CIHE
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No. 22

Power and Equity in International Higher Education:
Proceedings of the 2023 WES–CIHE Summer Institute Boston College

Marisa Lally
Editor

WES WORLD EDUCATION SERVICES

BOSTON COLLEGE
Lynch School of Education and Human Development
CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

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CIHE Perspectives

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FOREWORD

We are delighted to present our annual Proceedings of the WES-CIHE Summer Institute, a joint initiative of World Education Services (WES) and the Center for International Higher Education (CIHE) at Boston College. With the theme **Power and Equity in International Higher Education**, this iteration marked the first in-person Summer Institute since the pandemic.

The WES-CIHE Summer Institute continues to play a crucial role in the field of international education, offering a welcoming and supportive space for graduate students and other early-career researchers to share their work and receive constructive feedback from experts. The contributions shared in these proceedings stem from every inhabited continent in the world, reflecting the diversity of participants in this year's Summer Institute. Collectively, these contributions paint a picture of an academic field that is in transition, as new methods, problems, and technologies are added to ongoing conceptualizations and questions. What stands out is the explicit critical analysis of long-standing issues in a world that is clearly unequal and fragmented.

There are many people to thank for their invaluable contributions to the success of the Summer Institute. CIHE would like to thank WES for its ongoing financial support of the event and for making this annual publication possible. CIHE and WES would collectively like to thank the doctoral student members of the 2023 Summer Institute planning committee (Ekaterina Minaeva, Marisa Lally, and Asuka Ichikawa) for their invaluable insights, hard work, and energy in both planning and running the Institute, as well as CIHE's graduate assistant, Nathaniel Annor-Gyimah, for his invaluable logistical support during the event. We would also like to thank Marisa Lally for her editing support for this publication and Salina Kopellas, Staff Assistant at CIHE, for the layout and design.

We look forward to the next WES-CIHE Summer Institute in 2024.

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STUDENT EXPERIENCES IN INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

Racial Learning of International Students of Color in the U.S.: Re-examining the *Learning Race in a U.S. Context Emergent Framework*

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As international students become an increasingly prominent population in U.S. higher education institutions (Institute of International Education , 2022), there is an emergent stream of literature focusing on their experiences with racism, especially for those who are non-white (Yao et al., 2019). Nevertheless, little research addresses how they learn about race in this country. The U.S. bears a unique racial history that is likely to be unfamiliar, if not confusing, to many international students. Although several racial identity development models exist, they primarily concern native-born individuals raised under the U.S. race logic (Helms, 1995; Sue et al., 2019). In contrast, international students bring their understanding of race from their home countries and are therefore likely to find the U.S. logic incongruent with their own. As race is not understood and experienced uniformly across nations, there is a pressing need to transnationalize the theorization of race and racial identity development (Shome, 2010).

Fries-Britt et al. (2014) were the first to develop a framework that attempts to capture how foreign-born[1] students of color perceive race and respond to racialized experiences in the U.S. To date, this *Learning Race in a U.S. Context* (LRUSC) emergent framework has been cited over 160 times across fields. Since its publication, several studies have arisen to address international students of color's racial learning, especially amidst a growing international student population (IIE, 2022) and an increase in discussions about diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice on campuses across the U.S. (Buckner et al., 2021). The question is whether the LRUSC framework still captures the racial identity development process of international students today, nearly a decade after its creation.

This study aims to address this question by examining the literature published after the release of the LRUSC framework (i.e. since 2014) that addresses the racial learning of international students of color in the U.S.

The LRUSC Emergent Framework

Fries-Britt et al. (2014)'s LRUSC framework[2] emerged from interviews and focus groups with 15 international students of color studying physics in U.S. higher education institutions. Most came from African and Caribbean countries with Black majority populations. The LRUSC framework assumes that international students of color start their racial learning in the U.S. with preconceived racial understandings from their home countries. It then proposes three categories - unexamined U.S. racial-ethnic identities; moving toward racial-ethnic identity examination in the U.S. context; and integrative awareness - and outlines how students move from one category to another in a non-linear fashion, as they experience racial encounters (REs) in the U.S.

1 Fries-Britt et al. (2014) use "foreign-born students" rather than "international students" because all the participants were born and raised abroad but held various citizenship statuses.

2 See Fries-Britt et al (2014) for the visual of the framework.

Literature Analysis

A systematic literature search was conducted in mid-2022 and identified six journal articles, which were published after 2014 and focus on international students of color's racial learning: Bardhan and Zhang (2017); Jiang (2021); Mitchell et al. (2017); Okura (2019); Ritter (2016); and Yu (2022). The following sections analyze these articles with respect to the LRUSC framework.

Category One: Unexamined Racial-Ethnic identities

The literature confirms that international students of color initially hold unexamined racial-ethnic identities in the U.S. context (Bardhan & Zhang, 2017; Mitchell et al., 2017). As they are able to tend to their home countries' racial context for understanding, many believe they can ignore examining U.S. racial issues or their racial identities in the U.S. (Okura, 2019; Yu, 2022). This is particularly apparent in populations that do not have the opportunity to move physically to the U.S., e.g. during the pandemic (Yu, 2022).

According to the LRUSC framework, when students initially have racial encounters, or racist encounters in most cases, they continue turning to their home countries' racial context. Therefore, they are unlikely to respond and instead see these encounters as distractions. However, the literature shows that the reasoning behind the lack of response is more nuanced. For example, the Chinese participants in research by Jiang (2021) and Yu (2022) chose not to challenge the dominant racial narratives, not because they turned to China's racial context but because they accepted the U.S.-informed global hierarchy of race as a social fact. Racial encounters also led to the self-blaming of some of these students, as they lacked an understanding of race in the U.S. context. Additionally, Mitchell et al. (2017) and Ritter (2016) suggest that racial encounters could mean not just racist experiences but various means of racial learning, i.e. through media, personal relationships, coursework, etc.

Category Two: Racial Encounters and Home Country Context

Okura (2019) and Yu (2022) reveal the importance of experiential racial encounters, such as meaningful interactions with U.S. peers, in moving students from Category One to Two in the LRUSC framework. The LRUSC framework shows that students' racial learning begins from their experiences in the U.S. and treats the home country context as a background influence. However, Jiang (2021) and Ritter (2016) suggest that students' home country context could have a far more significant impact on their racial learning in the U.S., to the extent that racial ideologies from the home countries could be employed to racialize other minorities on campuses.

Category Three: Integrative Awareness

The last category of the LRUSC framework mirrors the outcome of traditional racial identity development models for U.S. minority students (Helms, 1995; Sue et al., 2019), i.e. when students achieve an integrative awareness and see race as a motivation to succeed and influence others in their minority groups. In the initial analysis by Fries-Britt et al. (2014), only one participant reached this category. The authors claim that international students of color are, in fact, unlikely to achieve this outcome, due to their different racial experiences in their home countries.

None of the reviewed literature mentions the achievement of integrative awareness of its participants. The literature, however, suggests some possible alternative outcomes to the one posed by Fries-Britt et al. One is that students could keep resisting racial identities in the U.S. context, as either a post/decolonial resistance (Bardhan & Zhang, 2017) or a result of their post-graduation plans in their home countries (Jiang, 2021; Yu, 2022). Another is that the minoritized experiences in the U.S. could evoke students' self-reflexivity and intercultural empathy towards marginalized groups in their home countries, as well as the U.S. Bardhan and Zhang (2017) called this possibility "hopeful," as it could open the potential for creative coalitions in social justice work.

Conclusion

This paper shows that the LRUSC framework is still generally applicable to the racial learning of international students of color in the U.S. It especially captures how many students lack knowledge of race in the U.S. context and how racial encounters can shift them to racial-ethnic identity examination. However, the recent literature looking at international students of color from diverse countries of origin reveals that the framework can benefit from incorporating the following revisions:

1. broadening the scope of racial encounters from only racist encounters to various means of racial knowledge acquisition;
2. foregrounding the impacts of the home country context, as they can serve not merely as background influences but as weapons to racialize others;
3. leaving the outcomes of racial learning open, as international students of color might not achieve the same outcomes as their domestic peers, given their diverse origins of international students.

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On the Politics of Access and Participation: The Everyday Work of Students with Disabilities in Nigerian Higher Education

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Introduction

Participative equity in higher education has largely been framed as equality regimes to address some of the consequences of massification (Trow, 1973), high participation (Marginson, 2016) and the neoliberalization (Rizvi & Lingard, 2011) of higher education (HE). It has become even more critical in pluralistic and post-colonial states like Nigeria, where the need to forge an inclusive community through higher education remains a cardinal function of the universities (Lebeau, 2008). This changing nature of the 'missions' of the university has challenged how higher education institutions respond to diversity initiatives and their investment in maintaining or altering institutional cultures (Aguirre, 2020; Ahmed, 2012). With little focus on students' agency, institutional perspectives on why institutions change (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991; Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012) and become what academics or leaders make of them (Chaffee & Tierney, 1988; Tierney & Lanford, 2018) abound in the literature on the sociology of HEIs. However, students' demand for the dissociation of the university from its colonial (Bhambra, Gebrial, & Nişancıoğlu, 2018) and capitalist relics (Santos, 2018) to an inclusive and liberating pedagogical space has called for the need to understand students' agency or roles in institutional transformation. This explains why the post-Salamanca debates on the meanings of inclusion, who is to be included, into what and how inclusion should be done (e.g. Ainscow, Booth, & Dyson, 2006; Ainscow, Slee, & Best, 2019) have shown why policies on inclusion and equity in HE must be approached as a holistic reform. This study sees inclusion in higher education as a policy process that addresses asymmetrical power relations of access, participation and outcome of underrepresented communities such as students with disabilities (SWDs), women, displaced people, persons of color and young people from low-income families. Inclusive education policy and corpus of work on how education systems can become inclusive, have been critiqued as a 'neo-colonial project' (Walton, 2018 p.34) developed in the rich countries of the so-called "Global North." This has thus given rise to a "second generation of inclusive education countries in the global South" (Artiles, Kozleski, & Waitoller, 2011) uncritically adopting the theoretical and empirical understanding of disability and inclusive practices developed from the center.

To interrogate knowledge on the experience of students with disabilities in higher education and practices of inclusive education more broadly, this study explored how the practices of inclusion and participation of students with disabilities in universities are organized. This study's novel approach situates the analysis of textual and social relations or the "untidy policy moments" (Svarícek & Pol, 2011) of disability inclusion practice in the HE system of Nigeria within the "colonial matrix of power" (Quijano, 2007) shaping global education agenda. It explores the everyday experience of students with disabilities by taking a critical perspective on how complex intersections of poverty, gender, religious and cultural beliefs at the local level continue to shape the meanings of disability and the practices of inclusive education.

Methodology

I employed institutional ethnography (IE) as a materialist method to explicate institutional processes that organize a problematic everyday world (Smith, 2005). Thus, the ethnography in IE does not necessarily connote traditional ethnographies of institutions but rather a commitment to people and actuality: a "commitment to discovering 'how things are actually put together' and how they work (Smith, 2006 p. 1). While researchers can know how things work through everyday observations, experiences, discussions with people, and reading, using IE helps focus on "textually organized ruling relations" central to understanding how things work (Murray, 2020). Therefore, this study describes the interface between individual experience and their textual relations with an institution. An 'institution' is conceptualized in this study as a 'metaphorical bundle of social relations that cluster around and coordinate specific societal functions' such as higher education, locally and extra-locally (Ng et al., 2013). This study was conducted with two levels of informants (Smith, 2005) by starting from the position of 'entry-level informants' (SWDs in the case of this study) and relating their experience to the 'level two informants'. These level two informants typically consist of the Lispkian street-level bureaucrats like disability unit (DU) staff, lecturers, counselling support services, volunteers, principal officers and other actors engaging in a 'work process' with the entry-level participants. Data generation was done through interviews, observations, and document analysis at three universities in Nigeria.

Findings

Findings from this study show how the organization of equity, diversity and inclusion practices in the Nigerian

HE is coordinated by texts and discourses embedded within ongoing local and extra-local relations. Institutional mapping of the work that goes into inclusion practices shows that most units and individuals are unaware of the intentions of the institutional policies and texts. University actors identify that the diversity of students and staff on campus is necessary for their university's transformation and the development of an inclusive society, but policies and strategies put in place to support disability inclusion are poorly developed. This means students with disabilities have to "work" their own inclusion. The work that students do in terms of accessing higher education, attending classes, and demanding accommodation is what I have delineated as *access* work, *participation* work and *transformation* work. This framing of the everyday resistance of students enables us to understand how inclusion work in higher education is being done and who is doing it.

Concluding Thoughts

As national and institutional strategies are oriented towards the economic role of producing "able-bodied" graduates for the labor market, the experience of students with disabilities remains precarious amidst structural and discriminative animus. This orientation draws on the colonial and capitalist economic development rationales that facilitated the expansion of the higher education system in Nigeria like most countries of the world. As universities founded and funded by the state, these colonial and market logics continue to shape the inclusion policies and the day-to-day experience of students with disabilities in higher education.

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Co-constructing Negotiated Internationalization: Chinese Students' Lived Engagement in an International Joint University

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Introduction

The study reported in this paper explores Chinese students' experiences in an international joint university located in China: Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University (XJTLU). An international joint university is one type of transnational higher education (TNHE) institution. TNHE is defined as "the mobility of an education program or higher education institution/provider between countries" (Knight, 2016, p. 36), an important symbol of the internationalization of higher education in China. Joint universities enjoy more equality with parent institutions and potentially more space to negotiate and co-construct internationalization (Feng, 2013). Although branch campuses in China are not legally recognized, some TNHE institutions, like the University of Nottingham Ningbo (UNNC), are operating more similarly to branch campuses than others, such as XJTLU. The Chinese founder of UNNC is considered to be academically weaker than its UK partner, so the latter is in charge of academic affairs, such as curriculum design, while the former only takes care of the administrative issues (Feng, 2013; Yu, 2020). In other words, in unilateral branch campuses, there is likely to be less space for students to participate in constructing internationalization. Currently, there is limited research on students' motivations, experiences, and engagements in an internationalised environment where they have the space for co-construction.

Despite TNHE being a quickly expanding phenomenon, there is limited research on Chinese students enrolling in TNHE, which could potentially shape our understanding of the symbolic meaning of TNHE in Chinese HE internationalization. This study examines the reciprocal relationship between an institution-constructed internationalized environment and students' agency, which enriches our understanding towards the dynamics of internationalization in TNHE.

Literature Review

Current literature mainly focuses on a particular type of TNHE, namely, the international branch campus. The individual situations of students are mainly examined from their relatively low scores in Gaokao (Chinese national entrance examination), which prevents them from getting admitted to their first choice. Low performance in Gaokao acts as both a forceful push from domestic institutions and a pull to TNHE entry standards (Liu et al., 2021). TNHE also attracts these students as a stepping stone to regaining entry to elite Chinese institutions (Fang and Wang, 2014), as well as a second chance to "make up" for their failure to obtain an undergraduate degree at one of China's top universities (Xie, 2022). However, such connotations of stepping stones and compromise may contradict the more or less elite positioning of TNHE in China. This study attempts to link personal motivations to the possible influence of institutions' construction of internationalization.

Internationalization is a contested concept, and one of its most representative forms in the university is associated with English as lingua franca. In terms of the actual internationalized encounter, current literature has largely examined the provision of English-medium instruction (EMI) in TNHE. EMI is defined as "the use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language of the majority of the population is not English" (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 37). In reality, teaching and learning in a non-native language can cause considerable, and often unnecessary, challenges and inconveniences to both teachers and students. Besides, with the overall tendency for research on TNHE examining EMI, there is an oversight of other internationalized aspects of TNHE, for example, the intercultural environment (Xie, 2022). Gu and Lee (2019) discuss how students strategically navigate learning resources but are still confined to language aspects. Therefore, this study brings these aspects together and explores how Chinese students actively manage their expectations by engaging with various international aspects of TNHE.

The Study

This study explores XJTLU as a case institution to examine its students' engagement in internationalization. Since the study focuses on students' engagement, XJTLU's emphasis on the ongoing construction of internationalization is perceived as a meaningful lens to examine the students' receptions of and their interactions with institutional construction. XJTLU is hypothesized as a more negotiated space which allows students to have more opportunities for the agency to co-construct internationalization.

This study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. How do students understand internationalization and what do they expect from it?
2. How does internationalization influence Chinese undergraduate students' decision to study in a joint venture institution?
3. How do their lived experiences in a joint venture institution align with their initial understandings and expectations of internationalization?

In this study, I have adopted a focus group approach with 29 current or newly graduated Chinese XJTLU undergraduates as participants. The focus group questions were semi-structured, developing from the literature review and research questions. Students were first asked to reflect retrospectively, about their prior ways of getting to know XJTLU, their motivations for attending and their expectations of an internationalized environment. When asking about students' lived experiences, the questions are designed to be specifically filtered to the two internationalizing aspects: the 100% EMI provision, and its student-centeredness, according to the overview statement provided by the official website of XJTLU. These two aspects are the defining characteristics of XJTLU as a TNHE institution in China. Therefore, it is hypothesized that students' experiences revolve around these two traits. The data is thematically categorized and analyzed with the help of NVivo. By asking about students' expectations and engagement, this study aims to unpack the potential (mis-)match between their prior feelings based on institutional positioning and promotions, and their actual experiences of the enactment of internationalization.

Finding and Discussion

I investigated the reasons for students choosing XJTLU and discovered that internationalization plays an important role which shaped the institutional promotional strategy, where the latter emphasizes its exclusive instructional usage of English. Such a strategy has been legitimized as an essential step for students who want to study abroad afterwards, as well as framed as symbolically superior in a non-English-speaking country. However, besides this outcome-oriented expectation, students also anticipated an internationalized environment, for example, more international teachers and classmates, more flexibility and independence, as compared to non-TNHE universities. Students' engagement sometimes disappoints them in terms of the 100% EMI being compromised by adding preparatory sessions in Chinese. Nevertheless, most of them started to appreciate the pragmatic value of a non-application of institutional policy and positively experience the student-centered environment, where they were actively involved in the co-constructing process of internationalization and could therefore make the most out of the internationalized environment.

While an overwhelming majority of students aim to study abroad upon completion of their study in XJTLU, there has been a mismatch, or partial recognition, among students regarding how their aim could be achieved. Therefore, this study adds nuance to the understanding of the potential discrepancy between a structured and legitimized way of accumulating capital, and a discretionary space where individuals can make the best out of the environment. In this study, some gradually come to the realization that they need a more practical form of capital - the institutionalized form, as in credentials - to get them to the next step of postgraduate education. The 100% EMI environment, in contrast, has been too challenging and time-consuming for most participants to effectively accumulate linguistic and institutionalized capital at the same time, which inevitably leads to EMI becoming an end in itself.

Conclusion

This study has contributed to our understanding of the EMI application in TNHE and international HE, as well as the discrepancy between the prescribed internationalization encouraged by an institution, and the negotiated one adopted by students. In XJTLU, 100% EMI provision and student-centeredness reflect such dynamics and struggle because of students' and institutions' different interpretations and perceptions of internationalizing policy. In this regard, I argue that an internationalized environment impacts individuals based on their situations and there should not be a single structured way of how one should benefit. Otherwise, the structure would risk mistaking tools with aims. Therefore, through the lens of how internationalization is applied in a TNHE institution, I call for a better appreciation for the realistic and pragmatic aspects of the implementation of internationalization in HE.

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The Effect of the Wide Use of Education Agents in International Student Recruitment on the International Higher Education Sector

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Introduction

This paper is adapted from my PhD project titled "The Role of Education Agents in the Marketized International Higher Education Sector". Education agents are a person or organization that recruits international students and refers them to education providers. They are not employed by overseas education providers but are private entities, contracted to deliver a range of services to potential students and the provider (BUILA, 2021, p. 14). The services include providing and promoting information regarding countries, cities, institutions, and application documents, proposing potential countries, institutions and/or programs, assisting in producing application documents and applying for a study visa, and arranging pre-arrival services. In the marketized international higher education sector, contracting education agents appear to primarily feature in the fierce international student recruitment campaign (Nikula, Raimo & West, 2023; QS, 2021a, 2021b; Department of Education and Training, 2019; Roy, 2017). The body of research on education agents noticeably grows accordingly (Nikula, Raimo & West, 2023), covering various perspectives such as education agents, international students, higher education institutions, and other stakeholders, which tend to focus on the pragmatic functions of education agents. However, few studies have examined what the wide use of education agents means for the intensely marketized international higher education sector. Drawing on the existing scholarship and the findings of my PhD project, this paper aims to shift attention to the functioning of education agents from the visible to the invisible.

Research Design

My PhD project is constitutive of two studies aiming to place the perspectives of education agents and Chinese agent-user students (Chinese students who use education agents to apply for master's programs overseas) in dialogue through a sequential qualitative research design. By interviewing 16 agent consultants in May 2020, Study 1 evaluates how education agents support Chinese agent-user students' overseas university applications, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Study 1 demonstrates reciprocal information asymmetry and even information absence between UK universities and Chinese agent-user students, education agents' four-step information management approach during the COVID-19 pandemic, and agents' reflection on self-identity (Yang et al., 2021). Built on the findings of Study 1, Study 2 moves towards a focus on Chinese agent-user students' perspective, exploring their application experiences and how they conceptualize education agents over their application process. As a former education agent, I was aware that my professional experiences and opinions have shaped my personal values. I was therefore mindful of the need to be cautious of my assumptions and potential over-interpretation of participants' reflections. I thus deployed interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) methodology (Smith et al., 2009) to design Study 2, which undergirds the importance that meaning-making should be built on participants' voices. By means of conducting four rounds of interviews with 10 Chinese agent-user students respectively from November 2020 to July 2021, Study 2 identifies and delineates agent-user students' most valued services, namely evaluating transcripts, selecting potential programs, and producing application documents. Study 2 classifies agents as alternative labor, information navigators, and insurance strategies in the stage of selecting potential programs (Yang et al., 2023).

Implications for the International Higher Education Sector

This project (Yang et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2020) suggests that international students' application and recruitment are characterized by uncertainties. Information regarding study abroad is the essence of choice-making for prospective international students. However, the very first question for many Chinese students is what they need to know. As the number of students studying abroad surges, the information associated with applications for overseas universities spreads, in multiple forums and locations, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Then where to glean reliable and effective information becomes an important question. At the same time, confronted with fierce competition for admission, the question of how Chinese students interpret the relevant information and position themselves emerges. As a result, many Chinese students commence with information collection very early, around the outset of the first year of the undergraduate programs. Chinese students tend to approach multifarious channels in relation to studying abroad, such as education agents, social media like official accounts on WeChat, recommendations from others, and official websites. In this sense, to many Chinese students, the sense of studying abroad is nebulous, and then uncertainties are consciously and unconsciously interwoven in their choice-making process.

Moreover, GPAs and applicants' undergraduate university backgrounds are perceived by overseas universities, education agents, and Chinese students as essential factors in the admission assessments, particularly postgraduate taught (PGT) programs in the UK. However, this project demonstrates that from the perspective of Chinese students, admission requirements of UK PGT programs, especially with respect to GPAs and undergraduate university backgrounds, are opaque, while general admission requirements appear to be clearly listed on UK university websites. In the market logic, UK universities do not depict their products clearly to potential students, spelling product information asymmetry (Wankhade & Dabade, 2006). In other words, UK universities are conditioning uncertainties in the international students' admission process.

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic generated severe uncertainties and challenges for the international higher education sector and for Chinese students' plans to study abroad (Yang et al., 2021). Especially in terms of the information flow, reciprocal information asymmetry and even information absence occurred between UK universities and Chinese students during the pandemic, which even rendered international students' application and recruitment temporarily stalled. In other words, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated pre-existing uncertainties enmeshed in international students' application and recruitment. At that point, education agents were seen to play a profound role as information brokers in information circulation between Chinese applicants and UK universities through a four-step information management approach. More specifically, the pragmatic value of education agents at this point is recognized as alleviating such immanent and unpredictable uncertainties for both Chinese students and UK universities.

Education agents seemingly function as reproducing uncertainties as well. As Yang et al. (2021) and Yang et al. (2023) indicate, application documents excluding transcripts appear to be less important in admission to UK PGT programs. It is thus worth questioning whether GPAs and the background of undergraduate universities effectively demonstrate applicants' academic strengths, specific skills, and even their true potential, given that the grading systems between China and UK higher education are different. With education agents' guidance, Chinese students become sensible about whether they need to retake some courses in which the scores are not good enough rather than failing. It means that high GPAs in China's higher education system can be attained intentionally and strategically with education agents' guidance, thus undermining their effectiveness in demonstrating students' genuine competence corresponding to intended programs. As a result, enrolled students' competencies likely mismatch those required by the programs, inducing potential conflicts between their expectations of UK PGT and actual learning experiences. On the part of UK universities, however, as Yang et al. (2023) suggest, it seems that they do not recognize this issue; they still grapple with the overwhelming application numbers by raising requirements for GPAs and delimiting the list of universities in China. Therefore, I argue that the current admissions policies of UK PGT programs appear to be partial and dysfunctional towards Chinese students, impinging on a holistic assessment of applicants' academic achievement and true potential, thereby confining recruitment of intended high-qualified students and sowing the seeds of uncertainties concerning Chinese international students' upcoming learning experiences and outcomes.

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EXPERIENCES OF ACADEMICS IN INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

Power and (In)Equity in the Mobility of International Academic Staff

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The internationalization of higher education is often depicted as unconditionally good, ideologically neutral, coherent, disembodied, and knowledge-driven policy intervention. Within discussions about internationalization, the mobility of students and staff takes prime attention (Altbach, 2004). Particularly, the mobility of academics is praised for fostering mutual understanding and knowledge production (Teichler, 2015). However, the flow of international mobility of scholars from the Global South to the Global North highlights power imbalances and equity concerns that are hard to ignore. While a few countries continue to attract large numbers of talented international scholars, the home countries of these scholars suffer from losing such valuable talent. Therefore, understanding the international mobility of academic staff, who are critical players in knowledge production, is essential for developing policies to retain such talent.

The international mobility of academic staff is highly diverse, context-bound, and complicated. De Haas (2021) argues that neoclassical migration theories and push & pull models are insufficient to explain (academic) migration, i.e., long-term mobility, as a social process, as they tend to list several static factors that play a role in mobility/migration without specifying their role and interactions or providing a structural account of the social processes driving population movements. This paper aims to partially address this gap by providing a nuanced, richer, and novel understanding of long-term international academic mobility via the example of academic migration from Turkey to the UK. The study explores how multi-level structural conditions have shaped academic migration from Turkey to the UK over the years by scrutinizing the migration behaviors of UK-based Turkish academics.

Methodology

This study is deliberately exploratory, and in line with this, it employs a qualitative research design underpinned by a social constructivist philosophy. The data is collected through 50 semi-structured in-depth interviews with UK-based Turkish academics working at over 30 UK universities in various positions and fields. Once the data were collected, thematic analysis was applied using NVivo to identify central and sub-themes. Throughout the study, ethical considerations for participant recruitment, the interview process, anonymization, and data security have been handled in accordance with the British Educational Research Association (2018) and UCL guidelines. As the conceptual framework, the capability-aspiration approach (de Haas, 2021), a new theoretical approach in migration studies developed based on Amartya Sen's capability approach (1999), is applied. Accordingly, migration is regarded as a function of people's capabilities and aspirations to migrate within given sets of perceived geographical opportunity structures.

Findings

The data suggest that the structural conditions shaping academic migration from Turkey to the UK include political, socio-economic, and professional/academic conditions. When presenting the findings, some direct quotations from the interviews are added to exemplify the findings when necessary.

Firstly, unlike prevailing academic mobility discourses that stress academic rationales as the driving forces behind international academic mobility, the study discusses the political conditions in the home country, i.e., Turkey, as the central theme influencing migration decisions. Many participants in the study expressed how their critical political stance against government policies led to some adverse consequences, such as being appointed to lower-ranked positions, postponement of promotions, or rejection of international conference requests. Especially participants who were members of the Academics for Peace Movement faced severe political pressure, including removal from Turkish journals' boards, rejections for promotions, dismissals from their positions, and even threats. Consequently, they sought refuge abroad or canceled their plans to return.

These findings align with recent studies concerning academic migration (Fidler et al., 2022), all of which argue that political conditions are the main driving force behind recent migration flows from Turkey. In Sen's (1999) words, political freedom and protective security, in the form of academic freedom, are central to producing scholarly work without fear of job loss or other repercussions. Therefore, once the deprivation of such political freedom becomes evident, the exodus of critical thinkers becomes widespread.

Additionally, academic/professional conditions are also found to be key factors shaping academic mobility from Turkey to the UK. The data suggest that Turkish academics migrate to the UK "to advance their careers," "get involved in international networks," "participate in international research projects," "receive international grants," "work in a peaceful environment," "access better research facilities," etc. in their own words.

Similarly, meritocracy and transparency in job offerings, promotions, and funding emerge as fundamental conditions in the higher education sector that shape academic migration from Turkey to the UK. While many participants had international experiences in several other destinations, notably continental Europe and the U.S., they perceived the likelihood of obtaining tenure-track positions in these destinations as relatively lower than their local counterparts.

Comparatively, the UK was cited as "the most welcoming academia" because the participants perceived that job offerings and promotions are based solely on meritocracy and that the UK higher education system operates transparently.

The scholarly literature suggests that international scholars mainly move abroad to work at prestigious universities with world-renowned scholars, extend global networks, and accumulate capital (Ackers, 2005; Bauder, 2015). Echoing with the pertinent literature, the current study's findings also support that academic conditions play a significant role in shaping academic migration from Turkey to the UK.

Lastly, socioeconomic conditions were discussed as a critical component of the migration decision process. Many participants in the study stated that "higher living standards," "comfort," and "social order" abroad, as opposed to "poor living standards" and the "burden of daily life" in Turkey were also important factors behind their migration.

Improving living standards through migration, i.e., lifestyle migration, has been widely discussed in the literature (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). Although the scholarly literature on academic mobility avoids portraying international academics as lifestyle migrants, the data indicates that lifestyle migration is also a part of academic migration from Turkey to the UK, particularly for those from lower socioeconomic status.

Discussion and Conclusion

De Haas (2021) conceptualizes migration as an intrinsic part of broader economic, political, cultural, technological, and demographic change processes. Due to these changes in the homeland and capability-enhancing activities like international education, people's image of the good life changes. The awareness of an alternative lifestyle and the belief that it is within their reach, thanks to their enhanced capability, likely increase their aspirations to migrate.

In the study, 80 percent of the participants (40/50) have obtained their PhDs abroad, and the rest have had some degree of international experience, including fellowships and short-term jobs. Turkish academics' experiences overseas, notably an international PhD, increased their aspirations to migrate and seek employment at a UK university because these experiences not only increased their knowledge about opportunities elsewhere, notably in the UK, but also instilled the belief and self-confidence that it is possible to find an academic job abroad. Therefore, the migration of Turkish academics to the UK is a function of increased capabilities and aspirations thanks to their international education/postdoctoral research visits.

Most participants did not plan to stay abroad at the beginning of their first prolonged international sojourn, PhD, or postdoctoral visit; instead, their decision to work in British academia developed throughout the years. While some stayed abroad without taking a "gap" year, others spent some time in Turkey as academics, and "while in the game," they made another international move to become academics abroad.

Furthermore, the extent to which local opportunities allow people to lead the lives they have reason to value (which is Sen's definition of development) at home is also likely to affect their migration aspirations. Again, drawing on the interviews, I argue that the recent setbacks witnessed in the Turkish political, economic, and academic life led Turkish academics to work and live in the UK, as they felt their freedoms at home were restricted. Restrictive policies, dysfunctional academia, intrusion of politics into the university space, and lack of funding constrain Turkish scholars' capabilities to research, write, and speak freely. Conversely, the UK academia offers a well-functioning working space where Turkish researchers enhance their academic capabilities.

Based on the discussion above, understanding international academic mobility through the aspiration-capability approach offers new insights into its flexible, context-bound, and agentic dimensions.

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Traditions as "Tacit Knowledge" in Global Asymmetries: The Case of Chinese Humanities and Social Sciences Scholars

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Introduction

Globalization has been overwhelming and asymmetrical, having different meanings in societies with various historical and cultural backgrounds. For many Asian societies, globalization has brought modern higher education systems with "twisted roots," meaning that modern universities in these places are shaped by both the foreign (mainly "Western") origin of the basic academic model and indigenous traditions (Altbach, 1989). For example, contemporary China has a higher education system that is highly modernized and patterned on Western models. However, China's universities are also quite "Chinese" under the influence of indigenous traditions. The cultural conflicts between Chinese and Western values (Yang, 2022) have been perplexing generations of Chinese scholars since the nineteenth century. Even today, such conflicts are still intractable for Chinese humanities and social sciences (HSS) scholars, whose research is deeply entangled with social and cultural contexts (Yang, 2014).

All of the above is especially significant for rethinking globalization through a cultural lens. As Euro-American epistemic dominance is increasingly rethought and challenged (Marginson, 2006; Bhambra et al., 2018), intellectual pluriversality has arisen (Reiter, 2018), with various non-Western traditions introduced (da Cunha, 2009; Reagan, 2018). Nevertheless, few studies empirically explain what role these indigenous traditions are actually playing in higher education. Taking Chinese HSS scholars as a case, this study borrows Michael Polanyi's notion of "tacit knowledge" (Polanyi, 1959) to explore how traditions are playing out in higher education against a backdrop of global epistemic asymmetries.

Methodological Considerations

This study employs a qualitative methodology to grasp Chinese traditions via the perceptions and experiences of the participants. Thematic analysis was conducted on the data, which involved both interviews and published works of 28 purposively-selected Chinese scholars. These scholars have shown great concern about Chinese traditions and are working in fifteen research-intensive universities in mainland China. They are from different research fields of humanities and social sciences, including sociology, anthropology, education, political science, archaeology, translatology, literature, history, philology, and philosophy. Scholars from research-intensive universities were selected, because such individuals are more likely to have good knowledge of traditions and rich academic experiences, while institutional and disciplinary diversity was sought in order to ensure some diversity of perspective. Twenty of the participants were interviewed online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. An additional eight did not participate in the interviews but were added as complementary participants, as the experiences and perceptions reflected in their published works were found to significantly enrich the findings.

Key Findings

The data demonstrate that Chinese traditions as "tacit knowledge" profoundly influence participants in three dimensions: scholarly self-requirement, moral self-improvement, and aesthetic enjoyment. However, the participants do not know how to position and impart tacit traditions in the current higher education system

The first dimension is scholarly self-requirement. The participants still align themselves with some traditional scholarly principles which can be traced back to ancient China. The most frequently mentioned principles are the quest for sincerity (*cheng* 誠), comprehensiveness of scholarship (*tong* 通), the unification/unity of knowledge and action (*zhi xing he yi* 知行合一), and humanistic pragmatism (*jing shi zhi yong* 經世致用). As collective beliefs and spontaneous attitudes, these principles are hardly measured by today's academic yardsticks. Still, they are closely related to participants' knowledge production in terms of their understanding of knowledge, research ethics, attitudes to academic careers, and writing styles.

The second dimension is moral self-improvement, which mainly refers to a traditional Confucian belief of "learning to become more authentically or more fully human" (Tu, 1985, p. 52). Many participants worshipped traditional virtues and believed high-level scholarship and good moral life are inseparable. Some of them have been practicing Confucian moral efforts (*gongfu lun*工夫論), a traditional way created by Song Confucians to pursue sagehood or ideal personalities through deep reading, quiet sitting, and reflexive meditation. By doing so, they believe they have improved their comprehension of life and the world, cultivate personal virtues, and form good dispositions and lifestyles.

The last dimension is aesthetic enjoyment. Rooted in the harmonization of man and nature/Heaven (天人合一), traditional Chinese aesthetics believes "words do not exhaust ideas" (*yan bu jin yi* 言不盡意) (Lynn, 1994, p. 67) and the sense of beauty comes from the fusion of emotion/feeling and nature scenery (*qing jing heyi* 情景合一). Such aesthetic pursuits can be found in the participants' experiences about literary reading, calligraphy and painting, dance, music, architecture, and so on. An example is their appreciation of traditional landscape painting. "Landscape" (*shan shui* 山水) literally means "mountain and water." The participants felt that landscape painting has an air of "harmony and peace" and gained emotional comfort and spiritual freedom by wandering in the mountains and water. They have taken great pleasure in these aesthetic activities and developed imagination, creation, intuition, insight, and sensibility.

Although the three dimensions are important, the participants have failed to find space for them in today's Western-patterned universities. First, it is hard to impart these traditions to students through formal curricula and teaching. For example, one of the participants pointed out the tradition of Confucian moral efforts has died away in modern universities. He found it impossible to teach students quiet sitting and reflexive meditation because people would think it is not "academic" or even weird for a professor to do so. Furthermore, his faculty or department would not allow him to teach his students these things. Besides, many of the participants have been troubled by the "publish or perish" culture. They complained that they have to publish as many papers as possible and have little time for traditional moral and aesthetic pursuits. As a participant said, before pursuing moral self-improvement, the first thing is to earn a living in such a system.

Some of them have tried to find solutions. For instance, "teaching by personal example through words and deeds" (*yanchuan shenjiao* 言傳身□) in daily interactions with their students is an informal but effective way. But overall, more predicaments will continue, and finding solutions needs generations of effort.

Conclusion

Chinese traditions play an important role in today's higher education but in a "silent" and "informal" manner. These traditions are embodied in the experiences of Chinese HSS scholars as scholarly self-requirement, moral self-improvement, and aesthetic enjoyment. They are tacit since they are not in today's academic standards or identified by the modern higher education system, but they are crucial for the knowledge production and intellectual life of Chinese HSS scholars.

Of course, this paper cannot reveal the full picture but rather some real situations of Chinese traditions from scholars' perspectives. Field observations were also not conducted due to the lockdown during the pandemic, which may limit this study's ability to provide a thick description with full details. However, overall, this study indicates that it is possible to examine traditions in empirical research. The case of Chinese HSS scholars also implies the possibility that various indigenous traditions are functioning tacitly in higher education and are practiced by people in non-Western societies. Paying more attention to these traditions is significant to promote the global agenda of intellectual pluriversality.

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ISSUES IN INTERNATIONALIZATION

Power and Equity in International Scholarships

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Introduction

International scholarships represent an invaluable experience for personal, academic, and professional growth. However, these programs are not always available to the general public. The Global North tends to be a favored destination for study abroad programs, resulting in unequal distribution of these opportunities. This unequal distribution exacerbates power imbalances among universities and hinders access to education for marginalized populations. In fact, universities in the Global North tend to reproduce social hierarchies and assume the universality of Western forms of knowledge, which inevitably affect individuals' professional and academic choices (Stein et al., 2016). This creates an environment where wealth and privilege may play a disproportionate role in determining who has access to educational resources and opportunities and who does not.

Campbell and Neff (2020) define international scholarships as programs that involve individuals studying in higher education institutions abroad. Students must also pursue a degree at a higher education institution and should be working with an advisor. The scholarship award must be part of a program, following selection criteria that are advertised and entail a competitive selection process. Lastly, the scholarship must cover most (over 50%) of the study level, as well as other expenses related to the academic experience (p. 827). This paper compares four scholarship programs from Latin America to understand how their characteristics may affect student access to these opportunities and favor certain institutions over others.

Methodology

Perna et al. (2014) typology was used to classify scholarships offered in Latin America. This typology reflects four main types of scholarships: type 1, which concerns programs focused on the development of basic skills; type 2, which focus on the development of advanced knowledge in developing nations; type 3, which focus on the development of advanced knowledge in developed nations; and type 4, which promote short-term study abroad. Latin American government-funded scholarships were found to generally take the form of Type 3 (i.e. they fund students for the development of advanced knowledge in developed nations). Guided by the literature, a subset of such programs were selected for further analysis based on their programmatic characteristics, such as mission statement, program focus on rankings, and return conditions, as well as the availability of information on their websites. These programs are: Colfuturo (Colombia), Guatefuturo (Guatemala), Pronabec (Peru), and BECAL (Paraguay). All of the selected programs fund students' graduate studies and have a selection process that students go through before they get selected.

Preliminary Results

The selected programs are similar in many respects. First, students who apply to these programs are expected to be excellent professionals with academic and/or professional goals that align with the country's development goals and are expected to return to contribute to the building capacity of their country. This is showcased by the programs' descriptions or mission statements. For example: "It is a financial support initiative for Colombian professionals, with *academic excellence*, who have the desire to expand their professional careers with master's or doctoral studies in the best *universities abroad*" (Colfuturo, Colombia); "To be the leading foundation that contributes to training professionals with *high international standards of academic excellence to promote the development of Guatemala*" (Guatefuturo, Guatemala).

Furthermore, the emphasis on international ranking systems is an important aspect that influences university choice for those students applying to these programs. All four scholarships - BECAL (Paraguay), Colfuturo (Colombia), Guatefuturo (Guatemala), and Pronabec (Peru) - emphasize ranking systems at the moment of application. Some examples of these rankings are Times Higher Education, QS World University Rankings, and ARWU. These programs' characteristics align with previous findings on this topic.

Another similarity is that all of the programs require students to return and work in their home country, following their time abroad (a model similar to other government scholarships around the world, e.g. Kazakhstan [Perna et al, 2015]). Furthermore, these government programs have "binding agreements" (Campbell, 2018), meaning that students need to pay back the cost of their education, if they do not return and work for a period of time in their home country.

However, despite such similarities, these programs differ, particularly in terms of their funding model. Scholarships in Latin America can be classified into three models: scholarships, where students do not need to pay any money for the scholarship received (Paraguay); credit scholarships, where students at first receive a loan to study abroad and, depending on returning conditions, they can receive a credit remission (Colombia, Guatemala); and educational loans, where students receive low-interest educational loans to pursue their studies abroad (Peru). The types of students selected and the program funding model may heavily affect access to these scholarships. That is, it may be the case that students who come from specific backgrounds possess the necessary knowledge to build a profile that may be attractive to the selection committee of the scholarship. Moreover, such students may possess the financial resources to pay for the paperwork required for the scholarship applications, as well as any other expenses that the scholarship may not cover. Thus, access to these programs is far from being equitable for those students who do not possess the financial or social capital to pursue these opportunities.

Conclusion

Studying scholarships' characteristics helps researchers understand two main factors. First, students who have access to these programs must focus on universities that are well-ranked. Students then mainly focus on English-speaking universities located, generally, in the Global North. Likewise, universities in the Global North benefit from the widely accepted use of rankings in order to attract and receive international students. This situation is evidence of the power dynamic that remains among institutions from the Global North and the Global South. Secondly, the scholarship programs' characteristics exclude those students who do not have the financial means to cover the cost of studying in well-ranked universities and/or who do not speak English. This may be the case particularly for programs that have a loan element to the funding model. Hence, access to these programs and to international education is not equitable. Thus, the focus on ranking systems is but one aspect of the scholarship program design that could be revised. In fact, rankings so far have not been proof of higher education quality or teaching quality (Hazelkorn & Mihut, 2022). Considering this, it is a task for researchers and policymakers to address these issues in scholarship programs to ensure more equitable access for students. The focus on ranking systems only generates inequality of access and has so far made no significant contribution to society and the public good. Thus, scholarship programs, researchers, and educators, in general, should be more critical of ranking systems and how these are used for government scholarship programs.

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Equity, Access, Merit and Justice in Aid-Funded International Scholarship Programs

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Target 4b of the Sustainable Development Goals requires donors to 'substantially expand globally the number of [higher education] scholarships available to developing countries…' (United Nations, 2015). The inclusion of this target and the sum of aid spent on scholarships infer that aid-funded scholarships for higher education contribute to ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education to a significant enough degree that their increase would impact meaningfully on sustainable development. Current opportunities for international mobility, however, have been characterised as representing an elite class looking to reproduce their social position (Brooks & Waters, 2011). In adopting the SDGs, member states pledged to ensure that 'no one will be left behind' and that they would 'endeavor to reach the furthest behind first'. This supports UNESCO's directive that scholarships which are included in Target 4b of the SDGs 'should be transparently targeted at young people from disadvantaged backgrounds' (2017, p. 14).

'Access' is a term used commonly in higher education, which has two distinct meanings: either access as *fairness,* or access as *inclusion* (Marginson, 2011, p. 23). The former relates to overall participation rates in higher education – are there enough places to meet demand? And the latter – are the individuals included in higher education representative of the general population? Access as fairness seeks to identify the optimum size of a higher education system to ensure that the receipt of a qualification is meaningful within a human capital system. It considers higher education in relation to the economic value of the qualification being sought. However, Marginson contends that there is a point within high participation systems in high- and middle-income countries where Gross Tertiary Enrolment Rate (GTER) approaches 50 percent and the focus shifts to issues of access as *inclusion* and policy begins to address underrepresented groups (2016). This can be seen in the UK, for example, where the focus has been on lower socioeconomic groups and, in the US, with affirmative action programs for underrepresented racial groups (Jerrim & Vignoles, 2015; Wilson-Strydom & Walker, 2015). There have not been equivalent demands for equity in the internationally mobile student populations in the way that there have increasingly been within domestic higher education systems (Brown & Tannock, 2009; Tannock, 2013).

Whilst the shift to access as inclusion is happening in these higher-income, higher-participation contexts, where places are limited in higher education, such as in sub-Saharan Africa where GTER is approaching 10%, focus is still on access as *fairness,* i.e. increasing the number of places available to ensure that the demand for higher education is met (Ahunanya et al., 2013; Aluede et al., 2012; Darvas et al., 2017; Oanda & Jowi, 2012; Varghese, 2015). Individuals that are able to access higher education in low GTER contexts tend to be those who have been historically privileged with the source of the demand for higher education being the socially, politically, and economically powerful. Under these conditions, there is little impetus for the state or private higher education providers to consider underrepresented groups in their plans for increasing access. This has resulted in studies of access in higher-participation, low-income contexts finding that educational inequalities are being perpetuated (Clancy & Goastellec, 2007; Ilie & Rose, 2016; Salmi & Bassett, 2012).

Sen's theory of Development as Freedom (1999) and the complex, political and contested concepts of equity, merit and justice are a useful lens through which to consider aid-funded scholarships. Sen's thesis argues that freedom is the ultimate goal of development, and the growth of freedoms is the principal means by which development should be measured. The leave no one behind principles support Sen's 'removal of major sources of unfreedom' as a development goal (1999, p. 3). Unfreedom in this context refers to the barriers that prevent less privileged groups from accessing higher education if they so desire. Equity of access in this context describes the extent to which the internationally mobile student population is demographically and economically representative of the domestic population of the 'sending' country. This framing draws on Sen's idea of 'transcendent institutionalism', in that true equity can only be realized if 100% of a population is represented or has an opportunity available to them (2009, p. 5). Marginson points out the utopianism inherent in Sen's approach, it only being possible if 100% of the population were able to access higher education (2011), but it is nonetheless a useful conceptual framing.

Scholarship programs regularly collate details of their recipients' demographic characteristics but do not systematically publish the data, making it difficult to study the degree to which scholarships programs are being accessed by individuals from underrepresented backgrounds (Mawer, 2018; also Institute of International Education, 2016). Many international scholarship programs are limited to graduate-level study. To be eligible, applicants must have successfully attained a 'good' first degree. With inequalities widening at each level of education, UNESCO has warned that SDG Target 4b may exacerbate inequality, as only those from privileged backgrounds may be able to access these opportunities (2016).

There are two ways that Target 4b might help realise SDG 4, either in ensuring these scholarships (taken to be of 'quality') are inclusive and equitable themselves, or that the impact of these scholarships will ensure inclusive and equitable quality education in the recipient country. The leave no one behind principles require, according to Sachs et al. (2019), that the design, implementation, and monitoring of activities under the SDGs take into account groups that have been traditionally marginalized, excluded, and underrepresented, and to ensure that combating inequality is centered in all development programming. It is within the framework of these principles that Target 4b, and its indicator - 'volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study' (United Nations, 2017) - is situated, and within which aid-funded scholarship programs must be understood.

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Excellence Initiatives for the Internationalization of Higher Education: The Case of the Brazilian Capes-PrInt Program

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A recent British Council study on international higher education in Latin America (Usher et al., 2019) analyzed the internationalization level of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico. Some similarities were found among them, such as having lower prestige universities, lower demand for inbound mobility, and language barriers, considering these are Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries, with few English-taught programs and weak command of English among academics. Thus, internationalization is seen as a policy area of low priority in these Latin American countries, receiving scarce funding, and, in the cases of existing monetary resources, focusing its efforts on sending graduate students or post-doctoral researchers abroad to expose them to high-quality research environments and other languages (Usher et al., 2019). Gacel-Ávila (2020) adds that, although Latin American countries have launched significant national initiatives and programs, they lack continuity and long-term funding. Therefore, "public and institutional internationalization policies need to be strengthened in order to avoid HE [higher education] in LAC [Latin America and the Caribbean] losing its relevance in the current global context" (Gacel-Ávila, 2020, p. 153).

In Brazil, Capes, the funding agency linked to the Ministry of Education, launched the Capes-PrInt call in 2017, intending to finance the expansion of the internationalization of graduate programs for four years. The Capes-PrInt program differed from previous initiatives from the Brazilian government because it based itself on an active and autonomous role of the winning institutions, who would define the projects, international partners, and research areas to be prioritized (Ergin & Leal, 2019; Marconi et al., 2019; Morosini, 2019). Even with much less financial support than previous programs, such as the Sciences without Borders (de Wit et al., 2019; Ergin & Leal, 2019; Marconi et al., 2019), a focus on institutional strategic thinking, research, more experienced researchers, and graduate programs were seen in Capes-PrInt, as well as the incorporation of internationalization dimensions other than student mobility (Ergin & Leal, 2019; de Wit et al., 2019; Marconi et al., 2019; Feijó & Trindade, 2021).

The selection results, published in 2018, reveal the government's interest in investing in the so-called "research universities," which are the more internationally linked institutions, with the potential of occupying high positions in international university rankings and becoming more competitive globally (Ergin & Leal, 2019; de Wit & Altbach, 2021). This desire is reminiscent of "excellence initiatives" that have been created by emerging and developed countries (Ergin & Leal, 2019), which, according to de Wit & Altbach (2021), "have brought about a differentiation within national systems, by separating an elite sector of world-class universities from other, more nationally and regionally oriented, research universities" (p. 309).

Feijó and Trindade (2021) add that such programs can enhance inequalities since they privilege institutions with previous experience in actions aimed at the development of internationalization. Marinoni and de Wit (2019) agree with the risk of negative consequences in terms of equality, especially if "this process is undertaken only by higher education institutions that are already engaged in it and not by those that are not and are therefore more in need of it" (paragraph 21). In addition, Ergin and Leal (2019) highlight that excellence initiatives have brought challenges such as "difficulties in measuring educational quality, exclusive centrality of research, disregard of local/original features of universities, and the dominance of economic rationales" (p. 24-25).

One of the eligibility criteria for the Capes-PrInt application was for institutions to have an institutional plan for internationalization, or a similar document, approved internally. Such a plan, however, would not be part of the application documents analyzed by the evaluating committee. Most universities did not have an internationalization plan at the time of the call (McManus & Neves, 2021) and there was/is no national policy for the internationalization of higher education institutions in Brazil (either public or private) providing guidelines. Therefore, all institutions intending to apply for the call, in addition to designing their funding proposal, had to design an institutional plan for internationalization and have it internally approved within a few months.

This lack of importance given to the internationalization plans in the selection process is what arose our interest in researching such documents. In the scope of a master's thesis, the research goal was, then, to analyze and compare, using content analysis (Bardin, 2011) as a methodology, the institutional plans for internationalization designed by the 24 federal universities approved in the call – out of a total of 36 higher education institutions and research institutes awarded the grant – aiming to find if they signal the evolving dynamics in existing approaches to internationalization in the country. The documents were coded, with the support of the NVivo software, into the coding system conceived for this purpose. The coding system had the following major categories: content structure, and policies and programs' focus. The latter section was subdivided into internationalization abroad, internationalization at home, internationalization of research, and comprehensive internationalization strategies.

The analysis revealed that the institutional plans for internationalization are aligned with the current global discussions and trends in the internationalization of higher education, showing certain homogenization of activities and approaches. Therefore, there is room for innovation connected with local and institutional characteristics and context, bringing some "Brazilianness" to the strategies. This perception can be related to the absence of a national public policy for the internationalization of higher education in Brazil, which would define the country's interests, priorities, and aspirations, guiding the universities in their strategic planning, helping shift the perspective to one more connected to the local and institutional characteristics and context. The extension of the program's period of implementation due to the pandemic does not allow us, yet, to assess if or to what extent the investment in these "excellent" institutions has deepened the inequalities in the development of internationalization between them and those institutions not awarded the grant, but it is, without question, an aspect for further investigation in the upcoming years.

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Revealing Structural Inequalities under Taiwan's Internationalization Policies

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The internationalization of higher education has become a focus of governments and higher education institutions (HEIs) worldwide over the past five decades (Knight & De Wit, 2018). While power and inequality issues in higher education internationalization on the West-East and North-South axes have received much attention (Marginson & Xu, 2022; Mwangi et al., 2018), these issues in national systems are under-researched. Hence, this study aims to provide deeper insights into system-level inequalities in Taiwan's internationalization policies and to lay the groundwork for future research on similar systems, especially in East Asia. By conducting case studies at a public university and a private university of technology, this study identifies substantial differences in their internationalization approaches rooted in structural inequalities. The differences are interpreted using the critical cultural-political-economic framework of Robertson and Dale (2015), which views education as an ensemble shaped by cultural, economic, and political forces.

The following paragraphs of this paper first introduce Taiwan's hierarchical higher education system. In light of the hierarchical structure, the impact of current internationalization policies on the case universities is then discussed.

Taiwan's Higher Education System and Current Internationalization Policies

Taiwan's higher education system entered a "universal" stage after an expansion in the 1980s. In 2021, the 148 higher education institutions (HEIs) in Taiwan collectively hosted 1.18 million students, with an enrollment rate of over 80 percent (Taiwan's Ministry of Education, 2022). Currently, there are two primary internationalization policies in Taiwan. On the one hand, Taiwan has prioritized international student recruitment, considering the shortage of domestic students due to low birth rates (Ma, 2014). On the other hand, the Program on Bilingual Education for Students in College was initiated in 2021. This program seeks to "enhance students' English proficiency" and "elevate national competitiveness" by promoting English as a medium of instruction (EMI) courses in Taiwanese HEIs (Taiwan's Ministry of Education, 2021, p. 2).

As all public and private Taiwanese HEIs are eligible for government funding, Hou et al. (2020) suggest that Taiwan's internationalization policies have been implemented with an egalitarian belief. Nevertheless, Lo (2009) points out that a hierarchical system has been established under Taiwan's internationalization policies. More specifically, the top tier is dominated by public research universities aiming for international excellence. The other three types of HEIs, namely public and private universities of technology and private universities, are at lower tiers with more locally-focused and teaching-oriented strategies. On this basis, this study aimed to examine how the scenarios and strategies for internationalization might differ significantly in different HEIs.

The Impacts of Internationalization Policies at the Institutional Level

The two cases included in the study are a top-ranked public research university (Case A) and a private university of technology (Case B). Empirical data on these universities' internationalization strategies were mainly collected through 22 semi-structured interviews with administrative leaders and academic staff and contextualized with relevant strategic documents.

Based on Lo's (2009) model, Case A has a higher status than Case B. Case A, with a great international and domestic reputation, has received sufficient funding to upgrade its environment, enhance international research partnerships, and offer high-quality EMI courses. It, therefore, attracts more international scholars and students. On the other hand, since Case B is a university of technology providing practice-oriented training, its source of international students is limited to Southeast and South Asian countries. Meanwhile, interviewees from Case B reflected on their difficulties in promoting EMI under the government's policy due to the low English proficiency of domestic students. In this case, English-taught courses are thus regarded more as responding to the demands of international students than empowering local students.

Given the widespread "ranking fever" and ambitions for "world-class" universities, such government-led role differentiation is common among East Asian countries (Mok & Marginson, 2021). However, this study further attributes the differences in the two cases to structural inequalities in the "universal" system. In other words, the unfavorable situation of EMI in Case B indicates deeper inequalities in the system. As Yu and Chen (2022) suggest, Taiwan's "universal" system only increases the opportunities for students with low- or middle-socioeconomic status to attend private HEIs but not high-status public universities. In this context, these students pay higher tuition fees to attend low-selective HEIs with less government funding. Interviewees in Case B also pointed out that English textbooks are sometimes too expensive for their students to afford, which may reduce students' motivations and learning outcomes of EMI. Under the current policy emphasis on English proficiency, their students are in an even more disadvantageous position than their cohorts in public universities. It is in line with Kariya's (2011) claim that a hierarchical structure coupled with universalization may lead to widening, rather than eliminating, social inequalities. As a few flagship universities are favored under government funding in consideration of resource efficiency, such inequalities seem to be continued.

In addition to the above mentioned political and economic reasons, a cultural explanation of the legitimation of these policies is provided. As a society with longstanding Confucian traditions, the responsibility for education rests primarily within individuals and families (Marginson, 2013; Yang, 2019). In this context, the government can merely offer seemingly equal opportunities under internationalization policies by opening funding applications to all HEIs. However, the extent to which students can benefit from these policies remains their own responsibility. This Confucian tradition has been further reinforced by the contemporary neoliberal discourse that imagines "a chain of equivalence between economic prosperity, modernization, social mobility and proficiency in English" (Kedzierski, 2016, p. 385). In this imagination and without proper concerns for equity, while internationalization has been vigorously promoted in Taiwan's higher education system, the challenges faced by local students in non-elite HEIs may be overlooked.

To conclude, this study presents a cultural-political-economic explanation for how structural inequalities are exacerbated under Taiwan's internationalization policies. Instead of egalitarianism (Hou et al., 2020), the findings of this study support elitism as a consistent driving force of Taiwan's internationalization approach. It thus calls for more critical internationalization studies that question structural inequalities in Asian contexts in order to enable a more egalitarian future.

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Exploring English and its Symbolic Violence in Internationalization at Home in China

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Beelen & Jones (2015) define Internationalization at Home (IaH) as the "purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic environments" (p. 69). In China, English is the core language policy when higher education institutions (HEIs) promote internationalization (Guimarães et al., 2019). If universities stick to national language in academia, their internationalization endeavor could be seen as "hollow" (Jenkins, 2011, p. 927). Hence, English serves as the major channel to "meet domestic demand for an 'internationalization at home' experience" (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 232). Paradoxically, English is harnessed to beget a multicultural teaching and learning environment, while, in fact, the dominant use of English establishes its hegemony in IaH. Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) can provide an epistemological tool to debunk the legitimacy of English in China's IaH, thus promoting indigenous Chinese culture in its internationalization efforts. English serves as a form of symbolic violence in China's IaH, because its dominance as a language is reproduced by Chinese people and consecrated as the legitimate symbol for internationalization.

Language, Pedagogic Action, and Bourdieu's Symbolic Violence in China

China's higher education enjoys a history of following its own developmental path under the guidance of its own logic, despite external influences (Yang, 2012). However, China's tradition of cultural superiority was shaken by devastating defeats in the beginning of modern history, since 1840 (Yang, 2012). When aiming to internationalize the domestic aspects of HEIs, China established the significant status of English in 1978 and started the College English Test (CET), including CET-4 in 1987 and CET-6 in 1989. Passing these tests (see Table 1) became a mandatory graduation requirement for undergraduates in most Chinese HEIs. Although Mandarin is the national and official language of the country, the ideology that "Englishization equals internationalization" is prevalent in China (Guo et al., 2022). Language is a "pivotal terrain in internationalizing academe" (Salö, 2022, p.119). The dominant role of English in international higher education (IHE) has been questioned mostly from the perspective of neocolonialism (Altbach, 2004; Guo & Beckett, 2007), which fails to capture the all-embracing complexities of its status, especially in the context of China's IaH. Neocolonialism is too general as a theoretical perspective to address the specific dilemma confronting China's IHE. A different theory is needed to explain the status of Chinese language in relation to the dominant English language in China's IaH.

Table 1. English in China's Tertiary Education

Year 0	English as one mandatory subject of National Entrance Exam
Year 1	Compulsory English courses
Year 2	Compulsory English courses and CET-4
Year 3&4	CET-6
Master	English as one mandatory subject of Postgraduate Entrance Exam
Doctor	English as one mandatory subject of Doctoral Entrance Exam

Bourdieu's symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) is premised upon the belief that "language itself is a form of domination" (Schubert, 2012, p.179) and language is "an instrument of power and action" as much as a communication trajectory (Bourdieu & Eagleton, 1992, p. 111). Symbolic violence is manifested through symbols as means of communication, cognition, recognition and feeling (Bourdieu, 2001, p.2). Education constitutes symbolic violence *par excellence* (Burawoy, 2019). Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) reveal the fact that "all pedagogic action (PA) is, objectively, symbolic violence insofar as it is the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power" (p.5). In other words, the imposition of a language is actualized through pedagogic action to reproduce social classification, especially the dominance of the elite culture, in this case, the Western knowledge. Phan and Barnawi (2015) find out that English's hegemony in IHE "penetrate[s] into the policy, curriculum, pedagogies, and practices" (p.562).

The Reproductive Role of the Dominated

Why do the dominated Chinese languages not resist the suppression of English in China's IaH? Bourdieu (1993) posits that the dominated are unable to achieve such self-awareness of resistance. Domination as a result of symbolic violence comes into effect when the dominated take the power relations for granted and perceive the existence of affairs in society as "natural, a given and unchangeable" (Thapar-Björkert et al., 2016, p. 148). When it comes to the discussion of IaH, English has acted as a representative language without doubts and hesitation from neither the Chinese government nor scholars in China, with compulsory English courses offered to undergraduate students to strengthen their capabilities (Gu & Lee, 2019). Meanwhile, individuals have inadvertently become complicit in domination because they do not realize their role of producing and reproducing domination and subordination (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). When students and staff in China's HEIs genuinely believe English is the legitimate symbol of international higher education and learning English is the only way to improve their global competitiveness, the domination of English becomes "imperceptible, insidious and invisible" (Thapar-Björkert et al., 2016, p.148). The legitimation of English as a symbol and its meanings are not only accepted but also internalized as the automatic ruling of Chinese, which masks the underlying power relations.

Consecration of English as the Dominant Language

School systems "consecrate" the culture of the dominant with language as the medium. Bourdieu (1993) argues that all evaluative terms such as international are essentially "euphemized versions of social classification, a social classification that has become natural and absolute" (p. 178). Since language proficiency of teaching staff is considered to be of great importance to advancing the progress of IaH (Beelen, 2011), symbolic violence is established by blaming individuals involved, in this case, including faculty and staff for lack of English proficiency as the cause of their poor internationalization performances. The consecration of English in IaH proves that the linguistic hierarchy of English over Chinese is successfully and insidiously reproduced. Apart from economic capital, English proficiency functions as a threshold and a gatekeeper (Guo et al., 2022) to produce inequality among faculty and students, thereby discriminating against those who are not linguistically eligible. Emphasizing English competency in IaH evaluation favors the dominant upper- and middle- class in China, because of their advantage in the competition of linguistic and cultural capital.

Conclusion

English and its ascendancy in China's HEIs as a tacit means of IaH can be analyzed from the critical perspective of domination and oppression in pedagogic action, which is exactly what Bourdieu's symbolic violence argues. The performance is mainly based on the reproduction of the dominated and the consecration of language. For educators, language should not be considered a competition indicator for spaces in educational systems or a restraint for teaching and learning, but it should serve as a channel to explore different linguistic spheres and reach diversity (Fabricius et al., 2017).

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Structural Disadvantages and Limited Opportunities for International Mobility in Higher Education

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The benefits of international mobility in higher education have been reported in many research studies. Particularly for nation states with limited higher education capacity, the skills and knowledge acquired by internationally mobile students can be disseminated and utilized in their home country, which could play a critical role in the local economic and social development (Castells,1994; Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1993). However, even with the continued increase in the number of international students (at least until the COVID-19 pandemic), access to international higher education has been unequal across nation states and between individuals within each country. According to data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, only a small percentage of students from low-income and underdeveloped countries have physically crossed an international border to pursue a college degree and enjoyed the benefits of international higher education (UNESCO, 2022). Access to and equity in international higher education opportunities are, therefore, bound to financial resources, social and cultural capital.

Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

World System Theory offers one potential explanation for these patterns. World System Theory questions the conventional approach of using nation states as separate units of analysis and contends that the world function as a whole, divided into three structural positions - core, semi-periphery, and periphery - which rarely change (Wallerstein, 1974; Snyder and Kick, 1979). The core (wealthy and powerful) countries can maintain their advantageous positions using hegemonic power and resources, which structure the system into a status of disequilibrium between the core and the periphery (O'Reilly, 2012).

Scholars have explored international student flow patterns, applying world system theory and network analysis. In general, their studies find that the core-periphery structure is relatively stable, and economic measures and the position of each nation state in the international student network are strongly correlated (Barrett and Wu, 1995; Chen and Barrett, 2000; Barrett et al., 2016, Shields, 2013). This study builds on the foundation of these previous studies.

This study aims to describe the unequal growth of international student flow and structural patterns of power positions between nation states in international higher education through two research questions.

1. How was the share of international students in higher education distributed globally between 1999 and 2019?
2. What are the patterns and changes in the power positions of nations states during this period?

Methodology

In order to answer these questions, first, the number of inbound internationally mobile students between 1999 and 2020 by country of origin were collected from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics website (UNESCO, 2022). 'Magnitude nil or negligible' was coded as 0, while missing data were not computed. These numbers include 'degree-mobile students' only, excluding short-term and credit-mobile students. Second, data on socioeconomic measures of nation states were extracted from the World Bank website (World Bank, 2022).

This study employs descriptive statistics, correlations, and network analysis to explain the structure and power dynamics within the global network of international college degree seeking students. In contrast to traditional methods that focus on the individual attributes of actors (nation states in this study), network analysis emphasizes the role of the underlying structure of the network and the properties of that structure. Also, network analysis uses numbers from connections and relations between actors to calculate the importance of each actor and their relative position to others. This study uses network analysis to examine how the international mobility network has evolved and changed, with a particular focus on power dynamics and positional changes of actors in the network.

Results and Findings

Between 1999 and 2019, the network has grown, with more connections between nation states and more actors participating. However, the growth of the network did not significantly change the distribution of power among nation states, particularly for the periphery countries. The analysis of the network structure reveals the existence of academic hegemony, which mirrors the hierarchical structure of international economic power. First, the share of international students for both inflow and outflow had been concentrated on the top 25% nation states, while the bottom 25% had sent and received only a few or no students during the period. Second, the centrality measures of nation states confirm the presence of the core-periphery structure. In general, the traditionally strong actors in the network have maintained their power positions at the core and the periphery group remains at the periphery. However, there have also been some observed changes, such as certain countries in the middle stratum (including Malaysia, Vietnam, and Saudi Arabia) experiencing growth, while some previously dominant players (such as Nordic countries and Japan) have lost their power over time. Third, the strong correlations between the GNI per capita and centrality measures, along with the presence of the stable core group, is aligned with explanations from World System Theory.

Policy Implications and Future Studies

The study confirms the presence of stable structural patterns in the flow of international students over time. The study also reveals that there have been shifts in the power positions of semi-core nation states. Although the study does not delve into the reasons behind the rise of some middle power countries and the subsequent decline of certain core countries, plausible explanations can be attributed to a combination of push and pull factors within these nations, such as immigration policies and national higher education initiatives. However, it is important to note that these changes are restricted to the core and semi-core nation states, whereas periphery countries did not experience much change in their power positions.

This study also emphasizes the role of economic factors in explaining the changing and unchanging parts of the patterns. The strong correlations between centrality measures and economic indicators of nation states imply that the economic power positions in the world system and economic relationships are mirrored in the network of international student flow. Not only are economic resources necessary for students to cover the costs of tuition, fees, and other expenses during their studies, but nation states also require these resources to invest in the higher education sector for the purposes of capacity building, infrastructure development, and the delivery of quality education. In low-income countries with limited resources, there is a higher likelihood of being trapped in a peripheral position. This means that these countries are often unable to fully participate in or benefit from global education systems. The lack of resources restricts their ability to compete with wealthier nations, resulting in their status as peripheral. In the same way, international education opportunities and benefits are more likely to be given to individuals who have financial resources, which leads to the reproduction of inequality. It is expected that students in less-resourced nations are less likely to have the chance to study abroad unless financial aid and information is available to them. Some studies pointed out this uneven nature of international higher education for individuals and countries (Waters, 2012; Waters & Brooks, 2010).

Addressing these issues at the national level is challenging, but supranational organizations can play a crucial role in reducing the equity gap in international higher education. Online education might also address limited international higher education access for disadvantaged students and nation states, as long as support from international organizations is available to support the building of infrastructure.

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Conceptions of Power & Equity as Moderating Forces in International Higher Education and International Relations

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Perceptions of the nature and functioning of the world are broadly influenced by societal paradigm shifts that impact nearly all fields of study, including political science, environmental science, educational psychology/pedagogy, economics, human/civil rights, etc. This paper refers to these elements as 'moderating forces' in the context of international higher education (IHE) because of their ability to question or alter not only the conceptions of theories and practices within the academic and professional field, but also the understanding of the realized outcomes of those theories and practices on different stakeholder groups. Changing understandings of power and equity in stakeholder relations fall under the umbrella of these moderating forces and bear consequences for practices and outcomes within both the field of IHE and the field of international relations (IR), among others. Since changing conceptions of power and equity serve as moderating forces on both fields individually, it stands to reason that they are also moderating forces over the area where these two fields overlap, particularly when considering the potential for IHE to be used as a conduit of soft power within IR, a topic which will be discussed later in this work. Understanding how this concept functions is then crucial for analyzing the interplay of these fields moving forward.

In the IHE literature, increasing attention and focus has been placed on the internationalization of higher education and notions of diversity, equity, and inclusion, which has provided scholars and practitioners with an updated understanding of power and equity in the field (Özturgut, 2017; Jones et al., 2021). This heightened intensity of consideration is warranted, given how inequity creates, or is caused by, power imbalances between stakeholders, which lead to further inequities in these relational contexts, resulting in a cycle that is hard to break (Brandenburg et al., 2020; Buckner & Stein, 2019; Marginson, 2022). In the IHE space, the beneficiaries of power imbalances have largely been the higher education institutions (HEIs) of the West/Global North, where, intentionally or not, these institutions have exploited the advantage granted by systemic inequity. Examples of this exploitation of the dominant relational position include the prevalence of English as the preferred language among a majority of international scientific journals/publications (Valcke, 2020), colonial practices at international branch campuses (Clarke, 2021; Xu, 2021), one-sided dealing in global partnerships (Lanford, 2021), neglecting engagement with higher education institutions in the East (Altbach & de Wit, 2015) and Global South (Dutta, 2020), refusing to accept or recognize Indigenous knowledge (Huaman et al., 2019; Patel, 2017) and the pervasive use of university ranking systems (Hazelkorn, 2015; Marginson, 2007; Marope et al., 2013). Findings such as these have contributed to what has become an evolving paradigm shift in IHE as an academic field and as a professional practice, acknowledging a need to realign the internationalization of higher education to improve overall outcomes for all stakeholders in the global society, not just those that benefit from relational power imbalances (Jones et al., 2021). Thus, modern conceptions of power and equity can be understood as moderating forces which influence the theoretical underpinnings and practical outcomes of IHE.

While the aforementioned (and non-exhaustive) list of practices may be problematic and produce uneven outcomes within the context of IHE, one can understand how troubling this also is for countries at the lower end of power and equity imbalances, when considering the sizable role that IHE plays in the broader realm of IR. While the theory of soft power investigates the overall strategies countries employ in an effort to influence one another without use of direct military or financial force (Nye, 2004), scholars have identified higher education as a key soft power strategic area (Wojciuk et al., 2015), as HEIs/IHE can be used to proliferate a country's political ideals, instill sympathies for the country of the host institution in its international students/faculty members and to forge personal relationships with future leaders from abroad (Nye, 2005). It can then be argued that the influence of power imbalances in IHE occurs at multiple levels of analysis – not just at the institutional level, but also at the country level. As opposed to previous interpretations of IHE that postured the concept as a neutral process and neglected relational dynamics (de Wit, 2023), the updated conceptions of power and equity have enabled scholars to also recognize unequal outcomes in the IR space as it pertains to higher education, and recent studies have thus called for new approaches to realign and balance the dynamics in these relational contexts. These new approaches, including knowledge diplomacy (Knight, 2017, 2022) and cultural diplomacy (Canales, 2023), seek to remove power imbalances from the relational equation by focusing on equity between partners to produce mutual benefit and exchange instead of exploitation, coercion, and influence. HEIs and governing bodies are then encouraged by researchers and the broader public to engage with stakeholders across their campus, in their local constituencies and in their broader partnership networks to design their international missions and strategies in a way that accounts for potential externalities, that is, how programs/initiatives might cause unintended harm upon represented, unrepresented, known, or unknown stakeholder groups. Here it is again evident that changing understandings of power and equity serve as a moderating force on the interplay between IHE and IR.

Particularly as critiques of IHE (Brandenburg & de Wit, 2011) and calls for a realignment toward global social responsibility and the internationalization of higher education for society (Jones et al., 2021) continue to rise, and as the evolution of the role of IHE in IR and diplomacy persists (Canales, 2023; Knight, 2022), it is imperative to recognize how updated conceptions of power, equity and other moderating forces influence fundamental changes of perspective in these fields. Further research should then work to build conceptual frameworks that map out the nature of this influence so that the relationship between moderating forces, theory, practice, and outcomes can be better understood. Consequently, the results of these studies could inform policymakers and practitioners so that the field may adjust more quickly to produce better outcomes for the global society, namely, increased value and quality of IHE for stakeholders, regardless of their national context or their relative power.

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REGIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES

The Political Economy of Employability: Framing Employability Policies in African Higher Education

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Employability is an issue of concern in higher education worldwide. Universities strive to improve graduate employability to allow graduates to transition to the labor market. The dominant framing perspectives influencing employability policies in African higher education should better incorporate issues of equity, quality and access to employment, as more equitable policies could make African higher education more attractive to international students. This article, therefore, argues for a more critical way of understanding the epistemological issues underpinning employability policies.

Overview

The employability discourse has taken precedence within higher education debates. Globally, universities are pressured to produce work-ready graduates to contribute to economic and social development. Improving the transition from higher education to employment and increasing employability is therefore a priority for higher education institutions, employers, and governments, as stakeholders with an interest in the returns from higher education investments (Alpaydın & Kultur, 2022). The provision of a workforce that is internationally competitive has also become a priority, as the internationalization of employability has compelled graduates to expand their search for employment across borders (Coelen & Gribble, 2019).

However, achieving harmony between the educational systems and the labor market requires policies directed at improving the education to work transition (Alpaydın & Kultur, 2022). Such policies cannot be universal, given diversity in context. In Africa, for instance, factors such as poverty, social injustice, high unemployment rates, policy uncertainty, social unrest, and violence in some countries affect economic growth and the labor market. Informal employment, underemployment, social inequalities and working poverty also characterize the African labor market (International Labor Organisation, 2023), further complicating the concept of employability.

The ideological orientation influences policy actors in developing employability policies. In turn, the highly marketized higher education system influences the ideology of policymakers assigned to develop employability policies (Reid & Kelestyn, 2022), with neoliberal policies driving institutions to commit to developing academic programs that respond to the changing world of work (Bulawa et al., 2017). The complex labor market dynamics also influence the employability policymaking and framing processes. In this context, this article aims to critically examine the current policy framing and representation of employability policies in African higher education.

Conceptual Framework

The analysis reviewed policy documents and strategies for employability in African higher education. The analysis of the policy documents identified three major perspectives considered to be dominant policy-framing approaches. The perspectives are informed by Sultana's typology of rationalities that inform career guidance (Sultana, 2014). This framework helps to reveal the sociopolitical ideologies embedded in employability policy framing. The framework also provides an analytical lens to understand how employability policies advance social justice, given the perpetual inequalities underpinning the African context both in higher education and the labor market. To date, it appears that there have not been attempts to contextualize the framework to Africa.

The technocratic approach focuses on fitting individuals into the economy and improving the supply of skills and labor required by employers (Hooley, Bennet & Knight, 2022). This approach prioritizes student-centeredness as reflected in the transition to the labor market and is oriented to human capital theory. For example, the policy provides students with practical and employability skills development, career education, and a guidance program (University of Rwanda [UR], 2020). Policies following a technocratic perspective focus on developing graduate capabilities in order to enable them to nurture the entrepreneurship and employability skills desired in the workplace (Bulawa, Seeco, Kgosidialwa & Losike–Sedimo). The assumption is that this will allow graduates to make a smoother transition from their study programs into the labor market and the workplace by developing wise market behaviour (UR, 2020).

The humanistic approach, in contrast, promotes the development of the individual within the societal structures to enhance self-discovery and flourishing of capacities (Hooley, Bennet & Knight, 2022). This approach is underpinned by the university's mission to help graduates foster the capacity to manage their career evolution (UR, 2020). The humanistic perspective is articulated as an approach that empowers graduates to develop skills to transition into the world of work (Bulawa, Seeco, Kgosidialwa & Losike–Sedimo, 2017). In this approach, self-actualization is perceived as an essential contributor to personal development. For instance, there is a focus on producing graduates who are ready for work both academically and personally through embedding personal improvement as well as employability skills development (UR, 2020). Examples following this approach include participatory learning, both within the university and in collaboration with the local community, aimed at enabling students to obtain real-world exposure (North-West University [NWU], 2018). This approach is articulated in terms of self-awareness and awareness of the labor market, thus developing the students' capital and capabilities.

Finally, power and justice are at the heart of the emancipatory approach. The emancipatory perspective develops knowledge to empower students to decode how the economy and labor market function and challenge social structures in pursuit of transformation (Hooley, Bennet & Knight, 2022). Critical social engagement develops active citizens to support national development. Concerning employability policies, the approach translates to uncovering structures of injustice to provide graduates with tools to transform social forces and economic structures that reproduce inequalities. This approach depicts the knowledgeable and employable graduates prepared for the lives of service, leadership and transformation of communities via sustainable solutions (UR, 2020). In terms of this framing, transformative change of employability practices may lead to inclusive employability at a local and international level. An example of programming within this approach is the creation of international learning experiences, designed to enhance employability at a local level and ensure the quality of graduate outcomes through internationalization at home.

Employability Policy Framing in African Higher Education

This analysis found that institutions prefer all three perspectives of framing employability policies in the African context. It also found that concepts such as "inclusion", "collaboration" and "diversity" dominate across the policies and practices, thus reflecting an aspiration to dismantle the existing socio-economic inequalities. Intentional incorporation of these concepts is often used to support the case for internationalization (Oparinde, Govender & Moyo, 2022).

However, the analysis also found that technocratic and humanistic frames dominate current policies. As such, framing is centered on the notion of human capital development and lifelong participation in the labor market, thus rendering the humanistic frame a powerful tool to address the employability issues in practice. The framings should be re-prioritized to inform the imagination of employability policymakers.

This could create a non-exclusionary approach to developing policies, translating to equity and dismantling power structures that limit the development of employability within African higher education. It is also crucial to contextualize the policies to the realities of the African labor markets and universities, since there is a tendency for policy borrowing.

This analysis drew on the ideological representation and nature of the policies, revealing the complex social, economic and cultural bases for social justice. Neoliberal higher education and the labor market seem to influence the epistemological and sociological underpinnings of knowledge in employability policies. The article argues for a novel lens for reframing employability policies in Africa. In the end, there is a need for robust institutional employability policies which universities still lack across the continent.

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Examining Discourses of Power and Value in EU-ASEAN Higher Education Cooperation Policy and Programs

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The European Union (EU) Support to Higher Education in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region (SHARE) program is funded by the EU to strengthen (inter)regional cooperation in higher education (HE) (SHARE, 2021). As interregional cooperation in higher education brings together actors, each with their own set of rationales, approaches, and values, it is worth better understanding the function of power in shaping interregional relationships. This study investigates how power operates in the discursive practices of the SHARE program, through an examination of public-facing documents, asking the following research questions:

1. How is power discursively constructed in policy documents of the SHARE program, through:

   a. Discursive representations of existential, propositional, and value assumptions?

b. Textual discursive phenomena and discursive practices such as intertextuality?

This short paper pilots a larger study and provides a use case of critical discourse analysis (CDA) in examining power in the policies, processes, and practices of international HE.

Project Context

Established in 2015, SHARE was a project funded by the EU to promote interregional cooperation between the EU and ASEAN. The project aimed to improve the quality, competitiveness, and internationalization efforts of the HE institutions in the ASEAN region (SHARE, 2021). From 2015-2022, the SHARE project implementation team, a consortium of EU and ASEAN organizations, worked toward these goals by leading policy dialogues with EU and ASEAN leaders, developing ASEAN quality assurance and credit transfer frameworks, and supporting intra-ASEAN and EU-ASEAN exchange scholarships (SHARE, 2021; SHARE 2022).

Following the close of the SHARE program in 2022, the networks established by SHARE are now part of a new EU-ASEAN initiative within the EU Global Gateway (EC, 2022; EC, n.d.). Cooperation will continue through the ASEAN HE space 2025 implementation plan (SOM-ED, 2022). Thus, understanding the function of the SHARE program in relation to past and ongoing interregional cooperation efforts merits further analysis. While the EU is effectively a supranational authority with pooled regional sovereignty, the primacy of national sovereignty among the ASEAN member states directs a more flexible mode of cooperation. As such, the EU model of regionalisation of HE and the related policies and programs may not perfectly transfer to the ASEAN region.

Methods

CDA offers a collection of methodological approaches to examine how power operates in discourse. This study employs intertextuality and Fairclough's (2004) ways of representing assumption as a frame of analysis.

Intertextuality and assumption work in concert to understand external relations in text: intertextuality "opens up difference by bringing other 'voices' into a text," while assumption "reduces difference by assuming common ground" (Fairclough, 2004, p. 41). *Intertextuality* seeks to identify the other voices or texts that are significant within a text and are "potentially incorporated into the text" directly or indirectly (p. 47), allowing the researcher to make visible the reproduction of power in discourse. *Assumptions* help to investigate power relationships by examining apparently common beliefs within a text. Fairclough (2004) proposes three types of possible assumptions: existential (assumptions about what exists), propositional (assumptions about what is the case), and value (assumptions about what is good or desirable) (p. 55).

Using this CDA framework, we examine five policy documents related to EU-ASEAN interregional HE cooperation:

1. The SHARE policy dialogue 15 program book (EU-SHARE, 2022)
2. The Roadmap on the ASEAN HE space 2025 (SOM-ED, 2022)
3. SHARE program results (SHARE, 2022)
4. EU-ASEAN: Global Gateway factsheet (EC, 2022)
5. The Global Gateway infographic (Delegation EU-ASEAN, 2022)

Document Analysis

Intertextuality

When examining intertextual relations of the five documents, we found that all had both implicit and explicit references to efforts by broader international organizations. These intertextual relations illustrate the web of power relations present in the EU-ASEAN efforts to harmonize ASEAN HE. Although there is representation within the documents from leaders in the ASEAN region, the goals for HE in the ASEAN region that appear in these texts are not without significant influence from its European and global partners. For example, the Roadmap (SOM-ED, 2022) and the program book (EU-SHARE, 2022) are authored by ASEAN-affiliated organizations, and intertextual references are made to ASEAN documents, such as the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on HE and the ASEAN Work Plan on Education

2021-2025. The documents also refer to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UNESCO Roadmap on HE 2030. The Global Gateway factsheet (EC, 2022) and the infographic (Delegation EU-ASEAN, 2022) reference the SDGs and indirectly reference (without attribution) the "Team Europe Approach" of EU capacity development strategy and the tagline used across Global Gateway publicity of "Europe's offer" to its partners.

Assumptions

The following section summarizes the findings of our analysis of existential, propositional, and value assumptions, as laid out by Fairclough (2004), in these policy documents.

Existential

1. There are developed and underdeveloped HE systems (SHARE, 2022)
2. It is possible to define high quality education and research (Delegation EU-ASEAN, 2022)
3. There are problems with the state of ASEAN HE that can be improved (SHARE, 2022).

Propositional

1. The phrase "people-to-people" is used in three of the documents - the Roadmap (SOM-ED, 2022), the program book (EU-SHARE, 2022), and the Global Gateway factsheet (EC, 2022) - suggesting power-equal partnership, reciprocity, and mutual benefit.
2. The concept of partnership is challenged by the existential assumption of development of ASEAN HE systems, outlined above (SHARE, 2022).
3. There is a distinct conception of the state and capacity of ASEAN HE systems in the Policy Dialogue 15 program book, different from what is seen in documents authored by EU actors, with a focus on "future opportunities for the ASEAN HE Space and the HE community globally" (p. 3), which suggests ASEAN's agency to contribute to the global HE community.

Value

1. Marketized and quantified language in the EU Global Gateway document, such as "investment mobilized by Team Europe" and "loans on favorable terms for investment projects" (EC, 2022, p. 1) suggests a donor-recipient relationship, rather than a partnership (SHARE, 2022).
2. The documents' focus on "developing, supporting and implementing EU policies while tackling global challenges," (p. 6) in the Horizon Europe research cooperation framework implicitly suggests that EU policy priorities are universal.
3. The Roadmap (SOM-ED, 2022) suggests a distinction in values and priorities between EU and ASEAN. The principle of being "participatory" includes "voluntary collaboration," "stakeholders as partners and agents of their own learning and capacity development," and "due consideration of the national regulations and different contexts of ASEAN Member States" (p. 4).

Discussion and Implications

In our analysis, we found that ASEAN-authored and EU-authored documents had different approaches to the SHARE partnership. The identified instances of intertextuality across the documents reviewed point to the differing rationales and foundational principles for the project of interregionalism in higher education within this partnership. Specifically, ASEAN documents show SHARE program results and rely on other ASEAN documents for core principles of the ASEAN Roadmap. On the other hand, EU-authored documents focus on return on investment and make assumptions about what high-quality education will be for the ASEAN regions. The authorship of these assumptions point to the potential for the imposition of particular approaches to policy and program construction in the ASEAN-EU partnership and interregionalization of higher education. For example, the emphasis on marketization and investment in EU-authored documents demonstrate how ASEAN should view the role of higher education as a tool for economic development first and foremost. As the SHARE program becomes part of the broader effort of Global Gateway, further analysis of these discursive phenomena will help illuminate how these power dynamics manifest in a new phase of the EU-ASEAN partnership for HE.

In future iterations of this project, we aim to include a wider variety of data sources, including interviews with key stakeholders, speeches, and workshop interventions, using multi-modal CDA, to create a more holistic view of the EU-ASEAN partnership for higher education. We hope that such an analysis would contribute to the study, as well as to the support, of policy and practice in future inter-regional partnerships in higher education.

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From the Regional to the Global: Why Higher Education Regionalization Matters for Universities?

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Globalization has prompted higher education institutions to be increasingly globally oriented, despite their long histories as nation-serving institutions. Against this background, the field of international and comparative higher education has shown increasing attention to the global dimension of higher education, particularly discussing the relationship between global higher education and the nation states (Marginson, 2022; Marginson & Rhoades, 2002; Shahjahan & Grimm, 2022). Meanwhile, a parallel group of studies focuses on the supranational regional dimensions of higher education. For example, Dale and Robertson (2002) reflect on how regional intergovernmental organizations, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), affect the education sector, arguing that these organizations are important forces in how nation states mediate the impact of global capitalism on education. In line with this, a large body of literature views the regional dimension of higher education as higher education regionalism, a political project initiated by nation states to build regional states (e.g. Chou & Ravinet, 2016). Yet, the regional dimension can involve non-state actors as well (Robertson, 2016). Scholars that view the regional dimension of higher education as a social process name it higher education regionalization (HER) (Knight, 2017). Notably, Knight (2016) notes that functional, organizational, and political approaches to HER are interrelated. In line with this body of literature, this article looks at the phenomenon of higher education regionalization, as a social process and a global trend. Particularly, drawing on the findings from my PhD thesis, this article reflects on universities' role in HER, and the relationship between HER and global higher education.

My PhD thesis examines why universities are members of Regional University Associations (RUAs), as an angle to study universities' role in HER. Theoretically, I conceptualize university memberships in RUAs as the structuration of the regional and global higher education field, where universities as organizations interact with other universities and form a new type of organizations called meta-organizations (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2008). Three views explain why organizational structuration happens. The economic functional perspective emphasizes efficiency, viewing organizational structuration as a new way of organizing resources to improve efficiency. The political functional perspective emphasizes political processes, viewing organizational structuration as a way for organizations, such as universities, to contribute to national interests. In contrast, neo-institutional arguments emphasize organizations' need for survival through the pursuit of legitimacy and status (Bromley & Meyer, 2015). I draw on these perspectives in my data analysis. Methodologically, I first examined RUAs' activities and framing of purposes through analysis of 32 documents of RUAs in Asia, Europe, Africa, and North America. I then examined institutional and national factors explaining universities' memberships in RUAs through a novel cross-national dataset that consists of around 16,000 universities worldwide. Lastly, I conducted interviews with 15 university leaders in East and Southeast Asia to understand why their universities are members of RUAs and their perspectives of HER.

My findings point to important relationships between universities, HER, internationalization, and global higher education. Firstly, RUAs are active organizational actors in HER, serving functional and cultural roles. Specifically, RUAs organize activities on people (i.e. student, staff, and faculty) mobility within the same world region, organize conferences related to important issues in higher education in the region and globally, and promote research collaboration among universities within the region through publication of journals, organization of research groups, etc. In addition, the framing of RUAs' purposes is often related to enhancing networking among universities, advocating for universities' interests in regional higher education policy, and maintaining the institutional and interestingly regional identities of universities. The framing of RUAs' purposes aligns with both functional and neo-institutional arguments around organizational structuration. Specifically, RUAs serve as both functional entities that help universities network for more opportunities, and organizations that help universities reinforce their institutional and regional identity to garner legitimacy in higher education. Interestingly, cultivating regional values and identity have become an important part of RUAs' organizational goals, suggesting that RUAs are functional and cultural organizations in HER.

Moreover, the analysis of a novel cross-national dataset suggests that universities' memberships in RUAs are linked to their pursuit of global status. Consistently, globally ranked universities are more likely to be members of RUAs. In line with the neo-institutional arguments, this finding suggests that membership in RUAs, such as regional organizations, is linked to universities' reinforcement of their global status in pursuit of legitimacy. Interestingly, universities in countries that have a higher percentage of international students from within the region are also more likely to be members of RUAs, suggesting that universities might be members of RUAs to recruit international students. This is in line with the economic functional perspective that suggests organizations interact to organize resources in the field for efficiency. In this case, RUAs serve as a new platform where universities can network for cooperation in student mobility.

Interviews with leaders of 15 universities in East and Southeast Asia corroborate the document and quantitative analysis. Particularly, universities indicate important rationales, such as enhancing global visibility and addressing global challenges, as well as networking to enhance their work in internationalization. Surprisingly, universities consider their memberships in RUAs as part of their work in internationalization and do not consider themselves playing any role to advance HER itself. However, regional cooperation is considered convenient and accessible, compared to cooperation with Western universities. Moreover, regional cooperation is more closely linked to universities' local mandates, such as training graduates that can contribute to the local and regional economy and understand cultural diversity in the region.

The findings from this study suggest important relationships between internationalization, HER, and global higher education. Concretely, from universities' perspective, HER is part of internationalization which helps universities to look outwardly towards the global higher education field, through mechanisms of gaining global status and obtaining international resources. In addition, HER is also considered a bridge between universities' local mandates and global ambitions. Specifically, HER helps universities to look inward towards their important mandates to serve the local community, while at the same time not losing sight of their global ambitions.

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UNDERSTANDING THE "GLOCAL" IN HIGHER EDUCATION

"We are Armed with Education": Understanding the International Higher Education Community's Support for Ukraine

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Although it is well-known that global refugee crises disrupt international higher education worldwide, scholarship rarely discusses such "crisis-driven" internationalization. In the neoliberal discourse, universities' international activities are perceived as tools for talent attraction, income generation, and prestige maximization (Knight, 2009). Forced internationalization (Ergin et al., 2019) which serves humanistic rationales (Streitwieser et al., 2019), meanwhile, receive little attention in scholarship. However, in practice, the international higher education community plays a vital role in supporting scholars and students in crises, as has been most recently demonstrated, in terms of the Russian war on Ukraine (Arado, 2022). By endangering academic communities in Ukraine (SAR, 2022), the war sparked a complex response from international organizations, governments, universities, and individual academics. This paper investigates the Western support for Ukrainian higher education that was triggered by the 2022 Russian invasion.

Internationalization and War

Ukraine's internationalization efforts intensified with the country's independence from the USSR and peaked after the state's association agreement with the European Union (EU). Since 1991, opportunities for international travel, cross-border cooperation, and abolished censorship in higher education enabled Ukrainian academics to engage with their Western counterparts. Internationalization efforts benefited from Ukraine's accession to the Bologna Process and the EU neighborhood policy programs (e.g., Erasmus Mundus, TEMPUS). In 2014, Ukraine's closer political, economic, and cultural integration with the EU became a crucial milestone for internationalization, allowing the local higher education community to benefit from the EU mobility, partnership, and research opportunities (e.g., Erasmus+, Horizon 2020) (Oleksiyenko et al., 2023).

Russia's annexation of Crimea and war in eastern Ukraine led to the first experiences of displacement among Ukrainian students, scholars, and higher education institutions but encountered limited international response. The internal displacement of 18 universities, over 3,500 academics, and 40,000 students in 2014 created a unique higher education context in Ukraine (Oleksiyenko et al., 2021). However, globally, Ukrainian academic crises remained largely unnoticed until Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022, which has destroyed 9 and damaged 59 higher education institutions to date (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2022). Understanding the recent international higher education community's support for Ukraine offers an important contribution to debates on meaningful engagement with war-torn higher education contexts.

Methods

This paper investigates the approaches of the international higher education community to support war-torn Ukrainian higher education through analyses of 20 interviews with Ukrainian academics and administrators leading crises-driven internationalization. These semi-structured interviews were conducted in August 2022 – January 2023 to understand the changing context of Ukrainian higher education. The sample included participants living in Ukraine and displaced academics hosted in European and North American universities, who remain affiliated with public and private universities across Ukraine. Both synchronous and asynchronous interviews were conducted to accommodate interviewees frequently experiencing disruptions to electricity and internet connectivity. Considering the upended lives of interviewees, participants were asked to share their reflections to the extent they were comfortable and safe. Interview data was coded by themes and analyzed using conventional methods in qualitative research (Miles et al., 2018) to identify internationalization instruments that served to save lives and careers. Given the phenomenological nature of this study, it does not aim to generalize to the overall academic community. However, reflections of the study participants provided valuable insights into the international higher education community's support for Ukraine. More instruments of support may be discovered in future research.

Findings

As Russian genocidal policies (Snyder, 2022) caused the internal displacement of over 6.2 million people in Ukraine and another 7.7 million were forced to find refuge abroad (UNHCR, 2022), academic communities, governments, and international organizations showed unprecedented solidarity with Ukrainian students and scholars. Organizations supporting at-risk researchers and newly established networks solicited resources to streamline refugee placement. After the Russian rectors expressed support for the war (Lem, 2022), many European universities and the EU reallocated their resources to enable Ukrainian victims of the war to continue their learning, teaching, and research (European Commission, 2022). Educational technology and lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic allowed Western universities to support Ukrainian tertiary institutions remotely.

Educational technology enabled Western academics to swiftly meet the urgent needs of Ukrainian higher education institutions, scholars, and students. The COVID-19 experience allowed Ukrainian universities to switch to online teaching quickly. Interview participants discussed faculty members from their partner universities abroad leading online courses for Ukrainian students. Virtual exchanges and collaborative online international learning ensured Ukrainian classrooms remained connected internationally, which became particularly important for male students unable to leave the country under Martial Law. Renowned academics and Nobel laureates expressed their solidarity with Ukrainians during numerous online lectures.

The arguably ad-hoc response of individual academics provided time for institutions to solicit resources to scale and sustain solidarity. Western scholars offered to host their Ukrainian counterparts. An international group of researchers collected and disseminated information on the vacancies through #ScienceForUkraine initiative. In the meantime, universities worldwide solicited resources to establish visiting scholarships and fellowships to host Ukrainian refugees.

However, the war-torn higher education system could not be evacuated, so new instruments emerged to meet the needs of at-risk students and scholars remaining in Ukraine. Some institutions provided stipends to enable students in Ukrainian universities to cover tuition and living costs. Western institutions introduced non-residential fellowships for scholars remaining in Ukraine. Newly established partnerships met the changing needs of Ukrainian universities. Particularly, interviewees highlighted the UK-Ukraine Twinning Initiative, which helped to secure new collaborations and address the needs of universities to revise their strategic plans. One of the interviewees discussed their positive twinning experience addressing the university marketing strategy, which enabled them to formulate a new slogan – "we are armed with education."

Governments and international organizations relied on existing programs to support the Ukrainian academic community. The EU's increase in Erasmus+ program funding for partnerships with Ukrainian universities allowed refugee students and scholars to return to the classroom. European governments acted similarly. For instance, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) allowed extended mobility periods and flexibility in expensing funds for joint projects with Ukraine. The EU's Jean Monnet Action funded teaching and research activities in Ukrainian higher education institutions, which was crucial considering severe cuts of state funding. The World Bank's assistance was streamlined through the government to provide students in Ukraine with academic and social stipends. While the state budget traditionally bears this expense, it became challenging to fulfill for the war-torn country.

Conclusion

Overall, international response to the disruption of academic activities in Ukraine engaged multiple actors: international organizations, governments, universities, and individual scholars. A diversity of actors contributes to addressing the needs of the Ukrainian academic community by leveraging previously established instruments and establishing new approaches. Individual scholars and entrepreneurial universities employed their flexibility to provide quick assistance, while governments and international organizations adjusted their programs.

However, the ad-hoc nature of opportunities privileged existing collaborations by targeting Ukrainian academics already engaged in international scholarly networks. Teachers and researchers with limited international exposure often struggled to navigate the international higher education space to identify appropriate opportunities. Additionally, new approaches have failed to address the growing tensions between individual and institutional priorities. The Ukrainian government and universities increasingly fear brain drain, so they insist on the temporary nature of opportunities offered to displaced students and scholars abroad. Meanwhile, students and scholars find themselves in precarious conditions, unable to plan their academic and personal lives.

These tensions call for a reassessment of instruments used in Western universities to support Ukraine. How can the international higher education community address the precarity of refugee students and scholars from diverse backgrounds without contributing to brain drain? This is a crucial question for future research on crises-driven internationalization.

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Equity in Postgraduate Research Degree Selection in the UK: A Rapid Review of Select Literature

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In the UK, factors such as race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, and disability, alongside less commonly researched ones such as socioeconomic background, family history of higher education, sexual orientation, religion, age, caring responsibilities and care experience, shape access to postgraduate research (PGR) studies (i.e., Master's by research and PhDs) (Lindner, 2020). In particular, despite increasing representation at the undergraduate or first-degree level, the proportion of Black and minoritized ethnic (BME) UK-domiciled students undertaking PGR, particularly doctoral, degrees remains low (Advance, 2022; Jackson-Cole & Chadderton, 2021). For funded PGR degrees, i.e., studentships, the proportions are even lower. For instance, for the three-year period between 2016/2017 and 2018/2019, out of 19,868 PhDs studentships supported by the UK Research and Innovation funding agency, 245 were awarded to Black or Black Mixed students (Williams et al., 2019). Of these 245, only 30 were awarded to those with Black Caribbean ethnicities. This underrepresentation not only limits intellectual diversity at the doctoral level, but also limits it at the faculty level, which ultimately determines what knowledge is valued in the academy.

Some scholars have suggested that three interconnected factors underpin the underrepresentation of BME UK-domiciled PhDs: structure (i.e. the inequitable internal structures of higher education institutions (HEIs)); organization (i.e. inefficacious equity, diversity and inclusion, or teaching and learning initiatives); and culture (e.g., learning environments; see also Lindner (2020)'s research culture and wellbeing barriers) (Williams et al., 2019). This paper focuses on structure, specifically the processes and practices of PGR selection, and how these contribute to inequity in PGR student selection through the exclusion of certain groups of applicants. A rapid review of literature was conducted, focusing on equity in postgraduate research degrees in the UK. In addition to formal searching, the author contacted experts for additional recommendations. Much of the evidence identified arises from the US context. Although differences exist between US and UK HE systems and admissions practices (e.g., the vast majority of US PhDs are funded, unlike in the UK), this evidence still offers important insights for the UK context.

The main structural characteristic that affects access is selection. Notably, selection begins much earlier than explicit selection (or "admissions") processes, i.e., a proxy selection or deselection process occurs when applicants decide to apply or not apply to graduate school . Evidence from the US suggests that graduate (UK postgraduate) applicants' school and program choice are influenced by personal, social and economic factors, all of which vary by sex, race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status (SES) and background (Holtzman et al., 2021). Specifically, evidence exists around the following: 1) socioeconomic differences in major choice (i.e. higher SES students are overrepresented in STEM, finance and the arts, while lower SES are overrepresented in education); and 2) gender and ethnic differences in distance of school applied to (i.e. women tend to apply closer to home than men, while Black students apply closest to home across all ethnic groups [Holtzman et al., 2021]). In the UK, Jackson-Cole & Chadderton (2021) suggest that BME postgraduate applicants avoid applying to elite research-intensive institutions because of fears of rejection due to perceived selector bias.

Part of the process of selection are the application documents which vary across disciplines and institutions. Giles et al. (2020) suggest that the documents typically required for British PhDs are primarily cognitive, comprising undergraduate degree classification, cohort rank, perceived research reputation of undergraduate institution, undergraduate prizes, Master's degree, academic publications, conference presentations, research experience, and references (or letters of recommendation). Michel et al. (2019) suggest a similar cognitive skew for key selection criteria – the principle by which assessments or evaluative judgements of applicants' claims to selection (Stone, 2013) are made – for US graduate programs (Master's and PhDs), though they highlight that the most frequently required documents include transcripts (including undergraduate grade point average (GPA)), standardised test scores (e.g., graduate record examinations or GREs), letters of recommendation, and personal statement(s) (Michel et al., 2019). They note that some institutions may also request a CV/résumé, writing sample, interview, or diversity essay (typically about applicants' backgrounds and identities, though where race-based criteria are prohibited by state law, applicants may instead be asked to write about their commitment to diversity). STEM courses have similar document requirements (Michel et al., 2019) although some scholars suggest that cognitive criteria are more often highly rated than non-cognitive ones. For example, for physics master's and PhDs, Chari & Potvin (2019) suggest that three cognitive criteria (physics/math, GPA/grades, undergraduate courses, and the GRE quantitative exam) and one non-cognitive criterion (letters of recommendation) feature among the most highly rated criteria.

Less explicit across both contexts are the relative weights of the different types of required documents, and the real distinction between criteria and document, tool, or material (especially given the interchanging of criteria and document). There is also fairly limited interrogation of the notion of merit, which determines the criteria upon which selection decisions are made. This is despite critique of the Eurocentric underpinnings of conventional definitions of merit (Tate & Bagguley, 2017) which typically rely on backward-looking assessments of prior achievements (Stone, 2013).

Despite significant evidence of the predictive validity of standardized test scores such as the GRE for postgraduate GPA in the US, scholars in the US and UK are increasingly highlighting the limitations of such cognitive criteria for underrepresented and/or disadvantaged populations (e.g., Giles et al., 2020; Lindner, 2020; Posselt & Miller, 2018). GRE cutoff scores are found to be particularly problematic for US applicants who have been out of school for a long time, applicants to non-STEM programs, and underrepresented minoritized applicants whose generally lower mean scores results in earlier screening out (Michel et al., 2019). For physics PhDs, undergraduate GPA (not GRE), alongside program rank (indicator of program learning environment), have been found to have the strongest and most consistent correlation with completion across all groups (Miller et al., 2019).

Similar critiques of the cognitive have been made in the UK, and the limited existing evidence suggests the use of first degree institutions as proxy for cognitive criteria such as the GRE. Undergraduate students from highly selective, research intensive Russell Group institutions are some percentage points more likely to progress to a PGR degree (Wakeling & Mateos-González, 2021); however, BME students, especially Black Caribbean and African, are less likely to receive undergraduate offers from these institutions (Boliver, 2016). Non-cognitive criteria, such as those which reflect personality, motivation and other personal characteristics (Michel et al., 2019), are less standardized and, perhaps as a result, there is less evidence of their predictive validity. However, some evidence suggests they may have predictive validity for both quantitative (e.g., GPA) and qualitative (e.g., commitment, progression, completion) outcomes (Michel et al. 2019). Other challenges of the use of non-cognitive criteria include their breadth and the use of multiple tools used to assess the same criterion, often simultaneously. Scholars (e.g., Kent & McCarthy, 2016; Michel et al., 2019; Posselt & Miller, 2018) suggest that rubrics may help address validity and reliability issues of non-cognitive measures, as well as increase transparency, consistency, and efficiency among selectors, although others have suggested that rubrics may reproduce bias where criteria are narrowly defined and applied (Culpepper & White-Lewis et al., 2023).

Ultimately, a balanced combination of a broad range of cognitive and non-cognitive criteria appears to facilitate a more holistic, equitable review (Kent & McCarthy, 2016), and potentially addresses the disproportionate weight of some cognitive criteria, which may not always accurately predict [post]graduate success and may further disadvantage already disadvantaged and underrepresented applicants.

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