-mouth can be important when choosing a study destination (cf. Greenacre et al., 2014; Nilsson, 2019). There is often a certain inertia in terms of students' tendency to choose other HEIs than previous students within their education have chosen before them. When it comes to choosing a specific attractive program, such as medical school, the education and the degree are primary. It is noticeable that outbound students have more options than they are willing and/or able to use when it comes to studying outside Sweden. The search for adventure seems to bring the outbound students to cities like London, Singapore, and Sydney, while those with medical studies in mind end up in cities like Riga and Gdansk. The warmer climate and beaches appear to bring Swedish outbound students to community colleges in Santa Monica and Santa Barbara. Even though a diploma from a community college is not recognized as a post-secondary education in the Swedish higher education system (CSN, 2018), students are still taking loans to study at places whose credits cannot be transferred to an undergraduate degree at a Swedish HEI.

The descriptive analyses provide some interesting indications regarding countries that are attractive to Swedes when studying abroad, especially considering that they are doing this with study loans, which have to be repaid to the Swedish government within 25 years. This suggests that the students are investing in their future career and life, which also seems to actually be the case. Furthermore, Swedish students might have mixed motives when studying abroad, for instance wanting to study at a highly recognized university located in a city and/or country that is attractive to the student. Some have to study where they are admitted, regardless of their preference of city and/or country, and do not really have a choice if they are aiming to, for example, become a physician.

The data reveals how changes in regulations can affect studying abroad. In 2015 a change in regulations took place, allowing only language courses at the post-secondary level to be eligible for grants and loans for studying abroad. The consequence of these new regulations was that the number of language students dropped considerably. This is also an example of how political decisions can either encourage mobility or make it more difficult, or even prevent it. This study shows that the numbers of outbound students to Spain, France, and Italy dropped by 40–70 percent since the turn of the millennium due to changes in regulations regarding receiving a loan to study a foreign language.

7.6 Implications

This study has shown Swedes studying abroad pre-COVID-19. The vast majority of students study in Europe, but an increasing number of those studying in Asia can be observed. About 2 percent of the Swedish outbound students studied in Asia in 2001 two decades later the share was 10 percent. However, Swedish students studying in another Nordic country still make up a significant number. For Swedes, studying in the UK has been very attractive. It remains to be seen whether this will continue to be the case among Swedes in the aftermath of Brexit, or if the flow of outbound Swedish students will take another direction. It is obvious that exchange students are linked with partner universities via formal agreements. Exchange students' choice of destination depends on existing networks and formal agreements with HEIs outside Sweden.

However, during 2020, Covid-19 has changed much when it comes to the possibility to take part in international student mobility. A large number of universities around the world have suspended all international student exchanges. At the same time, new opportunities are rapidly being developed to allow students to gain international experience without traveling. In addition to the various digital learning platforms available today, new innovations in the area of distance education are being presented, which in various ways offer new opportunities for "mobility". This will likely also create other opportunities for many of the students who previously, not least for socioeconomic reasons, found it difficult to spend a semester or two at a foreign university during their education. But even with the possibilities to find solutions through digital teaching methods, students will lack the cultural experiences of actually living abroad, which means that the physical meeting with other students and the social interaction and the cultural context will be absent. It is today difficult to foresee what implications this will have on international knowledge-sharing, having other experiences and perspectives from abroad while integrating with peers.

Swedes studying abroad post-COVID- 19 is still an open question. Thus, it is difficult to predict the long term-effects on mobility. The mobility patterns will probably change. Still, students will be aiming at an own personal experience of studying and living abroad. Concepts as blended mobility, i.e. to combine physical academic mobility, virtual mobility, and blended learning is expected to increase in the future. This can already be seen in the new Erasmus program, financed by the European Commission. Furthermore, this study indicates a wish to study at a prestigious university outside Sweden, and the attraction also involves a wish to remain in the country after graduating in order to work and live there. This is a driving force for some students and this will remain post-COVID-19. Another interesting aspect is the significance of the geographical location of HEIs for the students when choosing a post-secondary education. As a consequence, it can be assumed that an increase in online learning and worldwide digital courses available for students will be of importance in their choice of place for studies, wanting to study at high ranked HEIs.

References

Abbot, A., & Silles, M. (2015). Determinants of international student migration. *The World Economy, 39*(5), 621–635. https://doi.org/10.1111/twec.12319

Börjesson, M., Ahola, S., Helland, H., & Thomsen, J-P. (2014). Enrolment patterns in nordic higher education, ca 1945 to 2010. Institutions, types of education and fields of study. In *Working Paper 15/2014. Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation. Research and Education* (NIFU). Oslo. Retrieved from http://curis.ku.dk/ws/files/131533276/NIFUworkingpaper2014_15.pdf.

Bosangit, C., McCabe, S., & Hibbert S. (2009). What is told in travel blogs? Exploring travel blogs for consumer narrative analysis. In: W. Höpken, U. Gretzel, & R. Law (Eds.). *Information and communication technologies in tourism* 2009. Vienna: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-211-93971-0_6.

CIMO (Centre for International Mobility), UHR (Swedish Council for Higher Education) and SIU (Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education) (2013). *Living and learning – exchange studies abroad. A study of motives, barriers and experiences of Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish students.* Retrieved from https://www.uhr.se/globalassets/syv/utlandsvistelse/euroguidance/fler-rapporter/28083_living_and_learning.pdf.

Cresswell, T. (2010). Towards a politics of mobility. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 28*, 17–31. https://doi.org/10.1068/d11407

CSN (2018). *Studerande vid Community Colleges i USA*. Report 2018:6. Stockholm, Sweden. Retrieved from https://www.csn.se/download/18.6f417a0165fbcb61634b9/1538556885830/Studerande%20vid%20Community%20Colleges%20i%20USA%20slutrapport.pdf.

CSN (2019). *The Swedish Government authority in charge of financial aid*. Retrieved from https://statistik.csn.se/PXWeb/pxweb/sv/CSNstat/?rxid=1874bc3e-fef6-4c7e-b506-115ca290535c.

CSN (2020). *Vilka studerar utan studiemedel?* Report 2020:1. Stockholm, Sweden. Retrieved from https://www.csn.se/download/18.25c8284616ffa19f1e7a0f/1585641615784/Vilka%20studerar%20utan%20studiemedel.pdf.

CSN (2021). *The Swedish Government authority in charge of financial aid.* Retrieved from https://statistik.csn.se/PXWeb/pxweb/sv/CSNstat/?rxid=1874bc3e-fef6-4c7e-b506-115ca290535c.

Fong, V. L. (2011). *Paradise redefined: Transnational Chinese students and the quest for flexible citizenship in the developed world*. Stanford University Press.

Greenacre, L., Freeman, L., Cong, K., & Chapman, T. (2014). Understanding and predicting student Word of Mouth. *International Journal of Educational Research, 64*, 40–48. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2013.10.006.

Hall, C. M. (2005a). Space-time accessibility and the tourist area cycle of evolution: The role of geographies of spatial interaction and mobility in contributing to an improved understanding of tourism. In R. Butler (Ed.), *The tourism life cycle: Conceptual and theoretical issues*, *2*, 83–100. Channelview Publications Clevedon.

Hall, C. M. (2005b). *Tourism: Re-thinking the social science of mobility*. Prentice-Hall.

Jonsson, G. (2003). *Rotad, rotlös rastlös,* GERUM kulturgeografi 2003:3 (Umeå University Press, Sweden).

Knight, J. (2012). Student mobility and internationalization: Trends and tribulations. *Research in Comparative and International Education, 7*(1), 20–33. https://doi.org/10.2304/rcie.2012.7.1.20.

Mazzarol, T., & Soutar, G. (2002). Push-pull factors influencing international students destination choice. *International Journal of Educational Management, 16*, 82–90. https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540210418403x

Morgan, M., Lugosi, P., & Ritchie, J. B. (Eds.). (2010). *The tourism and leisure experience: Consumer and managerial perspectives* (Vol. 44). Channel View Publications.

Nilsson, P. A. (2019). Studying abroad. exploring mobility, expectations and experiences among mobile students. Department of Geography. Kulturgeografi 2019:2. (Umeå University Press, Sweden).

Nilsson, P. A., Westin, K., & Müller, D. K. (2019). Great expectations of studying abroad: Exchange students from Umeå University, Sweden. In M. Allison (Ed.), *Exploring the opportunities and challenges of international students* (pp. 99–124). Nova Science Publishers Inc.

Papatsiba, V. (2005). Political and Individual rationales of student mobility: A case-study of ERASMUS and a French regional scheme for studies abroad. *European Journal of Education, 2*, 173–188. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-3435.2004.00218.x

Plog, S. C. (1974). Why destination areas rise and fall in popularity. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, 14*(4), 55–58. https://doi.org/10.1177/001088047401400409

Plog, S. C. (2001). Why destination areas rise and fall in popularity: An update of a Cornell Quarterly classic. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, 42*(3), 13–24. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0010-8804(01)81020-X.

Relph, E. (1976). *Place and Placelessness*. Pion. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446213742.n5

Richards, G. (2015). The new global nomads: Youth travel in a globalizing world. *Tourism Recreation Research*. https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2015.1075724.

Rose, G. (1995) Place and identity: A sense of place. In D. Massey, & P. Jess (Ed.), *The shape of the world: explorations in human geography* (Vol. 4). A place in the world? Places, cultures and globalization. New York: Oxford University Press.

SOU. (2018). Ökad attraktionskraft för kunskapsnationen Sverige. Slutbetänkande av Utredningen om ökad internationalisering av universitet och högskolor. Statens offentliga utredningar 2018:78, Stockholm.

Tilley, C. (2006). Introduction: Identity, place, landscape and heritage. *Journal of Material Culture*, 7–32. https://doi.org/10.1177/1359183506062990.

Per A. Nilsson Ph.D., is an analyst at Umeå University, Sweden. His major research interests lie in the area of international student mobility and studying abroad.

Thomas Blom Ph.D. and Professor in Human Geography at the Department of Geography, Media and Communication at Karlstad University, Sweden. His major research interests can be divided into two main areas: perspective on knowledge and attitudes to higher education seen from a regional development perspective and trend-oriented tourism niches and its effects seen from a regional development perspective.

Part III
Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

Chapter 8
Equal and Inclusive Study Experiences for Disabled International Students

Armineh Soorenian

Abstract This chapter develops a case for better defined and more transparent ways to interpret and apply the term "disability" in universities around the world. By listening to students' voices, the chapter reveals how lack of clarity within the current definition of "disability", specifically in the British context, leaves Disabled international students studying in the UK feeling anxious, misunderstood, and confused about how to disclose their impairments. Given socio/cultural and linguistic variations in people's understanding of "disability", the use of established disability labels within different or unknown cultural frameworks can be challenging for international students, and terminology a significant factor in disclosure versus non-disclosure. Offering a degree of insight, the chapter aims to enhance the experiences of Disabled international students beginning their university journey. Students need to experience less confusion and receive offers of appropriate support to make the reality of university life equal in quality and enjoyment to that of their non-disabled peers.

Keywords Cultural definition · Disability · Barriers · Disabled international students · Disclosure · Medical model · Social model

8.1 Introduction

This chapter contributes to the significant and growing field of internationalised higher education (HE) by examining some of the reasons why, in our globalised education systems in which students are encouraged to travel internationally to benefit from transcultural HE, the mobility of Disabled international students appears to be limited. Literature supporting this group of students on their journey seems scarce, despite the fact that Disabled international students, as a group, experience not only the same set of barriers faced by their Disabled counterparts domestically, and those encountered by their non-disabled international peers, but also have their own unique challenges to confront on a daily basis. The intersectionality of Disabled international students' identities therefore form the basis of this work. The chapter concludes

A. Soorenian (✉)
Independent Researcher, Leeds, West Yorkshire, UK

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_8

with some inclusive recommendations to address these difficulties, emphasising the implications for future policy making.

8.2 Literature Review

In recent decades, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the globe have welcomed international students' participation in their universities (Travis, 2011). With consistent decreases in public funding, the neoliberal commodification of education into "services", and the transformation of students into valuable customers has become an increasingly attractive proposition. On the whole, universities have viewed internationalisation as a considerable source of income (Graf, 2009), bringing business opportunities with significant financial incentives. Outside the realm of economics, the pedagogical benefits of internationalisation are often intertwined with the 'cultural and intellectual diversity' (Amos, 2015) that develops from the creation of multicultural learning campuses. Internationalisation is thus considered to be capable of promoting understanding of cultural difference and diversity, and an appreciation of the world and one's place within it (Guo, 2007) with potential for HEIs to become progressive sites offering "engaged pedagogy" (Madge et al., 2009).

In the UK, it currently remains to be seen how Brexit and the immigration policies that will be introduced will affect international student numbers. However, despite the uncertain future, for many individual students the opportunity to live and study in a different culture has been a valuable life experience. Prospective international students have ultimately intertwined their personal and professional development, including heightened interpersonal skills, a good command of languages, practical application of knowledge, and strengths such as initiative, self-confidence, autonomy and resilience (Robson, 2011). These attributes reinforce the potential of international education to equip students with the suitable skills and characteristics for competitive international careers (Miller et al., 2015).

That said, international students can be an overlooked and vulnerable student population in host countries. With a common minority identity (Mahmood & Galloway Burke, 2018), international students arrive from various cultural backgrounds and speak a diverse range of languages. The way people dress, cook, live, use transport and socialise in the host country may not be comparable to the way in which international students operate in their home countries. This may leave them feeling lonely and overwhelmed by cultural differences, often experiencing great anxiety and destress during their initial immersion in unfamiliar cultural environments (Alloh et al., 2018; Berry et al., 2006; Li & Zizzi, 2018). New international students not only have to deal with the common problems of adjusting to a new state, possibly for the first time, but also have to contend with novel educational institutions, social behaviours and expectations including integration in developing adequate cross-cultural skills and English language acquisition/competence (Hadi Alakaam, 2015). Though it has to be recognised that there are differences among international students with regards to their cultural orientation dependant on various variables such as length of stay and level of interaction with the host society (Jamaludin et al., 2018).

Such practical challenges as time-management, visas, provision of information pre-/post-arrival accommodation, and policies relating to financial support, as well as emotional and affective issues, for example stress, homesickness, lack of confidence, participation in support services specifically in the case of international students, have been identified as key barriers by Katsara (2015), Li (2015) and Zhou et al. (2008). Other concerns may include pedagogic difficulties consisting of unfamiliarity with the host institutional system and academic conventions, different seminar, study and writing skills, teaching/learning experiences, linguistic diversity, and performance and outcomes.

Fundamental to this chapter, nationally and internationally, universities are typically interested in the 'best' and most able students, particularly for postgraduate work, arguably to the exclusion of Disabled students. As discussed above, non-disabled international students also encounter numerous barriers during their university experience. Therefore, if the seemingly inflexible British university environment is unable to address both sets of barriers promptly and effectively, questions arise about the preparedness of the HE setting to welcome Disabled international students at all, and how institutions will meet the intersectional needs of any Disabled international students that do arrive.

McLean et al. (2003) argue that as global education opportunities widen, the failure to address Disabled students' needs can be considered discriminatory, as it restricts their opportunities to succeed. Rhetorically, on an international level, the majority of universities have taken on the responsibility of developing a globally diverse student population, through equitable educational access paths, by increasing the number of exchange programmes and the process of internationalising teaching for "all" students, in principle to the inclusion of Disabled students (van Swet et al., 2012).

Yet, studies and literature on the way in which international opportunities are made accessible to Disabled students, compared with their non-disabled peers, is not readily available. While there is data available on the numbers of international students, the number of these who are disabled is not recorded as a matter of course. Taking part in a globalised HE experience can be of particular significance to Disabled students, enhancing their chances to study, socialise, develop and work abroad, particularly when facing limited opportunities in their home countries, be that a result of attitudinal or access barriers. Participating in HE is often viewed as a 'stepping stone to higher level occupations' (Shiner & Modood, 2002: 210), but to be able to participate at all, Disabled international students need to access international opportunities via accessible routes, which work towards accommodating their specific needs and address any concerns they might have about their impairments or disability. Discussed below is the key barrier faced by many Disabled international students as they begin their educational journey abroad, that of understanding and defining "disability" in a different cultural contextual framework. The chapter goes on to explain how this particular barrier can be addressed through flexible and inclusive solutions.

This discussion is informed by my first-hand experience of being a Disabled international student in British universities, as well as the findings of a project conducted for my PhD research, which investigated the experiences of Disabled international students in British HE. Thirty Disabled international students, studying in the UK, took part in my doctoral qualitative research, which examined the difficulties participants faced in their HE settings based on the intersectionality of their multiple identities of “Disabled”, “international” and, often, “mature” and “postgraduate” student.

8.3 Research Methods

The voices and experiences of participants were key evidence in my doctoral study; I therefore adopted qualitative and explorative data generation strategies to provide detailed insight into the under-researched area of Disabled international students’ experiences. For this study, a representative/random student sample would have been the preferred option, as it would have enabled the generalisation of results, and also reduced the risk of obtaining a biased outcome (Blaikie, 2000). However, such sampling procedures were not feasible due to lack of resources. To recruit participants, I used a snowballing method, including networking and chain referral techniques within various national educational institutions. Thirty mature participants with a range of impairments (two with invisible, five with dyslexia, ten with sensory [two with hearing and eight with visual], and 13 with physical) were recruited from 11 British universities. A ‘mature student’ refers to those students who start an undergraduate degree aged 21 or above (Oliver, 2020). Three of the participants were from Africa, four from Asia, six from the Far East, six from North America, and 11 from Europe.

I began the research using the collective data generation strategy of a focus group, with five participants, to refine and stimulate topics for the semi-structured interviews. I then chose the practical and explorative data collection strategy of semi-structured interviews, owing to the investigative nature of the study. Three telephone, 12 face-to-face, and 15 email interviews were arranged with the participants depending on their impairment-related concerns, and their availability in terms of time and location. The participants shared their experiences of a range of academic and non-academic issues associated with being a Disabled international student in the UK. I then transcribed the recordings and deployed pseudonyms to protect participants’ identities.

To avoid contrivance or misinterpretation of interviewees’ accounts, the participants were asked to read the transcripts through and make any changes, including additions or exclusions, as they saw fit. Subsequently I read the transcripts several times and coded them based on lists of themes and categories, generated from reading previous research findings and reflecting on theory. The content analysis as an ongoing process was considered on two levels, interpretive and reflexive (Mason, 1996). The method of analysis chosen for this study was a hybrid approach of qualitative methods of thematic analysis incorporating both the data-driven inductive approach and the retroductive approach (Blaikie, 2000). The aim of the latter is to explain observed regularities through the identification of mechanisms, or in this case disabling barriers, which produce them. Thus, the difficulties experienced by Disabled international students in accessing HE were considered evidence of their respective HEIs' disabling structures. An inductive approach—searching for patterns based on the facts or information (Boyatzis, 1998), for example the participants' accounts of HE—could conversely be used to draw conclusions, offer insight and enhance understanding, albeit in the context of this research only.

8.4 A Note on Terminology

The term "disability" is defined throughout the chapter in social model terms. This perspective considers "impairment" as a biological experience, whereas the concept of "disability" is defined as societal discrimination and prejudice related to a larger injustice issue (Holden & Beresford, 2002). An institution, which considers "disability" to be a problem located in an individual, may take a different stance from an institution which sees "disability" as rooted within the practices and attitudes that go on to create disabling barriers. The latter interpretation is based on the social model of disability. From this perspective, "disability" is a result of the interaction between a Disabled person's impairments and the physical and social barriers to her/his participation in society. Instead of focusing on deficiencies, as in the medical model, disability is considered a social construct (de Beco, 2014). It is the society which is disabling when it fails to accommodate Disabled people on an equal footing to their non-disabled peers.

Rooted in the individual medical interpretation of disability, the phrase "students/people with disabilities" denies the political or disability identity, which has emerged from the "Disabled People's Movement" similar to "Black" and "Gay" political identities (Barnes, 1992). When used in this context, the term "disability" refers to a student's medical condition rather than the disabling educational system and/or society at large, confusing the crucial distinction between disability and impairment. For this reason, the chapter does not refer to "students with disabilities" and instead deploys the language and terminology related to the social model perspective on disability when discussing the challenges that the international HE system poses for "Disabled international students".

8.5 Main Body

language that HEIs use to explain various impairments can reflect what the culture of the university becomes in relation to disability. This in turn determines how Disabled students are treated in that specific context (Rose, 2006). The challenge for HEIs is not to perpetuate the medical model of disability, but to use the social model to identify Disabled students. Within this enlightened model, the expectation is to ensure Disabled students' access to entitlement to support is met, whilst encouraging a social model approach to disability through the promotion of inclusive practices and the implementation of structural changes.

The British HE sector is more inclined to adopt the individual medical definition of disability highlighted in the UK *Disability Discrimination Act* (*DDA*). The solutions proposed to remove barriers are therefore often inadequate and supported by medical and personal tragedy discourses. Attempts are concentrated on changing the individual and meeting needs.

The accuracy of measuring impairments in the categorisation of "disability" in British university entry application forms such as the Universities and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS) has also shifted the emphasis away from the social interpretation of disability and created another hindrance for Disabled students (Higgins, 2012). As such, in disclosing their impairments formally on the UCAS form, or informally to a university in order to access support, students may fear being labelled, treated differently or even rejected from their choice of course and university (Rose, 2006).

Thus, the irrelevant nature of the categories of "disability" to educational and social needs, and the real or perceived threat of rejection, has the potential to inhibit students from disclosing such details (Rose, 2006). They may then take on the responsibility of their impairments themselves and go without support. For this reason, students are likely to make a series of preconceived decisions as to whether the benefits gained from disclosing an impairment will be outweighed by the possible disadvantages of doing so (Stanley et al., 2007).

At the point of transition into HE, Disabled students should be provided accessible and responsive information, advice and guidance about what disability refers to in the particular institutional framework in question. Yet, often it is the case that information, including that in prospectuses, is inaccessible and inaccurate. Madriaga (2007) found that added stress and anxiety resulting from lack of accessible information was one reason for the low proportion of Disabled students attending British HE.

As has been discussed, most international students experience a degree of anxiety during the cultural orientation process in the host country. However, additional factors often exaggerate the intensity of the culture shock experienced. These include the level and type of disability support required and provided, physical and informational accessibility, and cultural variation in understanding "disability" (Conway & McDow, 2010), all of which can significantly affect an otherwise successful study period for Disabled international students.

The socially accepted interpretations of who is and who is not Disabled, for instance, are relative to a given culture and time. When examining definitions of "disability" in different cultures, therefore, one should be aware that culture and ethnicity often shape social attitudes to "disability". Thereby, education, employment and family life opportunities for Disabled people differ markedly across cultures, pointing to varying attitudes to disability, and different social, political, economic and legislative contexts (McLean et al., 2003).

Preliminary medical tests in some countries can effectively exclude Disabled students from accessing and participating in university education. The identification of international students' impairments and related support needs may also be difficult owing to language and cultural barriers in this process; diagnosing and testing non-native English speakers for dyslexia is a case example here. Some students will be frustrated and disappointed by the difficulties they are confronted with in their host country, barriers that may not exist in their home country following the development of various anti-discrimination legislation.

Across the globe, health conditions and disability can be interpreted differently. In China, for example, educational services recognise only three categories of disability, namely cognitive, visual and hearing impairments (Deng & Guo, 2007). Conversely, in Hungary and France the recipients of support for having "special needs" are mostly pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties (van Zanten, 2009). Whilst the American education system refers to individual students' "disabilities" and conforms to the individual medical model, the German categories consider the educational support needs of Disabled students. Again, this points to vast differences when defining disability across the world (Powell, 2009).

Cultural norms may mean that international students prefer not to disclose an impairment or choose not to define themselves as Disabled, which may be the direct result of previous disability discrimination experiences or a corresponding fear of the effects of disclosure. For similar reasons, Farrar (2004) considered non-disclosure of impairments in the university setting to be affected by cultural and historical barriers.

For students requiring high levels of support in their home country, additional financial and personal costs associated with this support can make the transition particularly difficult (McLean et al., 2003). These students may initially feel that they must cope on their own without assistance, and may choose not to disclose the details of their impairments. It is important to note here that in the British context, unlike their domestic counterparts, there are no specific governmental grants available for Disabled international students' support needs. Disabled international students are only allowed to remain in the UK on the condition that they make no recourse to public funds (Gov.uk, 2019).

8.6 Findings

In light of the minimal information received by my research participants about "disability" definition and disclosure, they reported feeling overwhelmed and unsure about what terminology to use when disclosing their impairments in the different cultural and linguistic context. The socio/cultural and linguistic variations, and the inadequacy and complexity of disability categories exaggerated their confusion and misunderstandings as to what "disability" meant in the UK. Depending on their respective cultural contexts, participants used a range of perspectives, classifications and definitions about the labels and language used in relation to "disability".

In total, 25 participants said that they had been in a position where they had needed to accept one label or another when, in fact, the labels were inadequate. Elaine (with cerebral palsy and health conditions) explained that her student support service only allowed one category of "disability" to be ticked. She felt that only the generic category of "multiple impairments" partially represented the complexity of her specific impairments.

Irin (with cerebral palsy) did not wish to disclose her specific physical impairments to her university, however. Based on her cultural background, Irin did not consider herself to be 'Disabled' according to her interpretation of the concept. She repeatedly referred to herself as 'normal'. Her desire to pass as "normal" and the fact that she did not view her impairments as important to her sense of identity can be attributed to her concerns about the consequences of being stigmatised (Goffman, 1968) and the significance of any stigma for her university journey. Irin knew that she had no choice but to disclose her "impairments". However, owing to the complexity of her impairments, and her dissatisfaction with the adequacy of categories, she did not find a suitable space on the university application form in which to disclose the information.

Linda (with cerebral palsy) could not understand why her university had lumped the category of "mobility impairments" together with "wheelchair-user" on the form. Ned, on the other hand, added the word "wheelchair-user" in the blank space provided on his university form, thinking, 'The label "cerebral palsy" can't fully explain my condition, because it is very different from person to person'.

Jenny thought that Myalgic Encephalopathy (ME) did not fit into any of the existing categories on her university form. For her, the "invisible impairment" category was the most appropriate label to tick. As the findings in Rose's study (2006) demonstrated, for Iris (a mental health system survivor), university categories of "disability" were more indicative of physical impairments than any other impairments. Iris thought that this lack of awareness and understanding of mental health issues was also evident in the attitude of university staff: 'People might have difficulties interacting with people with a mental impairment like depression'. Elaine, Kate and Nora also criticised the university categories for being fixed, medicalised and stigmatising. Having physical or communication impairments are medical labels that might be attributed to students, but give little or no indication of the impact of an impairment on their experiences or the institutional barriers that must be removed to provide an equal educational experience (Rose, 2006). Due, perhaps, to his more easily defined impairment, Norman (with a hearing impairment) found the categories adequate and descriptive. It is argued here that attributing students with a label takes the focus away from HEIs having responsibilities to remove barriers and perpetuates the individual medical model of "disability".

Terminology is an important part of the language that contributes to the construction of "disability" (Barton, 2001). Whilst the confusion about the inadequacy and complexity of "disability" categories based on the individual medical model of this term may not be an issue exclusively affecting international students, as reflected in previous studies (Deng & Guo, 2007; van Zanten, 2009), the cultural and linguistic differences experienced by this group of students may have added to the misunderstandings and misgivings that participants described.

Different interpretations of impairment may have influenced participants' perceptions and ways of thinking about disability and their own identities, problematizing the intersectionality of being 'Disabled' and 'international' students. Gloria was not sure of the correct terminology to use in the university form in the UK in relation to her mobility impairment. Coming from a North American country, Carol wished she had received more information specifically on what "disability" meant in the British university context.

Peter was the only participant who explicitly discussed his observation of differences between the descriptive interpretation of impairments in the British universities, and that of his African country: 'In my country, four main categories are known: "physical", "hearing", "sight" and "mental" impairments. When we talk about "disability", people understand those, so other hidden "disabilities" are not known'.

Discussion.

The data showed that, in a university setting, where Disabled international students' needs were often not considered, the participants' disability-related concerns were exaggerated owing to various linguistic and cultural barriers. At times, participants had experienced discriminatory treatment on the grounds of their single identities of Disabled, international, or mature student. Other times, they were discriminated against as a result of the intersection of all these identities. However, separating out a single contributory cause for their marginalisation was often not possible, as their disadvantages were seemingly so simultaneous, intertwined and intersectional.

Depending on their cultural backgrounds, international students may use a range of terminology for describing different impairments and may not be familiar with the words commonly adopted to encourage disclosure in the host countries. An obvious translation of the term "learning difficulties", for example, may be absent in some cultures, which has the risk of international students not readily being able to identify with the labels such as a Specific Learning Disability (SLD), predominantly used to refer to dyslexia and also referring to dyssomnia or dyscalculia in the British HE context (Rose, 2006). Some concepts used to define specific impairments, when translated literally, may be confusing or even derogatory for Disabled international students and their families. Thus, the cultural interpretation and variation in the understanding and treatment of "disability" can be a key barrier to Disabled international students' integration in the host universities.

At disclosure stage, Disabled international students therefore need ample accessible and appropriate information on how the process works. Without such information they may feel particularly disadvantaged, not knowing how to disclose the details of their impairments in a different cultural and linguistic context, and what the benefits of doing so are. A more accessible and inclusive approach embedded in the internationalisation of HE should provide opportunities for quality improvement within universities by respecting, connecting as well as enhancing cultural appreciation and intercultural communication on "disability". This approach must remain sensitive to what “disability” means in a specific context. In this way opportunities for future study abroad can be equalised and increased. To this end the insights below can be deployed by a range of international educators and practitioners, administrators and policy makers to assist in adopting an inclusive culture.

8.7 Recommendations

Universities must provide accessible, culturally sensitive and tailored information on what “disability” means in that specific context. Both verbal and written information in a range of alternative formats, pre-arrival, in a timely manner to all prospective students must be offered. Upon request, universities must be willing and able to provide the information in different languages so that students’ families, who may not know English, would be able to access the information.

Informing students to the extent that they are fully aware of the potential benefits and drawbacks of disclosure whilst highlighting issues of confidentiality can lead to more cases of disclosure and fewer misunderstandings or anxieties about why an HEI needs this information (Rose, 2006). Hence, the information on disclosure must be readily available in different languages, explaining how to disclose different impairments in English and what the outcomes of such disclosures will be.

8.8 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the distinct lack of clarity in defining the term “disability” within British HEIs and how that in itself creates a fundamental barrier for Disabled international students starting their international education journeys. Literature and information defining “disability” and comparing cultural HE frameworks of “disability” is limited, which seems to be another key contributory factor to Disabled international students’ low access and participation in global HE. Improving accessibility for Disabled international students will have direct and immediate positive ramifications, not only for the group of people that are the central concern of this chapter, but also for a diverse range of other students from minority backgrounds who would greatly benefit from inclusive practices in education. When students with diverse backgrounds and learning styles interact fully and uninhibitedly with those considered “traditional” students, invaluable social skills are developed and learning experiences greatly enhanced across the board. This chapter proposes that the introduction of fully inclusive HE settings, as described above, is the only mechanism that can bring about a culture shift whereby difference is respected and celebrated, and communities are enriched and diversified.

Table of Participants

Name	Gender	Nationality	Age	Impairment	Course
Carol	F	Western (North American)	26	Visual impairment (Congenital)	PhD Social Science
Elaine	F	Western (European)	24	Cerebral palsy and health conditions (Congenital)	MA Social Science
Gloria	F	Non-Western (African)	37	Mobility impairment (Congenital)	MA Social Science
Irin	F	Non-Western (Far Eastern)	28	Cerebral palsy (Congenital)	MA Social Science
Iris	F	Non-Western (Far Eastern)	26	Mental health system survivor (Acquired)	MA Social Science
Jenny	F	Western (European)	29	Myangic Encephalomyelitis (ME) (Acquired)	PhD Social Science
Kate	F	Western (North American)	41	Mobility impairment (sometimes wheelchair-user) (Congenital)	PhD Social Science
Linda	F	Western (North American)	30	Cerebral palsy (Congenital)	MA Social Science
Ned	M	Non-Western (Far Eastern)	32	Physical impairments (wheelchair-user) (Congenital)	MA Social Science
Nora	F	Western (European)	32	ADHD and Dyslexia (Congenital)	BA Humanities
Norman	M	Western (European)	27	Hearing impairment (Congenital)	PhD Natural Science
Peter	M	Non-Western (African)	38	Mobility impairment (Sometimes wheelchair-user) (Congenital)	PhD Social Science

References

Alloh, F.T., Tait, D., & Taylor, C. (2018). Away from Home: a qualitative exploration of health experiences of Nigerian students in a U.K. university. *Journal of International Students, 8*(1), 1–20.

Amos, Y.T. (2015). Guest students: Faculty expectations of Japanese international students. In K. Bista, & C. Foster (Eds.), G*lobal perspectives and local challenges surrounding international student mobility*. Pennsylvania: IGI Global.

Barnes, C. (1992). *Disabling imagery and the media: an exploration of the principles for media representations of disabled people*. Derby: The British Council of Disabled People.

Barton, E. L. (2001). Textual practices of erasure: representations of disability and the founding of the united way. In J. C. Wilson & C. Lewiecki-Wilson (Eds.), *Embodied rhetorics: Disability in language and culture*. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.

Berry, J. W., Phinney, J. S., Sam, D. L., & Vedder, P. (2006). *Immigrant youth in cultural transition: Acculturation, identity and adaptation across national context*. Lawrence Erlbaum.

Blaikie, N. (2000). *Designing social research: The logic of anticipation*. Polity Press.

Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Sage.

Conway, M., & McDow, M. (2010). C*ultural diversity: Teaching all students, reaching all learners, presentation slides from the Center on Disability Studies*. University of Hawaii at Manoa. Retrieved from http://www.ist.hawaii.edu/downloads/presentations/pdf/CulturalDiversityTrainingModule.pdf.

de Beco, G. (2014). The right to inclusive education according to article 24 of the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities: Background, requirement and (remaining) questions. *Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights, 32*(3), 263–287.

Deng, M., & Guo, L. (2007). Local special education administrators' understanding of inclusive education in China. *International Journal of Educational Development, 27*, 697–707.

Farrar, V. (2004). Access to research: Institutional issues for disabled postgraduate research students. *Report produced through the HEFCE funded project Premia - making research education accessible*. University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Retrieved from http://www.premia.ac.uk/downloads/accessToResearch_reportOnInstitutionIssuesForDisabledPGRstudents.pdf.

Goffman, E. (1968). *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*. Penguin Books.

Gov.uk. (2019). *General student visa (Tier 4)*. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa.

Graf, L. (2009). Applying the varieties of capitalism approach to higher education: Comparing the internationalisation of German and British universities. *European Journal of Education, 44*(4), 569–585.

Guo, S. (2007). Nurturing cultural diversity in higher education: A critical review of selected models. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education, 37*, 27–49.

Hadi Alakaam, A. A. (2015). International students' eating habits and food practices in colleges and universities. In K. Bista, C. Foster, (Eds.), *Global perspectives and local challenges surrounding international student mobility*. Pennsylvania: IGI Global.

Higgins, M. (2012). Types of disabilities declared on UCAS applications. Retrieved from https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/types_of_disabilities_declared_o_25.

Holden, C., & Beresford, P. (2002). Globalization and disability. In C. Barnes, M. Oliver, & L. Barton (Eds.), *Disability studies today*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Jamaludin, N. L., Sam, D., & Sandal, G. (2018). Destination motivation, cultural orientation, and adaptation: International students' destination-loyalty intention. *Journal of International Students., 8*, 38–65.

Katsara, O. (2015). Internationalization of curriculum for Italian and international postgraduate students. In K. Bista , & C. Foster (Eds.), *Global perspectives and local challenges surrounding international student mobility*. Pennsylvania: IGI Global.

Li, M. (2015). Learning the rules of the game: Issues affecting academic acculturation of Asian international students in New Zealand universities. In K. Bista , & C. Foster (Eds.), *Global perspectives and local challenges surrounding international student mobility*. Pennsylvania: IGI Global.

Li, S., & Zizzi, S. (2018). A case study of international students social adjustment, friendship development, and physical activity. *Journal of International Students, 8*(1), 389–408.

Madge, C., & Raghuram, P.i & Noxolo, P. (2009). Engaged pedagogy and responsibility: a post-colonial analysis of international students. *Geoforum, 40*, 34–45. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2008.01.008

Madriaga, M. (2007). Enduring disablism: Students with dyslexia and their pathways into UK higher education and beyond. *Disability & Society, 22*(4), 399–412.

Mahmood, H., & Galloway Burke, M. (2018). Analysis of acculturative stress and sociocultural adaptation among international students at a non-metropolitan university. *Journal of International Students, 8*(1), 284–307.

Mason, J. (1996). *Qualitative researching*. Sage Publications.

McLean, P., Heagney, H., & Gardner, K. (2003). Going Global: The implications for students with a disability. *Higher Education Research & Development, 22*(2), 217–228.

Miller, J., Berkey, B., & Griffin, F (2015). Preparing international students for a competitive job market: Challenges and opportunities. In K. Bista , C. Foster (Eds.), *Global perspectives and local challenges surrounding international student mobility*. Pennsylvania: IGI Global.

Oliver, C. (2020). University guide for mature students. *The complete university guide.* Retrieved from https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/student-advice/applying-to-uni/mature-students-university-guide.

Powell, J. J. W. (2009). To segregate or to separate? Special education expansion and divergence in the United States and Germany. *Comparative Education Review, 53*, 161–187.

Robson, S. (2011). Internationalization: A transformative agenda for higher education? *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 17*(6), 619–630.

Rose, C. (2006). *Do you have a disability – yes or no? Or is there a better way of asking?* Learning and Skills Development Agency.

Shiner, M., & Modood, T. (2002). Help or hindrance? Higher education and the route to ethnic equality. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 23*(2), 209–232.

Stanley, N., Ridley, J., Manthorpe, J., Harris, J., & Hurst, A. (2007). Dangerous disclosures. *Mental health today*, June 2007 (pp. 24–27).

Travis, A. (2011). Visa curbs will cut overseas students by 80,000, says Theresa May. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2011/mar/22/number-foreign-students-to-be-cut.

Van Swet, J., Brown, K. L., & Kebreab Tedla, P. (2012). Learning together: An international master programme in inclusive education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 17*(4), 377–392.

van Zanten, A. (2009). Competitive arenas and schools logics of action: A European comparison. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, *39*, 85–98.

Zhou, Y., Jindal-Snape, D., Topping, K., & Todman, J. (2008). Theoretical models of culture shock and adaptation in international students in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education, 33*(1), 63–75.

Chapter 9
Impediments to Fostering Interculturalism at Home: The Nation-State, Social Power, and Cultural Representation in EFL Teaching Materials

Charles Brown

Abstract The present pandemic moment in which students' international mobility is curtailed sets the stage to think about the effectiveness of local education in EFL contexts. In this paper, I consider the role of EFL teaching in fostering interculturalism. Analyzing a corpus of public school EFL teaching materials from Japan, I focus on how they portray international culture with attention to the hidden curriculum. I conclude that these materials reflect historical relations of social power in placing emphasis upon powerful nations while also implicitly promoting the notion of cultural uniformity within countries, a uniformity in which the visibility of privileged social groups prevails. Both aspects—coupled with misconceptions about the nature of culture itself—are at odds with effectively fostering interculturalism. This particularly impacts students for whom the EFL class may represent the primary channel for intercultural opportunity in lieu of immersive international experience.

Keywords Critical pedagogy · Culture · English Language Teaching (ELT) · Hidden curriculum · Ideology · Interculturalism · media studies

9.1 Introduction

While students study abroad for many reasons, one motivation is the conviction that intercultural competency can be most effectively fostered through long-term immersion in other cultures. I currently serve in an English program for international students at an American university. As my colleagues and I have worked to transition from in-person to remote teaching during the pandemic, our international students have consistently voiced concerns that more is involved than content: They worry about missing out on being immersed in a different culture and interacting with diverse peers in their classes. While we faculty have responded by striving to deploy technology so as to best foster such interactions, this issue foregrounds the fact

C. Brown (✉)
Purdue University, West Lafayette, USA

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_9

that those for whom international study is *never* an option may be at a decided disadvantage in this important aspect of their learning.

This possibility has prompted me to investigate efforts at fostering intercultural competency for more local-bound students such as those with whom I have worked in English as Foreign Language (EFL) contexts in East Asia. Students around the world take English classes as part of their schooling, and these classes typically do claim to prepare students for intercultural encounters. There are potential social justice ramifications if such teaching is inadequate, though, since shortcomings in local education may promote educational inequity with less privileged locals losing out when compared to their more mobile peers. In response, I created a project to assess the EFL class as a vehicle for interculturalism, considering portrayals of culture in such classes with a focus on the hidden curriculum. Especially important for its potent socialization effects, the hidden curriculum includes that which is taught in school outside of the stated, or even intended, curriculum (Hafferty & Hafler, 2011; Kentli, 2009). I feel that cultural portrayals in EFL materials especially demand attention to the hidden curriculum since these materials represent one such avenue of socialization with implications for successful interculturalism. Though a case study of Japanese ELT, the resulting project reported upon here has implications for other settings, especially by exploring how the teaching of culture in EFL may have unintended, defacto, dimensions that may compromise its effectiveness. This project is also useful in modeling how such aspects of teaching materials may be discerned via an inductive search for patterns comprising a curriculum within them. In addition, such materials represent a ready avenue for improvement when shortcomings are found.

9.2 Literature Review

9.2.1 Teaching Culture in the EFL Class

There are several possible approaches to teaching culture in the EFL classroom. One is to attempt to avoid the teaching of culture entirely. This usually reflects the wish to present the target language simply as a "tool" in the belief that foreign culture and implicit cultural imperialism present a threat to students' identities (Alfahadi, 2012; Cortazzi & Jin, 1999). The second philosophy of culture teaching is to focus on the culture of native speakers of the language. In contemporary EFL education, this approach is often eschewed, at least ostensibly, given the status of the language as an international communicative platform rather than a language confined to certain locales. The fact that the majority of English speakers are not native speakers supports this stance (Alsamani, 2014). A third approach is to focus on the culture(s) within a particular region or group when the student is undertaking study with the goal of living or working in such specific contexts. The last approach to teaching culture as a component of English education is to embrace an international, intercultural stance. This is the stated approach in Japan where there is a strong connection perceived between internationalization and English (Galloway, 2009; Kubota & McKay, 2009; Rose & McKinley, 2017). This makes an examination of culture teaching in Japanese EFL valuable.

A cogent approach to the integration of a cultural component in language teaching requires understanding what culture actually entails. While a complex issue, at the broadest level, scholars point out a dichotomy between easily observed artifacts of culture such as clothing, the fine arts, edifices, and foods and "deeper" aspects of culture such as beliefs, identity, behavior, and ways of understanding the world (Nguyen, 2013). This dichotomy has been variously described, such as via the "culture iceberg" metaphor in which the more extensive and influential aspects of culture lie beneath the surface. For the present discussion, I draw upon the so-called big C/little c nomenclature in which the big C represents the easily observed and the little c represents cultural beliefs and behaviors (Kovács, 2017). While big C elements should not be discounted entirely, they are, at best, only reflections of the deeper culture with this more fundamental dimension being critical for interculturalism. Thus, the big C aspects are important in fostering interculturalism not because they *are* culture, but only for what they may reveal *about* culture. This means that attention to big C culture in the classroom should be accompanied by opportunities to penetrate such connections. In assessing efforts to teach interculturalism, it is important, therefore, to include a consideration of how well the approaches in question address the entire gamut of culture so as to prepare learners for interactions with people who may understand the world in very different ways.

9.2.2 Investigating Culture Teaching as Hidden Curriculum

Central to my discussion is the notion of the *hidden curriculum*, a concept used to explain how educational practices can convey unintended, covert information and expectations in addition to what is explicitly stated and assessed in official curricula. There are a multitude of examples. Teachers' unconscious expectations of students as manifest in their interactions in the classroom can work to reproduce gender roles (e.g., Pardhan, 2011). Faculty behaviors such as failure to start and finish class on time may send potent messages to students, in this case that "[y]our time (students) is not as important as my time (faculty member)" (Aterian, 2009, p. 283). The physical arrangement of the classroom itself also represents a hidden curriculum by suggesting, rewarding, or constraining aspects of behavior such as who is allowed to move, when, where, and in what manner (e.g., Tor, 2015). I draw on the following characteristics of this concept: First, the hidden curriculum is broad, with some considering it to include all hidden content and behaviors taught (or simply reinforced) in school, whether by teachers or others. Second, it can reflect the unintentional manifestation of beliefs held by those having control in educational contexts. Third, it *teaches* those beliefs, demanding student compliance with them (Apple, 2004; Giroux, 2001). While the hidden curriculum can thus involve many aspects of schooling, for the present discussion I focus on the hidden curriculum contained in English teaching materials such as lesson plans, handouts, and Powerpoint presentations for classroom use.

To discern the hidden curriculum pertaining to culture, I draw upon media studies given its robust toolkit for understanding the relationships between texts and ideology. A critical media analysis approach especially hinges on "reading against" rather than "with" texts (Newfield, 2011). This involves reflecting upon ideologies with which readers must comply for particular texts to work as their creators intend. For example, print advertisements for many goods and services include photos of models intended to be fashionable and attractive. One reason is that purveyors of such materials simply seek to attract potential buyers. They go beyond this, though, by seeking to forge a connection in the consumer's mind between purchasing the product and being the kind of person in the picture via this tactic. In essence, such materials require our agreement as to what counts, in visual terms, as a desirable person. They are contingent also upon our acceptance of other beliefs such as the idea that an ad for swimming pools, for example, requires people in the images at all. The read *against* such texts, on the other hand, foregrounds creators' implicit, and perhaps subconscious strategies, and the forms of compliance required by the reader. This can reveal the more insidious aspects of such media: For example, much research documents what visual media teaches about links between idealized body types and attractiveness to young people, especially girls. So powerful are the implicit messages and demands for compliance in these ubiquitous materials that they may lead to eating disorders and even lethal outcomes (Amazue, 2014). To thus state that such media can be considered deadly is not hyperbole.

The concepts of *cultivation theory* and the *truth effect* are useful in understanding why such effects occur. Developed especially to determine the impact of television upon viewer's beliefs, cultivation theory indicates that long-term exposure to materials with messages consistently differing from reality can result in "a distorted, media-influenced perception of reality [because] media-influenced perceptions of reality develop over time, [and] these perceptions of reality are the result of the unified, homogenized view of reality that [they] present" (Kahlor & Easton, 2011, p. 218). Likewise, the truth effect refers to situations in which people become more accepting of inaccurate statements when these statements are sufficiently repeated (Hasher et al., 1977). Both effects suggest *the power of ongoing exposure to repeated and consistent messages in a large corpus of materials.* An example of these phenomena pertains to the myth of normative feminine beauty as being connected to whiteness. This myth can be understood as the result of the inundation of countless images sending the message to the viewer that physical attributes such as narrow lips, a narrow nose, double eyelids and, especially, lighter skin are the most beautiful (Deliovsky, 2008). One important technique, then, of a critical approach to understanding potential media impact is content analysis whereby a corpus of material is analyzed to seek the repeated and implicit messages and assumptions underlying the reality therein (Holtzman, 2000). In other words, this involves an extended critical reading against a large body of texts so as to induce any underlying beliefs that might be taught. Such analytical tools can be applied to media associated with education in order to understand the hidden curriculum.

9.2.3 Research Questions and Methods

In this paper, I apply these ideas to an examination of presentations of culture in a corpus of Japanese ELT materials. I focused on the "where," the "who," and the "what" of cultural depictions to understand how they might represent a hidden curriculum pertaining to culture. Guided by these questions, I selected recent lesson plans and handouts created by several hundred middle and high school English teachers across Japan. These materials were posted mostly to prefectural-level repositories sponsored by the government for the sharing of teaching ideas. The collection of this data took place between early 2019 and early 2020. In amassing this corpus, I wished to include any materials bearing information about the culture of various groups. To do so, I looked for materials with two attributes. First, I sought materials with any type of designation of cultural group *membership*. Second, I sought manifestations of cultural *behaviors* or *artifacts* linked to such groups. One example was a worksheet asking students to make sentences about what they would do if they were in America. They were provided with information supposedly about America such as popular foods being hamburgers and root beer and famous places being The Statue of Liberty, The Golden Gate Bridge, and Hollywood. Such materials bearing cultural information were plentiful because there were many lessons explicitly about culture, others such as stories about people or practices in various locales, and exercises like the one above bearing more implicit cultural information. In considering how such materials might promote a hidden curriculum, it was important to include any materials bearing such cultural information, whether culture teaching was the intent or not. These efforts resulted in a collection of over 1900 materials teaching culture in some manner.

Working with such a corpus, as opposed to a smaller data set such as a single textbook, is valuable in such research for several reasons. Foremost, it offers a window into the teaching of interculturalism to an entire generation of Japanese people. For those whose intercultural experience is limited to the home content, such materials are critical. Also, any problematic constructions of culture that might be visible across this corpus suggests the presence of widespread ideologies. One caveat is that although these artifacts were posted by teachers, simply ascribing any ideologies underpinning such a collection to them would be premature. Such teachers could, for example, have simply typed "French culture" into a search engine to obtain material from which to create lessons. In such a case, what we observe in the resulting materials is a complex process involving factors such as institutional requirements (teaching culture), the workings of search engine algorithms (and possible manifestations of capital via paid content), and, perhaps, teachers' lack of criticality along with possible ideologies held by the teachers. The role of teacher beliefs, then, is a question for subsequent research. A final impetus to the collection of such an extensive corpus is that, given the workings of media cultivation and the truth effect, any consistent cultural characterizations suggest powerful impacts upon learners.

While the data collection was driven by an effort to discern a possible hidden curriculum through including materials whether or not explicitly intended for culture teaching, the data analysis was also driven by the same objective. Assessing the hidden curriculum in such a collection of materials involves an inductive exercise in striving to determine patterns, a curriculum, emerging in the data. I sought to generate a statistical report by tallying the relative visibility of different social groups and how their cultures were depicted. Again, being open to unexpected results is key. For example, social groups construed in such materials could have included endless possibilities such as millennials, gamers, religious groups, ethnic groups, gendered groups, or groups defined by locale or sexual orientation. The final step in the analysis was to search for prevalent patterns that would thus form a curriculum centered on culture.

9.3 Results

9.3.1 The Where, Who(Se), and What of Cultural Representations in ELT Materials

These materials reflected the goal of interculturalism by including information about many places and people outside of Japan, thus seeming to set the stage for students to learn about culture beyond the local. While some of these materials were presented as factual, others were fictional stories. Many of these fictional texts depicted young Japanese traveling internationally while others revolved around encounters with travelers *to* Japan. Other materials with a cultural dimension were simpler, often involving practice in target language forms, such as the sentence, *Where are you from?* A list of countries was provided for possible responses. In this case, the cultural teaching was more implicit with the primary purpose of the exercise being grammar practice. There are numerous situations in which the names of different countries were included in all of these materials. In total, a tally of this entire corpus showed 918 occurrences in which country names were included. In creating this tally, I included only unique country mentions from a particular handout or lesson plan; countries mentioned several times in the *same* handout, I counted as a single occurrence. Ranked in terms of a number of occurrences, this count revealed the following (Table 9.1).

This data alone demonstrates a disconnect between these materials and the mission of interculturalism, as entire swaths of the world were little represented. In particular, the list is highly Eurocentric with the Global South being largely invisible. European countries enjoyed 259 mentions compared with 34 for Southeast Asia, eight for sub-Saharan Africa, two for the Middle-East, and none for Central America. This indicates that this list reflects historically-rooted relations of power with the more politically, economically, and culturally powerful countries enjoying undue representation. The visibility of the traditional English-speaking countries is especially noteworthy in light of the Japanese education ministry's claimed internationalization mission for English education. With 288 of the 918 mentions, but only about 6% of the population, this visibility demonstrates the lingering political power of these

Table 9.1 Countries appearing multiple times in the corpus, ranked in terms of number of appearances

United States 97	Germany 24	Jamaica 7	Ireland 3	North Korea 2
Japan 93	Mexico 23	Vietnam 6	Madagascar 3	Romania 2
China 64	Spain 22	Argentina 5	Pakistan 3	Saudi Arabia 2
Australia 58	New Zealand 20	Belgium 5	Scotland 3	Switzerland 2
England/UK/Britain 56	Russia 20	Philippines 5	Sweden 3	Taiwan 2
France 54	Egypt 19	Singapore 5	Austria 2	Ukraine 2
Canada 51	S. Africa 14	Iceland 4	Cuba 2	Venezuela 2
India 40	Greece 12	Malaysia 4	Ghana 2	
Brazil 33	Finland 11	Nigeria 4	Hong Kong 2	
Italy 28	Thailand 11	Turkey 4	Kenya 2	
South Korea 28	Africa 9 [see text]	Indonesia 3	Norway 2	

countries coupled with an ongoing belief that the English language is somehow "owned" by them.

These materials also portray culture as nation-state-level phenomenon, sending a consistent, implicit message that a single, uniform culture is connected to each country. One typical worksheet required students to draw a line from flags of various countries to the "foods eaten there." In this case, the Italian flag was connected to pizza, the US flag to hamburgers, and the French flag to a plate of escargot. An especially troubling example was the case of Africa. I included the *continent* of Africa on the above list because the entire continent of Africa was often contrasted with individual countries and presented as a uniform geographical and cultural entity. Africans were thus robbed even of nation-state individuation, representing another manifestation of power. For example, one teacher created a culture board depicting "Christmas around the world." A map showed Canada, Germany, India and several other countries with one or two photos of Christmas decorations for each. At the bottom of the poster, the word "Africa" appeared with two photos. The implication that all individuals in this continent celebrate Christmas—and do so by decorating acacia trees on the savanna as indicated in these images—would no doubt come as a surprise to many Africans who in this case have been deprived not only of the visibility of their cultural groups, but even of their countries.

These materials presented the culture of countries not only as homogeneous, but as typically aligned with the most powerful social groups *within* these locales. An example of the prevalence of the culture of dominant groups was the presentation of important observances. Christmas appeared 150 times, Easter 23 times, Hanukkah eight times, and Eid once. Diwali, Kwanzaa, and Ramadan *never* appeared in any of these materials. One worksheet for students with the title of "American holiday: Easter" included the statement that "many Americans celebrate Easter." Yet, among the lesson plans and handouts from this corpus there were no similar indications that many Americans also celebrate other cultural events such as Eid, Kwanzaa, Lunar New Year, or the Dragon Boat Festival.

Some manifestations of dominant groups' visibility (and their association with the culture of entire nations) were more subtle. There were many stories and dialogs featuring characters from different places, yet the names of those depicted as being from the traditional English-speaking countries were virtually always stereotypical Anglo names. One Canadian character's name was Ann Green. Yet, as of 2007, the top 20 surnames in Canada did not include Green. They did, however, include the names Lam, Gagnon, Côté, and Chan. In the United States, 2010 census data indicated that the surnames Garcia, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Lopez, Gonzalez, and Nguyen were all more common than Green. *None* of these non-stereotypically Anglo names appeared in this corpus, despite there being a wealth of named Canadian and US characters in these materials.

When explicitly mentioned as culture—and often when not—culture in these materials was almost exclusively of the big C variety. Holidays, foods, costumes, and edifices were amply presented in these materials. For example, one teacher created class materials about Japanese culture. This included kabuki theater, sumo wrestling, and sushi. Another handout depicted a cartoon French person wearing a beret and striped shirt. Beyond the fact that such shallow stereotypes may be insulting, these practices implicitly teach that big C culture *is* culture, that culture can always be *seen.*

Overall, then, what ended up being presented as culture in these materials was strongly biased to the (1.) idealized (2.) big C culture of (3.) prominent groups (4.) hailing from a limited number of (5.) powerful countries. Thus, the presentation of culture in these materials involved a cumulative skewing away from its actual broader manifestations. This represents an inadequate preparation for intercultural encounters because it not only ignores the small c culture so important for understanding others, but because it is so heavily aligned toward powerful groups within powerful countries.

9.4 Discussion and Conclusions

9.4.1 What is Actually Being Taught: Cultural Representations as Hidden Curriculum

Considering this collection of 1900 recent materials from EFL classes in Japan through a hidden curriculum lens so as to be sensitive to implicit information about culture indicated the workings of prevalent ideologies relating to culture and reflecting social power. Beliefs implicit in and communicated via these materials included the following:

- Some countries are more important than others. If we assume this to be a random sample, Japanese EFL students would, as a group, be 27 times as likely to learn about France as they would be to learn about Ukraine, Ghana, Saudi Arabia, or Kenya. Many countries were simply invisible.

- Some *cultures* are more important than others. The cultures of dominant groups within the prominent countries in this corpus enjoyed great visibility. Many others were downplayed or entirely invisible.
- Culture represents an unchanging, place-based phenomenon as an aspect of the nation-state. This is a deterministic stance whereby one's culture can be assumed based upon the passport one holds. An implication is that this normalization would support the belief that if an individual's cultural practices diverge from the mainstream, the fault lies not with this construct: Such people are simply not legitimate, full-fledged citizens of the country in question.
- As a correlate of this, these materials teach that languages represent the rightful property of certain peoples. This point is potent in these materials. In addition to the names of English speakers being Anglo, in dialogs in which a Japanese character interacted with such people, the Japanese characters always had stereotypical Japanese names. There were no people depicted as native English speakers in this corpus with names like Taro or Harumi or surnames like Tanaka. Ideologies of language ownership and impermeable cultural borders (as well as othering) are thus maintained rather than being questioned or disrupted.
- Culture has low potential to give rise to conflicts. Trivializing culture to stereotypical big C elements robs the learner of a view of culture as entailing different interpretive lenses through which to understand events. This sets the stage for difficulty in gaining intercultural skills.
- Culture involves declarative rather than procedural competencies, that is to say, it is something that is talked *about* rather than lived and felt. What is noticeably absent in these materials were lesson plans in which students were doing culture such as role-playing intercultural scenarios. There were, for example, no treatments of what constitutes politeness in other cultures, the role and appropriate content of small talk, or varying perceptions of time. Such topics could have set the stage for productive reflection and practice.
- Culture is easily learned. These materials limit culture to the concrete (and, indeed, often further limited to the visible) rather than as being heavily cognitive. Presented as the foods, language, traditional garb, festivals, and iconic edifices specific to particular countries, this also renders culture easy to teach, to gamify, and to assess: Students can be asked to draw a line from a flag to a food on a piece of paper. This approach makes efforts touting interculturalism as a goal easier to market as well. Witness the many edifices from around the world on covers of language texts.

Beyond simply reinscribing traditional relations of power and depriving students of opportunities to grapple with and to appreciate culture in a more useful way, I believe that basing teaching upon such materials largely serves what may be deemed "confirmatory" education. Teaching that French culture, for example, is all about croissants, escargot, berets, chansons, and the Eiffel Tower merely confirms what students may already think they know about culture as gleaned from mass media depictions. One mechanism underlying media influence is the fact that media representations of the world tending to confirm our beliefs have a stronger impact (Dubow, et al., 2007, p. 415). This raises the troubling possibility that culture teaching in the EFL context may actually do more harm than good through promoting conceptual ossification rather than opening students to the ongoing growth, flexibility, and self-criticality demanded in an intercultural world.

Freire (2008) was among the first to warn educators of the potential for formal schooling to actually cement the social positions of students rather than serving to empower them. The teaching associated with culture presented here appears to provide an apt example since it especially impacts those less affluent students who rely more heavily upon such in-school cultural representations in lieu of international travel and study abroad. For these more local-bound students whose experience with interculturalism is limited to the EFL classroom, the implications are troubling. Teaching built around these materials would result in a ghettoization[1] of the local EFL student in which what is learned about culture is not only of questionable benefit, but is something they, unlike their more worldly peers, must struggle to overcome. Indeed, such teaching can potentially *give rise* to conflicts via the stereotypes imbued: A Korean-Canadian acquaintance recently related to me that his dislike of spicy food resulted in an argument with a friend. My acquaintance took exception to his friend's serious statement that this food preference disqualified him from being a "real" Korean. This is precisely the sort of stereotype promoted through these materials.

These concerns hinge upon the actual impact of these materials upon students. While it is clear that what is taught through such materials does not necessarily equate to what is learned, I believe that these concerns are warranted: The consistency of these materials across Japan, their authority, their explicit claim toward fostering intercultural competency, and demonstrations of the power of media in general, even when such media make no claim to educate, suggests their power. Targeting an audience of impressionable young people with the confirmatory tendencies of these materials cannot but bolster their potency. Overall, the very opportunity to subvert deleterious beliefs rather than to confirm them is lost. With this thought in mind, I turn to some recommendations.

9.5 Implications

This study has revealed troubling shortcomings in the teaching of culture in the EFL context of Japan. Examining a corpus of materials from Japan demonstrated biases in culture teaching accompanied by a misconstrual of the very nature of culture itself. Yet, I believe that there is a path forward. Media cultivation and the truth effect work though bodies of media such as that collected in this project in which messages are

[1] Rather than entailing a strictly geographical dimension, I use the term in the sense of a systematic and ongoing exclusion of one social group or social stratum from access to resources (e.g., Gupta, 2015; Stewart, 2019).

consistent. Presenting alternative messages, therefore, can represent a potent move in subverting ideologies implicit in such materials.

To make this happen, though, training for teachers, policy-makers, and materials creators in interculturalism and cultural theory is advisable. Despite widespread claims of interculturalism as a component of language teaching, little formal training along these lines is offered in the typical foreign language teaching program. I feel that by providing evidence of a compliance with ideologies related to culture among the creators of these materials, my discussion suggests a parallel to teaching language itself with no training: When one is pressed into teaching a language simply by virtue of being able to speak it, reliance upon often misplaced beliefs about the nature of language and how it is acquired result. In both the case of language teaching and culture teaching, then, ideology readily fills the resulting void in professional preparation. This problem may be further compounded when the teacher is not an insider to the culture under study.

Paulo Freire was not simply the "canary in the educational coal mine," alerting us to problems. He coupled his warnings with a message of hope in which promoting the development of a critical consciousness among students was key. In this spirit, I also feel that providing teachers and students alike with practice in critical media analysis represents an important response to the situation depicted here. I have drawn upon tools from media studies in this discussion of the covert content contained in these materials. Given the influence of media in our lives, being able to view media from an informed critical perspective is imperative as a twenty-first century life skill. Also, since many curricula already include critical thinking as a claimed component, this is one chance to tangibly advance such objectives. The transformative mission of creating pedagogy to render education more immune to and even aimed at dislodging misconceptions about culture is especially important for government-supported education given its mission as a public good. Market forces invariably push commercial learning materials producers to pander to the beliefs of the consumer. Witness the many commercial English textbooks featuring Big Ben or the Statue of Liberty on the cover. I am idealistic enough to believe that governments, on the other hand, have little excuse for such ideological confirmation in materials created under their auspices.

As a practitioner, I do appreciate that tackling the challenges outlined here at the ground level implies the expenditure of additional time and energy. Yet, this research has left me with the conviction that even small steps can make a difference. In this case, keeping the possibility of the hidden curriculum in mind by continually asking what messages about society might be conveyed through one's teaching materials and actions is crucial. In more tangible terms, remedying the additive cultural skewing I have presented is a good start. In this study, I found evidence of idealizing culture, limiting it to the big C aspects, focusing on the culture of dominant groups, presenting it as uniform within the nation-state, and focusing on the most powerful nations. One response, then, would be to assess one's own teaching in these terms and to take steps to redress any such problems. In this case, shifting the de facto curriculum in even relatively small ways may be valuable given the uniformity of content upon which media cultivation and the truth effect are contingent. For example, the equivalence between the nation-state and culture can be troubled by creating lessons in which cultural diversity within nation-states is an explicit or implicit feature. Improving the content of teaching materials in such ways can lead to a better experience for learners at relatively little cost in effort.

The stakes are high. This pandemic has foregrounded a number of social justice issues related to various forms of inequity. The dichotomy between highly mobile students who enjoy international education and their peers limited to learning in the local context appears to be one. I feel that the sort of analysis and responses presented here can empower the local student to more effectively achieve the intercultural stance so crucial to personal success in the twenty-first century.

References

Alfahadi, A. (2012). *Saudi teachers' views on appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks: insights into TESOL teachers' management of global cultural flows and local realities in their teaching worlds.* [Unpublished doctoral thesis]. University of Exeter.

Alsamani, A. (2014). Foreign culture awareness needs of Saudi English language majors at Buraydah Community College. *English Language Teaching, 7*(6), 143–153. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v7n6p143

Amazue, L. (2014). The contributions of media, body image concerns and locality to the perceived self-esteem of female Nigerian adolescents. *Gender & Behaviour, 12*(1), 6113–6124.

Apple, M. (2004). *Ideology and curriculum.* Routledge Falmer.

Aterian, H. (2009). The hidden curriculum. *University of Toledo Law Review, 40*, 279–296.

Cortazzi, M., & Jin, L. (1999). Cultural mirrors: Materials and methods in the EFL classroom. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Culture in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 196–219). Cambridge University Press.

Deliovsky, K. (2008). Normative white femininity: Race, gender, and the politics of beauty. *Atlantis, 33*(1), 49–59.

Dubow, E., Huesmann, L., & Greenwood, D. (2007). Media and youth socialization: Underlying processes and moderators of effects. In J. Grusec & P. Hastings (Eds.), *Handbook of socialization: Theory and research* (pp. 404–430). The Guilford Press.

Freire, P. (2008). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (M. Ramos, trans.). Continuum.

Galloway, N. (2009). A critical analysis of the JET Programme. *The Journal of Kanda University of International Studies, 21*, 169–207.

Giroux, H. (2001). Theory and resistance in education. Bergin & Garvey.

Gupta, R. (2015). There must be some way out of here: Beyond a spatial conception of Muslim ghettoization in Mumbai? *Ethnography, 16*(3), 352–370. https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138114552941

Hafferty, F., & Hafler, J. (2011). The hidden curriculum, structural disconnects, and the socialization of new professionals. In J. Hafferty (Ed.), *Extraordinary learning in the workplace* (pp. 17–35). Springer.

Hasher, L., Goldstein, D., & Toppino, T. (1977). Frequency and the conference of referential validity. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior, 16*, 107–112. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0022-5371(77)80012-1

Holtzman, L. (2000). *Media messages: What film, television, and popular music teach us about race, class, gender, and sexual orientation.* M. E. Sharpe.

Kahlor, L., & Easton, M. (2011). Television's role in the culture of violence toward women: A study of television viewing and the cultivation of rape myth acceptance in the United States. *Journal* *of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 55*(2), 215–231. https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2011.566085

Kentli, F. (2009). Comparison of hidden curriculum theories. *European Journal of Educational Studies, 1*(2), 83–88.

Kovács, G. (2017). Culture in language teaching: A course design for teacher trainees. *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Philologica,* 9(3), 73–86. https://doi.org/10.1515/ausp-2017-0030

Kubota, R., & McKay, S. (2009). Globalization and language learning in lural Japan: The lole of English in the local linguistic ecology. *TESOL Quarterly, 43*(4), 593–619. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1545-7249.2009.tb00188.x

Newfield, D. (2011). From visual literacy to critical visual literacy: An analysis of educational materials. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique, 10*(1), 81–94.

Nguyen, C. (2013). Cultural diversity in English language teaching: Learners' voices. *English Language Teaching, 6*(4), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n4p1

Pardhan, A. (2011). Influence of teacher-student interactions on kindergarten children's developing gender identity within the Pakistani urban classroom culture. *Early Child Development and Care, 181*(7), 929–948. https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2010.504371

Rose, R., & McKinley, J. (2017). Japan's English-medium instruction initiatives and the globalization of higher education. *Higher Education, 73*(1), 111–129. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-017-0125-1

Stewart, J. (2019). The ghettoization of persons with severe mental illnesses. *Mental Health and Social Inclusion, 23*(1), 53–57. https://doi.org/10.1108/MHSI-10-2018-0036

Charles Brown PhD, is a lecturer in the Purdue University Language and Cultural Exchange program in West Lafayette, Indiana, USA. His research focuses on the political aspects of English language education and how stakeholders navigate this terrain.

Chapter 10
Affective Benefits of Study Abroad for Second Language Learners

Jang Ho Lee

Abstract Research on the effects of study abroad (SA) on second language (L2) learners has been largely geared towards measuring linguistic gains through such overseas experiences. This chapter aims to address the issue of the effects of SA experience from a different perspective, by focusing on the affective benefits for L2 learners, which have recently started to receive attention from the research community. In this chapter, I first review previous studies that have examined the changes in L2 learners' anxiety, willingness to communicate in the target language, and L2 motivation through SA experience. I then discuss the methodological issues related to SA research on affective benefits for L2 learners, focusing on research design, participant profiles, and target SA programs. The chapter also provides implications for future SA research on affective variables.

Keywords Affective variables · Foreign language anxiety · L2 motivation · L2 willingness to communicate · Study abroad

10.1 Introduction

The field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) values the effectiveness of study abroad (SA) (Collentine & Freed, 2004; Llanes, 2011), which offers "an opportunity for foreign language (FL) learners to live in the community of the language they are learning for a fixed period of time" (Dewaele et al., 2015, p. 95). As most empirical studies in this field have examined the effects of SA on linguistic aspects (e.g., Cubillos et al., 2008; Di Silvio et al., 2016; Llanes & Muñoz, 2009), some researchers (Lee, 2018; Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008) have urged investigation into the affective benefits of SA for second language (L2) learners as well. This chapter aims to review the subset of this literature, which has focused on foreign language anxiety (FLA), L2 willingness to communicate (WTC), and L2 motivation, which have been examined extensively in SLA literature, and suggested to contribute to L2 learning

J. H. Lee (✉)
Chung-Ang University, Seoul, South Korea
e-mail: jangholee@cau.ac.kr

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_10

in significant ways. It will also provide a discussion on the methodological issues related to these studies and implications for future research.

10.2 Review of SLA Studies on Study Abroad and Affective Variables

This section will review different groups of SLA studies that have examined the effects of SA on affective variables. It will focus on studies that have investigated three major affective variables—FLA, L2 WTC, and L2 motivation—which have garnered tremendous interest among SLA researchers. In searching for empirical studies for the review, I used the following four keywords in combination with "study abroad": "affective AND study abroad," "foreign language anxiety AND study abroad," "L2 willingness to communicate AND study abroad," and "L2 motivation AND study abroad." I consulted several databases (e.g., Web of Science, ProQuest, Google Scholar) and followed up with a forward and backward literature search based on the initially identified articles. The following inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied during this process: (1) the studies were written in English; (2) the studies presented quantitative data on the affective benefits of SA, ideally through a pre-post survey design; (3) the studies explicitly described participant profiles and their SA experiences as well as the instruments used; (4) the studies that examined the effects of intensive L2 programs in one's home country (e.g., Grant, 2020) were excluded, as these programs provide qualitatively different learning environments from SA environments.

10.2.1 Foreign Language Anxiety

FLA has been extensively studied as one of the most important variables in affective dimensions in the SLA literature. The reason why FLA has caught the attention of the researchers has been summarized in Woodrow (2006) as follows: "Anxiety experienced in communication [in the target language] … can be debilitating and can influence students' adaptation to the target environment and ultimately the achievement of their educational goals" (p. 309). FLA has been included as a construct or sub-component of a higher-order latent construct in the structural model of L2 communication and learning. For example, in Yashima's L2 Communication Model in the EFL context (2002) based on Japanese university students, anxiety was included as one of the sub-components of *L2 Communication Confidence,* along with learners' *Perceived Communication Competence in L2*. On the other hand, in Papi (2010), FLA was included as one of the major constructs, serving as a mediator between motivation and intended efforts to learn the target language.

Table 10.1 Summary of empirical SA studies on FLA

Study	Length of stay	Major results
Allen and Herron (2003)	6 weeks	• pre-SA score > post-SA score
Dewaele et al. (2015)	2, 3, or 4 weeks	• pre-SA score > post-SA score • Non-significant effect of L2 proficiency level on difference between pre-SA and post-SA scores • Non-significant effect of length of stay on difference between pre-SA and post-SA scores
Lee (2018)	5 weeks	• Whole group: pre-SA score > post-SA score • Advanced: pre-SA score ≅ post-SA score • Beginner, Intermediate: pre-SA score > post-SA score

Note. > , significantly superior to; ≅, not significantly different

Although there have been different approaches to operationalizing FLA and its negative relationship with L2 learning (e.g., Clément et al., 1994; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994), Horwitz et al.'s (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) has been the most widely adopted construct in SLA literature. According to Horwitz et al., FLCAS is concerned with "performance evaluation within an academic and social context" and could be suggested to comprise three components including "communication apprehension," "test anxiety," and "fear of negative evaluation" (p. 127). SA research has also adopted this construct to examine the effects of SA, and I introduce three empirical studies based on this scale that satisfied the abovementioned inclusion criteria (see Table 10.1 for the overview of these studies).

One of the earliest studies that examined the changes in FLA through SA was Allen and Herron (2003). In this study, 25 college U.S. students participated in a short-term summer SA program in France; they were administered the questionnaires on FLCAS. The results revealed that the participants' FLCAS score dropped significantly, with a large effect size. By adopting the interview and Language Contact Profile, Allen and Herron further found that FLA among their participants resulted from insecurities related to limited linguistic competence and cultural differences between their native and target communities. Recently, Lee (2018) investigated the affective benefits of four different SA programs in U.S., Canada, Malaysia, and China, with 67 Korean college students. These SA programs all offered five-week intensive in-class instruction on the target languages (English in the case of the three programs, and Chinese for one program), as well as outside-classroom cultural experience activities. The results showed that the participants' FLA decreased significantly with a medium effect size. However, when split into different proficiency levels, only beginner and intermediate-level learners showed significant changes in FLCAS scores, whereas the advanced-level group did not.

Dewaele et al. (2015) also conducted a study on the changes in FLA through SA, but in a specific context called a "pre-sessional course." According to Dewaele et al., the pre-sessional course "can be considered short SA programs, with the only difference that at the end students do not usually return home, but continue their studies at that university" (p. 101). They further suggest that this characteristic may positively influence learners' motivation and attitude towards language learning. Their study included learners of French participating in a pre-sessional course at Aix-Marseille University in France. Participants' linguistic backgrounds were mixed, with their L1s including Russian, English, German, Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish, among others. The participants' proficiency levels also varied, ranging from A1/A2 (beginners) to C1 (proficient users) in terms of The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001). Another point of difference from Allen and Herron (2003) and Lee (2018) was that the participants in Dewaele et al.'s study varied in terms of the duration of SA, from two to four weeks. The participants were given the questionnaire on FLA and L2 WTC (see *L2 Willingness to Communicate* section for the detailed finding on the latter) at the start and end of the program. Their finding showed that the participants' FLA dropped significantly as a result of attending the pre-sessional course, although the effect size related to this finding was not reported. It was further found that the length of stay (two, three, and four weeks) and proficiency level were not related to the size of decrease in FLA.

The review of studies on FLA (Allen & Herron, 2003; Dewaele et al., 2015; Lee, 2018) suggests that even short-term SA experiences could contribute to mitigating language learners' FLA. Regarding proficiency level, beginners and intermediate learners appear to have benefited significantly from their SA experience in reducing their FLA, although more research is needed to suggest whether advanced-level students can also gain similar significant benefits. When it comes to the length of stay, Dewaele et al.'s study, which was the only one with variations in this variable among the participants, showed "a slight trend of lower FLA values for those who stayed longer" (p. 106), but this finding should be interpreted with caution due to its non-significance.

10.2.2 L2 Willingness to Communicate

As the construct originally developed in L1 communication, WTC has been proposed as a personality-based predisposition to participate in communication in a specific context (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990). In the 1990s, WTC was introduced to the SLA literature, particularly through the works of MacIntyre and his colleagues (e.g., MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 1998). It appears that the increasing attention to this construct timely coincided with the rise of the communicative approach, in which L2 learners' verbal contribution to classroom interaction is perceived as one of the determining factors for the success of developing one's communicative competence.

The pyramid model of WTC by MacIntyre et al. (1998) is arguably the most influential model of this construct in SLA research. In this model, L2 WTC is assumed to influence L2 use (i.e., actual communication behavior), while it is also influenced by several factors ranging from more situation-specific ones such as the desire to

Table 10.2 Summary of empirical SA studies on L2 WTC

Study	Length of stay	Major results
Dewaele et al. (2015)	2, 3, or 4 weeks	• pre-SA score < post-SA score • Significant effect of L2 proficiency level on the difference between pre-SA and post-SA scores • Significant effect of length of stay on difference between pre-SA and post-SA scores
Kang (2014)	8 weeks	• Whole group: pre-SA score < post-SA score • Intermediate: pre-SA score < post-SA score • Beginner, Advanced: pre-SA score ≅ post-SA score
Lee (2018)	5 weeks	• Whole group: pre-SA score < post-SA score • Advanced: pre-SA score ≅ post-SA score • Beginner, Intermediate: pre-SA score < post-SA score

Note. < , significantly superior to; ≅, not significantly different

talk to a specific person and state self-confidence, to more enduring and stable ones such as intergroup climate and personality. This model (MacIntyre et al., 1998) has provided significant implications for the subsequent research on L2 WTC, proposing that L2 WTC is influenced by both situation-specific and more stable factors.

For many L2 learners, one of the primary goals of participating in SA programs may be related to boosting their communicative ability and L2 WTC; this is why some SA studies in the SLA literature have examined L2 WTC (see Table 10.2 for an overview of these studies). These studies have adapted questionnaires on WTC from previous literature (McCroskey, 1992; Peng & Woodrow, 2010; Taguchi et al., 2009) that were designed to measure learners' willingness to speak in the target language in different contexts (or situations) with a Likert scale.

Dewaele et al. (2015) also measured the participants' changes in L2 WTC, along with FLA. Their findings revealed that the participants' L2 WTC increased significantly overall, but length of stay and proficiency level may mediate the effects of SA on L2 WTC. In terms of length of stay, it was found that a period of two weeks actually led to a drop in the participants' L2 WTC, while three and four weeks increased L2 WTC. As for proficiency levels, intermediate learners (B1 and B2 in CEFR) benefited most, followed by lower proficiency groups (A2). The advanced group (C1) showed smaller gains than the A2, B1, and B2 groups. Interestingly, the lowest proficiency group (A1/A2) in their study showed a drop in L2 WTC after SA. Although Dewaele et al. did not give further explanation about this finding, it is possible to assume that this group did not have a proper level of L2 proficiency to engage in communication in the target language at the outset of the program, and their lack of engagement may have, in turn, negatively influenced their WTC. Along with their findings on FLA, Dewaele et al. suggest that the effects of SA may vary across the different affective domains (i.e., FLA and L2 WTC). Furthermore, there may be a certain threshold of L2 proficiency level for some affective variables (see

Kang, 2014 for similar discussion), above and below which L2 learners can benefit or be disadvantaged.

The proficiency effect on the gains in L2 WTC in Dewaele et al. (2015) was mirrored in other studies. Kang (2014) and Lee (2018) investigated short-term SA experiences of Korean undergraduate EFL students, with L2 WTC as one of the target variables examined in both studies. Overall, both studies showed that the participants' L2 WTC significantly increased, but the findings regarding proficiency effect differed between the two studies. In Lee's study, the beginner- and intermediate-level groups showed significant increases in L2 WTC, while no significant change in L2 WTC was observed with the advanced-level group. In the case of Kang (2014), it was only the intermediate group which made significant gains in L2 WTC. Regarding non-significant gains of the advanced group, it seems that this group in both studies already had a high level of L2 WTC prior to their SA participation, and had limited space for improvement.

The results of the three studies reviewed above collectively suggest that the intermediate-level group, which has achieved a certain level of L2 proficiency upon participating in SA programs, may benefit most from SA experience in terms of developing their L2 WTC. It seems that the advanced group may benefit less so, presumably because they are a group of learners who have already developed a high level of L2 speaking proficiency level (and also L2 WTC). However, we cannot exclude the possibility that some of these learners may not have benefited in terms of L2 WTC for other reasons (e.g., extroversion is not valued in their own culture).

In contrast, the question of whether the beginner group could make significant gains in this variable through SA remains unanswered, as it was only the beginner group in Lee's (2018) study that showed significant increases. While more research is needed to resolve this question, it seems that future research needs to use more standardized ways of measuring learners' L2 proficiency level (see *Participant Profiles* section). It is possible that the differences noted above may be due to different instruments or criteria used. There is also a possibility that L2 WTC and L2 proficiency level may interact with other affective and cognitive variables, which may likewise produce different findings. For example, Kang (2014) attributed the non-significant gains in L2 WTC among the beginner learners in his study to their high level of L2 anxiety, another important affective variable as discussed above.

10.2.3 L2 Motivation

Motivation has been one of the major constructs in SLA (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). The SLA field has embraced different approaches to operationalizing this construct, ranging from socio-educational model (Gardner & Lambert, 1972), self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), Process Model (Dörnyei, 1996) and L2 motivational self system (Dörnyei, 2009). While these approaches have put forward different mechanisms in accounting for the role of motivation in SLA, the general consensus in the field is that motivation is a powerful predictor of L2 learners' behaviors and their learning outcomes. The L2 motivational self system and its components have recently attracted attention from researchers, with SA research on affective benefits also having adopted this framework. Given this, I will focus on this framework here.

L2 motivational self system (Dörnyei, 2009) was established upon Markus and Nurius' (1986) notion of possible selves and Higgins' (1987) self-discrepancy theory. Based on these works, L2 motivational self system has been composed of three elements: ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self, and L2 learning experience. Ideal L2 self is related to "the image one has of their future self as an L2 user according to their own wishes", whereas ought-to L2 self is concerned with the image one develops about oneself according to external aspects, and "attributes which the learner believes they ought to possess in order to meet expectations and avoid negative outcomes according to external expectations" (Geoghegan, 2018, pp. 220–221). The L2 learning experience refers to a wide range of experiences that L2 learners build around their learning environments (i.e., their language instructor, peers, curriculum, feeling of success or failure, and so on). Among these elements, the ideal L2 self has been the focus of researchers' attention, as it has been found to be significantly related to other important L2 variables, such as learners' intended efforts (Papi, 2010), motivated learning behavior (Csizér & Kormos, 2009), attitude towards L2 instruction (Lee & Lee, 2017), L2 anxiety (Peng, 2015), and others. Recent studies on SA have also paid attention to this component, raising the question of whether SA could enhance L2 learners' ideal L2 self. I introduce three quantitative studies that have addressed this question below (see Table 10.3 for the overview of these studies).

Moritani et al. (2016) adopted the L2 motivational self system framework (Dörnyei, 2009) in examining the changes in L2 motivation through SA experience

Table 10.3 Summary of empirical SA studies on L2 motivation

Study	Length of stay	Major results
Moritani et al. (2016)	4 weeks	• Ideal L2 self: pre-SA score < post-SA score • Ought-to L2 self: pre-SA score ≅ post-SA score
Kim and Lee (2019)	5 weeks	• Ideal L2 self: pre-SA score < post-SA score (effect size larger for lower-level group) • Ought-to L2 self: pre-SA score ≅ post-SA score
Kim (2020)	Various among the participants (cross-sectional design)	• No significant relationship between ought-to L2 self and experience abroad • Significant relationship between ideal L2 self and experience abroad

Note. < , significantly superior to; ≅, not significantly different among 15 Japanese EFL learners. The participants were all majors in sociology and were beginning-level learners. They participated in the SA program in the University of Hawaii, Manoa. The target SA program offered both English classes and extracurricular activities. Results revealed that the levels of ideal L2 self and L2 confidence increased significantly, whereas the ought-to L2 self hardly changed as a result of a four-week SA. In view of the importance of this variable, Moritani et al. pointed to the importance of maintaining an increased level of an ideal L2 self for their future L2 learning.

With a similar research aim, Kim and Lee (2019) examined the motivational changes among 88 Korean female college students who participated in SA programs in four English-speaking countries (i.e., Philippines, the U.S., Canada, Malaysia). The results of this study accorded with those of Moritani et al., in that only the level of the ideal L2 self increased significantly between the two components of the L2 motivational self system. When split into A2 (lower-level) and B1 (higher-level) for separate group analysis, it was found that the level of the ideal L2 self for both groups increased significantly, although the effect size for this change was larger for the lower-level group.

The most recent study that looked at the relationship between experience abroad and the L2 motivational selves is Kim (2020). Unlike the previous studies which measured the participants' level of motivation twice (i.e., prior to and after SA) through a pre-post design, this study is based on a cross-sectional design. In this study, the Korean university students were given a questionnaire on L2 motivational selves, their previous experience abroad, and self-efficacy. The results of this study showed that experience abroad was significantly correlated with ideal L2 self, but not with ought-to L2 self. In addition, experience abroad was still significantly related to ideal L2 self, even after controlling for the effects of self-efficacy. With this finding, Kim suggested that "the actual realities they face living in the target context may be a practical way to help them recognize their current self more clearly", and "such experience may be seen to facilitate students to construct their ideal self-images vividly with relative ease" (p. 267), unlike the foreign language context in which the target language is hardly used in reality.

Based on these findings, it seems clear that ideal L2 self is significantly related to SA experience of language learners. It is also promising that beginner- or lower-level learners could benefit in terms of ideal L2 self from short-term SA experience (four or five weeks). Further research on the effects of SA on ideal L2 self, along with its interaction with other affective and linguistic dimensions, is needed.

10.3 Methodological Issues and Implications for Future SLA Research on Study Abroad and Affective Benefits

In this section, I will discuss methodological issues related to conducting SLA research on SA and affective variables. In doing so, methodological aspects will be discussed in the order of research design, participant profiles, and target SA programs, along with their implications for future research.

10.3.1 Research Design

Most SLA studies on SA and affective variables have adopted either pre-post (e.g., Dewaele et al., 2015; Kang, 2014; Lee, 2018) or cross-sectional designs (e.g., Kim, 2019; Thompson & Lee, 2014). In the case of the one-group pre-post design, L2 learners are generally given the questionnaire on the target variables twice—before and after SA. Researchers adopting such a design have mostly used paired *t*-tests or its non-parametric equivalent (i.e., the paired samples Wilcoxon test) to statistically measure changes in the target variables. This approach is superior to the cross-sectional design in that the latter relies on L2 learners' self-reporting of their previous experience abroad. However, the one-group pre-post design's methodological weakness is the possibility that the observed significant changes in the target variables, if any, may be due to factors other than SA experience. Given this weakness, it is ideal to have a comparison group, which stays in the home country (often called at-home or AH group in literature), to more accurately measure the effects of SA experience. Examples of studies that have adopted such a design include Cubillos et al. (2008), Segalowitz and Freed (2004), and Serrano et al. (2014). While it is difficult to find an SLA study on SA and affective variables based on this type of design, Yashima and Zenuk-Nishide's (2008) longitudinal study, which compared the SA and AH groups' development in international posture, can serve as a good example for future SLA research on this issue.

Research on SA and affective variables will also benefit from a mixed-method design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), in which both quantitative and qualitative research methods are adopted in a single study. In the case of research on the SA and affective dimensions, this would mean that L2 learners' responses towards questionnaire items are recorded prior to and after SA, and a subset of these learners may be interviewed in different phases (i.e., before, in the middle of, and after) of the SA programs. It is expected that collecting additional data through qualitative research instruments would offer possible explanations underlying the patterns in quantitative findings. Indeed, some researchers (e.g., Lee, 2018; Moritani et al., 2016) pointed to this issue in discussing the limitation of their studies and called for a mixed-method design. In this regard, it is recommendable for researchers to include open-ended responses in their questionnaire to glean more qualitative data on L2 learners' perception if other instruments such as observation diaries and interviews cannot be implemented because of practical constraints.

Finally, researchers on this issue are also encouraged to examine linguistic gains along with affective benefits through SA (see Taguchi & Collentine, 2018 for similar suggestions on examining linguistic and intercultural development together). An excellent example in this regard is the study by Allen and Herron (2003), which examined changes in linguistic gains such as oral and listening skills, along with the participants' integrative motivation and FLA. This painted a more comprehensive picture for the SA experience of their participants. Kang's (2014) study also deserves some attention, as he examined the affective variable (i.e., L2 WTC), linguistic gains (i.e., speaking proficiency), learning behaviors (i.e., learners' participation in classroom interaction), and learners' perspectives through interviews. By examining these variables together, he was able to suggest that, after SA experience, cyclic relationships emerged among gains in L2 WTC, participation in classroom interaction, and English speaking proficiency.

10.3.2 Participant Profiles

One of the notoriously challenging aspects of SA research is related to the sampling of the participants. A large proportion of the participants in SA research are those who voluntarily participated in SA programs (often with their own expenses), making random sampling virtually impossible as a sampling option. While researchers on SA should not be blamed for their selection of convenience sampling, they are encouraged to clearly state their sampling method and discuss it in their limitation section (see Allen & Herron, 2003 for such an example). This issue may also raise concerns when one compares SA and AH groups, if the AH group consists of L2 learners who could not participate in SA programs for personal reasons. Indeed, opting for SA (or not) may be significantly related to one's motivation to learn the L2, or to the anxiety level, which should be investigated systematically in future research. In such cases, researchers must provide detailed explanations of why their participants self-selected or were allocated to either program, so that readers can make their own informed interpretation of the findings.

Another relevant aspect of participant profiles is related to the ways of measuring the proficiency level of L2 learners at the time of embarking on SA programs. While it is promising that recent studies have sampled participants with various L2 proficiency levels, they have adopted different instruments to measure L2 proficiency levels, making it rather difficult to compare the results across the studies. For example, Kim and Lee (2019) allocated the participants to different proficiency groups using their scores on the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC®), while Dewaele et al. (2015) used a short written performance. On the other hand, Kang (2014) used three different criteria, including the participants' score on the Test of Spoken English (TSE®), their self-assessed speaking proficiency, and their native English speaker instructors' holistic assessments. It is expected that the use of a standardized measure of L2 proficiency level would contribute to more systematically synthesizing the findings on SA and affective benefits.

10.3.3 Target SA Programs

It has been discussed above that comparing the effects of SA and AH groups is recommended to examine the effects of SA more accurately. What appears to be equally important is to sample more than one SA program in a single study. As each SA program is made up of different language curriculums and extracurricular activities, it is possible that the affective benefits resulting from attending a certain SA program may be the outcome of interaction between that particular program and the participants (i.e., L2 learners). Lee (2018) is a good example of this, as this study looked at four SA programs in different countries. Although it is not always possible to sample more than one SA program, the findings from diverse SA programs may possibly be more informative and generalizable.

The length of stay for SA programs appears to be another important variable. It should be noted that a large proportion of SA research on affective benefits have sampled short-term programs, lasting two to eight weeks. Although the length of the stay has not been frequently addressed as an important variable, Dewaele et al.'s study (2015) points to the possibility that the effects of SA as a function of the length of stay may vary across different variables (see *Foreign Language Anxiety* and *L2 Willingness to Communicate* sections above for the detailed review). Thus, the length of stay also deserves more systematic investigation in future research.

10.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced and reviewed previous SA studies on affective benefits in the SLA literature, focusing on FLA, L2 WTC, and L2 motivation. Overall, the SA experience seems to have brought about significant gains among L2 learners with respect to these variables, although proficiency level appears to be an important factor to be considered for L2 learners and educators before opting for and suggesting SA participation. I have also discussed the methodological issues related to these studies, along with implications for future research, focusing on research design, participant profiles, and target SA programs. It is hoped that future SA research on affective variables would be more carefully designed to add significant contributions to the SA research in the field of SLA.

References

Allen, H. W., & Herron, C. (2003). A mixed-methodology investigation of the linguistic and affective outcomes of summer study abroad. *Foreign Language Annals, 36*(3), 370–385. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2003.tb02120.x

Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. (1994). Motivation, self-confidence, and group-cohesion in the foreign language classroom. *Language Learning, 44*(3), 417–448. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1994.tb01113.x

Collentine, J., & Freed, B. F. (2004). Learning context and its effects on second language acquisition: Introduction. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 26*(2), 153–171. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263104262015

Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge University Press.

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Csizér, K., & Kormos, J. (2009). Learning experiences, selves and motivated learning behaviour: A comparative analysis of structural models for Hungarian secondary and university learners of English. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 98–119). Multilingual Matters.

Cubillos, J. H., Chieffo, L., & Fan, C. (2008). The impact of short-term study abroad programs on L2 listening comprehension skills. *Foreign Language Annals, 41*(1), 157–186. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2008.tb03284.x

Dewaele, J.-M., Comanaru, R., & Faraco, M. (2015). The affective benefits of a pre-sessional course at the start of study abroad. In R. Mitchell, N. Tracy-Ventura & K. McManus (Eds.), *Social interaction, identity, and language learning during residence abroad* (pp. 95–114). EUROSLA Monograph Series (Vol. 4).

Di Silvio, F., Diao, W., & Donovan, A. (2016). The development of L2 fluency during study abroad: A cross-language study. *The Modern Language Journal, 100*(3), 610–624. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12343

Dörnyei, Z. (1996). Moving language learning motivation to a larger platform for theory and practice. In R. Oxford (Ed.), *Language learning motivation: Pathways to the new century* (pp. 89–101). University of Hawaii Press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The L2 motivational self system. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 9–42). Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z., & Ryan, S. (2015). *The psychology of the language learner revisited*. Routledge.

Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1972). *Attitudes and motivation in second language learning.* Newbury House.

Geoghegan, L. (2018). International posture, motivation and identity in study abroad. In C. P. Vidal, S. López-Serrano, J. Ament, & D. J. Thomas-Wilhelm (Eds.), *Learning context effects: Study abroad, formal instruction and international immersion classrooms* (pp. 215–253). Language Science Press.

Grant, S. (2020). Effects of intensive EFL immersion programmes on willingness to communicate. *The Language Learning Journal, 48*(4), 442–453. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2017.1422274

Higgins, E. T. (1987). Self-discrepancy: A theory relating self and affect. *Psychological Review, 94*(3), 319–340. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.94.3.319

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal, 70*(2), 125–132. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1986.tb05256.x

Kang, D. M. (2014). The effects of study-abroad experiences on EFL learners' willingness to communicate, speaking abilities, and participation in classroom interaction. *System, 42*, 319–332. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.12.025

Kim, H.-I. (2020). The effects of experience abroad, English self-efficacy, and proficiency on the L2 motivational selves: A study of Korean EFL university students. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 14*(3), 259–272. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2019.1579218

Kim, H. S., & Lee, J. H. (2019). Does short-term study abroad experience change female second language learners' motivation and attitudes towards classroom language choice? *Korean Journal of Applied Linguistics, 35*(2), 29–51. https://doi.org/10.17154/kjal.2019.6.35.2.29

Lee, J. H., & Lee, S. (2017). Analyzing the correlation between attitudes towards classroom language uses and individual learner variables of EFL learners. *Korean Journal of Applied Linguistics, 33*(2), 81–105. https://doi.org/10.17154/kjal.2017.3.33.2.81

Lee, J. H. (2018). The effects of short-term study abroad on L2 anxiety, international posture, and L2 willingness to communicate. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 39*(8), 703–714. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2018.1435666

Llanes, À. (2011). The many faces of study abroad: An update on the research on L2 gains emerged during a study abroad experience. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 8*(3), 189–215. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2010.550297

Llanes, À., & Muñoz, C. (2009). A short stay abroad: Does it make a difference? *System, 37*(3), 353–365. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2009.03.001

MacIntyre, P. D., & Charos, C. (1996). Personality, attitudes, and affect as predictors of second language communication. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 15*(1), 3–26. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X960151001

MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. *The Modern Language Journal, 82*(4), 545–562. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1998.tb05543.x

MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1994). The subtle effects of language anxiety on cognitive processing in the second language. *Language Learning, 44*, 283–305. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1994.tb01103.x

Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist, 41*(9), 954–969. https://doi.org/10.1037//0003-066x.41.9.954

McCroskey, J. C. (1992). Reliability and validity of the willingness to communicate scale. *Communication Quarterly, 40*(1), 16–25. https://doi.org/10.1080/01463379209369817

McCroskey, J. C., & Richmond, V. P. (1990). Willingness to communicate: A cognitive view. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 5*(2), 19–37.

Moritani, H., Manning, C., & Henneberry, S. (2016). Preliminary findings of L2 motivational changes in a short-term study abroad program. *Shimane Journal of Policy Studies* (総合政策論叢), *31*, 41–56.

Papi, M. (2010). The L2 motivational self system, L2 anxiety, and motivated behavior: A structural equation modeling approach. *System, 38*(3), 467–479. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2010.06.011

Peng, J. (2015). L2 motivational self system, attitudes, and affect as predictors of L2 WTC: An imagined community perspective. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher, 24*(2), 433–443. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-014-0195-0

Peng, J., & Woodrow, L. (2010). Willingness to communicate in English: A model in the Chinese EFL classroom context. *Language Learning, 60*(4), 834–876. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2010.00576.x

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*(1), 54–67. https://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1020

Segalowitz, N., & Freed, B. F. (2004). Context, contact, and cognition in oral fluency acquisition: Learning Spanish in at home and study abroad contexts. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 26*(2), 173–199. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0272263104262027

Serrano, R., Tragant, E., & Llanes, À. (2014). Summer English courses abroad versus 'at home.' *ELT Journal, 68*(4), 397–409. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccu007

Taguchi, N., & Collentine, J. (2018). Language learning in a study-abroad context: Research agenda. *Language Teaching, 51*(4), 553–566. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444818000265

Taguchi, T., Magid, M., & Papi, M. (2009). The L2 Motivational Self System among Japanese, Chinese and Iranian learners of English: A comparative study. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 66–97). Multilingual Matters.

Thompson, A. S., & Lee, J. (2014). The impact of experience abroad and language proficiency on language learning anxiety. *TESOL Quarterly, 48*(2), 252–274. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.125

Woodrow, L. (2006). Anxiety and speaking English as a second language. *RELC* j*ournal*, *37*(3), 308–328. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688206071315.

Yashima, T. (2002). Willingness to communicate in a second language: The Japanese EFL context. *The Modern Language Journal, 86*(1), 54–66. https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-4781.00136

Yashima, T., & Zenuk-Nishide, L. (2008). The impact of learning contexts on proficiency, attitudes, and L2 communication: Creating an imagined international community. *System, 36*(4), 566–585. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2008.03.006

Jang Ho Lee received his DPhil in Education from the University of Oxford. He is presently an associate professor in the Department of English Education at Chung-Ang University. His areas of interest are L2 vocabulary acquisition, the effects of study abroad on L2 learning, and chatbot-based language learning. His work has been published in *The Modern Language Journal*, *Applied Linguistics*, *TESOL Quarterly*, *Language Learning & Technology*, *Language Teaching Research*, *ELT Journal*, *Language Awareness*, *ReCALL*, *System*, among others.

Chapter 11
A Unified Global Competence Framework for Studying Abroad

Linli Zhou and Crystal Green

Abstract Global competence refers to ones' capacity to live and work well in a context that is distinct from their cultural background (OECD, 2018). However, international students' need to develop both civic and career global competence has not been conceptually recognized and explicitly addressed in American Higher Education research and practices. This chapter establishes a framework of *unified global competence* aiming to analyze the interactions between civic aspects of global competence (i.e. building critical citizenship) and its career goals (i.e. developing career skill sets). In this framework, three sub-competences—information, social, and context competence—are identified as important for studying abroad and to reflect the interaction between civic and career global competence. We argue that unifying civic and career global competence is important to cultivate a well-rounded person in the context of cross-cultural learning. Thus, this chapter provides a multidimensional framework of unified global competence that could guide more comprehensive research and practices in international higher education programs.

Keywords International students · Civic-career interaction · Unified global competence

11.1 Introduction/background

Global competence refers to ones' capacity to live and work well in a context that is distinct from their cultural background (OECD, 2018). This definition highlights both the civic and the career pursuits of global competence, aiming to address a gap that has existed in American higher education for a long time. Universities in the United States usually separated civic educational programs (i.e. building critical citizenship) from career trainings (i.e. developing career skill sets). However, a career-civic unification is important to prepare our students to enter the future workforce and meanwhile to live well with the increasingly diversified people.

L. Zhou (✉) · C. Green
Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, CA, USA
e-mail: llz1722@ucla.edu

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_11

International students' experience and demands are unique from their domestic peers. They not only study at school for their future career development, but are also in need of skills to understand and adapt to the new cultural and social environments that are different from their home contexts. Civic capabilities like cross-cultural understanding are especially important for both their career expectations and their engagement with other cultures (Ngai, 2011). International students' civic needs are always combined with their career aspirations, while the dual demands have not been systematically conceptualized with a framework. A unified global competence framework should be created to reflect the career-civic interactions and establish a comprehensive understanding of global competence for international students so that American higher education can better support current international students studying in American higher education.

This chapter establishes a framework of *unified global competence* aiming to offer implications for educational programs of comprehensive pursuits for both career and civic aspects. In this chapter, unified global competence will be explained with three sub-competences—information, social, and context competence. These sub-competences are recognized based on learning theories on competence for international students (Liu, 2012). This chapter conceptualizes and discusses each sub-competence with important concepts in education. *Information competence* is discussed in relation to multilingualism and critical literacy (Freire & Macedo, 2000). *Social competence* is analyzed with emotional intelligence and intercultural communication (Lane et. al, 2004). *Contextual competence* is defined with social responsibility and sustainability (UNESCO, 2015). Discussing these sub-competences with relevant concepts helps to understand the different layers and meanings of unified global competence as well as showcase the civic-career interactions for studying abroad experiences. A multidimensional framework will guide future research and practices to better support international students with unified global competence development in higher education programs.

11.2 Literature Review

In America, universities have been taking an increasingly competitive approach using the logic of human capital theory viewing students as sole future labors rather than a citizen of the society (Slaughter & Leslie, 2001). This market-driven approach forms purposes and organizations of higher education that has sidelined the democratic mission of universities as providers of upward social mobility (Slaughter, Slaughter, & Rhoades, 2004). A tension has emerged in American higher education recently. On the one hand, a human capital theory approach to higher education has an instrumentalist perspective to regard education as mere career preparation. On the other hand, a human-rights driven approach, as articulated by the United Nations and other international bodies, offers a holistic and cosmopolitan perspective on the purpose of higher education. Global competence education in America has long enmeshed within these two competing visions of the aims, purposes and funding structures of higher education.

To review the current understanding of global competence, we draw from a variety of existing frameworks that have been used in the United States, including the Definition and Selection of Competences, the Ed Steps Framework for Global Competence, and Global Competence for PISA (Boix Mansilla & Jackson, 2011; OECD, 2005, 2018). We synthesized and re-organized these literatures into a framework of unified global competence for international students. The framework acknowledges the need to promote both collective social well-being and career readiness. However, it does not aim to provide a formula for problem-solving among diverse actors in complex situations. Rather the framework is designed to activate individuals' reflexive and reflective processes of critical thinking and learning in relation to their material and social environments as a source of personal and shared growth.

The Ed steps Framework produced by Boix Mansilla and Jackson (2011) offers a humanistic understanding of global competence. This framework divides global competence by identifying four critical attributes and domains. The first domain is *investigating the world* which asks students to explore (identify, analyze, and argue) affairs of global significance, that is phenomena that affect people worldwide. The second domain of global competence is *recognizing perspectives* which requires acknowledgement, respect, comparison, and understanding of different thoughts. The second domain is important to understand the complex global issues identified in the first domain. The third domain is *communicating ideas,* referring to language proficiency as well as thoughtful communication with a collaborative and adaptive approach towards achieving a common goal. The third domain (communicating ideas) is built upon the second domain (recognizing perspectives), which enables students to recognize and understand multiple perspectives. The last domain, *taking action* stresses the goal of making a difference in the world for globally competent students. A combination of all the previous three domains are necessary to achieve a potentially impact contributions to the world. The Ed steps framework essentially shaped the U.S. Department of Education International Education Strategy 2012–2016 with subject-specific strategies and teaching suggestions.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) global competence framework identifies four dimensions of global competence: (1) examine local, global and intercultural issues, (2) understand and appreciate different perspectives and worldviews, (3) interact successfully and respectfully with others, and (4) take responsible action toward sustainability and collective well-being (2018). These four dimensions of global competence integrate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values together. The first dimension requires knowledge about the world and other cultures, such as intercultural issues, relationships, and interdependence. The second dimension calls for skills to understand and act, including information reasoning, effective communication, conflict management, and adaptability. The third dimension promotes attitudes of openness, respect, and global mindedness—to view oneself as connected to the world community and feel responsible for the common good. The fourth dimension demands an appreciation for human dignity and diversity. This combination of four different dimensions (knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values) directly reflects the civic interests in global competence which promote understanding of the social responsibilities for the global common good (e.g. environmental changes).

The Definition and Selection of Competences (DeSeCo) framework (OECD, 2005) provides an inspiration to combine career and civic global competence. As an overarching and interdisciplinary conceptual framework, the DeSeCo framework identifies 3 categories of competences that are important for both individual and collective goals: (1) adapting tools for one's own purposes and using them interactively in specific contexts (2) interacting and engaging with socially heterogeneous groups, and (3) acting autonomously while situating oneself in a broader social context.

These competences are important for an individual to function in society—not only adapting to the new demands of employment (e.g. the changing technology and diversifying and compartmentalizing/ fragmenting societies), but also establishing citizenship to accomplish common goals (e.g. social justice, pollution). With a unified (career-civic combined) perspectives, we are introduced to a potential construction of unified understanding and definitions on global competence.

To define unified global competence, we further reviewed learning theories and synthesized relevant competence frameworks. Learning theories divide competences by four components: cognitive (thinking), affective (emotional/feeling, e.g. sensitivity), behavioral (psychomotor/physical), and situational (contextual) (Liu, 2012), while other global competence frameworks (Lane et al.'s global leadership competences model in 2009, and global competence framework by the OECD in 2018) added social perspectives and interpersonal skills.

While these existing frameworks are useful for conceptualizing global competence, we find that they do not address two key components of educational curricula. First, they do not specify the population of learners, but are instead general recommendations. We are interested in developing here a framework that is relevant specifically for adult international students, who represent a very small and privileged portion of the global population. Second, the general frameworks are not developed for a particular context. Therefore, we here develop a framework that is relevant to higher education in the United States. The imaginaries of American higher education have been marked by a tension between utilitarian market values, human capital theory and the commodification of education on the one hand, and the wholistic liberal arts vision of education as a democratizing endeavor on the other (Cornwell & Stoddard, 2001; Stoller & Kramer, 2018). There is a need for higher education in the United States to take into account both the instrumental and the intrinsic needs of education (Dumitru, 2019), and the unified global competence framework presents a synthetic model for reconciling these needs.

11.3 Research Methods

This paper uses a synthetic method to connect different ways of thinking about global competence from the field of education and management in order to create a unified framework. We first make a clear typology by reviewing the different definitions and understanding on the purposes of global competence. Two types of perspectives for understanding global competence are identified: career perspective that focus on cross-cultural employability and long-term career success; and civic perspective that focuses on social responsibilities for global common goods (e.g. environmental changes).

Comparing career with civic pursuits, this paper demonstrates the how discussion of career and civic global competence are less prominent in the literature but are significant for international students' development in the American higher education. Then we reconnect career and civic global competence into a framework of unified global competence and identified its three sub-competences—information, social, and context competences. The unified global competence is proposed to illustrate the career-civic interactions that best fits the dual demands of international students and enable higher education educators to support them more comprehensively by not only their work preparation but also their life adaptation in cross-cultural contexts.

11.4 Results

Three sub-competences—information, social, and context competences—are found as illustrative for the interactions between career and civic global competence. They are also found as the key competences that enable individuals to work and live well in a cross-cultural context. Figure 11.1 shows the review process and our findings.

Unified global competence has three components. The first component *information competence* refers to language and literacy skills and critical reading capacities, especially on divergent understandings of different cultures on the same issues. This refers to, for example, multilingualism and multiliteracies for completing work tasks, as well as critical understanding of information. From a career perspective, reading and understanding multiple languages (Reimers, 2009) are important for job task completion (such as presenting ideas, listening to and understanding international colleagues). From a civic perspective, critical reading is the key to recognizing different perspectives and worldviews in the information and making meaning in a multicultural context independently (Freire & Macedo, 2000; Boix Mansilla & Jackson, 2011). By relating information to the social, cultural, and ideological context, one will understand the quality, appropriateness, and value of that information. Contextualizing information also helps map the gaps in our current knowledge. Those with information competence can also identify appropriate sources in order to organize knowledge and information.

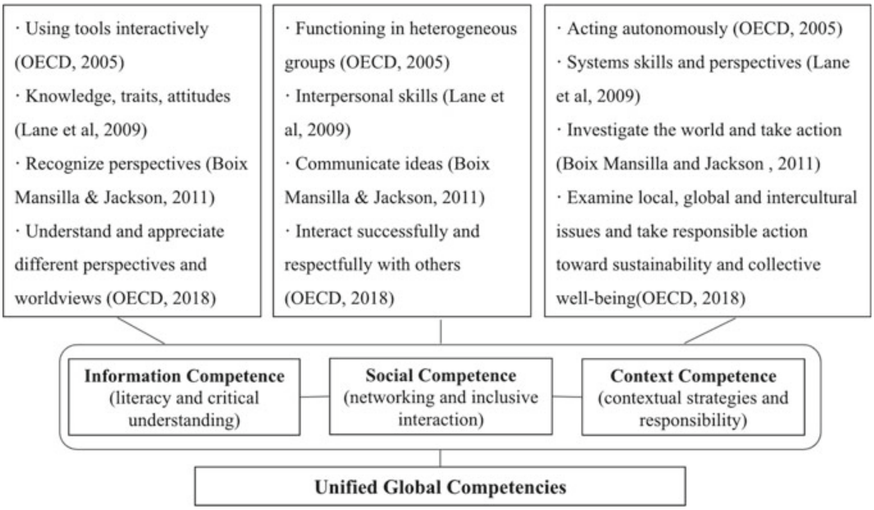

Fig. 11.1 Three sub-competences of unified global competence

Social competence is the ability to network well and to communicate with different cultural groups inclusively. Social competence requires the skills of networking and communicating inclusively in order to respect diversity. Communicating and interacting with others to initiate, maintain, and manage personal relationships is essential for building the emotional intelligence that supports cross-cultural employability. Civically, while interacting with diverse groups, one should reflect the “big picture” of historical and social norms and situations to make not only accurate interpretations of the underlying emotional and motivational states of theirs and others, but also to recognize and understand the wide range of opinions, situations, and beliefs that are the basis for social cohesion and inclusion.

Context competence refers to coordinating different abilities to understand and collaborate with diverse groups of people towards the issues at hand. Context competence refers to contextual strategies to work and live and take social responsibilities. Context competence requires one to act autonomously; to set goals, make plans and propose strategies to control one’s job, life, and goals. Additionally, context competence requires one to move from individual goals to collaborative decisions and actions (UNESCO, 2015). Finally, it highlights the importance of system thinking and considerations of the context for any individual or collective behavior.

Information, social and context competences are the three sub-competences of unified global competence because they reconcile the competing discourses of career versus civic global competence. Figure 11.2 shows how these three competences incorporate both career and civic aspects of global competence.

Information, social, and context competences all contains aspects that fulfill both career and civic purposes. Figure 11.2 reveals global competence that combine career

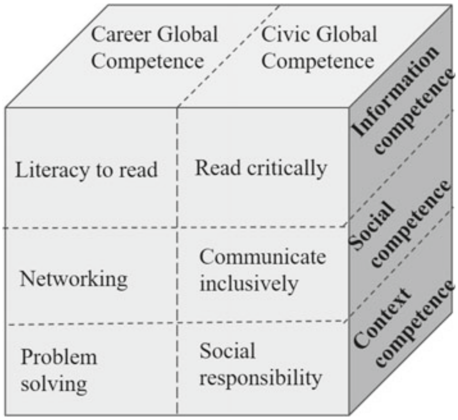

Fig. 11.2 Career-civic interactions in unified global competence

and civic purposes. The unified global competence offers a multidimensional framework to understand and support international students' development to live and work well while learning cross-culturally. We argue that unifying civic and career global competence is crucial to cultivate a well-rounded person in the context of cross-cultural learning. This coordinated approach will also enable more comprehensive research and supporting programs for international students in the international higher education programs.

By synthesizing the definition of global competence in different frameworks, this section constructs a typology of global competence (career, civic, and unified global competence), as shown in Fig. 11.3.

Three types of global competence are identified in this study—*career global competence,* the instrumental competence to facilitate cross-cultural employability and long-term career success; *civic global competence,* an intrinsic and relational competence to promote understanding the social responsibilities for the global common good (e.g. environmental changes); and *unified global competence* (containing three sub-competences—information, social, and context competences) to illustrate the interactions between career and civic global competence, and that enables students to work and live well in a complex world.

11.5 Discussion and Conclusions

This chapter presents a unified framework for global competence in higher education that identifies aspects needed to work and live well in a complex world. Unified global competence is comprised of three sub-competences: information, social, and context competences.

Competences are not developed in isolation; they are discursively mediated and contextual in nature. This means that competence is not only a matter of individual psychology, but is fundamentally social. Therefore, unified global competence

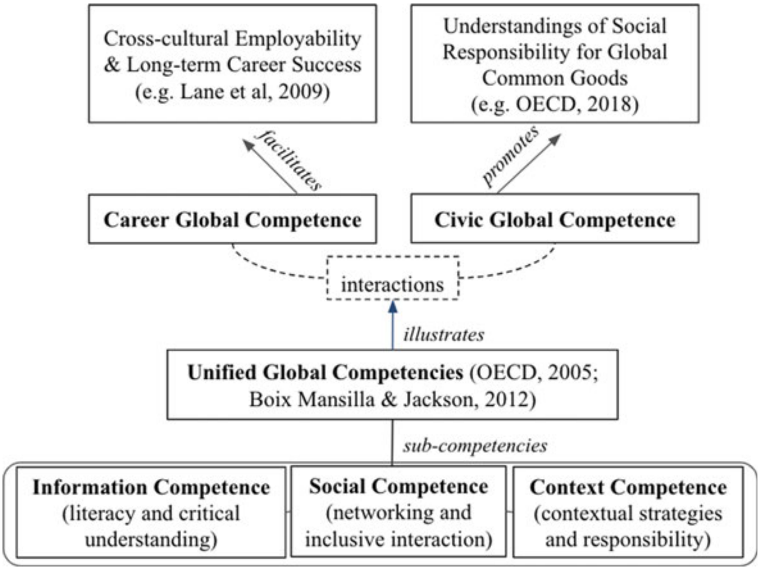

Fig. 11.3 A topology of global competence

cannot be approached solely from the perspective of individual personal development. Global competence is a capacity of individual students, however competences are held and used within interactions between the individual and their social contexts. We cannot circumscribe the development of these competences irrespective of the practices of daily interaction and the social environments and within which individuals live and work. An individual's cultivation of global mindedness as a dispositional or affective orientation is impoverished when pursued without consideration of the vibrant and challenging shared life in which global competences are negotiated and developed. Furthermore, the social nature of life requires the development of ethical practice based on understandings. Competences are therefore not only the property of discrete individuals, but are negotiated as properties and processes of the group (Sawyer, 2002).

The unified global competence framework presented here is meant for use with international students in higher education in the United States. The dual notions of career and civic competences as existing in opposition to one another is a unique and well-developed discourse in the United States. The reliance on human capital theory in the development of higher education in the United States, in particular around the rationales for international student exchange, has more similarities to the discourses for example in higher education in China than with the Humboldtian tradition in European higher education. In Europe, where the tension between human capital theory versus human rights as the basis for the provision of higher education have emerged within different imaginaries of higher education, a conceptual and curricular unification of career and civic competences may not be needed. However, in the United States, the purposes and means of promoting global competences for international students remains unclear. This framework provides a tool for addressing this complexity.

Further, in presenting this framework we do not mean to imply that global competence development is linear. Development can be halting and recursive. It is also identity work that is contextual, experiential and happens over time through work and life. As an aspect of one's identity, global competences are dynamic and contextual. Global competence, like global citizenship, are approached differently in different countries (Lehtomaki, 2019). The unified framework shares similarities with the idea of *transversal competences,* meaning that competences are holistic and comprehensive, crossing disciplinary boundaries in all areas of study, work and life (Halinen, Harmanen, & Mattila, 2015). While we aim to present a *unified* framework for higher education, in the sense of that the framework is transversal across different domains of study and working life, we do not mean here to imply a *universal* framework that in applicable in all social, cultural, political or geographic contexts. The aim of a unified framework is not to create a hegemonic vision of global competence. Instead, we point to how cleaving civic and career competences in the development of adults misses the interplay between the competences needed to forge an integral life as whole people in work and civil society.

Finally, we recognize that this is an elite framework. The impetus for this work was a recognition of the lack of a framework for the development of global competence for international graduate students. In aiming to develop a framework for use in higher education, the competences we define are geared for a globally mobile intellectual elite. We recognize also that this framework does not explicitly incorporate critical theory, although we hold that neither does it exclude adaptation or implementation from a critical perspective.

11.6 Implications

The framework for global competence presented here can be used to open conversations in the United States higher education around the competences that international graduates students should develop. Popular discourses within higher education, specifically in the United States, about the development of global competence during graduate level university studies abroad, have tended toward increasing employment eligibility. Higher education institutions, therefore, face a moral conundrum in which expectations for domestic and international students' competences may be understood in different ways, both from the institutional perspective and from the students' perspective.

A clear typology of global competence is provided to overcome the lack of consensus of the different definitions among scholars of different fields (e.g. business and education). The three types of global competence—career, civic, and unified global competence—is helpful to direct research on international students. Especially, the concept of *unified global competence* (containing three sub-competences—information, social, and context competences) illustrates the interactions between career and civic global competence and thus connects individual benefits (e.g. cross-cultural employability) with collective development (e.g. understandings of the social responsibilities for global common goods like environmental changes). With the coordinated approach, educators can better conceptualize the different dimensions and layers of meanings of global competence. Teachers could also clearly define their learning goals with the help of the multidimensional framework. Policymakers and administrators in higher education can support international students' in recognition of their dual demands. American higher education can thus design programs that support both the career interests and their civic development of international students.

References

Boix Mansilla, V., & Jackson, A. (2011). *Educating for global competence: Preparing our youth to engage the world*. Retrieved from http://pz.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/book-globalcompetence.pdf.

Cornwell, G. H., & Stoddard, E. W. (2001). The future of liberal education and the hegemony of market vales. *Liberal Education, 87*(3), 6–15.

Dumitru, A. (2019). Neither end, nor means, but both—why the modern university ought to be responsive to different conceptions of the good. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 51*(1), 87–96.

Freire, P., & Macedo, D. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed, 30th anniversary edition* (30th Anniversary edition; M. B. Ramos, Trans.). New York: Continuum.

Halinen, I., Harmanen, M., & Mattila, P. (2015). Making sense of complexity of the world today: Why Finland is introducing multiliteracy in teaching and learning 2015. In V. Bozsik (Ed.), *Improving literacy skills across learning. CIDREE yearbook 2015* (pp. 136–153). Budapest: HIERD.

Lane, H. W., Maznevski, M., Mendenhall, M. E., & McNett, J. (2004). *The blackwell handbook of global management: A guide to managing complexity*. New York: Wiley.

Ngai, H. N. (2011). *"Border Crossers" on a diverse college campus: Exploring motivation and experiences* (Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles). Retrieved from https://search.proquest.com/dissertations/docview/861765771/abstract/E74840A67F424A99PQ/56.

OECD. (2005). Definition and Selection of Competences (DeSeCo). Retrieved December 10, 2019, from https://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/definitionandselectionofcompetencesdeseco.htm.

OECD. (2018). PISA 2018 global competence. Retrieved December 10, 2019, from https://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-2018-global-competence.htm.

Reimers, F. M. (2009). Global competence. *Harvard International Review, 30*(4), 24–27.

Sawyer, R. K. (2002). Durkheim's dilemma: Toward a sociology of emergence. *Sociological Theory, 20*(2), 227–247. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9558.00160

Slaughter, S., Slaughter, S. A., & Rhoades, G. (2004). *Academic capitalism and the new economy: Markets, state, and higher education*. JHU Press.

Slaughter, S., & Leslie, L. L. (2001). Expanding and elaborating the concept of academic capitalism. *Organization, 8*(2), 154–161.

Stoller, A., & Kramer, E. (2018). Introduction: Toward a philosophy of higher education. In *Contemporary Philosophical Proposals for the University* (pp. 1–23). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

UNESCO. (2015). Global citizenship education: Topics and learning objectives. Retrieved April 29, 2019, from https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232993.

Linli Zhou is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California Los Angeles, USA. Linli conducts institutional effectiveness research in higher education aiming to support comprehensive learning experiences and competence development for students.

Crystal Green is a post-doctoral researcher at the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California Los Angeles, USA. Her major research interests lie in the area of international and comparative education, system, culture and education, and teacher mentorship.

Chapter 12
Examining the Role of Study Abroad Agencies in Mainland China

Mark D. McCormick

Abstract As concerns are raised about the fairness of the university admissions process, along with the increase of international students studying abroad for higher education, one understudied issue is how international students navigate the application process. The largest group of international students that study in the United States come from mainland China, and the non-profit Beijing Overseas Study Service Association (BOSSA) estimates that there are over 4,000 study abroad agencies currently operating in Mainland China who aid the students during their application process. These agencies often lack transparency and little information is known about the services provided to students and how these agencies operate. University admissions officers have raised concerns about where the ethical boundaries are drawn during this process, as international students work their way through an unfamiliar application process.

Keywords Academic support · China · Educational services · International students · University preparation

12.1 Introduction

In March 2019, news that over fifty people had allegedly gained improper admission into elite universities in the United States led the daily news cycle. Nicknamed "Operation Varsity Blues," the news singled out celebrities and other upper-class families that had used different services to bribe university officials for entrance into elite colleges (Chappell & Kennedy, 2019). This situation was the culmination of decades of work by extremely wealthy families and independent counselors to exploit the college admissions process. It consisted of many different actors that had personally profited during the scheme, including exam proctors who had been paid-off, parents and counselors who had told blatant lies, and university employees who had looked the other way (Korn & Levitz, 2020).

M. D. McCormick (✉)
The University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, Honolulu, HI, USA
e-mail: markdmcc@hawaii.edu

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_12

With more and more students attending college, gaining acceptance to a prominent university has become a more competitive process, and the field of college admissions reflects this. While the scandal was shocking to the general public, the process to gain acceptance to elite universities is a topic that has been explored for decades now, with deeper examination into how fame, political alliances, money and power have all corrupted the university admissions (Golden, 2019). One way that this process has been corrupted is through the use of agencies and private counselors who know how to navigate the college admissions process, and there has been a dramatic increase in the number of professionals who work in this field over the past two decades. Since 2005, there has been an increase of full-time independent counselors to approximately 8,000 to 10,000, with an additional 12,000–15,000 part-time counselors who are often only accountable to the families that have hired them (Golden, 2019).

During this same time, the number of international students studying in American universities has increased dramatically. In 2019, almost 1.1 million students, comprising 5.5% of the student body in American universities, came from abroad and in 2018, the total contribution of international students to the American economy was estimated to be around $45 billion (Bastrikin, 2020). However, even with this increase in the number of students studying abroad in the United States, the topic of how students prepare their college applications and everything that happens before going abroad is a relatively understudied issue. Over the past few years, investigative reporting by Reuters and Inside Higher Ed have exposed deeply unethical and fraudulent practices in some study abroad education agencies. Generally speaking, however, little is known about the practices, the procedures and the ethical issues in study abroad education agencies in China, which is the largest exporter of international students to the United States (Cheng & Yang, 2019). This lack of information and data on how students are preparing college applications, writing essays, and understanding the study abroad process is alarming during a time when more and more students are choosing to go abroad and when the university admissions process has been corrupted. The scale and scope of these unethical practices from individuals and agencies is impossible to know with any certainty, but it is a question that needs to be examined and addressed in an effort to create more just and equal educational opportunities.

12.2 Overview of International Student Mobility with a Focus on China

The number of international students studying abroad for higher education has exponentially risen over the past few decades. From 1990 to 2011, there was an increase of almost 3 million students choosing to continue their higher education in a different country (Tierney & Langford, 2015). Trends, such as the increase in the number of international students, have been difficult to predict. For example, in 2009, it was estimated that there would be close to 8 million international students by 2020 (Altbach et al., 2009), though that estimate has fallen short. In 2017, there were 5.3 million students studying abroad (UNESCO, 2019). For the past decade, China has been the largest exporter of international students, surpassing India in 2009 (Cheng & Yang, 2019).

China's history of exporting international students can be traced to economic reforms in 1987 (Liu, 2013). As China's GDP has continued to rise, the number of students studying abroad has risen as well, further solidifying the link between educational migration and economic development (Mankowska, 2018). A rapid increase in students studying abroad began in 2001, which can be linked with the growth in China's GDP (Yue, 2013). Over the past decade, the number of Chinese undergraduate students studying as international students in universities in the United States has continued to rise. There was a fivefold increase, from around 67,000 students in 2006/2007 to over 350,000 during the 2016/2017 academic year (Yang, 2018), and by 2018/2019 the number of students had risen to approximately 370,000 (Korn & Levitz, 2020). In 2016, it was approximated that there were over 544,000 Chinese students studying abroad all around the world (Cheng et al., 2017), with the two most popular countries for international students that year being the United States and the United Kingdom (Bista et al., 2018). While many different countries all over the world have seen an increase in international students from Mainland China, the United States is by far the biggest receiver. In 2015, Chinese students accounted for 31% of all international students in the United States (Cheng & Yang, 2019).

However, these trends are not only visible in the United States and are not limited only to higher education. In 2010, 31% of international students in Australian higher education were from Mainland China (Azmat et al., 2013), and China sent the most international students to the United Kingdom in 2016, totaling just under 100,000 (Bista et al., 2018). One trend of interest is who is studying overseas from China. Children or students from high-income and middle-income families were much more likely to plan to send their children overseas for education, with more than half of the high-income families indicating that they planned to have their child study overseas for either high school, undergraduate or graduate work (Cheng et al., 2017). This trend has had a large impact on the economy in the United States, with the impact of Chinese student enrollment totaling $14.9 billion in 2018 (Bastrikin, 2020).

Mainland China has one of the most intensely competitive education systems in the world and has been extensively examined with regards to how the education system is having an effect on culture and society inside China. As Jacka et al. (2013) note, "[c]ompetition in China's education system is intense. The causes and consequences of this competition are complex and involve social stratification, gender and ethnic relations, economic inequality, political legitimacy, international migration and ideologies of development" (p. 161). However, with China's focus on international education and exporting hundreds of thousands of students, it stands to reason that there will be even more intense competition inside China, this time for acceptance to one of the desired elite American universities.

Surprisingly, with such a large number of students studying abroad, there is a gap in the literature with regards to examining how students from mainland China have prepared to go abroad and the agencies that are often assisting the students. Without much-centralized regulation in the study abroad industry, many different agencies have popped up, offering all kinds of services.

12.3 Overview of Study Abroad Education Agencies

An education agency, as defined by Hagedorn and Zhang (2011), is "a third-party entity who is paid to assist a student to find, apply to, and/or prepare for college. In China, agents are often hired to assist students in finding an international institution fitting their academic goals" (p. 186). There have been a few studies that have examined how education agencies interact with the receiving institutions (Huang et al., 2016), but education agencies still remain an understudied issue at the micro-level (Coco, 2015). The education agencies hold an important position, acting as a bridge between students' origins and destinations that allow for educational migration across international borders (Collins, 2012), yet the relationship between students and recruitment agencies lack transparency and data, most likely because of commercial and ethical reasons (Robinson-Pant & Magyar, 2018).

The importance of the roles of study abroad agencies in the internationalization of higher education remains an understudied issue and part of the reason may be the different roles and services that the agencies offer (Sarkar & Perényi, 2017). The category of "education agent" is often a mixture of individuals who have been hired by universities to recruit students, and individuals or corporations that have been hired by the student to choose what institution to apply to and to help guide them through the process. There is no specific data available that clearly expresses how many companies or individuals are working on either end of this activity, but it is clear that the number of organizations, along with the number of individuals that are using these services, are increasing (Reisberg & Altbach, 2011).

It should come as no surprise that there has been a large increase in the number of agencies in mainland China over the past decade, though exact data are hard to come by. According to a list provided by the Ministry of Education of China in January 2011, there were approximately 400 registered education agencies in mainland China (Zhang, 2011). The non-profit Beijing Overseas Study Service Association (BOSSA) estimated in 2017 that number had ballooned to over 4,000 study abroad agencies operating in Mainland China (Chua, 2017).

12.4 Services Provided by Study Abroad Agencies

Because study abroad agencies in China are not a monolithic entity, it is impossible to know exactly what services are offered to students, as individual services may differ from agency to agency and from student to student. Students use agencies for different purposes. Some students use the agency as a guide during the entire application process, while other students only use the agency as a source of information on different aspects of foreign universities (Hagedorn & Zhang, 2011). Most agencies provide an entire range of services, including services such as basic information about universities, application preparation, counseling and visa-processing (Pimpa, 2003).

Study abroad agencies are thought to have several advantages when sending students abroad. Agencies know the language and the culture of the sending and receiving countries, are cost-effective and helpful for the universities and improve the quality of applications by vetting local students. They also help with providing counseling for students and their families, help arrange visa applications, and provide assistance for test prep, among other services (Özturgut, 2013).

A lot of these services are necessary for students who are traveling abroad for educational purposes. Interactions that cross-cultural barriers often require complex understandings and dispositions (Hinchcliff-Pelias & Greer, 2004). Academic advising of international students is a field that has been examined through the receiving end and found that international students have a set of challenges due to language, culture and former education prior to arriving in their new country (Bista, 2015), so it stands to reason that preparation to study abroad may contain similar challenges. Chinese students who went abroad with the help of an education agent were often unfamiliar with many different aspects of the process, including university applications and visa processing, as well as lacking information about specific universities (Hagedorn & Zhang, 2011). Perhaps because of this, using a study abroad education agency is quite common in Asian countries (Zhang, 2011).

There is not a lot of specific information about how study abroad agencies work. The vast majority of students who are preparing to go abroad must take different international exams, including the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), and the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Testing (ACT) exam, though some universities in the United States are currently working to eliminate these testing requirements (Hubler, 2020). On the website of New Oriental (http://www.neworiental.org/english/), the most popular education agency in China, there are options for study abroad consulting, test-taking preparation, and basic English or science training.

12.5 Discussion

Receiving an acceptance letter to a world class university and experiencing the privilege to study in an institution of higher learning has always carried with it inherent advantages, with the most obvious one being the knowledge and education that the student gains. However, there are other benefits as well. The impact of receiving a college degree has been shown to strongly correlate with extensive financial benefits, with this correlation growing stronger over the past few decades (Oreopoulos & Petronijevic, 2013). Gaining admission to these universities has become an increasingly intense competition, yet historically this was not always the case. For example, a survey of 40 prestigious institutions in 1920 revealed that only 13 of the 40 colleges and universities denied any applicants at all (Levine, 1986).

While many study abroad agencies work to find the best university for their students, there are some education agencies, both in the United States and abroad, that do not meet high ethical standards (Franklin, 2008). These ethical issues may range from promising parents and students certain results that may be unattainable, embellishing talents or personal experiences, not accurately representing academic scores or tests, or agencies insisting they have special relationships with universities (Klunder & Winston, 2017). Oftentimes, education agencies or independent counselors use a family's anxiety to justify charging excess fees, all while not attempting to find a university that is the best fit for the individual student (Golden, 2019). Study abroad agencies in China often use different pricing structures than agencies in the United States or elsewhere, which may be seen as unethical to some. While many American agencies offer a set price or hourly pay to an individual or an agency, the process in China may involve parents paying more money for their child gaining acceptance to one of their top choices, or gaining admission to a university on the top 50 on the US News list (Korn & Levitz, 2020). The relationships that study abroad agencies have with the students, as well as higher education institutions, are often in tension because of factors like differing goals or information asymmetries (Nikula & Kivistö, 2018). These tensions may make it difficult for study abroad agencies to be incentivized to act in an ethical manner.

Increasingly, students are seen as consumers or customers who are nudged toward higher education with a focus on credentials, the possibility of professional networks, and a status signal rather than as a desire for knowledge (Means, 2018), and there is nothing to suggest that this is not the same with students who desire to study abroad. This starts at the process of admissions, even before students are attending the university. Consequently, there is a concern that as admissions shift to focus more on a holistic evaluation of an applicant, students who have the skills, networks, or finances to aid their application process will continue to have inherent advantages (Sowell, 1993). Operation Varsity Blues exposed that upper-class families were willing to commit fraud to ensure that their child gained admission to a top university, highlighting the increasing importance of not just an elite education, but of an elite degree from a world class university.

In early 2017, the Chinese central government ceased the requirement that agencies must secure a license from education bureaus, thus making it significantly easier to start and maintain a study abroad agency (Chua, 2017). This lack of requirements, however, has made it more difficult to ensure that the agency is doing quality work. Faked transcripts, fraudulent personal essays, and fraudulent letters of recommendation are concerns that are sometimes discussed with regards to Chinese students coming to the United States (Redden, 2016). In October 2016, Reuters published a report on Dipont Education Management Group that alleged that Dipont had spent thousands of dollars in services or cash transfers to admissions officers in order to gain admission to universities such as the University of Virginia, Vanderbilt University and Wellesley College (Qing et al., 2016). College recruiters from the United States have reported feeling exhausted by the amount of lying, cheating, and fraud on college applications before ultimately deciding to fall back on standardized test scores as the most accurate representation of the student (Jiang, 2011). Due to these issues, international students, particularly ones that come from Asia, have caused admissions officers to question if their essays are legitimate, if the test scores are accurate, or even if the student who arrived at the university is the same student who applied (Qing et al., 2016). University admissions officers have reported feeling overwhelmed due to the large number of applications and understaffed admissions offices, thus leaving the application process open to dishonest actors who are looking to game the system (Selingo, 2020).

These issues are not limited to just the university application. ACT and SAT scores that have been taken abroad have been cancelled due to copying, leaking of test questions, or individuals who paid for people to take the exam for students (Robbins, 2017). A Reuters investigative report found a Chinese-based testing company at the University of Iowa that wrote papers, took exams, and completed coursework for Chinese students. A further look into the industry, by the same report, found numerous Chinese-based education centers that helped students doctor high school transcripts and embellish recommendation letters from high school teachers (Qing et al., 2016). According to the Association of International Educators and a US-based consulting company called Zinch China, 90% of recommendation letters for Chinese applicants to Western universities have been falsified (Bartlett & Fischer, 2011). The two companies worked together to interview 250 high school students in China and found that approximately half of the local school transcripts had been doctored, awards and achievements were exaggerated or faked, and most shockingly, 70% of college admissions essays were written by someone other than the applicant (Bartlett & Fischer, 2011).

There is little doubt that there are hundreds, if not thousands, of quality study abroad agencies operating in mainland China that are ethical, fair and work to provide as best they can for their students. In situations like this, study abroad education agencies can offer a profoundly positive, helpful, and life-changing experience for the students and the employees alike. These kinds of agencies, at their best, offer moments of shared understanding across different cultures and different value systems, and cultivate an environment of open mindedness and collaboration. Bad actors with unethical behavior do an extreme disservice to the work that honest students, educators, and agencies are attempting to do. Agencies that play in the ethical gray areas only harm everyone while trying to help individuals get ahead. They create an environment where admissions officers lack trust and faith that students are honestly applying to their university, and oftentimes fail to properly match a student with a university or college that fit their academic level.

When examining the process of sending students, further research must be done regarding how students are preparing to study abroad and choosing to navigate the application process. Clear and concise data about these issues would be beneficial for the receiving institutions and universities. The process of receiving students would benefit greatly from a detailed analysis of where the application process has been corrupted and how universities and institutions could reconceptualize the admissions process for international students.

12.6 Conclusion

The number of international students who are studying abroad has increased dramatically over the past few decades, which has led to students receiving a more in-depth, international perspective and an opportunity to learn about other cultures, as well as being the largest source of funds for international education (Altbach & Knight, 2007). As the number of spaces at elite institutions are not increasing at the same speed as the number of students applying for those spaces, there is an intense competition for access to these spaces. This has created a system of interacting parts that produces an unfair playing field where financially well-off students have opportunities like college preparation classes, private tutors and extracurricular options to strengthen their chances. Co-existing with these factors are unethical actors who will guarantee students access to the university of their choice by committing fraud through falsifying documents and applications.

If nothing is done to address these issues, it is unlikely that anything changes. The field of study abroad is barely regulated in China and stricter regulations on what agencies are allowed to help students go abroad, and in what capacity they are helping, could solve some of the ethical issues that admissions officers at universities struggle to deal with. On the receiving end, institutions that are accepting international students could make changes to the application process by eliminating some aspects of the application. Some universities are already experimenting with this possibility and it will be helpful to examine if changing the university admissions policy creates a more equitable and fair system for international students.

The experiences of students who are preparing to study abroad remain understudied, most likely due to the sensitive nature of their choices and how they choose to navigate the complex study abroad process. For students, university admissions officers, and study abroad agencies alike, it would be beneficial to explore the experiences of the students as they prepare to go abroad, in an attempt to shine light on the different issues they face during this process, how they go about navigating the study abroad process, and the ethical issues that they have to deal with as they start their educational journey.

References

Altbach, P., & Knight, J. (2007). The internationalization of higher education: Motivations and realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 11*(3/4), 290–305.

Altbach, P., Reisberg, L., & Rumbley, L. (2009). Trends in global higher education: Tracking an academic revolution. In *A Report Prepared for the UNESCO 2009 World Conference on Higher Education*, *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.*

Azmat, F., Osborne, A., Le Rossignol, K., Jogulu, U., Rentschler, R., Robottom, I., & Malathy, V. (2013). Understanding aspirations and expectations of international students in Australian higher education. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, 33*(1), 97–111. https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2012.751897

Bartlett, T., & Fischer, K. (2011, November 3). The China Conundrum. Retrieved August 18, 2020, from https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-china-conundrum/.

Bastrikin, A. (2020, April 12). International student population & enrollment statistics. Retrieved September 2, 2020, from https://educationdata.org/international-student-enrollment-statistics/.

Bista, K. (2015). Roles of international student advisors: Literature and practice in American higher education. *International Education*, *44*(2), 87–101, 109. http://search.proquest.com/docview/1674722068/.

Bista, K., Sharma, G., & Gaulee, U. (2018). International student mobility: Examining trends and tensions. In K. Bista (Ed.), *International student mobility and opportunities for growth in the global marketplace* (pp. 1–14). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

Chappell, B., & Kennedy, M. (2019, March 12). U.S. charges Dozens of parents, coaches in massive college admissions scandal. Retrieved April 23, 2019, from https://www.npr.org/2019/03/12/702539140/u-s-accuses-actresses-others-of-fraud-in-wide-college-admissions-scandal.

Cheng, B., Fan, A., & Liu, M. (2017). Chinese high school students' plans in studying overseas: Who and why. *Frontiers of Education in China, 12*(3), 367–393.

Cheng, B., & Yang, P. (2019). Chinese students studying in American high schools: International sojourning as a pathway to global citizenship. *Cambridge Journal of Education*. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2019.1571560

Chua, R. (2017, December 20). Agencies helping Chinese students study Abroad cash in on Lucrative business. Retrieved April 6, 2019, from https://america.cgtn.com/2017/12/20/agencies-helping-chinese-students-study-abroad-cash-in-on-lucrative-business.

Coco, L. (2015) Capturing a global student market for colleges and universities: The use of private third party agents in international student recruitment. *Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA*.

Collins, F. (2012). Organizing student mobility: Education agents and student migration to New Zealand. *Pacific Affairs, 85*(1), 137–160.

Franklin, S. (2008). A cultural perspective, for better or for worse. *NAFSA*. Retrieved from http://www.nafsa.org/_/File/_/agents-cultural_perspective.pdf.

Golden, D. (2019). *The price of admission*. Broadway Books.

Hagedorn, L., & Zhang, Y. (2011). The use of agents in recruiting Chinese undergraduates. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 15*(2), 186–202.

Hinchcliff-Pelias, M., & Greer, N. (2004). The importance of intercultural communication in international education. *International Education, 33*(2), 5–18.

Huang, I., Raimo, V., & Humfrey, C. (2016). Power and control: Managing agents for international student recruitment in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education, 41*(8), 1333–1354. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2014.968543

Hubler, S. (2020, May 21). University of California Will End Use of SAT and ACT in admissions. Retrieved September 18, 2020, from https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/21/us/university-california-sat-act.html.

Jacka, T., Kipnis, A., & Sargeson, S. (2013). *Contemporary China: Society and social change*. Cambridge University Press.

Jiang, X. (November 3, 2011). Selecting the right Chinese students. Retrieved April 3, 2019, from https://www.chronicle.com/article/selecting-the-right-chinese-students/.

Klunder, J., & Winston, R. (2017). *What your agent will not tell you about college admissions*. Lizard Publishing.

Korn, M., & Levitz, J. (2020). *Unacceptable: Privilege, deceit & the making of the college admissions scandal*. Penguin Books.

Levine, D. (1986). *The American college and the culture of aspiration, 1915–1940*. Cornell University Press.

Liu, Y. (2013). Meritocracy and the Gaokao: A survey study of higher education selection and socio-economic participation in East China. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 34*(5–6), 868–887.

Mankowska, A. (2018). Studying Abroad: A case study of Chinese international mobility. *BCES Conference Books, 16*, 150–156.
Means, A. (2018). *Learning to save the future: Rethinking education and work in an era of digital capitalism* (pp. 1–174). https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315450209.
Nikula, P., & Kivistö, J. (2018). Hiring education agents for international student recruitment: Perspectives from agency theory. *Higher Education Policy, 31*(4), 535–557.
Oreopoulos, P., & U. Petronijevic. (2013). Making college worth it: A review of research on the returns to higher education. In *NBER Working Paper Series, #19053*. Accessed 22 September, 2020, from http://www.nber.org/papers/w19053.
Özturgut, O. (2013). Best practices in recruiting and retaining international students in the U.S. *Current Issues in Education*, *16*(2). Retrieved from http://cie.asu.edu/ojs/index.php/cieatasu/article/view/1213.
Pimpa, N. (2003). The influence of family on Thai students' choices of international education. *The International Journal of Educational Management, 17*(5), 211–219.
Qing, K., Harney, A., Stecklow, S. & Pomfret, J. (2016, May 25). This industry helps Chinese cheat their way into & through US colleges. Retrieved October 19, 2018, from https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/college-cheating-iowa/.
Redden, Elizabeth (2016, October 17). Buying access to admissions officers? Retrieved October 10, 2018, from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/10/17/reuters-investigates-special-relationship-between-us-admissions-officers-and-chinese.
Reisberg, L., & Altbach, P. (2011). The ambiguities of working with third-party recruiters: Essential dilemmas. *International Higher Education, 63*, 3–5.
Robbins, J. (2017, February 27). SAT Scores of Asian students cancelled over cheating. Retrieved October 3, 2018, from https://www.voanews.com/student-union/sat-scores-asian-students-cancelled-over-cheating.
Robinson-Pant, A., & Magyar, A. (2018). The recruitment agent in internationalized higher education: Commercial broker and cultural mediator. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 22*(3), 225–241.
Sarkar, A., & Perényi, Á. (2017). Education agents as competitiveness enhancers of Australian universities by internationalisation facilitation. *Entrepreneurial Business and Economics Review, 5*(4), 61–89.
Selingo, J. (2020). *Who gets in and why: A year inside college admissions*. Scribner.
Sowell, T. (1993). *Inside American education: The decline, the deception, the dogmas*. Free Press.
Tierney, W., & Lanford, M. (2015). An investigation of the impact of international branch campuses on organizational culture. *Higher Education, 70*, 283–298.
UNESCO. (2019). Retrieved May 13, 2020, from http://data.uis.unesco.org/Index.aspx?queryid=172.
Yang, Y. (2018, April 4). 2017 Sees increase in number of Chinese students studying Abroad and returning after overseas studies. Retrieved September 29, 2018, from en.moe.gov.cn/News/Top_News/201804/t20180404_332354.html.
Yue, C. (2013): International student mobility: China. In *UNESCO*, *The international mobility of students in Asia and the Pacific*. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002262/226219E.pdf.
Zhang, Y. (2011). The use of agents in applying to the U.S. Higher education: Experience of Chinese undergraduate students. *Graduate Theses and Dissertations* (p. 12175).

Mark D. McCormick is a PhD student in Global and International Education in the College of Education at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He spent seven years working in the study abroad industry in Tianjin, China, and another year and a half in the internationalization of higher education at Shenyang Institute of Technology in Shenyang, China. His research interests are the internationalization of higher education, international student mobility, and the intersection of culture and education.

Chapter 13
The Contours of Internationalization in Kenya's Universities: The Challenges of Quality and Relevance

Ishmael I. Munene

Abstract In this chapter, I explore internationalization of higher education in Kenya paying close attention to the context in which it has been framed from the colonial era to the contemporary period. In the analysis, I demonstrate the manifest tension between the desire by universities to espouse global values and generate revenue as measures of success versus the need for the institutions to demonstrate local relevance through the infusion of African epistemologies even as they clamor for global ranking through internationalization. The analysis begins with the framing of higher education internationalization followed by the analysis of internationalization in the colonial, immediate post-independence, and the contemporary periods.

Keywords Colonial university · Developmental university · Neoliberal university · African indigenous knowledge · Western epistemology

13.1 Introduction

Internationalization has been one of the key innovation mantras in Kenya's university sector since 2000. Universities have opened international offices with directors, signed partnership agreements with international universities, and initiated study abroad programs to shore up their global presence. Yet, despite the increased internationalization activities in recent years, the process is not new nor are the developments restricted to Kenya. Internationalization is as old as the foundation of modern universities in the country, and the current manifestations of the process echo developments in the rest of Africa including historical origins, current motivations, rationales, and configurations as well as outcomes. Throughout the country's higher education history, internationalization efforts have been anchored in the perceived pragmatic needs and global competitiveness while eschewing the rich tapestry of indigenous epistemologies that would enrich institutional transformation.

I. I. Munene (✉)
Educational Leadership Department and College of Education and Carnegie African Diaspora Fellow, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ, USA
e-mail: Ishmael.Munene@nau.edu

C. R. Glass and K. Bista (eds.), *Reimagining Mobility in Higher Education*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93865-9_13

In this chapter, I explore the evolution of the internationalization of higher education in Kenya paying close attention to the context in which it has been framed from the colonial era to the contemporary period. In the exploration, I demonstrate the manifest tension between the desire by universities to espouse global values as a measure of success against the call for the institutions to demonstrate local relevance even as they clamor for global ranking through internationalization. The analysis begins with the framing of higher education internationalization followed by the analysis of internationalization in the colonial, immediate post-independence, and the contemporary periods.

13.2 Conceptualizing Internationalization and Education Quality

A myriad of definitions of internationalization exists in extant literature; consensus is hard to come by. Zeleza attributes the contested definitions to the "…diversity and complexity of its rationales, activities, stakeholders, and providers at the international, national, sectoral, and institutional levels." (Zeleza, 2016, p. 213). Notwithstanding this challenge, it is possible to provide a working conception of internationalization based on existing literature. Knight (1999), conceptualizes it as the process of integrating "transnational elements into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (p.2). A Delphi panel of international education experts expanded Knight's definition with the rider, "….in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make meaningful contribution to society" (De Wit & Hunter, 2015, p. 3). The transnational elements include study-abroad programs, allowing students to learn about other cultures (internationalization at home), providing access to higher education in other countries where local institutions cannot provide demand, upgrading international perspectives and skills of students, enhancing foreign language, and offering cross-cultural understanding (Altbach & Jane, 2007). While quality enhancement has been an important motivation for internationalization, commercial interests and global competitiveness have also been key impetus driving the process. Therefore, from the foregoing, pro-active rather than reactive overtures define institutional approaches to internationalization.

Besides internationalization, the concept of educational quality is germane to this work. There is no consensus on what education quality means or what features denote its existence. Some have approached it from an input perspective, others have looked at the outputs of the system, yet others have focused on the process of education itself. The merits of the various definitions aside, quality in higher education goes beyond the narrow confines of performance and outcomes to include the complex and broad intangible benefits of the education. In this chapter, I employ Harvey and Greens view of quality as a "transformation" in which higher education leads to qualitative change in learners cognitive abilities and, ultimately, to futures perceived as desirable (Harvey & Green, 2006). Quality university education should go beyond merely

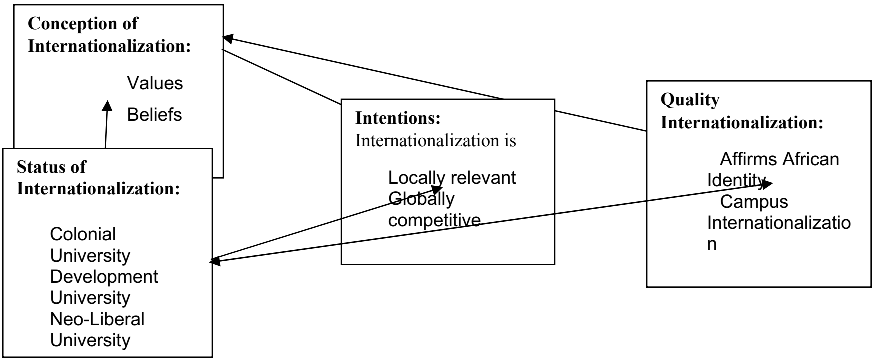

Fig. 13.1 Conceptual framework of quality internationalization & African higher education

transmitting concepts derived from the western epistemologies to questioning such concepts as well as initiating the dialogical process of uncovering African epistemologies to arrive at a balanced view of the world to enrich the academic space. This view of quality is in tandem with the competency approach to internationalization which underscores the importance of developing skills, knowledge, attitudes and values of students and faculty so that they become internationally knowledgeable and interculturally skilled (Qiang, 2003).

A conceptual framework is central to the analysis of internationalization efforts and this work is no exception. Figure 13.1 portrays the concept of internationalization used in this work with quality of learning outcomes as the guiding reference. The beliefs about internationalization and values it promises for the institutions form the bedrock of the initiative. The internationalization efforts in three epochs of university development in Africa—colonial, development, and neo-liberal—are assessed along these beliefs and values. In the analysis, the internationalization approach in the three eras is epitomized by emphasis on western epistemological values and beliefs while neglecting African knowledge embedded in local communities. Importantly, the neoliberal era is characterized by emphasis on global competitiveness and revenue generation that deepens the link to western epistemological values. This work advocates for a broad-based inclusive internationalization which affirms and promotes African epistemological identity evident in indigenous communities as a counterweight to the excessive western imprint in the current internationalization efforts.

Source Author.

13.3 Internationalization and the Colonial University

It is impossible to navigate the manifest tensions between internationalization and local relevance without a recourse to the history of higher education development in the country. The roots of university development coupled with the nature of the colonial university in Kenya are the focus of this section. The section looks at the colonial university including the rationale for its establishment, the curriculum content, and expected outcomes. In the process of the analysis, the genesis of university internationalization is illuminated.

The foundation of the university in Kenya was international; in 1956 the Royal Technical College, the precursor to the current University of Nairobi, was founded as a branch of the University of London. The college offered degrees in arts, science, and engineering awarded by the University of London underlying both the pragmatic skills and moral values that graduates were to personify. The college had a singular mission to train local manpower both in functional skills and British norms for the emerging colonial bureaucracy. In terms of curriculum, modes of instruction, and methods of assessment this colonial university college followed the traditions of the metropole university. There was no room for local innovation in instruction, curriculum, or program developments (Lulat, 2003, Wane & Munene, 2019). This colonial experience in early university development was not a Kenyan phenomenon alone, but was a reality replicated across the rest of Africa whether under British, French, or Portuguese colonialism (Mamdani, 2018).

While the overt aims of Kenyan colonial higher education architecture were clearly enunciated, the two interrelated covert goals were less obvious. The first was to act as a fulcrum of economic, cultural, and mental subordination of the indigenous African peoples. It was the vehicle that shaped the incorporation of African economies into the global network of capitalist production through the strengthening of the local colonial economic production and bureaucracy—in human skills development and values articulation. This supported the economic relations between the colonized African nations and the metropolitan states. The second was to redefine knowledge production in the continent. The courses offered and modes of instruction were a replica of the content offered and the pedagogical approaches employed in the mother European university. Importantly, the colonial university introduced the one-size-fits-all western disciplinary mode of knowledge organization and promoted the notion of universal scholars tutored in universally sanctioned theories and methodologies irrespective of the local context. Differently stated, it elevated the notion of "international" excellence in knowledge production and dissemination in the university as something foreign, and not local knowledge and its relevance.

Appreciating the genesis of internationalization of higher education in Kenya requires the fundamental recognition of the role of the colonial university in setting up the dominant patterns and structure of internationalization that elevates foreign epistemology while eschewing local knowledge and processes. The colonial university was among the first major assaults on African indigenous epistemologies which were perceived as subordinate to western knowledge systems. Equally, the colonial university set the stage for framing higher education internationalization in terms of economic benefits, albeit latently. These twin themes continue to reverberate in the discussions on internationalization of higher education especially now that international partnerships and linkages have become central in universities' strategic planning in the country.

13.4 The National Development University and Internationalization

Kenya's independence in 1963 obliterated the architecture of the colonial university and ushered in the era of the national development university, from 1970 to the early-1990. The University of Nairobi (inaugurated in 1970 after the breakup of the federated University of East Africa) and its affiliate Kenyatta University College (KUC) were the first development institutions established with the specific purpose of fronting national development along the lines of the land grant universities in the USA. Later in 1984 Moi University was established and in 1985 KUC became a full-fledged public university, Kenyatta University. Until the mid-1990s, the three were the only national development universities in the country.

Like in the rest of Africa, the Kenyan national development university had an Africanization agenda centered on manpower development to replace colonial bureaucrats, an economic transformation through modern agriculture & commerce, and the advancement of political progress through civic education (Alperovitz et al., 2009; Government of Kenya, 1965; Mazrui, 1992a, b & Yessufu, 1973). Koffi Anan captured this succinctly as he delineated the role of the African university:

> I believe that the university must become a primary tool for Africa's development in the new century. Universities can help develop African expertise; they can enhance the analysis of African problems; strengthen domestic institutions; serve as a model environment for the practice of good governance, conflict resolution and respect for human rights, and enable African academics to play an active part in the global community of scholars (Anan, 2000).

These development roles assigned to the university were encapsulated in various policy documents generated by the Kenyan government to guide the war against the three enemies of national progress: illiteracy, poverty, and disease. The first development blueprint noted the centrality of higher education in national progress (Government of Kenya, 1965), a position upheld by the World Bank-funded policy document on Kenya's education (Government of Kenya, 2005) and by the state-appointed Public University Inspection Board (Government of Kenya, 2006). In the state's policy proscriptions for progress, a direct correlation existed between university education and national development.

True to this calling, the development universities articulated their local relevance by developing programs and outreach activities that addressed local needs overlooked by the colonial university. The University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University, for instance, developed programs on African and Kenyan history, African musicology, African literature and oral literature, and Kiswahili. The University of Nairobi established the Institute of African Studies to promote research on indigenous institutions and material culture and developed an extra-mural studies program to offer courses through distance learning. A major victory was attained when the university renamed its Department of English to Literature Department (Sicherman, 1998), a victory over the domination of European approach to literature which excluded important African authors and oral literature. The university's renowned traveling theatre traversed the country taking to the people literature and performing arts with socio-political relevance. These activities were meant to buttress attitudinal shift from the colonial euro-centric to the independence afro-centric orientation among the students, a fact noted by the first vice-chancellor of the university in his address to the first graduating class in 1970: "We are obliged to design a system of education that will help to promote social change and contribute to rapid economic growth, not only by training educated manpower needed for specific tasks of development, but also by creating proper attitudes of mind in our people" (University of Nairobi, 2020). In this way, not only did the universities contribute to the intellectual engagement and promotion of local culture but they also facilitated the codification of the same in written form. The first generation of Kenyan authors in various fields of humanities and social sciences were based in these institutions.

In addition to these local relevance initiatives, there were three areas of regional internationalization worth mentioning that the universities pursued. First, universities in the three countries of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, collaborated in sharing external examiners for thesis, dissertations, and examinations as a quality enhancement mechanism. Second, French students from Kenya were often hosted by universities in the French-speaking Burundi and Rwanda for a month-long language field experience. Third, the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA) was established by the three east African governments and national universities in 1980 to facilitate contact and cooperation in academic activities.

While the Kenyan political leaders and key university administrators envisioned a fully national development university that is locally relevant, Africanist in outlook, and actively engaged in the lives of the local citizenry, overall the reality was anything but. In terms of pedagogy and curriculum content, both the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University College remained largely beholden to the traditions inherited from the colonial university. The lecture method of teaching, a rigid examination structure, and oversight by external examiners from the commonwealth countries including Britain remained the hallmarks of teaching and assessment in both undergraduate and graduate studies. The teaching content largely continued to emulate the curriculum in the west (America and Europe) especially in disciplines like education philosophy, psychology, and sociology in which theories and research methods were mostly foreign. Additionally, though the universities established departments of African languages, indigenous languages never became their concentration both in teaching and research. The departments' focus were, and continue to be, Kiswahili, the national language. Moreover, attempts by the three east Africa governments (Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda) to develop an East African Community Higher Education Area (EACHEA) modeled along the Erasmus Program in Europe to facilitate student mobility never materialized (Oanda & Matiang'i, 2018). All said, very limited efforts were made to moderate the preponderance of western influence by incorporating intellectual thoughts and methodological approaches by African scholars and thinkers as well as reframe the organizational architecture to enhance regional indigenous internationalization.

Besides this imbalance in knowledge production and dissemination, academic mobility, international collaborations, and partnerships also reflected the dominance of western academic paradigms. Junior academic staff in the universities were sponsored by international government agencies and private foundations for doctoral studies in Canadian, European, and US universities further cementing the western epistemological hold on the local universities. Kenya, for instance, was a beneficiary of the US government African Scholarship Program of American Universities (ASPAU) which sponsored 1,500 students from 1961 to 1970 of whom 64% returned to Africa to take up university positions (Rich, 1978). The British government through the British Council, Canada through CIDA, and Germany through DAAD played a key role in supporting manpower development in Kenyan universities in the 70 and 80 s. The Ford, Rockefeller, and Carnegie foundations collaborated with the US government to support African universities' manpower development as part of the cold war foreign policy (Arnove, 1980). Research partnerships and collaboration activities, dependent on foreign donors, were skewed in favor of foreign universities (Bogonko, 1991).

The modicum localization initiatives made by the development universities notwithstanding, the institutions largely remained foreign just like their counterparts in the rest of Africa. The universities remained alien institutions teaching western theories and epistemologies to the neglect of African knowledge systems and, for the most part, disengaged from the development needs of the local populace. In Nabudere's assessment, the universities "….continued to reproduce dependent Eurocentric knowledge, a knowledge that is dependent on its actualization in centers that exploit the African people and utilize African resources freely….The models of western universities, which Africa adopted, have proved completely unsuitable for Africa's needs" (Nabudere, 2003, pp. 5–6). Mazrui baptized the national universities as "multinational corporations", highly dependent on the west as a reference point for decision-making, selling cultural goods manufactured in Europe to Africans, and whose graduates had intellectual dependency on the west (Mazrui, 1975 and 1992a, b).

As a project of African nationalism, decolonization, development, democratization, nation-building, and regional integration, the development university failed, to a considerable degree, to reframe internationalization discourse to elevate African epistemologies. The university manifested tensions between the necessity to retain an "international" (western) outlook in the academy and the need to be locally relevant, engaged, and African in outlook. In Table 13.1, a summary of the success and failures of the national developmental university in balancing the pull of the colonial university and its western orientation and the need to be locally relevant is presented.

13.5 Internationalization and the Neo-Liberal University

State Policy Shift.

From independence in 1963 to the late-1980s higher education was fully funded by the state. The government not only provided funds for both operational costs

Table 13.1 The Developmental University Localization: Goals, Strategy, Success & Failures

The developmental University in Kenya			
Goals	Strategy	Achievements	Failures
• Decolonization mission • National Development • Local Relevance & Engagement	• Africanization of academic staff • Afro-centric academic programing in humanities & social sciences • Creative & performing arts • Extra-mural studies • Regional collaboration	• Indigenous academic staff & leadership • Some localization of curriculum • Conversion of English Dept. to Literature Dept • Theatre arts to grassroots • Codification of African scholarship in books and articles	• Curriculum not fully decolonized: western content & theories prominent in many disciplines • Pedagogy and student assessment from the colonial university era • Attitudes and values of academic staff and students firmly western • Regional collaboration through staff mobility failed

Source Author

and capital development but also fully sponsored students for both undergraduate and graduate studies. Since the early 1990s, the landscape of universities in Kenya has shifted, catapulted by the twin forces of marketization and privatization. Under the government's policy of revenue diversification, public universities must generate revenues from tuition fees, marketing programs, and private sources to supplement declining state subsidies. Furthermore, to satisfy the surge in demand for university education, private universities would be permitted to operate in the country thereby ending the state monopoly in the provision of university education (Munene & Otieno, 2008). In this new dispensation, the state's focus will be on policy development, regulation, accreditation, and enabling access rather than direct involvement in university affairs. This change in government policy in higher education was enshrined in the 1994–1998 National Development Plan that proclaimed:

> …..the central thrust of the new policies is to rely on market forces to mobilize resources for growth and development with the role of central government increasingly confined to providing an effective regulatory framework and essential public infrastructure and social services. The government will limit direct participation in many sectors and instead promote private sector activity (cited in Kiamba, 2004, p. 55).

That public universities would now be required to adopt private sector business models and corporate governance styles was amplified by the minister for education who declared:

> This is a turning point in the development of our public universities, where they are being called upon to adopt business-like financial management styles. It is also a point in time when universities have to plan well ahead about resources expected to be coming from sources other than the exchequer. ... [The] time has come to seriously take account of the universities'

> potential to generate income internally. It is an open secret that some of our universities are capable of generating substantial amounts of money from the resources at their disposal. ... Income from such sources should be exploited and treated as definite sources of university revenue (cited in Kiamba, 2004:55–56).

The consequences of this policy shift have been institutional massification, from 3 national universities in 1995 to 74 public and private universities today. Student enrollment has also swelled from 20,000 in 1990 (Mulinge et al., 2017) to around 509,470 today (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2020).

Internationalization in the Age of Neo-liberalism.

The new policy shift was not confined to Kenya but part of a global trend that began in 1980 when higher education reforms in Britain and USA tightened the link between universities and the national economies while strategically positioning them as instruments for global competitiveness. "Academic capitalism" (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997) is now the operating mantra as universities develop market-based academic programs, focus on STEM disciplines, marketize services, engage in applied contract research while limiting the growth in basic sciences, fundamental research, humanities, and social sciences. Academic capitalism has been embraced in higher education in nearly all countries in Africa heralding an era of government retreat in financing universities and their increasing reliance on private revenues (Assie-Lumumba, 2006, Ochwa-Echel, 2013, and Zeleza, 2003).

As Kenyan universities have veered into the marketplace, they have been thrust into the global marketplace of ideas and resources. Universities are now viewed as an important cog in enhancing the nation's global competitiveness through the training of a globally competitive workforce. They must also be globally competitive institutions and generate resources from the global marketplace. Thus, privatization, marketization, and globalization are intricately fused together in this neo-liberal university paradigm. It is in this market-competitive environment that the current internationalization efforts are situated.

Most of Kenya's universities now have a directorate of international programs whose *raison d'être* is revenue generation through the capture of the student market, access to research grants through collaborative partnerships, and the enhancement of institutional profile through global ranking. Table 13.2 highlights the rationales and objectives given by the country's leading universities to justify the establishment of the directorates. These goals principally focus on reputation-enhancement and revenue-generation through partnerships, student enrolment, and staff exchange for short-term visits. Missing in these objectives are important such as full campus internationalization and the advancement of indigenous African knowledge. Furthermore, the directorates are also poorly staffed with only one senior academician serving as the director and between 2 and 5 supporting staff. Without well qualified and knowledgeable staff, it is doubtful these directorates will be successful whether advancing full campus internationalization, enhancing research partnerships, leading the curriculum internationalization efforts including strengthening African epistemologies, and increasing students and scholar mobility.

Table 13.2 Rationale for International Directorates in Kenya's Leading Universities

University	Name of directorate	Rationale for Establishment
University of Nairobi	Center for International Programs and Links	• A leading integrative center that enhances the University's international, research, academic and cultural interactions • Initiating, promoting, facilitating, and coordinating international programs and links, staff and student exchanges and mobility, collaborative research projects and worldwide networking (University of Nairobi, 2020)
Kenyatta University	Center for International Programs and Collaboration	• to initiate and co-ordinate international programs and collaborations for enhancement of the Kenyatta University profile • Welfare of international students & staff including travel and accommodation assistance (Kenyatta University, 2020)
Moi University	Directorate of International Programs, Linkages and Alumni	• to provide a complete service to international students and staff, and to provide the necessary strategic support to academic structures to enable the internationalization of the institution in its totality; to create a home away from home feeling to international students and staff • To enable the university achieve the objective of being world class in nurturing innovation and talent in Science, Technology and Development (Moi University, 2020)

(continued)

Enrollment of international students remains the key strategy the universities are focusing on to generate tuition revenue as well as enhance their reputations in a competitive environment. International student enrollment, however, remains dismal. Table 13.3 documents the paucity of international students in selected public and private universities in 2018 (Muyaka, 2019). The overall diversity ration of 0.015%

Table 13.2 (continued)

University	Name of directorate	Rationale for Establishment
Technical University of Kenya	Global and Community Engagement	• window through which the institution engages with the external world in terms of public lectures, colloquia, debates, and discussions on one hand and social and cultural activities on the other hand • develop relations and dialogue with other universities and government institutions on many of these issues and to work closely with the external media to contribute on topical issues from an academic perspective (Technical University of Kenya, 2021)

Source Author

Table 13.3 International Student Enrollment as Reflection of Diversity in Selected Universities, 2018

University	Student enrollment	International students	% Campus diversity
University of Nairobi	103,000	459	0.0004
Moi University	42,670	225	0.0005
Mt. Kenya University	25,919	256	0.01
USIU-Africa	7,059	1006	14.3
Total	159,594	2,322	0.015

Source (Muyaka, 2019, p. 110)

suggests an academic climate with inadequate international cross-cultural diversity that would enrich the teaching–learning experience.

While no official government policy exists on university internationalization, the Kenya National Qualification Authority (KNQA), a state agency that standardizes higher education qualifications, has initiated steps to normalize university universities operations and resources to make them attractive to international students. The target of 30,000 students from the current 4,000 in five years seeks to ensure that Kenya becomes the destination for international students in the region with Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda, among others, as the catchment areas according to KNQA head (Waruru, 2019). In marketing their programs, the KNQA head avers, universities:

> must also provide decent and affordable accommodation to international students on a reliable basis and on a bigger scale….and, there may be a need for them to come together

> and market their programs as a group rather than do so individually. This is what we are proposing for now and we shall start with willing universities…..What is needed is aggressive marketing and joint branding (Waruru, 2019).

The embedded narrative of “aggressive marketing”, “joint branding”, “market programs”, and “decent and affordable accommodation” speaks to the repositioning of universities to attract a fee-paying clientele rather than also recalibrating the institutions to internationalize and advance neglected areas of academic inquiry including indigenous African knowledge systems. In this case internationalization through international student enrolment does not seek to affirm the centrality of African knowledge and African perspectives in global knowledge production and dissemination. Rather, it seeks to merely sustain and expand the unequal relations in knowledge production and dissemination that favors the west.

Another important internationalization activity that the Kenyan universities boldly proclaim is collaboration and linkages with international universities. Indeed, most universities have established linkages and partnerships with foreign universities especially those in the west. A look at the partnerships in some top public universities underscores the extent of these linkages. The University of Nairobi has established links with universities in Belgium, Germany, UK, and USA. These partnerships have grown exponentially since the 2000; between 1999 and 2003, the university had signed 38 partnership agreements and in the next five years, 2004–2008, the number had grown to 116 (Otieno, 2012). The longest running partnership with the Free University of Belgium has provided support for ICT infrastructure, masters, and doctoral training. Moi University has had a longstanding relationship with Indiana University in the USA and the Free University of Belgium that support doctoral training, faculty exchange, and joint research programs. Egerton University offers an aeronautical engineering program in collaboration with Michigan University in USA. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology has had a longstanding partnership with several Japanese universities funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

These partnerships for academic training, student exchange and collaborative research with universities in the Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe, and USA are dictated by funding availability. With financial resources coming from the wealthier partners in Asia, Europe, and the USA, it is not a surprise that the flow of trainees is from Kenya to the international partners. In contrast, students on academic exchange are from the same partners to Kenyan universities. The dominance of western universities is reflected in these flows, and reflects a shift from educational and cultural norms of international education to financial ones. Kenyan universities have strategically positioned themselves both as revenue-charging hosts of study-abroad students from western universities, and recipients of training resources from foreign universities. Few Kenyan students travel abroad for short-term academic exchange. When they do travel for education, the major destination is Uganda as self-sponsored students in pursuit of training in high demand programs such as medical sciences. Uganda is a preferred destination owing to the lower cost of training compared to Kenya (Ogachi, 2009). Knowledge is no longer an instrument of global cross-cultural understanding but a commodified good to be traded globally. More significantly, the partnership structure provides little incentives for the study and integration of African epistemologies into the realm of global academic discourse as part of internationalization.

Scholars agree that internationalization is incomplete in absence of a comprehensive strategy of internationalization on campus. Put differently, internationalization at home where all faculty and students experience it, is as critical as international partnerships and linkages. The American Council on Education has defined it as:

> a strategic, coordinated framework that integrates policies, programs, initiatives, and individuals to make colleges and universities more globally oriented and internationally connected. In order to foster sustainable and just global engagement, the comprehensive internationalization model embraces an organizational growth mindset. It frames internationalization as an ongoing process rather than a static goal. To that end, it recognizes that all constituents at a college or university—students, faculty, and staff—are learners and central to the institution's equitable, intercultural transformation (American Council on Education, 2021).

Equally, Hudzik (2014) sees comprehensive internationalization as the means through which higher education institutions respond to widening and more complex expectations to connect globally to better serve students, clientele, and society in the twenty-first century. Comprehensive internationalization is, therefore, a necessary condition for empowering the entire university community to engage fully with the global academic community on a solid footing.

It is, therefore, surprising that despite the establishment of directorates for internationalization and global engagement, all Kenyan universities lack a strategy for comprehensive internationalization. No institutional policies and strategies have been enacted to support faculty develop intercultural competence in curriculum development and teaching. There are no physical or virtual opportunities for all students to engage in academic activities beyond the national boundaries. There is no financial support for approved short-term study abroad programs for undergraduate and graduate students. Furthermore, the senior most official overseeing the internationalization efforts is the director, a rank below a dean. This denies the position the political clout and visibility to champion internationalization in the organizational hierarchy particularly the need for resources. Without a comprehensive campus internationalization strategy, internationalization is confined to a few fortunate scholars and remains detached from most internal stakeholders. This denies the majority of the faculty and students opportunities to explore and affirm the African identity, culture, and language in the realm of global knowledge production.

There have been some moves to infuse internationalization through academic courses with an international bent. The teaching of three major international languages of English, French, and German has been a feature in the academic programs since the 1970s. The British, French, and German governments have provided resources for academic staff development as well as for teaching and learning to strengthen the teaching of these languages and allied cultures. A more recent addition in nearly all public universities is the Confucius Institutes through which the Chinese language and culture are taught. As China's global influence increases, so have the universities sought to establish Confucius Institutes to tap into the training and research resources that flow from this academic partnership. That foreign governments are at the forefront of promoting their own languages in Kenyan universities need not surprise us. Language is the vehicle through which a society's culture and values are codified and transmitted and by financing their national languages programs, these governments are reinforcing the continued dominance of foreign values and cultures in the academy. Meanwhile, Kenyan universities have yet to develop programs on indigenous languages as in South Africa to counter the dominance of foreign languages.

In sum, while neoliberalism has heightened the need for universities to be globally competitive it has also catalyzed the revenue-generation as a key impetus for internationalization. In turn, this contributed to a lopsided view of internationalization which eschews African epistemologies and identity in global knowledge production and neglects campus-wide internationalization efforts.

13.6 Conclusion

Higher education internationalization in Kenya is a by-product of external and internal forces that have shaped the development of universities rather than an intrinsic impetus to improve the quality of learning outcomes. It is a development trajectory guided by the desire to fit into the contours of the global paradigm of higher education success rather than local relevance enriched by internationalism. The colonial university sought to reproduce the metropolitan British university locally and, therefore, subordinated indigenous African knowledge systems. Whereas the post-independent national development university made some efforts to incorporate African epistemologies in the curriculum, these efforts remained minuscule and confined to specific academic units rather than a university-wide academic mission. The internationalization agenda of the contemporary neo-liberal university driven by the need to attain global competitiveness and revenue enhancement centered around the marketization of academic programs. In this financial model of internationalization, the advancement of African knowledge remains elusive.

All told, the contours of internationalization in Kenya's higher education has yet to grapple with the intricacies of centering African epistemologies as the core of knowledge production in universities. An internationalization strategy that strikes a balance between ethical revenue generation and the advancement of African knowledge will go a long way in mitigating the current lopsided approach to efforts.

References

Alperovitz, G., Dubb, S., & Howard, T. (2009). The next wave: Building University engagement for 21st century. *Good Society, 17*, 69–75.

Altbach, P., & Jane, K. (2007). the internationalization of higher education: motivations and realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 11*(3/4), 290–305.

American Council on Education. (2021). *Comprehensive Internationalization Framework*. Retrieved from American Council on Education. Retrieved April 16, 2021, from https://www.acenet.edu/Research-Insights/Pages/Internationalization/CIGE-Model-for-Comprehensive-Internationalization.aspx.

Anan, K. (2000, August 3). Information Technology should be used to tap knowledge from greatest Universities to bring Learning to All. *Press Release No. UNIS/SG/2625*. New York: United Nations Information Service.

Technical University of Kenya. (2021, April 14). *Global and community engagement*. Retrieved from Technical University of Kenya. Retrieved April 14, 2021, from http://tip.tukenya.ac.ke/index.php/directorates/global-and-community-engagement.

Arnove, R. (1980). *Philanthropy and cultural imperialism: Foundations at home and Abroad*. G.K. Hall.

Assie-Lumumba, N. (2006). *Higher education in Africa: Crises, reforms and transformation.* Dakar: CODESRIA.

Bogonko, S. (1991). The Development of University education in Kenya 1960–1989. *Journal of Eastern Africa Research and Development, 21*, 141–168.

De Wit, H., & Hunter, F. (2015). The future of internationalization of higher education in Europe. *International Higher Education, 83*, 2–3.

Government of Kenya. (1965). *Kenya Education Commission Report*. Government Press.

Government of Kenya. (2005). *Kenya Education Sector Support Programme.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

Government of Kenya. (2006). *Transformation of higher education and training in Kenya to secure Kenya's development in the knowledge economy: report of the Public Universities Inspection Board.* Nairobi: Government Printer.

Harvey, L., & Green, D. (2006). Defining quality. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 18*(1), 9–34.

Hudzik, J. (2014). Introduction. In J. Hudzik (Ed.), *Comprehensive internationalization: Institutional pathways to success* (pp. ii–iv). Routledge.

Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. (2020). *Economic Survey 2020*. Government Press.

Kenyatta University. (2020, July 30). *The Centre for International Programmes and Collaborations.* Retrieved from Centres and Directorates. Retrieved June 30, 2020, from http://international.ku.ac.ke/.

Kiamba, C. (2004). The experience of privately sponsored studentship and other income generating activities. *Journal of Higher Education in Africa, 2*(2), 53–73.

Knight, J. (1999). Internationalization of Higher Education. In J. Knigh (Ed.), *Quality of internationalization of higher education* (pp. 13–18). OECD.

Lulat, Y. (2003). The Development of Higher Education: A Historical Survey. In D. Teferra & P. Altbach (Eds.), *Africa higher education: An international reference handbook* (pp. 15–31). Indiana University Press.

Mamdani, M. (2018, July 19). The African University. *London Review of Books, 40,* 14. Retrieved June 22, 2020, from https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v40/n14/mahmood-mamdani/the-african-university.

Mazrui, A. (1975). The African University as a multinational corporation: Problems of penetration and dependency. *Harvard Educational Review, 45*(2), 191–210.

Mazrui, A. (1992a). Towards diagnosing and treating cultural dependency: The case of the African University. *International Journal of Educational Development, 12*(2), 95–111.

Mazrui, A. (1992b). Towards diagnosing and treating cultural dependency: The case of the African University. *International Journal of Educational Development, 12*, 95–111.

Mulinge, M., Arasa, J., & Wawire, V. (2017). *The status of student involvement in University Governance in Kenya: The case of public and private Universities.* Dakar: CODESRIA.

Munene, I., & Otieno, W. (2008). Changing the course: Equity Effects and institutional risks amid policy shift in higher education financing in Kenya. *Higher Education, 55*, 461–479.
Muyaka, J. (2019). The status of internationalization of higher education in Kenya: The case of University Diversity. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies, 10*(2), 106–114.
Nabudere, D. (2003). Towards the establishment of a Pan-African University: A strategic concept paper. *African Journal of Political Science, 8*(1), 1–30.
Oanda, I., & Matiang'i, O. (2018). The East African higher education area; A global or regional higher education space. *FIRE:Forum for International Research in Education, 4*(3), 56–76.
Ochwa-Echel, J. (2013). Neo-liberalism and University Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Sage Open*, 1–8.
Ogachi, O. (2009). Internationalization vs regionalization of higher education in East Africa and the challenges of quality assurance and knowledge production. *Higher Education Policy, 22*, 331–347.
Otieno, I. (2012). *Internationalization of an African University in the post-colonial Era: A case study of the University of Nairobi.* Lexington: University of Kentucky Doctoral Thesis.
Qiang, Z. (2003). Internationalization of higher education: towards a conceptual framework. *Policy Futures in Education, 1*(2), 248–270.
Rich, J. (1978). *United States Government-Sponsored Higher Educational grams for Africans: 1957–1970, with Special Attention to the Role of the African-American Institute.* Columbia University Press.
Sicherman, C. (1998). Revolutionizing the literature curriculum at the University of East Africa: Literature. *Research in African Literatures, 29*(3), 129–148.
Slaughter, S., & Leslie, L. (1997). *Academic capitalism: Politics, policies, and the entrepreneurial University*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
University of Nairobi. (2020, July 30). *Centre for International programmmes and Links*. Retrieved June 30, 2020, from https://international.uonbi.ac.ke/basic-page/vision-mission-core-values.
University of Nairobi. (2020, September 23). *The 1970 Graduation.* Retrieved from The University of Nairobi. Retrieved April 7, 2021, from https://uonbi.ac.ke/news/1970-graduation.
Moi University. (2020, July 30). *Vision, Mission.* Retrieved from Directorate of International Programs, Linkages and Alumni. Retrieved June 30, 2020, from https://international.mu.ac.ke/index.php/about/vision-mision.
Wane, N., & Munene, I., et al. (2019). African indigenous education in Kenyan Universities: A decolonizing and transformational tool. In J. Miller (Ed.), *International Handbook in Holistic Education* (pp. 319–327). Routledge.
Waruru, M. (2019, June 5). *Kenya Announces Bold Plans to Reach 30,000 International Students.* Retrieved from The PIE News: News and Business Analysis for Professionals in International Education: Retrieved April 15, 2021, from https://thepienews.com/news/kenya-announces-bold-plans-to-become-international-student-hub-africa/.
Yessufu, T. (1973). *Creating the African University: Emerging issues in the 1970s.* Oxford University Press.
Zeleza, T. (2003). Academic freedom in the neo-liberal order: governments, globalisation, governance, and gender. *Journal of Higher Education in Africa, 1*(1), 149–194.
Zeleza, T. (2016). *The transformation of global higher education 1945–2015.* Palgrave Macmillan.