

A 'Roller Coaster' experience?

An exploration of Postgraduate International Students' perceptions of teaching, learning and assessment and integration with home students and building a campus community

Tomasz John

My spin
The findings I report in this paper are a result of my own research. I am not a member of the research team. I am a student member of the program and I am currently working on my PhD.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Positive

- The research paper highlights the importance of the research findings.
- The research paper highlights the importance of the research findings.
- The research paper highlights the importance of the research findings.

Challenges

- The research paper highlights the importance of the research findings.
- The research paper highlights the importance of the research findings.
- The research paper highlights the importance of the research findings.

What's next?

These findings have formed the basis for discussion for the next stage of the study: focus groups with SU, home students and academics as an attempt to finding ways in which improvements might be achieved at the target university and more widely

Thank you for attention

Dr Tomasz John
International Pathways Programme Lead, Coventry University for the Creative Arts
190 Research Point, University of Reading

Theoretical Background

Literature Review

- the internationalisation of HE theorised in the literature at the organisational, strategic level
- focuses on the growing numbers of 'international students'
- there are very few comprehensive investigations of the interactions between international students and academics

Shift of the focus of study

- moves and more in-depth studies which make use of theories from the field and research of the experiences of both students and practitioners, focusing on internationalisation
- such research involves efforts to support the experiences of international students, home students and academics in facilitating change in teaching and learning practices
- there is still a strong need for national and policy level changes of approaches

Methods

Aim?

• The aim of the research is to explore the experiences of international students and academics in the interactions between international students and academics

Why focus groups?

- used because they allow researchers to explore the experiences of international students and academics in the interactions between international students and academics
- the research paper highlights the importance of the research findings.
- the research paper highlights the importance of the research findings.

Integration with home students and building campus community

Positive

- Virtual communities
- International students blend well among themselves

Challenges

- The research paper highlights the importance of the research findings.
- The research paper highlights the importance of the research findings.

Bibliography

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An exploration of Postgraduate International Students' perceptions of teaching, learning and assessment and integration with home students and building a campus community

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My spin
The presentation is part of a wider project that aims to explore the experiences of international students in a virtual world.

Theoretical Background

Literature Review

- The internationalisation of HE theoretical in the literature at the organisational, strategic level
- focused on the growing numbers of 'international students'
- there are very few comprehensive investigations of the interactions between international students and academic

Shift of the focus of study

- more and more research studies which make use of student focus groups and interviews of the experiences of international students
- ask research workers: what is required to support the experience of international students in educational institutions?
- more a HR strategy and for cultural sensitivity

Others' views on research

- the role of the research in the development of international students
- the role of the research in the development of international students

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Positive

- International students appreciate the quality of teaching
- International students appreciate the quality of teaching
- International students appreciate the quality of teaching

Challenges

- International students appreciate the quality of teaching
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Bibliography

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Methods

Aim?

to explore the experiences of international students in a virtual world

Why focus groups?

to explore the experiences of international students in a virtual world

Design, recruitment and data analysis

to explore the experiences of international students in a virtual world

Integration with home students and building campus community

Positive

- Virtual communities
- International students bonded well among themselves

Challenges

- International students bonded well among themselves
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George Jones was here into reflections with the research question of the main results

Selection of students' views on teaching, learning and assessment, building campus community

A 'Roller Coaster' experience?

An exploration of Postgraduate International Students' perceptions of teaching, learning and assessment and integration with home students and building a campus community

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My spin

This presentation is a part of a wider PhD research study which aims to contribute to an understanding of the international student experience from the perspectives of teaching, learning and assessment as well as social participation

Literature

TH

When you are in a presentation, you should be aware of the audience's perspective. The audience should be able to see the content of the presentation from their perspective. This means that you should be aware of the audience's perspective and the content of the presentation.

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Shift of the focus of study

- more and more in-depth studies which make use of stories from the field and accounts of the experience of both students and practitioners dealing with internationalisation
- such research involves allows to explore the complexities of interactions between international students, home students and academics in constantly changing intercultural higher education landscape
- there is still a strong need for cultural sensitivity in pedagogical approaches

Where does my research fit?

- EU MA and PhD student in the UK studying with international students
- EAP Lecturer working with international student and staff
- response to diverse students' needs of an increasingly internationalised university
- this study allows a deeper understanding of the impact of internationalisation
- a tool to maximise and benefit from the opportunities for intercultural learning

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Shift

- more and stories from experience dealing with
- such research complexity students, constantly landscape
- there is shift in pedagogy

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Methods

Aim?

Explorations of the experiences of international postgraduate students

Areas:

Teaching, learning and assessment
Student support services/living
Integration with home students and building campus community

4 focus groups
23 postgraduate international students (including 2 EU students)
4 different campuses of the university
April and June 2013.

Why focus groups?

- used increasingly in educational research, have proved to be a valuable tool to generate data in the form of facts, opinions, experiences and feelings
- the interaction procedure can inspire recollections and discussion which is less likely in an interview situation
- home students and staff placed in separate focus groups to reassure open expression of opinions

Design, recruitment and data analysis

- study is based on a qualitative critical ethnographic case study
- the research has taken a form of an in-depth investigation of a purposive sample
- opportunity sampling and snowball technique was used to recruit participants through university website, social networks and emails
- the primary data focused on content rather than conversation analysis or discourse analysis tradition
- finally both thematic analysis and narrative analysis were conducted to gain an in-depth understanding of issues under investigation

Methods

Why?

International postgraduate students

Why focus

- used increasingly in education
- proved to be a valuable
- reflects opinion

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Emerging themes have been cross referenced with the research questions in the main research.

Selection of students views on:

- teaching, learning and assessment
- integration with home students and building campus community

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Positive

New education system challenging but exciting

"With traditional education, you would be asked to perform well in any of the tests and to answer. I remember when I was in high school, I was asked to perform in a class and I was nervous. Now, I can perform in a class and I am not nervous." "The curriculum is challenging but exciting. I like the fact that it is not just about memorizing facts, but about understanding the concepts and applying them in real life situations. It is a great experience and I am looking forward to the next level of learning."

Students enjoy feedback in tutorials and feel they are respected

"I have been happy, and I feel like I am being respected from all sides. The staff are very helpful and they are always willing to help. I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning." "I have a lot of experience from the tutors. They are always willing to help and they are very helpful. I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning." "I have a lot of experience from the tutors. They are always willing to help and they are very helpful. I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning."

Internationalised curriculum

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Pre-session and in-session ERP programmes

"The pre-session and in-session ERP programmes are very helpful. I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning." "The pre-session and in-session ERP programmes are very helpful. I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning." "The pre-session and in-session ERP programmes are very helpful. I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning."

Challenges

Insufficient learning support

"I don't have enough support in my learning. I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning." "I don't have enough support in my learning. I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning." "I don't have enough support in my learning. I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning."

Understanding staff

"I have been to several countries and I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning." "I have been to several countries and I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning." "I have been to several countries and I am very happy to be here and I am looking forward to the next level of learning."

- Dissatisfaction of the organisation of the courses involving late inductions into certain technical areas of the university
- Lack of friendly learning environment due to sharing space with students from other courses
- Long handbooks with difficult language and inability to find or understand information in them

Emerging themes have been cross-referenced with the research questions in main research.

International

Ph

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Positive

Challenge

Positive

New education system challenging but exciting

"When I studied in China, students just joined lectures without joy, you must come to uni, it's easier, but here is different - I consider many things, I have more books to read, in China we don't have to read any books even though the library is much bigger than the one here. Books are useless there"

"The reason why I really enjoy the course is that here I feel like I'm really studying! I have to be more independent, it's more beneficial for me in general, I do it for myself, even if my marks are not too good, it's useful for me to write about my work, I learn a lot from feedback"

Internationalised curriculum

"Even though our main tutor is British, he will always show examples from different countries, because I have classmates from Colombia, China, India and America. So I think it is a good thing for us, because I believe that I learn a lot, each time we talk it is a new experience for me. I can guess inspiration from the different examples"

"In general the tutors give different examples from different countries, they do not only focus on examples for western culture"

Students enjoy feedback in tutorials and feel they are respected

"We have nice tutors, last term I told them I didn't understand them at all, but now they always help me to catch up with things, writing essays, working on proposals, how to explore things, provide solutions"

"I have a lot attention from the tutors, that's another advantage, at big unis there's no personal relationship with your tutor, they treat you like nobody, they just check your work, here because the numbers are low, I get more attention from tutors"

Pre-sessional and in-session EAP programmes

"It was very helpful to come here for 10 weeks to improve my English. I cannot imagine that time I started understanding my course, vocabulary or legal knowledge without the pre-sessional course, it turned out to be very helpful in the first semester"

"We joined the in-session EAP course where discussed difficult texts with, styles, topics. The teacher helped us to understand texts, discuss them, and we learnt how to read the longer texts. It was beneficial. The paper was more than 10 pages, it was hard to finish. So I learnt how to speed up my reading and skim through text. We also learnt to proof-read each others' work, very helpful"

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Challenges

Insufficient learning support

"I work mainly by myself so it is more about you being motivated so I found that a little bit disturbing, too much freedom! I expected more from group work, tutorials, and lectures. Yeah. At first I felt a little bit frustrated that you should study on your own, I would like to be guided more effectively, especially at the beginning of the course"

"we only have one teacher, so we have only one tutorial every week, 20 minutes per week, that's all we get! And as international students, we spend three times more money than home and EU students"

Understanding staff

"we have to decode, it's something we have to learn as well, because it's a different culture, in HK people generalize and criticize right away, we jump into conclusions, were really straightforward, we don't go round like Brits, so when talking about projects, sometimes I wish I could get a simple answer"

"during tutorials, tutors will always say a positive thing, and then you have to face the reality when you receive a written feedback, it's totally different! It's a disaster! I was really frightened as I wasn't sure if I could trust that person, if they actually mean what they say in tutorials!"

"it's the language barrier, acronyms, euphemisms, colloquialisms, how they approach you. It's really clear when I receive feedback from a non-British tutor. It's straight to the point"

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Integration of students views on:
• teaching, learning and assessment
• integration with home students and building campus community

Integration with home students and building campus community

Positive

Virtual communities

International students bonded well among themselves

Challenges

Collaboration with home students
"There have already been two projects that I have been working on and I will be looking to expand these to include more of the students. The experience that the students have is a valuable one and I will be looking to expand this to more of the students and to more of the projects that I am working on."

Lack of opportunities to practise English
"I feel that my English is not improving as fast as I would like it to be. I am sorry it doesn't matter if we are Asian or international, but it's like that, really. And the other thing is that UK postgraduate students are nice and polite but we don't meet quite often as they have their personal lives, they commute to work, they have no time for socialising. In our accommodation there are mostly international students."

Limited choice or lack of relevant clubs and societies in SU
"There was only one event last year in UK and Berlin they have really vibrant systems, each student gets a buddy who then is responsible for introducing the student to university life and places. It's really helpful here, there are not enough groups for socialising. No societies, no activities going on. I only walk on the campus, just this."

Integration with home students
and building campus community

Positive

Challenge

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Collaboration with home students

"I think home students have to put more effort towards understanding us and try very hard to explain things to us. We know, we see that. Sometimes, they have never had any experience in collaborating with international student, especially MA degree, and then they see us, get confused with us"

"meetings, parties, events are very helpful because international students are home sick and they only stay in their rooms or walk around and they do not have too many friends. We don't like clubbing that much, maybe once a month, but I think other kind of activities... cultural exchange and interaction, that would help to make better communication with home students"

"we don't have any British friends. I mean they are nice, friendly and lovely but there is still a barrier. I don't know, maybe it's the English culture. Our British friend's girlfriend is Chinese, so he's a good example of integration possible. It is difficult to find the same topic with British if you have little in common, it's different cultures. They don't watch the same movies, they don't listen to the same music, we know different celebrities"

Lack of opportunities to practise English

"I feel that my English is not improving a lot, sorry! It doesn't matter if we are Asian or international, but it's like that, really. And the other thing is that UK postgraduate students are nice and polite but we don't meet quite often as they have their personal lives, they commute to work, they have no time for socialising. In our accommodation there are mostly international students "

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Bibliography

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Thank you for
attention

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A 'Roller Coaster' experience?

An exploration of Postgraduate International Students' perceptions of teaching, learning and assessment and integration with home students and building a campus community

Tomasz John

My spin
The presentation is part of a wider research project which aims to explore the experiences of international students in the UK and how they can be supported to integrate into the UK higher education system.

Theoretical Background

Literature Review

- The internationalisation of HE theoretical in the literature at the organisational, strategic level
- focused on the growing numbers of 'international students'
- there are very few comprehensive investigations of the interactions between international students and academic

Shift of the focus of study

- more and more research studies which make use of student focus groups and interviews of the experiences of international students
- ask research students to explore the experiences of international students, home students and academic in the context of teaching and learning
- more and more research on the experiences of international students

Others do not research this

- the focus of study is on the experiences of international students
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Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Positive

- International students are more likely to be engaged in learning activities
- International students are more likely to be motivated to learn
- International students are more likely to be active in class
- International students are more likely to be confident in their own abilities
- International students are more likely to be able to work independently
- International students are more likely to be able to work in groups
- International students are more likely to be able to work in pairs
- International students are more likely to be able to work in teams
- International students are more likely to be able to work in projects
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- International students are more likely to be able to work in reflective journals
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Challenges

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What's next?

These findings have formed the basis for discussion for the next stage of the study: focus groups with SU, home students and academics as an attempt to finding ways in which improvements might be achieved at the target university and more widely

Methods

Aim?

The aim of the research is to explore the experiences of international students in the UK higher education system.

Why focus groups?

A focus group is a qualitative research tool that allows researchers to explore the experiences of a group of people. It is a good way to explore the experiences of a group of people who have similar experiences.

Design, recruitment and data analysis

The research was designed as a qualitative study. It was designed to explore the experiences of international students in the UK higher education system. The research was designed to explore the experiences of international students in the UK higher education system.

Integration with home students and building campus community

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