



US Higher Education Internationalization Through an Equity-Driven Lens

An Analysis of Concepts, History, and Research

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L. W. Perma (ed.), *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*,
Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research 36,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-43030-6_11-1

Abstract

It is common for higher education institutions (HEIs) in the United States (USA) to pursue internationalization through multiple approaches, including developing a global curriculum, hosting international students and scholars, promoting study abroad programs, and establishing cross-border partnerships. The push toward internationalized HEIs can contribute to the reification of Western imperialism, academic colonization, and inequality. In this chapter, we use equity as a foundation to analyze research on the concept of internationalization, the historical progressions of internationalization practice in the USA, and the multiple forms of internationalization practices at US HEIs. We articulate the potential for research on US higher education internationalization to be equity driven and offer considerations for how researchers and practitioners can center power and equity as they engage in investigating or implementing internationalization processes. We recommend interrogating how, by whom, and for whom internationalization is defined; using a structural lens that bridges internationalization to its primary driver – globalization – and viewing internationalization as the amalgamation of multiple complex practices.

Keywords

Cross-border · Curriculum · Equity · Geopolitics · Global engagement · International higher education partnerships · International students · Internationalization · Internationalization at home · Power · Research training · Strategic planning · Study abroad · Teaching and learning · Transnational education · US higher education

Twenty-first century higher education internationalization in the United States (USA) can no longer be defined by a small number of activities and programs managed by one or two isolated offices, as it was in earlier years (Childress 2009; Hudzik 2011; Knight and de Wit 1997). Instead, growing pressures and priorities to develop students as global citizens, attract international students to improve diversity and financial goals, and engage in global partnerships, research, and teaching to achieve a world-class reputation have triggered a major expansion in the international engagement of US higher education institutions (HEIs). Today, internationalization among US HEIs has developed into a major component of strategic planning, generating billions of dollars in revenue each year across institutions (Douglass and Edelstein 2009; Knight 2011; Scott 2006).

In federal, state, and institutional policies, US higher education (HE) has established goals toward greater fairness in access and success for domestic students, as well as mutual benefit in its relationships with local communities. These goals have not been fully achieved; however, they create benchmarks for moving toward greater equity, which are often lacking in US HEIs' global engagement strategies. In fact, while internationalization is increasingly a strategic priority within US HE,

growing scholarship demonstrates that internationalization practices such as study abroad, international student recruitment, and cross-border partnerships can engender Western/US superiority and hegemony as well as inequality (George Mwangi 2017; Buckner and Stein 2019; Vavrus and Pekol 2015; Yao et al. 2019b). In this chapter, we argue that given the comprehensive integration of internationalization into US HE and the highly globalized society in which HE functions, equity cannot be achieved within the US HE context without a focus on internationalization. And yet, as de Wit and Jones (2018) articulated, “for internationalization to be inclusive and not elitist, it must address access and equity” (p. 18). It is essential that research addresses the challenges and inequities related to HE internationalization. While scholars have examined the many goals, processes, and outcomes of single HE internationalization practices and critiqued internationalization as a concept, few have drawn connections across this extensive body of literature to analyze how empirical inquiry on US HE internationalization reifies educational (in)equity (George Mwangi et al. 2018).

In this chapter, we develop linkages across extant scholarship by articulating the potential for US HE internationalization to be equity-driven in research and theory. Our analysis of literature includes a review of multiple forms of HE internationalization scholarship including conceptual articles and empirical research on singular examples of internationalization, such as study abroad and research partnerships. We reviewed scholarship that either had an explicit focus on US HE or discussed US HE comparatively with other countries. US HE often dominates models for internationalization practice around the world and is the focus of a large proportion of HE scholarship on internationalization. Yet our focus on US HE in this chapter serves as a means of disrupting internationalization approaches and scholarship from the US context that can reify hegemony and inequity that, without interrogation, contributes to the reputation and dominance of US HE as a global leader.

We begin by presenting how internationalization is traditionally defined in scholarship, followed by our presentation of a lens that centers equity in how internationalization is defined, investigated, and pursued. While the concept of equality focuses on equal treatment or distribution, equity centers on removing barriers, redistributing resources, and inclusion for those disadvantaged by unequal and hegemonic power structures (Ng 2003). An equity lens assumes that education institutions and their processes are not neutral and “makes explicit the political nature of education and how power operates to privilege, silence, and marginalize individuals who are differently located in the educational process” (Ng 2003, p. 214). We integrate Secada’s (1989) conception of equity into the educational context, which states:

though our actions may be in accord with a set of rules, their results may be unjust. . . educational equity should be construed as a check on the justice of specific actions that are carried out within the educational arena and the arrangements that result from those actions. (pp. 68–69)

Through our use of an equity-driven lens, we view our subsequent analysis as a check on how scholars have constructed knowledge about US HE internationalization.

After presenting our lens, we use it to (1) provide an equity-centered review of sociohistorical and contemporary forces of globalization impacting US HE internationalization, demonstrating how, over time, shifts in internationalization concepts, priorities, and practices are connected to shifts in the focus of internationalization scholarship, and (2) review, critique, and integrate research on major components of US HE internationalization in order to highlight what we know about US HE internationalization, as well as the equity-related benefits or consequences of how research on this topic has been conducted. We end with recommendations for an equity-oriented agenda for US HE internationalization research and implications of this agenda for practice and policy.

Defining Internationalization

One of the predominant critiques of HE internationalization scholarship is the lack of a clear definition of the concept of internationalization (Knight 2011; Stier 2004; Zeleza 2016). While the use of the term internationalization began to emerge in HE publications in the 1980s, 40 years later there is still a lack of agreement among HE scholars about how internationalization should be defined, framed, and studied empirically (Knight 2012). Much of the scholarship on internationalization in the leading HE journals does not offer a definition of the concept and instead uses the term as if there is a universal definition (George Mwangi et al. 2018). One reason for this may reflect Brandenburg and de Wit's (2011) argument that internationalization within HE has become the standard or norm, creating the illusion that everyone understands the meaning of the concept and views it in the same way.

Even if a consensus among the HE research community is not possible, it is important for scholars to clearly define the term for themselves within their research. Internationalization of HE has long been considered a difficult subject to discuss largely due to the variety of terminology associated with the concept (Hudzik 2011). Terms such as globalization, internationalism, and internationalization are frequently used interchangeably despite differences in scope, purpose, and processes (Hudzik 2011). It is important to distinguish between these and other related concepts in research in order to present an accurate portrayal of how universities engage globally.

While internationalization is a process that HEIs intentionally engage in to demonstrate a global presence, globalization refers to technological, economic, scientific, and social forces that increasingly create a more interdependent world unbounded by politics or physical geography (Rumley et al. 2012). Internationalization is a response to the pushes and pulls of globalization (Knight 2012; Stromquist 2007). Researchers often discuss and critique contemporary globalization as a market-driven process that universalizes neoliberalism and capitalism while drawing connections to the concept of Westernization (Yang 2003). In the HE

context, internationalization as a process engaging globalization is similarly critiqued as heavily commercialized and competitive (Pike 2012).

Internationalism can be considered the opposite of nationalism in that instead of focusing on the well-being of citizens within a singular nation, the focus becomes the global community (Pike 2012). Internationalism invokes a communitarian emphasis on global cooperation, collaboration, and the common good (Pike 2012; Stromquist 2007). Similar to internationalization, internationalism is a response to globalization, but considers global interdependence requiring community instead of competition (Pike 2012). A number of scholars have debated whether the HE sector is pursuing internationalism or internationalization, as well as which process HE *should* pursue (Byram 2018; Pike 2012; Stromquist 2007). Given that most have concluded that internationalization is the clear direction of US HE, this chapter considers how equity has been conceived in HE internationalization research and how an equity lens can be more directly integrated into this scholarship into the future.

Internationalization is typically viewed as a process as opposed to an end product (Knight and de Wit 1997; Qiang 2003). Thus, internationalization as a process is expected to lead to the achievement of end products like increased student diversity and intercultural competency, quality improvement, better international rankings, and responsiveness to a globalized environment (Qiang 2003). Activities that comprise the internationalization process are reinforced or weakened by organizational factors at an HEI, including HEI leadership, operations and support services, and institutional policies (Qiang 2003). Most definitions of internationalization highlight the incorporation of an international focus into the functions and purpose of HE and suggest that internationalization processes are ongoing.

Knight (2012) argued that the twenty-first-century HE internationalization is more complex given the number of institutional and national stakeholders involved who may have different, and even competing, motives. HEIs take on internationalization efforts for various reasons and motivations including academic, social/cultural, political, and economic rationales (Knight and de Wit 1995). Contemporary rationales for internationalization have shifted from the academic and social/cultural of the medieval universities in Europe to an emphasis on political and economic rationales (de Wit 1999). For example, the rise of the USA as a world power has driven US universities to take on internationalization in order to maintain America's global influence. From an economic perspective, internationalization not only prepares a global workforce and attracts international research and development (R&D) dollars but also increases revenue for HEIs due to the growing commodification of HE (de Wit 1999). While economic and political rationales for internationalization are not inherently in contrast to improving equity through HE, an equity-oriented approach provides intentionality in examining how internationalization rationales (as well as processes, practices, and outcomes) are inherently connected to power, privilege, oppression, and advantage.

In attempting to define internationalization, scholars have discussed whether definitions should be broad enough to apply to any country context and HEI, or focused on specific activities and country contexts (Knight 2003; Qiang 2003). Knight (2003) stressed that internationalization encompasses all processes with an

international dimension in HE and proposed a working definition that has become heavily adopted:

Internationalization at the national, sector, and institutional levels is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education. (p. 2)

In subsequent scholarship, Knight (2012) explained that creating a definition with too much specificity would not be neutrally transferable across nations. Her perspective in 2012 reflected a preference for values neutrality in internationalization practice, rather than value-driven or culture-specific processes, which could demonstrate bias more reflective of a specific country, culture, region, or worldview (e.g., Westernization, Americanization).

An Equity-Driven Internationalization Lens

While we concur with Knight (2003, 2012) that values and culture can be enacted through internationalization, we do not agree that they can be disconnected from internationalization, or that internationalization can be neutrally defined. Instead, we argue that investigating values, agendas, and ideologies should be at the forefront of internationalization research. This perspective is the foundation for our development of an equity-driven internationalization lens. This lens serves as a tool for centering equity in US HE internationalization research and engaging in scholarship that reimagines the purpose, processes, and outcomes of internationalization.

The equity-driven lens we propose is comprised of four guiding principles: integrating equity-driven conceptual and theoretical perspectives, de-/constructing internationalization, defining the sociohistorical context, and connecting to contemporary forces of globalization. We use the term research “lens” rather than framework, because beyond shaping how researchers view or ground an issue, a lens is also able to magnify. In our case, our lens is meant to serve as a tool for magnifying (in)equity in HE internationalization. Our development of the lens was informed by our initial review of the literature, in which we foregrounded the broad concepts of equity and inequity as a way to examine how these concepts were present and missing in extant scholarship. In doing so, we identified the four guiding principles of our lens as the main ways in which scholars engaged (in)equity in their research or called for greater focus on (in)equity in US HE internationalization research. After identifying the four guiding principles, we used them to synthesize and organize the key themes we had developed in our analysis and critique of the body of scholarship on US HE internationalization.

Integrating Equity-Driven Conceptual and Theoretical Perspectives

Our equity-driven lens includes a guiding principle focused on how scholars theoretically and conceptually ground their studies. Conceptual and theoretical perspectives integrate ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions that ultimately frame research design and interpretations of phenomena (Jabareen 2009). Within our equity-driven lens, it is important to interpret how conceptual/theoretical frameworks in HE internationalization research acknowledge, reinforce, or challenge unbalanced power dynamics and global (in)equities.

It is through privilege and power that social institutions, such as education systems, reproduce inequity (Bourdieu 1984). Without examination and scrutiny of internationalization in HE, there becomes a global social reproduction of inequity (de Wit and Jones 2018; Vavrus and Pekol 2015). In the case of HE internationalization in the USA, research traditionally mimics practice in that framing around power, hegemony, and equity in academic scholarship on internationalization is still emerging (George Mwangi et al. 2018; Shahjahan and Kezar 2013).

Scholars have begun, particularly within the twenty-first century, to move away from the disciplinary perspectives of social psychology and intercultural communication that have undergirded international education and take a values-neutral approach to internationalization in order to engage in frameworks that critique and interrogate internationalization (Vavrus and Pekol 2015). Scholars have used critical theory, postcolonial theory, decolonial theory, and critical race theory to empirically unpack colonial and racist university processes, governed by oppressive structures of power (e.g., Andreotti 2006; Blanco Ramírez 2014; George Mwangi et al. 2018; Roshanravan 2012; Stein et al. 2016; Vavrus and Pekol 2015; Yao et al. 2019b). For example, drawing from decolonial scholarship, Stein et al. (2016) explained that most institutions of higher learning operate through a global dominant imaginary from which issues of racial hierarchies and economic inequalities in the field are maintained.

Our equity-driven internationalization lens is also informed by a critical and transformative epistemology. Although critical theory encompasses a broad range of definitions and applications, we ascribe to Giroux's (2003) assertion that critical theory is "both a 'school of thought' and a process of critique" (p. 27). By incorporating critical theory and perspectives to our lens, we pay attention to educational practices and ideas that "serve the interests of the dominant class while simultaneously silencing and dehumanizing 'others'" (Brown 2004, p. 78) within international HE research and theory. While scholars do not have to utilize critical theory or paradigms to be equity-oriented, an equity-driven lens must be based in a foundation that unveils and interrogates how racial, colonial, political, and/or economic hierarchies inform current international research practices.

De-/constructing Internationalization

In an equity-driven framework, internationalization is not just embedded in systems of power; rather, it is a tool used to wield power and therefore cannot be neutral. The process, concept, and construction of internationalization have power in defining which people, organizations, locations/environments, processes, outcomes, and (research) agendas are centered or silenced when HEIs engage globally. Therefore, our lens requires researchers to be clear in how they are defining internationalization and not depend on broad definitions without interrogating or deconstructing how the definition itself frames their work. In addition, we argue that data, especially when discussing people, must be disaggregated in order to nuance who participates in internationalization. In our development of the equity-driven internationalization lens, we used questions to deconstruct how internationalization was represented in literature such as: Who gets to define internationalization (and how does that shape the focus, design, and impact of research)? Who benefits from the ways in which internationalization is defined (or remains undefined) in extant scholarship and who does not? What are the theories, ideologies, perspectives, and values informing how we define internationalization and how can we make these explicit in our research?

In addition to defining internationalization, researchers must have intentionality in the terminology and concepts they use to engage in inquiry regarding internationalization. For example, terminology such as “developing” or “least developed countries,” (LDCs) which is a concept coined by the United Nations, creates a negative connotation of particular countries or regions of the world as weaker and less valuable than countries like the USA. In this chapter, we replace those terms with Majority and Minority World. Majority World refers to areas in which most of the world’s population, natural resources, and landmass are located, but are often economically poorer (Alam 2008). The Majority World is typically referred to in HE scholarship as the Global South, Developing Countries, or Third World. Minority World refers to economically more privileged countries (Alam 2008). The Minority World is typically referred to in HE scholarship as Global North, Developed Countries, or First World, but rarely as White settler countries. We recognize that these terms are still inherently problematic as many countries do not fit neatly within this dichotomy. However, we argue that by replacing more traditional terminology with Minority World and Majority World, we encourage reflection on the unequal dynamics and power relations between two world areas, as well as highlight that there are resources and value present in regions that are typically defined by what they lack. Similarly, our equity-oriented lens asks researchers to deconstruct and then utilize concepts and terminologies in internationalization research that are asset-oriented (rather than deficit-oriented), are inclusive, complicate the status quo, and interrogate dynamics of power and privilege.

Defining the Sociohistorical Context

An equity-driven lens for internationalization recognizes that contemporary practices in US HE cannot be separated from the sociohistorical forces that form intricate relationships between coloniality, racial hierarchies, institutionalized racism, globalization, and capitalism, which structured the country's first colleges and continue to manifest through HEIs today (Dancy et al. 2018; Wilder 2013). Internationalization of HE has always been a part of the fabric of the USA. The arrival of the first colonizers established that transnational flows of people, ideas, and motivations can irrevocably change the trajectory of a community, as demonstrated by how settler colonialism devastated the Indigenous communities in the Americas (Stein 2018; Wilder 2013). With the arrival of settlers, the economic and political benefits of internationalization and global flows continued to bolster US society, including the transatlantic slave trade, indentured servitude, and the cheap labor of Chinese immigrants for building the transcontinental railroad. As evidenced by these examples, the USA has always been a site of internationalization, globalization, colonization, and domination of people, land, and ideas.

The “founding, financing, and development of higher education in the colonies were thoroughly intertwined with the economic and social forces” (Wilder 2013, p. 1) of the transatlantic slave trade and settler colonialism. The foundation of US HE is rooted in perspectives imported from Europe, most notably from the British residential model and then later from the German research model (Thelin 2011). US traditions of residential student learning, scientific research, and faculty governance are results of transnational flows of educational perspectives from other countries. In addition, HE in the USA was founded to educate White men from elite families, and colonial colleges were all based on Christian foundations (Thelin 2011). Although some attempts were made to educate the Indigenous youth, the efforts were rooted in White- and Christian-dominated perspectives that resulted in trauma and damage for the students, many of whom were resistant to participating (Wright 1988). Many graduates of elite colleges returned to the southern states as landowners who fully participated in the slave trade after being educated on the inferiority of Blackness and the supremacy of Whiteness (Wilder 2013).

Contemporary internationalization practices by US HEIs continue imperialistic and colonial approaches, yet perhaps in more subtle ways. Internationalization in US HE is politically and economically driven, often used as a way to establish the dominance of HEIs. Through the commodification of international students, the emphasis on cutting-edge knowledge production, and establishment of English dominance at branch campuses, the US HE enterprise is at risk of maintaining inequitable approaches to education around the world. As stated by Stein (2018), the inequities and injustices of the present are not entirely novel, but rather are the legacy and continuation of a higher education system whose foundations have been deeply entangled with the logics, relations, and infrastructures of racial-colonial capitalism since its beginnings (p. 78).

Because of the ties between sociohistorical and contemporary forces, internationalization affects all aspects of HE in all nation-states. The flows of

internationalization efforts, including student mobility and research partnerships, cross both real and imagined borders, which necessitates foregrounding issues of power and hierarchies from both historical and current contexts. Pursuing an equitable approach to internationalization research interrogates the imperialism that has inherently been a part of US HE and has continued to permeate, in both subtle and overt ways, current approaches to internationalization. We offer the equity-driven internationalization lens as a tool for engaging in knowledge production or critique that has “a motivational connection to action itself” by linking “a radical decoding of history to a vision of the future” (Giroux 2003, p. 50) to disrupt current approaches to international higher education research and practice. Similarly, our lens asks researchers to acknowledge and engage with the past when conducting studies on contemporary internationalization issues.

Connecting to Contemporary Forces of Globalization

Our equity-driven lens requires scholars to recognize the globalization-based pushes and pulls (e.g., economic, social, political, environmental, technological, scientific) that drive how US HEIs engage in internationalization processes. While globalization and internationalization are distinct concepts, they are intertwined. Internationalization reflects multiple practices interlocked with its structural driver – globalization. Yet globalization is an under-conceptualized factor in internationalization scholarship. If scholars do not acknowledge the forces of globalization as a starting point for internationalization-related research, it will wrongly appear as if internationalization occurs in a vacuum or that the motivations driving it are based solely on institutional/individual choice. However, we argue that internationalization is inextricably linked with the global structures and systems that often favor Minority World needs, a market orientation, and neoliberal ideologies (Pike 2012; Yang 2003).

Despite the interconnectedness between internationalization and globalization, perception often centers on internationalization efforts being compartmentalized as domestic priorities that are distinct from international issues; that is, the local is separate from the national, which is also separate from the global. However, the realities of internationalization are rooted in continuous flows (Marginson and Sawir 2005) that extend between, around, and within the global, national, and local. A commonly used term is *glonacal* (Marginson and Rhoades 2002) which identifies the coexistence of the global, national, and local. In using a glonacal perspective, HE is “shaped in three dimensions simultaneously” (Marginson 2004, p. 177) through continual interaction. As a result, contemporary internationalization of HE signifies the interconnectedness and immediacy of how global pressures are very much present in local and regional priorities.

Our equity-driven internationalization lens refutes the idea that the HE enterprise is distinct from the influence of global and local politics, markets, and dominance. Globalization and internationalization work in tandem through a dynamic interaction in which HE is an active participant. According to Cantwell and

Maldonado-Maldonado (2009), the global “can be understood as structure, and the local as agency positioned within this structure” (p. 291). Yet power and dominance are inherent in global structures because at the core, “power is embedded in the way globalisation is conceived” (p. 291). Thus, understanding the role of power in US constructions of glonacal forces is critical in unveiling how the pressures of globalization, such as markets and prestige, contribute to US internationalization efforts and contribute to Majority and Minority World distinctions. Globalization has affected every aspect of higher education, leading to pushes for internationalization without much critical reflection. Our equity-driven internationalization lens requires scholars to conceptualize the term “internationalization” with an understanding of how globalization overlaps as a very real and influential force.

Sociohistorical and Contemporary Influences on Internationalization Research

In alignment with our equity-driven lens, we next focus on the sociohistorical context and contemporary forces of globalization to demonstrate how globalization can act as a catalyst for the way in which internationalization is pursued in research and practice while also highlighting how internationalization research and practices can occur in response and reaction to the forces of globalization in any given era. Research content, frameworks, and methodology often mirror the major challenges and problems within society at any given time. This is particularly true in education research, given that one of its central purposes is to help improve and reform education policy and practice. This section demonstrates how research through the mid-twentieth century into the twenty-first century related to the internationalization of US HE reflects key sociohistorical and contemporary issues, priorities, and events. We focus on the early development-aid model approach to US HE and the (failed) push toward a national strategic plan for the internationalization of US HE, the influence of prestige and financial indicators on the growth of internationalization practices, and the movement toward comprehensive internationalization as a part of the US HE system.

Sociohistorical Context: US HE Internationalization as National Strategy

HE internationalization gained prominence as a national strategic tool in the USA during and post-World War II into the Cold War period. In the twentieth century, US HEIs became more of a global force “for improving economic growth and social stability [emerging] as a major player in solving global development challenges” (George Mwangi 2017, p. 33). In the 1960s US HEIs’ internationalization strategies began to shift toward a development-aid focused model, known as “technical assistance and development cooperation” (de Wit 2001, p. 122). This donor-recipient or path-dependent model of internationalization remained dominant until the

1980s and, one could argue, is still in existence in some HEI practices (Heyneman and Lee 2016; Koehn and Obamba 2014).

Through the donor-recipient model, knowledge transfer and capacity building became one-dimensional and unidirectional, with the flow of students from the Majority World into the USA and the flow of faculty, funds, and other resources from the USA into the Majority World (de Wit 2001). This approach to internationalization was in part due to the need for post-World War II reconstruction in Europe and for development of higher education infrastructure to support workforce development in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (de Wit 2001). This strategy began as a competition between the USA and Soviet Union into the Cold War period, but by the 1980s, Western Europe, Canada, and Australia began funneling development funds into the Majority World as well (de Wit 2001). The rationales provided were mutual understanding and world peace, but also emphasized countries desiring the strongest position as a superpower and the creation of allies in other areas of the world (Bu 1999; Heyneman and Lee 2016).

US HE internationalization strategies have historically been used to socialize students and scholars from abroad into Western thought, democratic ideals, and allyship with the USA (de Wit 1999). Particularly during the post-World War II period, the USA feared threats from the Soviet Union and engaged in public diplomacy using the US educational system (Bu 1999). For example, the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961, which drives educational and cultural exchange between the USA and other nations, was created to “promote international cooperation for educational and cultural advancement, and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world” (McAllister-Grande 2008, p. 22). This program was supported and expanded during the Cold War period, and cultural exchange, through the vehicle of US HE, was treated as a national security interest (Bu 1999; de Wit 2001). Students, scholars, and technical trainees in both Europe and newly emerging politically independent countries throughout the world were targeted by US universities through recruitment strategies and scholarships to enroll, become educated and socialized within the US HE system (which also provided socialization toward US democratic ideals, politics, and values), and return to the home country where they could become leaders in instilling democracy and nation building (Bu 1999). US college students and scholars who traveled abroad were encouraged to act as ambassadors who could spread US beliefs and values around the world as well (McAllister-Grande 2008). Bu (1999) suggests, “In the competition with the Soviet propaganda, ‘educational exchange’ became an important instrument to project favorable images of the United States symbolized by its abundance of material wealth, consumer culture, technological know-how, individual freedom, and political democracy” (pp. 393–394). This use of soft power through cultural dominance and influence was important during the Cold War period and was a more feasible option than military domination, given nuclear threat.

Many of the US HE internationalization practices reflected between the post-WWII and Cold War period were focused on specific, individual activities like student exchange. Unlike many European countries around the world, the USA

never fully developed a national strategy for internationalization in HE (de Wit 2002). The multiple integrated strategies and practices seen on many campuses today as comprehensive internationalization were not due to governmental influence, “given that most efforts at the federal, state, and institutional level have been piecemeal, usually without the interest or support of powerful lawmakers and, perhaps most importantly, a presidential administration or a farsighted governor” (Douglass and Edelstein 2009, p. 20).

One of the closest moments to developing a national strategy occurred in the 1960s as part of the “Great Society” era under President Lyndon B. Johnson. This period saw the development of legislation for domestic HE concerns through the Higher Education Act of 1965. It was around this time that President Johnson also saw the need for policies guiding international engagement and practices by educational institutions and proposed the International Education Act (IEA) of 1966, “to strengthen our capacity for international educational cooperation, to stimulate exchange with the students and teachers of other lands, to assist the progress of education in developing nations, and to build new bridges of international understanding” (HR 14643 1966, p. 6). For HE, the IEA of 1966 focused on world affairs, internationalization of the curriculum, educational exchanges, and education for development. Although the IEA was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate, the need to fund the Vietnam War allowed it to die in the appropriations committee. The legislation was never funded (Smithee 2012; Vestal 1994).

Parallels Between US Sociohistorical Context and Internationalization Research The lack of strong national support for HE internationalization paralleled research on HE internationalization during the Cold War period into the end of the twenty-first century. This research argued for needed support and prioritization of internationalization by the government and HEIs. Some of this research stemmed from international education associations that worked as advocates and were commissioned by “foundations, such as Carnegie, Ford, Sloan, Guggenheim and others . . . to sponsor research and data gathering” (Smithee 2012, p. 10). The associations, in turn, conducted research or sponsored academics to conduct research that sought to demonstrate the value of internationalization (e.g., Goodwin and Nacht 1983; Lee et al. 1981). This period also saw the creation of US-based international education academic journals (e.g., *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* in 1995, *Journal of Studies in International Education* in 1997, and *Journal of Research in International Education* in 2002) as well as practitioner-focused news media/magazines (e.g., *World Education News and Reviews* in 1988, *International Educator* in 1992, and *IIE Networker* in 2001).

During this time into the early twenty-first century, the push to clearly define internationalization, debate its definition, and consider the drivers and outcomes of internationalization were also brought to the forefront. The focus on defining the internationalization of US HE led to the dominance of:

A functionalist or instrumentalist approach to understanding the internationalization efforts of universities as a whole. That is, the studies focus attention on the specific inputs (activities), processes (arrangements), and outcomes (goals) of higher education internationalization rather than the broader context that shapes it. (Vavrus and Pekol 2015, p. 6)

Research aligned with the practice of growing standardization regarding the implementation and processes behind the internationalization of HE, often without acknowledgment of unequal systems and structures that internationalization might be reinforcing. For example, a major rationale for internationalization in the twentieth century focused on development and the spread of democracy (Bu 1999; de Wit 1999). This rationale uses internationalization as a form of soft power to reify US HE dominance and exceptionalism by assuming that democracy is an ideal system and that US HE can provide the solutions to the world's challenges. Thus, while the research and research outlets developed in the late twentieth century reflected voice, clarity, and enthusiasm for internationalization practices and policies in US HE, there is danger in presenting internationalization through solely a positive lens, or as Brandenburg and de Wit (2011) critiqued as “a synonym of ‘doing good’” (p. 16).

Contemporary Globalization Forces: US HE Internationalization as Institutional Strategy

The use of HE internationalization as a geopolitical tool would reflect what Knight (2004) refers to as a national-level rationale in which internationalization focuses on human resource development, strategic alliances, commercial trade, nation building, and social/cultural development. While political advocacy for an intentional national-level approach can be seen from the middle to the end of the twentieth century, new patterns emerged in the twenty-first century that shifted the focus to a more institutional-level rationale in which internationalization is used by individual HEIs to emphasize international branding and profile, income generation, student and staff development, strategic alliances, and knowledge production (Knight 2004). This shift reflects globalizing forces, national events, and political changes that led to greater focus on nationalism, protectionism, and border control in tandem with an increasingly corporatized and neoliberal US HE model.

The 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 were a major catalyst for change in how the US federal government framed global engagement, particularly related to immigration. For US HE, this change was present in the added scrutiny and restriction placed on foreign nationals (especially those from predominantly Muslim countries) seeking entry into the USA as college students and visiting scholars. New procedures, policies, and security measures were developed between 2002 and 2003 (e.g., the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act, National Security Entry-Exit Registration System, and the US-VISIT program), designed to reduce the probability of terrorists entering the USA (Mueller 2009). In 2003, a Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) was created requiring HEIs to submit data on their foreign students to the US State Department or risk loss of accreditation

(Mueller 2009). This new threshold for entry deterred foreign nationals from entering the USA after 9/11, particularly given that there were fewer restrictions for entry into countries such as Canada and Australia (Lee and Rice 2007). Mueller (2009) found that:

The total number of students admitted from PMCs [predominantly Muslim countries] increased by 29.6% between 1999 and 2001, compared to an increase of 22.6% for all other countries. These numbers decreased between 2001 and 2004 by 8.1% for all other countries and by 44.5% for PMCs. (pp. 21–22)

While HEIs in the early 2010s seemed to be on an upswing in international student enrollment from losses in the previous years (Institute of International Education [IIE] 2018), there is another sociopolitical shift occurring in the USA and in other places around the world that supports closed borders, rejects greater diversity within national borders, and strives to be both among the most powerful in the world and, yet, more insular. Policies such as the 2017 travel ban of citizens from Iraq, Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen into the USA (Almasy and Simon 2017), procedures making it challenging to pursue international collaborations (Brajkovic and Helms 2018), lack of federal funding for research abroad (Helms et al. 2017), travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic (Conway et al. 2020), and the 2020 proclamation suspending H-1B and J visas for international students by the Trump administration in 2020 (Proclamation 10014 2020) reflect this shift on US HE. Increased nationalism and xenophobia have scholars questioning the role of internationalization in the HE sector and whether US HE internationalization practices will be sustained into the future (Altbach and de Wit 2018; Harkavy et al. 2020).

While HEIs often frame internationalization as a process that yields positive outcomes, particularly in improving the US economy and competitive global edge (Brandenburg and de Wit 2011; Stein et al. 2016), many of the ways in which the outcomes of HE internationalization are framed at a national policy level do not share the same discourse. The participation of international students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) is one example. Currently, there are not enough US-born graduates obtaining college degrees in STEM to meet occupational demands (National Science Board 2018). This lack of STEM participation has led to the recruitment of foreign-born students and professionals to the USA to mitigate the gap in the STEM talent pipeline (National Science Board 2018). “At approximately 90 percent of U.S. universities, the majority of full-time graduate students (master’s and PhDs) in computer science and electrical engineering are international students” (National Foundation for American Policy 2017, p. 13). In 1992, the federal government created an optional training program for international students in STEM to obtain a US college degree and remain within the USA to participate in the STEM workforce. Today that program is consistently under threat (Merrick 2018). More stringent immigration and visa policies are signaling to potential international students that they are not welcome (Merrick 2018; West 2020). The federal government is not treating the participation of

international students and workers as an asset in STEM or as a geopolitical resource, although without their participation in the STEM talent pool, the USA is less prepared to compete globally in that sector.

Other key issues impacting internationalization, particularly at US public colleges and universities, are continued state divestment and decreased funding to HEIs. Internationalization is one way that universities create alternative revenue streams (Altbach and Knight 2007; George Mwangi 2013). Forces pushing for the internationalization of US HE are often rooted in economic foundations, with an emphasis on financial, human, and intellectual resources. US institutions have been found to commodify aspects of internationalization, including student mobility for academic dominance (Yao [forthcoming](#)) and international graduate students as labor sources in US HEIs (Cantwell et al. 2018). For example, research demonstrates that as state funding for public US HEIs decreases, the enrollment of international students increases, suggesting that public HEIs are induced by state disinvestment to recruit and enroll international students for whom tuition charges are many times higher than what state residents pay (George Mwangi 2013). As fewer federal and state funds are allocated toward US HE, HEIs are in tandem becoming more corporatized and commercialized (Kezar 2004), and internationalization is not immune to this process. Internationalization has become big business for study abroad agencies and international student recruiters, some of which market internationalization as a commodity that can be bought through students' purchasing power as consumers (Stein et al. 2016).

Much like other aspects of HE in the USA, internationalization is highly motivated by market forces, as exhibited by the valuing of global rankings (e.g., Amsler and Bolsmann 2012; Marginson and Van der Wende 2007; Shahjahan et al. 2017) and positional competition (e.g., Brown 2000; Brown et al. 2008; Kim 2016). Global rankings "cemented the notion of a world university competition or market" (Marginson and Van der Wende 2007, p. 308), and in recent years, rankings often serve as the gold star approach to increasing prestige and dominance within the global HE market. Global university rankings such as *Times Higher Education World University Rankings* and *QS World University Rankings* are used as comparative metrics for quality and prestige within the international competitive arena. Despite debates on the accuracy and validity of global rankings, many institutions promote internationalization as a way to climb the ranks of top-rated global institutions (Delgado-Márquez et al. 2013).

Global university rankings have been criticized for their role in increasing stratification and imperialism among institutions and nation-states (Amsler and Bolsmann 2012; Shahjahan et al. 2017). Amsler and Bolsmann (2012) argued that rankings become a tool for exclusion that supports the neoliberal academy rather than serving to identify quality and value. Shahjahan et al. (2017) highlighted the colonial nature of global rankings, as they are rooted in Eurocentric and "historically conditioned uneven and competitive economies of prestige and historical processes affecting international relations" (p. S68).

Global university rankings have benefited the USA, as US institutions lead the rankings. Despite the arbitrary measures and weights of the rankings process, the

outcomes of global rankings benefit US HEIs as they pull students based on reputations for quality and prestige (Mazzarol and Soutar 2002). In addition, the privileging of institutional types is uneven as research universities dominate what is considered quality and prestigious in the USA (Altbach 2012; Marginson and Van der Wende 2007). As a result, global university rankings contribute to a privileged and hegemonic model of HE, particularly for Anglo-Saxon countries such as the USA (Ordorika and Lloyd 2015), that is “projected to the rest of the world as the ‘objective’ ideal to follow” (p. 386). Global rankings create and perpetuate stratification among and between the USA and the Majority World, particularly in the promotion of research institutions.

Despite the privileging of research institutions in the USA, the prevalence of US HEIs in global university rankings still benefits the overall global reputation of US institutions as a whole. In doing so, the USA gains in positional competition when compared with other countries. Simply stated, positional competition is defined as “how one stands relative to others within an implicit or explicit hierarchy” (Brown 2000, p. 633), in which social groups utilize assets to maintain an advantage. Positional competition privileges the social elite as groups seek to outperform others in an attempt to maintain a position of dominance as a way to keep an advantage. When applied to HE, US HEIs seek to maintain academic dominance by pushing for high global rankings, seemingly outperforming HEIs in other countries.

Based on a global market perspective, US HEIs maintain positional competition in the global academic market through three areas: membership, meritocratic competition, and market (Brown 2000). Membership is based on how an individual, or an institution, is positioned against others, typically through categories such as gender, class, and national origin. Meritocratic competition is found in effort toward achievement, often at the cost of neglecting structural and systemic inequality. Markets indicate a shift toward economic principles of supply and demand, and as a result, barriers to market competition are eliminated as a way to establish positional competition. As a result, global market forces exerted on the USA drive the impetus toward maintaining high positional competition within new global dynamics and the global knowledge economy (Brown 2000; Brown et al. 2008; Kim 2016), thus driving internationalization efforts.

Without the presence of cohesive national or state agendas, US HE internationalization is influenced by the agendas of professional associations, private foundations, and individual HEIs (de Wit 2001; Smithee 2012), further reflecting a fragmented approach to internationalization comprised of individual institutional choices, agendas, and needs. Internationalization is a major strategic priority of a number of professional associations that work to support institutions in creating and enacting comprehensive internationalization efforts, including the Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA), and NAFSA: the Association of International Educators. The American Council on Education (ACE), which defines internationalization as “a strategic, coordinated process that seeks to align and integrate international policies, programs, and initiatives; and positions colleges and universities as more globally oriented and internationally connected” (Center for Internationalization and Global Engagement 2012, p. 3), has worked with over

130 colleges and universities to provide “assistance to leadership teams as they engage in a comprehensive review of internationalization efforts on campus” (American Council on Education 2019, para. 1). There exist numerous leadership programs for administrators, campus consultants, written guides, and other tools to ensure that US HEIs can design, implement, and assess their internationalization strategies effectively.

Parallels Between Contemporary Globalization Forces and Internationalization Research Education associations, along with other private organizations, play a major role in influencing how US HE internationalization strategies are developed (Smithee 2012). Yet, this influence has also led to critiques that HEIs are developing internationalization strategies that are not guided by their unique institutional context and mission, and instead reflect the goals, motivations, and priorities of external organizations and associations as well as institutional isomorphism and corporatization (George Mwangi et al. [forthcoming](#); Wells and Henkin 2005). A number of studies and conceptual papers from international education professional associations and education advocacy organizations advocate for the infusion of internationalization practices into the core curricular and cocurricular activities of US HEIs (Smithee 2012). Some of the most highly cited include NAFSA’s report *Comprehensive Internationalization: From Concept to Action* (Hudzik 2011) and the American Council on Education’s national survey-based study of US HEIs leading to *Mapping Internationalization on U.S. Campus*, a report of the current state of US HE internationalization published every 5 years since 2003. These reports have guided hundreds of US HEIs’ internationalization strategies given their focus on applied research and a practitioner audience. Given their research, ACE has proposed a model for the implementation of comprehensive internationalization, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of six pillars: (1) articulated institutional commitment; (2) administrative leadership, structure, and staffing; (3) curriculum, co-curriculum, and learning outcomes; (4) faculty policies and practices; (5) student mobility; and (6) collaborations and partnerships (Helms et al. 2017). While these kinds of reports have been highly influential for HE practitioners, many have limitations in not being empirically based or relying solely on institutional data that is self-reported (Smithee 2012).

The institutional-level focus on contemporary US HE internationalization (Knight 2004) is also reflected in scholarship that has emphasized institutional-level case studies and analyses of the organizational structures, processes, and outcomes of campus internationalization strategies. There has been a mushrooming of internationalization strategies and activities to the point that almost all US HEIs pursue internationalization to some extent (Green and Shoenberg 2006). These forms of internationalization range from informal activities among various institutions to extensive curriculum changes and student exchanges (Vavrus and Pekol 2015).

Childress’ (2009) study is one of the most comprehensive institutional analyses, including interviews with dozens of HEIs and the identification of three general

types of internationalization plans (Institutional Strategic Plans (ISP), Distinct Documents (DD), and Unit Plans (UP)) that are often elected by HEIs based on factors such as the size of the institution, phases in the internationalization cycle, goals and purposes of internationalization, and campus stakeholders' buy-in. Childress (2009), in tandem with other scholars such as Bartell (2003), suggests that a top-down approach to the internationalization process guided by campus leadership and university-wide strategic plans are most successful.

Approaching from an organizational perspective, Bartell (2003) further argued that institutions that are responsive to external change are more likely to bring about a successful internationalization process than internally oriented institutions who often take on truncated and tokenizing international processes. Research demonstrates that because internationalization is a dynamic and globally engaged process, HEIs must acknowledge the multiple internal and external factors at play. Zhou (2016) argues that internationalization occurs at five levels, global, national, institutional, program, and personal, with each level consisting of its own purposes, programs, outcomes, approaches, and projects. Despite this complexity, research also shows that behind the intensification of internationalization, there are implicit assumptions (Knight 2011), economic and social imperatives (Vavrus and Pekol 2015), and a lack of scrutinization of the underpinnings of internationalization programs and ideologies (Stier 2004) within US HEIs.

For example, although global HE may be seemingly neutral relational environments, power structures can be unevenly oppressive within the relationships and exchanges between the USA and other countries, which are commonly identified as First/Minority and Third/Majority World societies (Rhee and Sagaria 2004). With the pervasiveness of global rankings, prestige, and positional competition, US HEIs become imperial and colonial actors in contemporary HE. As a result, a form of academic imperialism comes into play when researching the effects of globalization and internationalization.

Research on internationalization often centers the USA as the unit of comparison, thus contributing to academic imperialism. Higher education has become the new imperialism (Naidoo 2011), with US institutions dominating within the glonacal sphere of HE. The academic imperialism of the USA is "premised on both consensual and coercive interaction" (Rhee and Sagaria 2004, p. 81), in which global actors are complicit in accepting US globalization and internationalization efforts. The complicit and consensual relationship is evident in the large number of mobile students from sending nations, the acceptance of the English language as *lingua franca*, and US institutions continually ranked as being top academic destinations for knowledge (Marginson 2008). As a result, the danger of inequalities such as privileging of certain knowledges and priorities in global HE research continues to be a problem, especially as academic dependency on US HE continues to flourish (Altbach 1977; Yao forthcoming). The dependency establishes the US intellectual model as the dominant force on which dependent nation-states as peripheral members rely, thus maintaining the USA's dominant position in educational research.

Understanding Internationalization Research Through an Equity-Driven Lens

The sociohistorical context and contemporary forces of globalization surrounding HE internationalization demonstrate a number of broad parallels between internationalization policy/practice and research. Next, we use our equity-driven lens to synthesize what is known about specific US HE internationalization practices and how research investigates these practices. Knight (2012) suggests that internationalization is comprised of (1) internal or “at-home” practices that happen on campus and (2) abroad or “cross-border” internationalization, which refers to practices that involve movement across national boundaries. Similarly, we found that much of the scholarship on US internationalization focused on singular internationalization practices that could be categorized in one of these two ways. “At-home”-oriented scholarship focused on international students; curriculum, teaching, and learning; research, training, and scholarly activity; and internationalization at-home practices. Cross-border-oriented scholarship focused on study abroad; international higher education partnerships; and transnational education. While we aggregate types of individual practices in this section for clarity, we do not use the two pillars as an additional organizing tool because individual internationalization practices (or even the larger categories of at-home and cross-border practices) are not mutually exclusive and do not reflect neat and simple distinctions. Similarly, Knight (2012) explains, “that these two pillars [at home and cross border] are separate but closely linked and interdependent” (p. 34). Thus, we focus on five practices of US internationalization that are most relevant to contemporary higher education: educating international students, international higher education partnerships and research activities, US involvement in transnational education, study abroad as a high-impact practice, and strategizing internationalization at home. Each section that follows applies the guiding principles of the equity-driven lens to demonstrate whether and how extant research on five practices of US HE internationalization reflects an equity orientation.

Educating International Students

International students are typically defined as foreign-born students who have entered the USA on a temporary student visa for the purpose of attending a US HEI. Research on the experiences of international students in the USA is one of the largest and most established bodies of literature on US HE internationalization practices.

Sociohistorical Context One of the major developments of research on international students’ experiences in US HE stems from the 1960s and 1970s, when a number of annotated bibliographies and systematic literature reviews were conducted on student mobility to the USA (e.g., Cormack 1962; Cussler 1962; Spaulding et al. 1976; Walton 1967). These reviews were often sponsored by the

US federal government and captured hundreds of articles that typically reflected education or other social science evaluation studies. For example, Spaulding et al.'s review in 1976 included 433 sources. These reviews focused on international students' adjustment to US HE, how their sojourn to the USA impacted their values, factors impacting their academic achievement, and peer group composition and engagement. One critique of these reviews is that international student research portrays this student population in narrow ways, and this critique is not dissimilar to critiques of research on international students' experiences in contemporary times (e.g., Abdullah et al. 2014; George Mwangi et al. 2019; Hanassab 2006; Heng 2019; Lee 2014; Malcolm and Mendoza 2014; Yao et al. 2019b).

De-/constructing Internationalization International students came to the USA from over 200 countries in 2018 (Institute of International Education [IIE] 2019a), but researchers often “construct” international students' experiences by generalizing research results to all international students as if they reflect a homogenous group (Yoon and Portman 2004). This limitation is particularly apparent in quantitative studies with large national data sets for two reasons: (1) these data sources may not capture much demographic data about these students beyond their foreign status and (2) when demographic data is collected, the small number of international students within a data set makes the ability to analyze within-group differences difficult due to producing a small n . Lack of attention to student diversity is also embedded in the ways that US HEIs are asked to report international student data by the US government: international students' racial identity is not captured.

In quantitative and qualitative studies, international students are often only disaggregated by national identity, which is problematic given that a dominant national group might be used to represent all other international students from a particular region. For example, in their systematic review of research on East Asian international students' well-being, Li et al. (2014) found many studies making claims about all East Asian or Asian international students, when their samples only included Chinese international students. A sole focus on national identity also ignores students' socioeconomic status, religious identity, ethnic/racial identity, linguistic background, sexuality, ability, and other identities (Shahjahan and Kezar 2013). Not acknowledging sociocultural factors and identities beyond national origin presents students as one-dimensional and wrongly suggests that there can be a “one-size-fits-all” approach to meeting their educational needs (Shahjahan and Kezar 2013; Yoon and Portman 2004). It should not be assumed that all international students share common characteristics or experience US HE beyond a shared student visa status. By removing this assumption, scholars can acknowledge that international students “experience multiple points of privilege and oppression given their intersecting identities (e.g. nativity, race/ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status) at different points in time” (Yao et al. 2019b, p. 45).

Conceptual and Theoretical Perspectives Research on international students' experiences has historically been grounded in assimilationist and psychology

frameworks focused on coping to understand international student adjustment to their new educational environment (Coates 2004; Khawaja and Stallman 2011; Li et al. 2014). Two of the most often cited frameworks are Obeng's (1960) concept of culture shock (which defines the stages one experiences as a result of moving into a new cultural environment) and Berry's (2006) definition of acculturative stress (the stressors one experiences in adapting to the values, beliefs, and practices of a new country context). Li et al. (2014) argue that "compared with culture shock, acculturative stress is considered a more positive concept because it not only includes psychological stressors in culture shock such as depression and anxiety but also provides four strategies on how people handle their acculturation experiences" (p. 303). Yet, seeking to understand international students solely using either framework foregrounds their behavior as maladaptive to adjustment challenges, which scholars using these frameworks have found include depression (Constantine et al. 2004; Volet and Jones 2012; Wei et al. 2007), culture shock (Bochner 2006; Cemalcilar and Falbo 2008; Wang and Mallinckrodt 2006), non-assimilation to dominant culture as a deficit (Li et al. 2013; Nilsson et al. 2008), and lacking agency in their own experiences. Assimilation-based theories also place the onus on international students to adapt to their environment instead of calling for HEIs to transform to better support and be inclusive of their international students (George Mwangi et al. 2018; Yoon and Portman 2004).

Framing scholarship around what international students are lacking, rather on how they can be supported in their education environmental, is problematic within an equity-driven lens. As Yoon and Portman (2004) argue, international students "need to be viewed from a developmental perspective rather than from a pathological perspective" (p. 38). As an example of deficit framing, a number of studies have investigated the correlation between English language proficiency and international student well-being, finding that students with less English proficiency are often more homesick, anxious, and depressed during college (Lin and Scherz 2014; Poyrazli and Lopez 2007; Sue and Sue 2007; Yao 2016; Yeh and Inose 2003). An equity-driven approach might examine the relationship between international students' well-being and the support US campuses are (and are not) providing for students' English language skills development. This type of study would shed light on US HEIs' processes and services for international students, instead of defining international students as deficient.

International students have also been framed as sojourners, a group that Bochner (2006) defined as "individuals who travel abroad to attain a particular goal within a specified period of time" (p. 181). By defining students as temporary sojourners, HEIs, and US society more broadly, may not see value in investing time and resources into supporting these students. This is a false premise, given that between 2004 and 2016, at least 1.5 million foreign college graduates from US HEIs obtained authorization to remain and work in the USA (Ruiz and Budiman 2018). Even if students return to their home country, US HEIs should support their success as learners rather than as commodities. Student-centered research that better elucidates the needs, perspectives, and experiences of international students can be used to help

ensure their success in US HE, rather than reify US hegemony in internationalization.

A number of scholars are moving scholarship to a more equity-driven approach for understanding international students, their perspectives, and their educational experiences and outcomes. Some scholars are using sociological, ecological, and critical frameworks to consider and critique the role of systems, structures, and environments on international students' experiences. For example, Yao, George Mwangi, and Malaney Brown (2019b) used critical race theory to analyze unequal social systems and structures in the USA that impact international students' experiences such as systemic racism and nativism. Their article highlights that adopting a critical analytical lens allows for the inclusion of international students within the landscape of racial climate, diversity, equity, and inclusion discourse and practice, which has historically focused on domestic American students. Lee and Rice (2007) applied the concept of neo-racism, a form of racism grounded in culture, national origin, and nation-to-nation relationships, rather than solely phenotype or physical characteristics, to demonstrate the nuanced ways that international students experience discrimination in US HE. Growing scholarship considers student outcomes during (e.g., Choudaha and Schulmann 2014) and post-college. Emerging scholarship on students' well-being and sense of belonging (e.g., Yao 2015) is grounded in care for students and not the benefits of these students to US HEIs.

Contemporary Forces of Globalization The commodification of international students reflects a response to market-driven globalization that was present within the literature in three main ways. Each of these three rationales is foundationally true and connected the economic forces of globalization. Yet, using them to center the significance of studying student mobility to the US and international student experiences reinforces the image that these students' value is in what they can provide to US HEIs, rather than how US HEIs can support their learning, development, and degree completion.

First, researchers point to the billions of dollars that international students contribute to the US economy (Altbach and Knight 2007; IIE 2019a) to demonstrate the significance of understanding these students' experiences. Researchers have both used and critiqued financially driven images of international students such as "state stimulus potential" for public state HE systems that are experiencing financial hardship (Owens et al. 2011) and as "cash cows" for the US economy (Abelmann and Kang 2014). Others have investigated how financial motivation may impact US HEIs' commitment to international students, finding that US HEIs increase international student enrollment when state appropriations decrease (George Mwangi 2013). The economic strategy of international student enrollment connects to broader discourses on global competition and the STEM talent pipeline (Yao and Viggiano 2019).

The second commodifying theme paints international graduate students as inexpensive labor provided to universities as research assistants and teaching assistants. While research on the demand side of international student mobility to the USA is

still scarce, a demand-side focus stresses what international students can provide to US HEIs. Scholars have demonstrated the positive impact this labor can have on research innovation, with Chellaraj, Maskus, and Mattoo (2008) and Matloff (2013) examining patent creation by international graduate students. International students also have a major impact on teaching given that, “if not for international teaching assistants, many courses required by U.S. students would be in short supply, delaying their graduations” (Peterson et al. 1999, p. 68).

A third commodifying rationale used or critiqued in the literature is the intercultural competence that American students can obtain by interacting with international students on US campuses (Bevis 2002; Chapdelaine and Alexitch 2004; Harrison 2002). This research highlights the developmental growth of domestic students (Andrade and Evans 2009; Urban and Palmer 2013), essentially portraying international students as a diversity resource for Americans (Yao and Viggiano 2019).

A growing body of work examines how international students and student mobility are situated within larger systems of global domination and geopolitics, addressing the forces of globalization. For example, Kim (2010) uses Bourdieu’s social reproduction theory and cultural capital to highlight how Korean international graduate students’ motivations to attend US HE were influenced by both US hegemony (power of global cultural capital) and US political values (democracy and freedom). Kim asserts that Korean’s students’ aspirations were “reproducing the global hierarchy of higher education” (p. 123) in their attempt to improve their competitive positioning in the global workforce through a US degree. However, Kim (2010) also wrote, “Korean students see US higher education as a means of liberation that resolves or escapes from some of the inner contradictions of Korean higher education, such as gender discrimination, a degree caste system, and an authoritarian learning culture” (pp. 123–124). These dual motivations demonstrate the complex and multiple globalized political and economic forces impacting international students’ engagement with US HE.

Other scholars have used the constructs of imperialism (Rhee and Sagaria 2004) and interest convergence (Yao and Viggiano 2019) to critique the commodification of international students for US HE diversity and political and economic gains. This literature highlights the institutional discourses that are used to portray international students ranging from international students as capital to geopolitical tool in foreign diplomacy. Whether from the student, HEI, or country (host/home) perspective, our equity-driven lens supports investigating how international students are situated within multiple geopolitical, sociohistorical, and globalized economic systems and contexts. This includes international students’ impact on home and host countries, the demand-side motivations for student mobility, and how student mobility works to transcend and/or reify global inequities.

International Higher Education Partnerships and Research Activities

Generally, US HEIs are shifting their emphasis from cross-border mobility of individual students and faculty to capacity building and collaboration at the institutional level involving research, teaching/curriculum development, and the creation of programs and campuses (Knight 2012; Scott 2006). These institutional-level activities require partnerships with stakeholders abroad that are justified by scholars as being of strategic importance to HEIs for research production, educational opportunities for students, and financial gain (Chan 2004; Helms 2015; Maringe and de Wit 2016; Sakamoto and Chapman 2011, Sutton and Obst 2011). Much of the literature we describe in this section on international HE partnerships fell into at least one of the three categories: (1) defining how partnerships are structured and justified, (2) sharing best practices for sustainable and successful partnerships and/or the challenges of partnership implementation, and (3) assessing the outcomes of partnerships. Our equity-driven lens draws attention to how the positioning of HE partners within a global knowledge economy relates to (in)equitable partnership efforts and outcomes.

Conceptual and Theoretical Perspectives and De-/constructing Internationalization Literature on domestic HE partnerships is predominantly framed using strategic management and organization theories (e.g., Eddy 2010). These approaches are useful in understanding how partnerships function broadly as they have been used to investigate partnership length of time, motivations and goals, resources, funding and staffing structures, activities, and types of agreements developed (e.g., Gatewood and Sutton 2017; Godbey and Turlington 2002).

Scholars of international HE have developed a number of typologies from this domestic partnership research for categorizing international partnership structures. For example, Maringe and Foskett (2010) describe international HE partnerships as existing on at least one of the three levels: (1) faculty-driven, which can involve faculty partners from multiple countries/HEIs; (2) university-sponsored that involve partner HEIs from multiple countries; and (3) organization-sponsored including foundations and associations. Similarly, de Wit (2002) suggests that international partnerships should be defined by the level of the partners involved (e.g., at the department, center, school, or institutional level) or the level of institutional engagement (e.g., individuals, academic department or school, institution, or system). Each level demonstrates the size of the partnership unit and structure, which often reflects complexity in management.

Caution must be taken in applying domestic partnership scholarship or using broad international partnership typologies toward a construction of international HE partnerships that does not acknowledge sociohistorical, cultural, and geopolitical complexities that cross-border engagement entails. The American Council on Education drew similar conclusions in their analysis of the applicability in practice of existing international HE partnership (Helms 2015). Their analysis ultimately found dual importance in program administration/management and cultural/contextual

issues, but also that “compared with management issues, these themes [cultural and contextual] are generally more complex; good practices are emerging, but there is greater variation among the standards in terms of how they are addressed, and more outstanding questions about practical applications” (Helms 2015, p. 5). The increasing growth of international HE partnerships has led to calls for greater understanding of the dynamics of power, culture, and respect for local context in these relationships to avoid homogenizing and hegemonic outcomes (Knight 2012; Sutton and Obst 2011).

International HE partnership research grounded in domestic HE partnership literature and strategic management and organization theories has placed less of an emphasis on issues of (in)equity. However, an equity-driven lens is particularly important given that US HEIs participating in international HE partnerships are predominantly working with Majority World partners, which creates an unequal playing field of power (George Mwangi 2017; Hagenmeier 2015; Lanford 2019). Maringe and de Wit (2016) explain six justifications of international HE partnerships:

1. Obtaining global knowledge processes that are challenging to procure as a single institution
2. Using local and global perspectives to tackle a problem of common concern
3. Enhancing international capital
4. Sharing resources to create investments
5. Requirements by national rules and regulations to engage in partnerships
6. Narrowing knowledge gaps and other inequities, particularly between the Majority World and Minority World areas

While these rationales are not mutually exclusive, scholars find that self-interest by US HEIs, such as reputation building and financial gain and neoliberal ideologies that prioritize competition and financial gain, can overshadow strategies for reciprocity and mutual benefit in their partnerships with the Majority World (Anthony and Nicola 2019; Chan 2004; Lanford 2019).

A growing area of scholarship centers on equity by using frameworks that emphasize partnership dynamics of power and reciprocity. This scholarship deconstructs the concept of “partner(ship)” among stakeholders with differing resources and the global knowledge economy. Sutton and Obst’s (2011) transactional/transformational framing of international HE partnerships, which was adapted from service-learning models, presents one example. They discuss transactional partnerships emphasizing the exchange of resources, people, or ideas that do not require institutional buy-in or create institutional change, while transformational partnerships focus on relationship building between institutions, collaborative efforts, and the development of common goals. The authors explain how the development of transformational partnerships is made more difficult by asymmetric approaches to engagement in which the Majority World partner is expected to build capacity and learn from the Minority World partner, but not vice versa. Thus, knowledge transfer and capacity building become one-directional and dependent, rather than

collaborative and reciprocal. Similarly, George Mwangi (2017) used the concept of mutuality to conduct a qualitative, multi-case study analysis of 60 US HEI partnerships for development projects with Majority World HEIs. These partnerships were funded by USAID to work on faculty and student training needs, conduct applied research, improve academic program offerings, and engage institutions in community outreach – all with the aim of improving the capacity of the Majority World partner’s HEI and to contribute to their local and national development goals.

Mutuality is “a framework for approaching collaboration with sensitivity to the context of differing cultures and value systems” (Shivan and Hill 2011, p. 155) and is comprised of four structurally oriented goals of international engagement and development: equity, autonomy, solidarity, and participation (Galtung 1980). George Mwangi (2017) found that, while partners strove for mutual partnerships, they lacked formal processes or intentional communication strategies for mitigating the power differential that existed between US and Majority World partners. Although Majority World partners were knowledgeable of their institutional and country contexts more so than their US partners, they were not always included in partnership development planning, which did not use their knowledge and expertise in an effective way. There was often a disconnect in the partnership, defined as an ideological desire for mutuality among the partners, but a lack of mutuality in practice (George Mwangi 2017).

Scholars have called for the development of international HE partnerships that emphasize transformational and reciprocal relationships (Knight 2012; Sutton and Obst 2011), but this approach requires empirical inquiry that can inform best practices for equitable partnership engagement. Much of the work on international HE partnerships emphasizes capacity building and sustainability (Helms 2015), but less is known about whether these outcomes occur through one-sided, external support or a two-way transfer of knowledge and mutual benefit. Scholars should continue to examine the purpose, motivations, and drivers of international HE partnerships. An equity-driven lens directly brings issues of power and domination to the forefront to assess their role in partnership engagement and success.

Contemporary Forces of Globalization Our equity-driven lens can also be used by scholars to interrogate the global systems and structural pushes and pulls of globalization that lead US HEIs and Majority World HEIs to partner in ways that upend equitable engagement. In theory, international partnerships are a win-win for all involved, especially in light of how many common issues, such as nutrition challenges and health pandemics, affect people all over the world. Benefits of international partnerships for HEIs include global recognition, increased funding support, and academic prestige of their faculty and scholars. From a personal and professional standpoint, scholars have the opportunity to expand their knowledge and experiences and increase the global dimensions of their research when participating in internationalization initiatives (Jung et al. 2014).

Research is a high-cost endeavor when considering expensive laboratories, human resources, and financial investments. Research universities in the Majority

World may need to partner with well-resourced international universities, usually from the Minority World or with larger corporations (Altbach 2016), to compete in the global academic marketplace. Yet despite the push of HEIs to create cross-border research partnerships and engage in international scholarship, few scholars are prepared to engage in the international research and scholarly arenas (Yao and Vital 2016). Research ethics (Edejer 1999) and the possibilities of scientific colonialism (Trostle 1992) complicate the emphasis on international partnership research and scholarly activities.

Much of the emphasis for research partnerships may not truly be equal collaboration, especially when considering the dynamics of the Majority World and the Minority World. A form of “scientific globalization” (Altbach 2016, p. 186) is established within the global research marketplace, with priorities and norms established by “the leaders of research, located in the major universities in the United States and other Western nations” (p. 186). International scholars, for whom English is not their primary language, may be co-authors on manuscripts that are disseminated through what would be considered “mainstream” journals that use English as their operating language (Canagarajah 1996; Lillis and Curry 2006). Majority World scholars may feel pressure to collaborate with Minority World scholars as a way to get published in mainstream journals, potentially leading to uneven research and writing partnerships. Even more troubling is Canagarajah’s (1996) assertion that unequal access to mainstream journals put international scholars at a disadvantage because it “enables center scholars to borrow the data of periphery scholars. . .to build their own arguments in mainstream books and journals” (p. 461). Thus, inequity can arise due to academic publishing’s contribution to “serving the Western hegemony of knowledge” (Canagarajah 2002, p. 6).

Research and the production of knowledge are now responsive to the market-like nature of HE (Paasi 2005). Many university governance bodies around the world use peer-reviewed journal articles as the criteria to measure faculty productivity, with an emphasis on citation factors in what are considered top journal indexing sites. For example, faculty in Taiwan must establish their research performance through citations and publishing manuscripts indexed in the Science Citation Index (SCI) and the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), often considered the top-tier indexing sites (Chou et al. 2013). Several other Asian countries are also complicit in using indexing sites to demonstrate their high-quality research, with the assumption that indexing sites contribute to higher status and rankings in an academic global game coined the “SSCI Syndrome” (Chou 2014). The SSCI Syndrome indicates a very narrow focus on perceived quality and productivity that has been imposed by national and institutional policies in the quest for higher rankings in the global HE market. The dangers in ascribing to citation indexing sites again indicate the hegemonic structures of academia in the USA. Both SSCI and SCI are owned by Canada-based Thomson Reuters. According to Chou (2014), the indexing standards have “long been recognized by major English-speaking universities” (p. 24), with Australia, Canada, the USA, the UK, and New Zealand representing much of the Minority World.

Because of the draw toward English-dominant research and publications, many US-based faculty establish research partnerships with institutions and scholars in the Majority World. Some current common models of partnerships include “postal research” (Costello and Zumla 2000, p. 827), in which Minority World researchers request colleagues in Majority World countries to send them samples or data. Another model includes “parachute research” (p. 827), which is likely the most common international research model. Parachute research describes researchers, most of whom are Minority World-based, traveling to other countries for short periods of time to bring back data to their home institutions. The time invested in the research sites is minimal, with either much of the work done by in-country partners or without true immersive practice. The dangers of such research are a lack of mutuality within partnerships as well as a lack of attention to local and Indigenous cultures and people. The pressure for international research partnerships may contribute to issues of scientific colonialism, in which Minority World researchers take, use, and publish data out of Majority World communities (Trostle 1992). As a counter to scientific colonialism and centering the needs of the Minority World, our equity-driven lens asks scholars to de-center US HEIs in international HE partnership research in which US HEIs are partners. This will allow for a clearer understanding of the impact of partnership work on Majority World partners as well as the positioning of these partners, which can better inform best (and equity-driven) partnership practices. Researchers can also better acknowledge, learn from, and engage in the localized context of Majority World partners, which includes their unique sociohistorical, political, cultural, and economic characteristics.

US Involvement in Transnational Education

Transnational education broadly “refers to study programs where learners are located in a country other than the one in which the awarding institution is based” (Wilkins 2016, p. 3). The establishment of transnational education (TNE) is based on HEIs’ developing educational partnership with other institutions and government agencies around the world. TNE benefits both the sending and receiving countries; for example, receiving countries gain access to HE as a way to meet growing economic and educational demands, particularly in regions such as the Middle East, Latin America, and Southeast Asia (Altbach and Knight 2007). Sending institutions are typically based in Minority World regions such as the USA, the UK, and Australia. Benefits for these sending institutions include increased global prestige due to their presence and financial rewards from tuition revenue (Altbach and Knight 2007). With these shared interests and benefits, TNE has grown as a way for HE to move across borders in contemporary times.

With the proliferation of TNE, the types of providers and policies vary across regions, institutions, and researchers who conduct studies on TNE, resulting in an abundance of terminology and operational definitions. Knight (2016) created a framework of TNE that categorized the multiple types and definitions used by sending and receiving countries. Two primary categories are used to organize the

different types of TNE: collaborative TNE provisions and independent provisions. Collaborative programs are those that include collaboration between the local and foreign providers, including twinning programs, joint degree programs, co-founded universities, and local-supported distance education programs (Knight 2016). Independent programs are those in which the sending institutions do not have formalized collaborations with local institutions. These include international branch campuses, franchise universities, distance education, and foreign private institutions (Knight 2016).

Conceptual and Theoretical Perspectives Current research on the USA's involvement in TNE tends to focus on branch campuses in single countries or regions, such as Qatar (Golkowska 2017; Walsh 2019), or broad-based systematic reviews of literature in an attempt to organize the many aspects of TNE (Johnson 2017; Naidoo 2009). Yet many of these studies are missing a critical conceptual/theoretical grounding or lacking a lens centered on equity. An exception would include Kosmützky and Putty (2016), who conducted a systematic review on the literature related to transnational, offshore, cross-border, and borderless HE. In that review, they found that the research can be divided into six themes: overview and trends, quality assurance and regulation, teaching and learning, institutional and management perspectives, governance and policy, and student choice and student mobility. The authors also critique their finding that TNE research tends to be "extremely 'localized'" (Kosmützky and Putty 2016, p. 22) and seldom challenge the "ideological or normative underpinnings" (p. 22) of TNE, which may contribute to unequal and inequitable transnational efforts.

Sociohistorical Context Although TNE may be considered a newer form of cross-border HE, the first transnational institutions were provided by US institutions in the mid-1950s as a way to educate US military or serve their own students in study abroad programs (Verbik and Merkle 2006). Although TNE is not a new phenomenon, the scope and scale of cross-border partnerships have grown extensively over the years (Naidoo 2009), with the USA taking the early lead in numbers of branch campuses (Verbik 2007).

In the late 1900s, US institutions established several international branch campuses, to varying levels of success (Altbach 2016). For example, over a dozen US HEIs opened in Japan in the 1970s, yet were not well received due to economic and enrollment issues as well as difficulties with governmental officials in Japan. Other branch campuses include New York University's Shanghai and Abu Dhabi campuses and Duke University's campus in China, which are still in operation (Altbach 2016). Although branch campuses have surged and waned in recent years, as of 2016, the USA was the largest provider of international branch campuses, with a total of 78 campuses out of the total 249 reported worldwide (Crist 2017; Garrett et al. 2016).

De-/constructing Internationalization Despite the seemingly neutral approach to cross-border education, many sending institutions, especially from the USA, have been criticized for taking an entrepreneurial and capitalistic approach through TNE. As stated by Altbach (2016), “American overseas expansion is in some cases becoming frankly entrepreneurial” (p. 127). For example, several US institutions, considered to be low-prestige that needed the financial benefits from overseas investments, partnered with the Israeli education sector. Most of those collaborative institutions have been shut down “in part because of concerns about low quality and the lack of adequate supervision from the sponsoring institution” (Altbach 2016, p. 127). Altbach (2010) highlighted several areas that may lead to, in his words, how “branch campuses may be unsustainable” (p. 2): difficulties relocating qualified and experienced faculty, replication of curriculum, quality of students, and shifting global priorities. As a result, the sustainability of branch campuses may be tenuous, especially as long-term implications are unclear.

The difficulties in ensuring quality and regulation are that, in the global academic market, there really are no regulations for HE. Much of the specific policies are related to different governments, affecting both the sending and receiving institutions. Quality assurance “has different meaning and significance” (Kosmützky and Putty 2016, p. 18), which can be difficult to track and assess. In addition, US HEIs do not follow national standards of education; as a result, each institution participating in TNE determines their own criteria for quality (Kosmützky and Putty 2016). Yet the current research on US-related TNE seldom connects the interrelatedness of issues and topics of establishing and maintaining branch campuses, with most research compartmentalized by topics such as student and administrator’s lived experiences (e.g., Healey 2016; Wilkins et al. 2012), policies and organizational structures (e.g., Lane and Kinser 2013; Tierney and Lanford 2015), and definitions and typologies of the different types of TNE (e.g., Knight 2016; Verbik 2007). Much of the research emphasizes either very localized studies in specific regions or specific topics without much attention to the broader interconnectedness of transnational education.

Contemporary Forces of Globalization Using an equity-driven lens necessitates an examination of how globalization affects the research and practice of TNE, particularly related to issues of power and dominance. For example, TNE contributes to English language dominance. Although teaching and learning processes vary across different institutions and regions, a common aspect of TNE is the use of the English language as institutions’ operating language (Altbach 2016). Many TNE use English as lingua franca, or English-mediated instruction (EMI), as a way to attract students. Yet this approach may be contributing to English language dominance in academia, especially at TNE around the world. The use of EMI increases institutional prestige while simultaneously assisting in the English language development of staff and students (Ferguson 2007). The use of EMI can marginalize non-native English speakers (Jenkins 2014) as they experience difficulties in navigating comprehension and communication in classwork (Bjorkman 2008). Students may find difficulty in

understanding and communicating with their instructors, especially if the instructors are also non-native English speakers (Yao et al. 2019a).

Despite the challenges with learning and EMI, research shows that students choose to attend TNE to advance their employability post-graduation (Wilkins and Huisman 2011; Yao and Garcia 2018; Yao and Tulião 2019). Students may experience a new culture through an immersive format gain prestige from an international degree and, at the same time, improve their English language skills (Fang and Wang 2014; Wilkins and Huisman 2011; Yao and Garcia 2018). In a study by Wilkins, Balakrishnan, and Huisman (2012), students chose to enroll at US branch campuses in the United Arab Emirates because they were able to receive a degree that is rewarded by the sending campus by following the same curriculum, which contributed to the overall prestige of their foreign degree. The pull of TNE is strong given the interest in Western teaching methods and perceived improvement in communication (Fang and Wang 2014).

The expansion of transnational education has contributed to academic colonization through the imposition of English as lingua franca, entrepreneurial student recruitment, and Minority World-based teaching and learning practices (Altbach 2016; Ferguson 2007; Jenkins 2014; Yao et al. 2019). Yet many host countries seek out these academic colonial practices as a way to participate in global HE. Scholars engaging in research related to transnational education must take into consideration the social, political, and economic conditions that may contribute to nation-states participating in these partnerships. For example, researchers should consider integrating the sociohistorical context of the host country for TNE while simultaneously questioning sending countries' motivations for participating in TNE. Examining why HEIs in the USA participate in transnational educational partnerships will provide insights on the motivations and realities of the harmful impact of potential academic colonization. Asking the question of "who benefits from this partnership?" will illuminate how practices may affect those who are most vulnerable, including students who choose to attend transnational universities.

Study Abroad as High-Impact Practice

Study abroad programs have often been lauded as high-impact practices for student success and persistence (Kuh 2008; Stebleton et al. 2013). According to NAFSA (2019) which is considered the leading international education association in the USA, study abroad is assumed to "help American students succeed in their careers, and collectively, these international experiences lead to a more innovative, secure, and prosperous United States" (NAFSA 2019). US HE uses study abroad programs for "preparing U.S. students to secure jobs after graduation in order to advance their careers, as well as preparing them to thrive in the multicultural global marketplace" (Institute of International Education 2017). The US federal government has also invested resources into promoting more US students to study abroad, as evidenced by former President Barack Obama's 2009 "100,000 Strong Initiative" as a way to

increase the number and diversity of US students who study in China (U.S.-China Strong 2019).

Sociohistorical Context Study abroad became popularized in the USA with the passage of Higher Education Act of 1965 which permitted HEIs to use federal financial aid to support study abroad (Mukherjee 2012). Since that time, study abroad has “evolved from the periphery to the center of the global curriculum” (Mukherjee 2012, p. 81) as a way to promote intercultural communication and understanding. Study abroad was lauded for bringing benefits to the USA, especially related to peacemaking and global citizenship (Mukherjee 2012). Study abroad may also contribute to security and economic needs of the USA (NAFSA 2019). Using the equity-oriented lens, understanding the sociohistorical context of study abroad allows scholars to delve deeper into the foundations that inform current study abroad efforts.

Study abroad programs span a variety of structures and practices, including duration of programs, role of faculty and/or staff, and logistical responsibilities (e.g., institutional vs. external organization). Variations exist on participation rates and popularity of regional destinations. Study abroad as an international educational enterprise is considered to be an important aspect of college students’ educational experience. Research on study abroad crosses many topical areas such as the influence of faculty-led programs (e.g., Goode 2008; Niehaus et al. 2018) and outcomes for specific majors (e.g., Niehaus and Inkelas 2016; Wainwright et al. 2009).

Every November, the Institute of International Education (IIE) releases facts and figures related to international students in the USA and US students’ participation in study abroad. According to the most recent IIE report (2019b), the majority of students studying abroad participate in short-term programs that are in Europe, with growing interest in countries such as Greece and the Netherlands (IIE 2019a), all of which represent the Minority World. Broadly speaking, US students are currently following an upward trajectory in study abroad participation, which continues the growth over the past 25 years (IIE 2018). In addition, short-term programs, defined as summer programs or activities 8 weeks or less, have increased in popularity over time (IIE 2018). Short-term programs attract students because of the opportunity to efficiently engage in international experiences because of the shorter time commitment and potential lower cost (Brown et al. 2006).

Conceptual and Theoretical Perspectives Many HEIs in the USA have lauded study abroad as a tool for student learning, intercultural engagement, and global citizenship development (Altbach 2016), driving much of institutional emphases on study abroad as an impetus for student development. As a result, study abroad is often the top stated institutional priority in internationalization efforts in US HEIs (American Council on Education 2017).

Conceptual and theoretical perspectives related to study abroad research tend to be used in qualitative studies that focus on student learning outcomes. Because of the prevalence of short-term programs, much of the research focuses on the student outcomes of shorter sojourns. A multi-site case study noted increased self-awareness and awareness of cultural and social issues from short-term study abroad (Jones et al. 2012). Students report “self-perceived impacts on students’ intellectual and personal lives” (Chieffo and Griffiths 2004), such as learning to view the USA differently and developing personal attributes such as adaptability and flexibility. Short-term study abroad may be a mechanism for providing intercultural experiences and personal development during the time in sojourn (Chieffo and Griffiths 2004; Mapp 2012).

Longer-term programs may lead to more significant outcomes, as stated by Dwyer (2004) who compared correlations between long-term and short-term program outcomes. The attention given to post-trip programmatic interventions for meaning making may also contribute to student learning and development as founded by Rowan-Kenyon and Niehaus (2011) in a case study that followed up with students 1 year after they concluded a 1-week study abroad experience. Guided by Mezirow’s (1991, 1997, 2000) theory of transformative learning, the authors found that continued and purposeful engagement after the trip contributed to students finding continued meaning in their experiences. Students who did not integrate the experience in their daily lives shared that their “experience had faded into a distant memory” (Rowan-Kenyon and Niehaus 2011, p. 224). The convenience of short-term programs may provide both positive and limited outcomes for transformative student learning and development.

Contemporary Forces of Globalization Using an equity-focused lens, scholars must go beyond reporting student learning outcomes. The short time in-country may lead to “issues of consumerism, postcolonial practices, cultural tourism, and commodification of experiences” (Kortegast and Kupo 2017, p. 151). The shortened nature of these programs has led to critiques of these trips serving as university-sponsored tourism that may be potentially damaging to the host country while simultaneously viewing the host country as the “other” (Lewin 2009; Zemach-Bersin 2007). The objectification of the local people often appears in social media, in which students take pictures of “cultural Others” as a way to show their exotic travel to friends and family back home (Kortegast and Kupo 2017). The shortened nature of these programs also can serve as vacation sites, especially due to promotion of “island programs,” in which students stay inwardly focused with their own travel companions (Lewin 2009). Short-term study abroad can lead to what Breen (2012) termed “privileged migration,” described as “a process whereby students relocate to places that become ‘home’ for a limited period of time, and thereby privilege a kind of temporary engagement with the foreign, before returning to the normalcy of home” (p. 84). As a result, students may gain artificial experiences (Ramírez 2013) while simultaneously creating harm to their personal cultural understandings and host country.

De-/constructing Internationalization We suggest that researchers use an equity-driven lens to examine how study abroad may be more accessible for certain student populations. The majority of students who study abroad tend to be White (70% in 2017/2018; IIE 2019a). The other racial/ethnic student representations have stayed relatively flat over the past 3 years, currently listed as 10.6% Hispanic or Latino, 8.4% Asian or Pacific Islander, 6.1% Black or African American, 4.4% Multiracial, and 0.5% American Indian or Alaska Native (IIE 2019a). Although the numbers of students studying abroad have increased over the years, the representation of various racial/ethnic groups has not increased.

Contemporary studies that focus on specific student populations, specifically students of Color, are becoming more common in study abroad research. Disaggregating student populations is important because of demonstrated outcomes of study abroad benefits for minoritized students (e.g., Day-Vines et al. 1998; Lee and Green 2016; Morgan et al. 2002; Neff 2001). For example, African American students who traveled to Ghana were able to examine US culture more critically, develop their racial, ethnic, and cultural identity, and connect with the emotional aspects of the slave trade history (Day-Vines et al. 1998). Students who participated in heritage study abroad programs, defined as sites that represent students' ethnic identities, were able to gain a better understanding of their identity and shared bonds with the heritage site (Morgan et al. 2002; Neff 2001). In a qualitative case study, Lee and Green (2016) found that Black undergraduate participants in a South Africa study program experienced stronger sense of their academic interests and gained better understanding of their racial identity and greater knowledge on how to conduct research. Yet despite the many benefits of study abroad for racially and ethnically minoritized students, the majority of current research tends to aggregate findings for all students rather than examining outcomes for specific populations. Thus, using an equity-driven lens encourages researchers to disaggregate student participants.

An equity-driven lens also requires attention to the structural barriers that contribute to differences across groups in participation in study abroad. Structural challenges include lack of information, financial constraints, and scheduling conflicts (Brown 2002; Brux and Fry 2010; Gaines 2012; Walker et al. 2011). Using survey data and focus groups, Brux and Fry (2010) found that faculty were an important factor for encouraging multicultural students to study abroad; the faculty who were most likely to encourage students to go abroad identified as multicultural faculty and/or had prior and current international experiences. The encouragement of faculty may mitigate some of the personal barriers toward study abroad that students of Color may feel, such as concerns related to racism, discrimination, and safety (Green 2017; Willis 2012, 2015). Black students in one focus group reported that study abroad was "for other students, but not for them" (Brux and Fry 2010, p. 519). The perception that study abroad is for White undergraduate students permeates contemporary discourse on who is encouraged to and chooses to study abroad (Brux and Fry 2010).

Future research should also consider the motivations and experiences of graduate students and adult learners, especially those who may be from underrepresented backgrounds. Campus internationalization efforts often include pushing graduate-level study abroad as a way to prepare future faculty and administrators for working and leading in a global world. Although there has been an increased emphasis on study abroad activity for graduate students, scant research exists on the experiences of graduate students studying abroad (Dirkx et al. 2014; Shallenberger 2009). Graduate students bring deeper nuances to the sojourning experience as they “tend to focus on the academic and professional development” (Dirkx et al. 2016, p. 531). They similarly bring previous professional experiences and academic backgrounds into their meaning making of their travels. In a qualitative study, Green (2017) found that for Black women, graduate students’ study abroad allowed for transnational movement to help them make meaning of Black womanhood as they returned “to their bodies as a site of knowledge” (p. 107). In doing so, graduate students may be able to gain a sense of global perspectives as a way to prepare themselves for a globalized world.

Scholars should also continue to examine the benefits of study abroad to different student populations, including students of Color, first-generation students, and adult learners. Study abroad research tends to aggregate findings for all students, with few studies that attend to nuances of student demographics. Additional research should be conducted on differences in the benefits based on the duration of study abroad programs. Although research shows that longer duration programs are more beneficial for students, short-term programs attract the most students in the USA. Continued research is needed to understand the long-term effects of short-term study abroad programs. Disaggregating the experiences of various student populations would provide insights on how short-term programs may be more beneficial for certain student populations, especially because the focus is typically on immediate outcomes, or changes in behavior of returning students. Expanding beyond immediate student responses may contribute to expanded theory development and application for study abroad. The question of “who can participate?” is key in how study abroad programs are promoted to all college students. How can students participate if they are undocumented/DACAmented? What are the potential traumas that the idea of study abroad may elicit in students who are refugees or children of refugees? Study abroad as a high-impact practice must be analyzed from an equity-driven lens if we are to realize the full potential of study abroad for all students.

Strategizing Internationalization at Home (IaH)

Internationalization at home (IaH) is a practice that was coined by Bengt Nilsson in the late 1990s as a way of encouraging on campus intercultural learning between domestic students and the growing immigrant/international student populations in Sweden (Agnew and Kahn 2014). While Nilsson focused on one Swedish HEI (Malmö University), the term has since been further conceptualized and applied to

the US HE context given similar patterns in immigration and international student enrollment. Knight (2012) highlights that IaH “strategies can include the intercultural and international dimension in the teaching/learning process, research, extracurricular activities, relationships with local cultural and ethnic community groups, and integration of foreign students and scholars into campus life and activities” (p. 34). Civic engagement projects where students build relationships with local cultural and ethnic communities, participate in online group projects with students in other parts of the world, and are provided intentional opportunities for engagement between domestic and international students within a US HEI are all examples of IaH practices (Beelen and Jones 2015; Jones 2013; Watkins and Smith 2018).

Sociohistorical Context Attention to IaH is important given the lack of exposure many students in the US have to cross-border internationalization efforts (Brown 2002; Brux and Fry 2010; Gaines 2012; Walker et al. 2011). US HEIs experience challenges in sending large numbers of students abroad given the lack of state or federal support for study abroad that is found in other regions of the world (de Wit 2002). Governmental support (or lack thereof) acts as a globalizing force in how HEIs around the world structure education abroad opportunities, subsequently impacting student accessibility. Unlike Europe’s Erasmus program that provides financial support to all students to go abroad via an exchange program, students in the USA are often expected to pay for study abroad experiences independently or through institutional financial support if available (de Wit 2002). Thus, cross-border activities that can increase intercultural competence, such as study abroad, are prohibitive to many students.

The use of an equity-oriented lens to support research that centers on whether and how IaH improves students’ equitable exposure to global learning is essential. Only 11% of students in US HEIs traveled abroad during their undergraduate career in 2018 (Institute of International Education 2019a), with the majority of these students coming from majority and/or privileged backgrounds (Dessoff 2006; Perna et al. 2014; Sánchez et al. 2006; Salisbury et al. 2011). A study by Soria and Troisi (2014) presents only one of the few empirical studies focusing on IaH’s potential as an equitable alternative to study abroad, finding that IaH activities can positively influence students’ development of intercultural competence as much, if not more than, study abroad.

Although HEIs are focused on ways to “bring the world to the home campus and the home campus to the world” (Agnew and Kahn 2014, p. 32) through IaH, the actual process and priorities for internationalization vary across programs and people, leading to difficulties in cohesive planning and implementation. Schoorman (1999) conducted an embedded case study to examine how members of one university described their conceptualization of internationalization. Findings identified three pedagogical challenges to comprehensive internationalization as an institution: university members had diverse understandings and implementation practices of internationalization, perceptions were linked to the relevance of internationalization

to their field of study, and international students were not heavily utilized as resources (Schoorman 1999). As a result of these differences in perspectives, the implementation of IaH may be difficult from an institutional perspective without a clear and strategic path forward. In a study by Childress (2009), internationalization plans were found to be helpful with IaH at 31 participating institutions. The internationalization plans contributed to providing a road map for implementing as well as promoting buy-in and collaboration. However, the plans in the study seemed to assume neutrality in internationalization efforts without much (if any) suggestions for promoting and ensuring equity.

One aspect of IaH is internationalizing the curriculum, through the teaching, research, and service in a university (Knight 2008). In considering how HEIs may move toward a more international campus, the curriculum is often central to the way in which an institution operates. Broadly speaking, internationalizing the curriculum is a process “by which international elements are infused into course content, international resources are used in course readings and assignments, and instructional methodologies appropriate to a culturally diverse student population are implemented” (Schuerholz-Lehr et al. 2007, p. 70). As stated by Leask (2015), one of the foremost scholars on this topic, internationalizing the curriculum requires an understanding of the complexities related to three interactive components: the formal, informal, and hidden curriculum (Leask 2015). The formal curriculum refers to planned activities and processes that lead to degree completion, whereas the informal curriculum pertains to activities that supplement classwork. The hidden curriculum is the most nebulous, yet most pervasive aspect of curriculum planning that includes unintended and implicit messages. Thus, internationalizing the curriculum is complicated because it is “situated at the intersection of policy and practice in universities and the cause of fascination, frustration, confusion, and fulfillment” (Leask 2015, p. 3).

When considering how to internationalize the curriculum, the move toward internationalization can be fraught with challenges, disagreements, and varying perspectives. Many academic institutions and programs seek the elusive goal of developing students’ global competence at home through shifting curricula, yet there is no common pathway or formula on how to achieve these lofty goals (Brustein 2007). Most research related to internationalizing the curriculum has been criticized for being disjointed and lacking coherence (Barnett and Coate 2005; Leask 2013), with few studies situated in the USA. US-based studies tend to emphasize specific disciplines such as psychology (Bikos et al. 2013), business (Manuel et al. 2001), and counseling psychology (Marsella and Pedersen 2004).

Conceptual and Theoretical Perspectives Using our equity-oriented lens, we found extant IaH research to be grounded in theories related to (1) individuals’ interactions such as Allport’s (1954) intergroup/intercultural contact theory, which outlines conditions for having positive intercultural relations, and (2) intercultural and global competency development such as Deardorff’s (2009) intercultural development theory that focuses on skills and knowledge that can be developed for improved intercultural competence. This was not surprising as IaH scholarship in the US

context places emphasis on teaching, curriculum, co-curriculum, and global learning, which tend to be the foundation of US IaH practices and strategies (Knight 2008; Leask 2013; Landorf et al. 2018).

Custer and Tuominen (2017) used Allport's (1954) theory to ground their quantitative study on a virtual exchange program between a US community college and Japanese HEIs. The researchers investigated changes in the intercultural competency, intra-/interpersonal development, and cognitive development of students who participated in the program, finding that US students placed greater value on interacting with people from different cultures after their exchange experience. This example is demonstrative of how intergroup/intercultural contact and intercultural development frameworks lend themselves to inquiry that examines the outcomes of student learning and development through curricular or cocurricular activities. However, the participants in Custer and Tuominen's (2017) study had self-reported high levels of intercultural competence prior to the exchange experience and predominantly came from highly educated families, despite community colleges often enrolling high numbers of first generation to college students. While researching their participants' learning outcomes has utility, an equity-oriented lens might also emphasize the demographics and motivations of students who participated in the virtual exchange programs, the accessibility of IaH program for diverse students, and other structural or environmental factors that impact IaH opportunities for students' global learning and development.

De-/constructing Internationalization Unlike research on European HE, there is a dearth of literature specifically naming IaH within the US context as a strategy that brings together multiple internationalization practices, or research examining IaH as a strategy inclusive of multiple practices (van Liempd et al. 2013). Instead, researchers often focused on singular practices such as peer interactions with international students and internationalized curriculum and teaching practices.

Our equity-oriented lens supports de-/constructing and researching IaH as a multipronged strategy, given the reality that HEIs tend to engage in more than one form of internationalization practice at a time. Understanding the engagement and interaction of multiple internationalization practices and strategies could better elucidate the impact of IaH on students, institutions, and other stakeholders. We found only one study that considered the organizational structures and processes supporting IaH. This study, by Choi and Khamalah (2017), inventoried and investigated the reach of IaH to students as well as assessed how well IaH practices aligned with institutional mission. Within their single-case qualitative study, they found that the HEI research site had misalignment between support for IaH in institutional rhetoric and institutional mission/support structures for IaH goals. Their findings lead us to question whether other HEIs have similar misalignment, which would jeopardize the effectiveness of IaH efforts overall. Scaling up the focus of Choi and Khamalah's (2017) study to be multi-institutional – for example, engaging in document analysis of HEIs' internationalization strategies (to determine goals for processes and

outcomes) in tandem with surveys and interviews (to determine implementation of processes and actual outcomes) – is one recommendation for further inquiry into how IaH is constructed and realized on college campuses.

Contemporary Forces of Globalization Through an equity-driven lens, researchers might further de-/construct IaH to understand what is acknowledged as IaH practice (and why), what practices should be acknowledged (and why they are not), and who the beneficiaries of IaH are or should be. For example, Soria and Troisi's (2014) study solely focused on the learning and development of domestic students, thus excluding international students from the sample they selected from the Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) survey data. While a study on the intercultural competency development of domestic students is not inherently problematic, the authors did not address this sampling decision, which can leave readers assuming that domestic students are the only ones who build intercultural competency from IaH practices. Further, it reifies the commodifying message that interacting with international students and forms of global engagement are meant to be consumed by US students and their universities for their own benefit.

Another way that scholars can engage in equity-driven IaH scholarship is by examining the multiple forces of globalization that push and pull HEIs between student learning and development motivations along with fiscal and reputation-driving motivations of their IaH strategies. For example, research suggests that intercultural competence, as a student learning outcome of IaH, is perceived by US HEIs as making their students more competitive and employable on the job market (Bolen 2001; Miller et al. 2018; Teichler and Janson 2007) as well as more prepared to live in a global world (Deardorff 2006; Held and McGrew 2007). This scholarship highlights economic forces of globalization, which foregrounds IaH as a strategy for developing global leaders and competitive employees – outcomes which scholars have criticized reify a neoliberal agenda and market-driven orientation (Cole 2016; Raimondi 2012). While this critique has value, given the high cost of college, HEIs are pressured to ensure student learning translate into tangible opportunities after degree completion. Researchers might investigate the complexities, tensions, and synergies associated with being student-/learning-centered in their IaH practices in tandem with facing the economic realities of a globalized world.

Although not often used as a primary rationale for IaH in research, another increasingly important global force to consider is how IaH practices can be more environmentally sustainable than cross-border activities (Watkins and Smith 2018). Having faculty and students fly to other countries to engage in research and learning creates tremendous amounts of carbon emissions. IaH practices align with the increasing concern about HEIs reducing their carbon footprint (Shields 2019) by focusing on global learning within the domestic learning environment of a US HEI. While campuses have developed more environmentally sustainable internationalization practices, such as virtual study abroad, empirical research has not kept pace with these developments by investigating their impact on student outcomes, institutional outcomes, or environmental outcomes. Research on IaH can consider areas of

inquiry beyond student learning and development, to include environmental and economic drivers of internationalization practices that can ultimately impact equity-oriented issues like sustainability.

Overall, the possibilities of how IaH may lead to increased inequities should be considered in future research, especially related to the possible damaging effects of globalization. Efforts for IaH and, more specifically, internationalizing the curriculum, may contribute to the promotion of academic imperialism through Minority World/US-based norms and practices. Stein (2017) offers the perspective that the use of a one-size-fits-all approach to internationalizing the curriculum would “reproduce the dangerous epistemic arrogance that characterizes any claim to universal relevance” (p. S39). The current Western approach to internationalizing the curriculum stems from “long standing patterns of curricular Euro-supremacy” (Stein 2017, p. S25), leading to further equity issues for those involved and affected by internationalization. Thus, at least three considerations should be made when beginning the attempt to internationalize the curriculum, and we extend these recommendations for equity-focused future IaH research: name and address the Western-centric curriculum that pervades most Minority World institutions, delve into systemic analyses of dominance and difference, and engage the long-term process of deconstructing current dominant paradigms through “denaturalization; seeking practical solutions; addressing contradiction; facing complexity” (Stein 2017, p. S43). In doing so, higher education researchers can move toward a more equitable approach to researching and theorizing IaH.

Moving Forward: Equity-Driven Internationalization Research

Our equity-driven internationalization lens foregrounds (in)equity in research on the motivations, strategies, implementation, and outcomes of HE internationalization. In this chapter, we applied the lens to analyze and critique how internationalization is defined in US HE scholarship; describe how sociohistorical and contemporary global forces connect US HE internationalization practice, policy, and research through the twentieth and twenty-first centuries; and review how the multiple practices of US HE internationalization are empirically investigated in research. To move HE internationalization research forward, we conclude by offering ways that future researchers can apply the lens to their own work.

Figure 1 illustrates how the equity-driven internationalization lens views the intricacies of internationalization “up close.”

As we described throughout this chapter, we argue that applying an equity-driven lens to internationalization requires unpacking the underlying conceptual and theoretical perspectives, de-/constructing internationalization, identifying sociohistorical contexts, and probing contemporary forces of globalization. Figure 1 uses a piece of yarn as a metaphor for illustrating how these four guiding principles are tied together in studies of the internationalization of HE. Yarn is typically viewed as a singular thread – just as internationalization is typically viewed as a singular process. However, when look at closer, yarn is made up of multiple strands of tightly

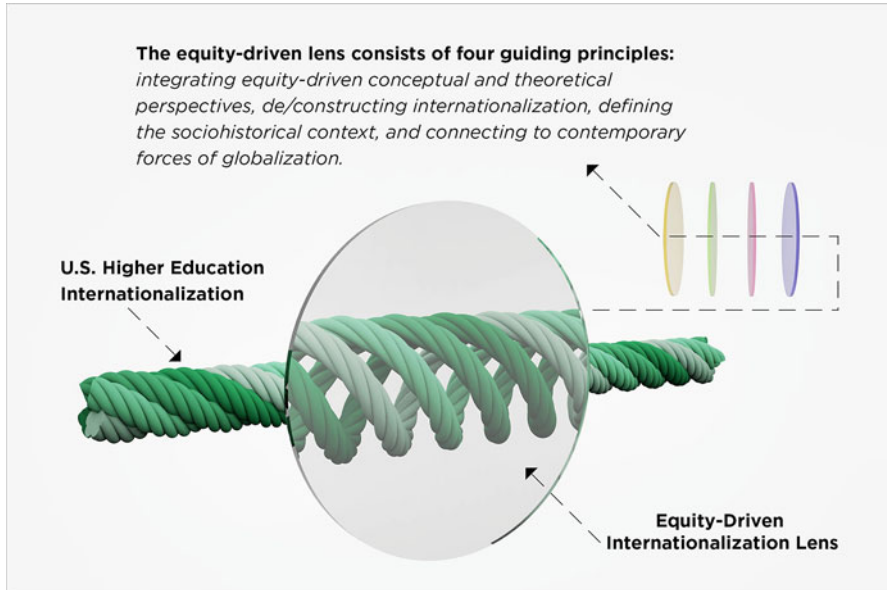


Fig. 1 Equity-driven internationalization lens

interlocked fibers. Internationalization also reflects the amalgamation of multiple complex processes, policies, practices, people, communities, and organizations.

The singular piece of yarn, representing internationalization, is woven into the fabric of US HEIs. As such, it can become embedded within university values and practices as a guiding paradigm. The equity-driven internationalization lens acts as a “check” (Secada 1989) on this paradigm by magnifying (in)equitable historical and contemporary social, cultural, racial-ethnic, economic, environmental, and political factors that create the conditions for which internationalization is enacted – factors that we view as interlocked within the fibers of internationalization. In the next sections, we suggest how scholars can use the four guiding principles of the lens to examine and make visible in their own research the conditions, mechanisms, and processes by which HE internationalization occurs.

Conceptual and Theoretical Perspectives

An equity-driven research orientation guides scholars away from grounding their work in ways that reinforce internationalization as a values-neutral or indiscriminately positive process. The literature we reviewed in this chapter demonstrates values neutrality permeating definitions of internationalization (such as Knight 2003, 2012) that are used to inform subsequent research. Similarly, an indiscriminately positive portrayal of internationalization in research leaves unchecked and unexamined inequity that occurs across individuals, institutions, and nations

engaged in HE internationalization practices (Brandenburg and de Wit 2011). Study abroad research solely focused through the lens of intercultural development for US students can fail to acknowledge that not all students have the opportunity to study abroad, particularly those from minoritized backgrounds. Assimilation and acculturation theories often focus on the challenges international students experience, but place the onus on these students to navigate their new environment, rather than on HEIs to provide students the necessary support.

One way to counteract values neutrality in research is through the use of conceptual and theoretical perspectives that enable researchers to critique and disrupt inequity, hegemony, and marginalization that occurs within HE internationalization, as well as to identify and engage in resistance of inequity and (re)imagining of internationalization (e.g., Shahjahan 2014; Shahjahan et al. 2017). Growing research in the US context on the internationalization of HE uses critical and transformative frameworks, but, in our review, we found it more common for scholars to call for the use of the frameworks as an implication for future research, rather than embed frameworks like post-/decolonial theory or critical theory in their own research. Still, although limited, extant literature can be a starting point. In our review, we saw frameworks such as mutuality and transformational partnerships centered in research on US HEI and Majority World HEI partnerships (e.g., George Mwangi 2017; Sutton and Obst 2011) as well as critical race theory, neo-racism, and academic capitalism used to understand international student experiences (e.g., Lee and Rice 2007; Paasi 2005; Yao et al. 2019b).

Our equity-driven lens should not be used to replace the integration of critical epistemologies and theories in future research, although it is informed by those approaches. Researchers may find other paradigms or theories more relevant to the scope of their work. Our lens does ask that researchers grapple with not only what internationalization means but also how they frame research problems to combat inequity. As scholars make decisions in how they ground and frame their research, we suggest asking the following questions in that decision-making process. How does my theoretical/conceptual perspective:

- Help me to foreground equity in who/what my research question(s) serve and center?
- Guide me toward literature that resists values-neutral and hegemonic internationalization or supports my critique of literature that does?
- Inform my methodological and methods to embed power and equity into choices such as research site and participant selection and how I collect, analyze, and present data?
- Support my integration of the larger structures, systems, values, and histories that internationalization is embedded within?

¹Some of the disruptive terminology provided stem from literature on internationalization outside of the US context, which is why those works were not reviewed more extensively in our chapter.

De-/constructing Internationalization

In the beginning of this chapter, we shared that an ongoing critique of HE internationalization scholarship is the lack of a clear definition of the concept of internationalization or its underlying assumptions (George Mwangi et al. 2018; Knight 2011; Stier 2004; Zeleza 2016). Throughout our review of literature, we found that other concepts often went undefined such as the term “partnership” in some international HE partnership research. We also found instances of internationalization practices presented one-dimensionally. These studies include studies of internationalization at home that only acknowledges beneficiaries of IaH as domestic students and studies of international students’ experiences that presented international students as a homogenous group.

While these examples could be viewed as a general critique of individual research studies, given our review across internationalization research in this chapter, we view them as a larger issue directly connected to equity. The language used in internationalization research and the meaning ascribed to that language, whether explicitly stated or implicitly assumed, has power to shape how internationalization is understood and enacted in practice, policy, and future research. We encourage researchers to move beyond implicit assumptions of internationalization and engage greater nuance in how it is constructed in research toward the goal of equity-driven scholarship. For example, in this chapter, we used the terms Majority World and Minority World to disrupt the status deficit orientation around concepts applied to some regions of the world. Other disruptive terminologies¹ that scholars may want to consider using or engaging in inquiry around include:

- Glocalization as an alternative to internationalization (see Patel and Lynch 2013; Patel 2017). Patel (2017) defines glocalization “in a higher education context embraces equity, diversity, and inclusivity of local and global community perspectives and encourages glocal community building and partnerships” (p. 71).
- International students of Color as a means of acknowledging the racialized identity of some international students (see Yao et al. 2019b).
- Describing internationalization via its goals/drivers rather than individual practices (see Stein et al. 2016, for four articulations of internationalization: internationalization for the global knowledge economy, internationalization for the global public good, anti-oppressive internationalization, and relational translocalism).
- Academic/cultural tourism as a critique of education abroad (see Breen 2012; Kortegast and Kupo 2017).

We also recommend researchers use an equity orientation to interrogate why internationalization is defined in particular ways and what impact those definitions have on HE practice. For example, international/foreign students and domestic/American students are the only students discussed in the internationalization scholarship we reviewed, which creates a false binary around students’ global

engagement and backgrounds. Through an equity-driven lens, a researcher might reflect on and implement:

- Reflect: What does it mean to use constructs like domestic and international in equity-driven internationalization research? Given previous research, how might the use of this type of dichotomous language limit portrayals of international students in scholarship?
 - Implement: Develop ways to problematize these terms in research design and dissemination.
- Reflect: How and why are domestic/American students with a transnational background (e.g., naturalized immigrants, children of immigrants, refugees) excluded from internationalization scholarship?
 - Implement: Engage in inquiry that examines how these students experience or impact HE internationalization to bring them into internationalization discourse.

These are examples of how a scholar can take a research topic and deconstruct its commonly used terminology or reconstruct it by bringing excluded communities into the body of literature. The overarching idea is for scholars to question who gets to decide “what counts” and “who counts” as internationalization on an individual campus or even in HE internationalization research, rather than accept the status quo of what is included, excluded, or defined. In doing so, scholars can move toward a construction of internationalization in research that works to resist, rather than reify inequity in HE. Our equity-driven lens calls for a greater emphasis on questioning and unpacking HE internationalization through inquiry, which can be supported by the lenses that comprise it.

Sociohistorical Context

We argue that current research, policies, and practices cannot be divorced from social and historical events and ideologies that continue to inform contemporary approaches to international research. Current practices related to internationalization are rooted in “the legacy and continuation of a higher education system” (Stein 2018, p. 78) that is based on imperialistic and colonial foundations. Scholars can pursue equitable approaches to internationalization research by considering sociohistorical contexts and how these contexts serve as foundations for current internationalization research and strategies.

Based on our review of literature, we argue that internationalization practices, such as study abroad and internationalization at home (IaH), should not be viewed as independent of sociohistorical context, as evidenced by the woven yarn in the equity-driven lens. For example, study abroad research often focuses primarily on student learning outcomes (e.g., Chieffo and Griffiths 2004; Jones et al. 2012; Niehaus and Inkelas 2016; Wainwright et al. 2009) yet seldom discusses the contextual factors informing study abroad research and practice. Although the

Higher Education Act of 1965 permitted financial aid to support study abroad (Mukherjee 2012), research demonstrates that cross-border sojourn is cost prohibitive to many students, with the majority of study abroad students coming from majority and/or privileged backgrounds (Dessoiff 2006; Perna et al. 2014; Sánchez et al. 2006; Salisbury et al. 2011). Thus, scholars and practitioners may promote IaH as a cost-effective way to promote internationalization to all students.

IaH also necessitates an examination of the sociohistorical foundations that have shaped the focus on IaH. For example, many institutions found difficulties in systematically planning and implementing internationalization programs and priorities, given the lack of common understanding and implementation practices across disciplines (Schoorman 1999). In addition, few studies exist that provide a critical and comprehensive examination of internationalizing the curriculum in the USA, which is often used as the primary mode of IaH. As stated by Stein (2017), the current approach to internationalizing the curriculum stems from “long standing patterns of curricular Euro-supremacy” (p. S25).

In moving forward with internationalization research, we suggest using the sociohistorical context guiding principle as a tool for critical knowledge production that acknowledges and engages with the past. Some questions for scholars to ponder while conducting international HE research include:

- In what larger structures, systems, values, and histories is the internationalization practice that is being examined embedded?
- How do social, cultural, historical, racial, economic, and political factors as well as local and world events influence how internationalization is enacted?
- How do sociohistorical events and contexts affect and inform the selected research approach?

By engaging in such questions, scholars may approach internationalization research in a way that interrogates how prior actions and ideology of US HE permeate current approaches to research and scholarship.

Contemporary Forces of Globalization

Our equity-driven lens reiterates the importance of considering globalization in internationalization research and practice. As the visual of our lens illustrates, internationalization practices and topics do not occur in values-neutral vacuums driven solely by institutional/individual choice. Internationalization is heavily driven by global structures and systems that privilege the needs of the Minority World, as evidenced by neoliberalism and a market orientation (Pike 2012; Yang 2003). Researchers must take into consideration how contemporary forces of globalization affect research and practices related to international higher education.

One contemporary globalization force is the COVID-19 crisis, which upended higher education in the USA and other nations in spring 2020. At the time of writing this chapter, COVID-19 has disrupted day-to-day HE operations, and colleges and

universities around the world are considering how HE moves forward in current and post-COVID-19 times. Several prominent international HE scholars have responded by calling for increased attention to the possibilities of transnational education (TNE) as a way to mitigate the challenges with student mobility during a pandemic (Mitchell 2020). Equity-driven scholars should interrogate *why* and *how* TNE may reify US complicity in academic colonization, especially as related to English language dominance and entrepreneurial approaches to student recruitment (Altbach 2016; Ferguson 2007; Jenkins 2014; Yao et al. 2019a).

An equity-oriented lens should also be used to examine the concerns of international student mobility. Much current discourse focuses on how US HE will lose millions in revenue due to low international student enrollment in COVID-19 times (e.g., Fischer 2020; Redden 2020). Like previous research, this discourse views international students as financial resources for US HE (e.g., Altbach and Knight 2007; George Mwangi 2013; IIE 2019a; Yao and Viggiano 2019). Guided by our equity-driven lens, we argue that international students are situated within geopolitical and global economic systems; thus, scholars should engage in research that questions how international student mobility is a product of, contributes to, and responds to contemporary forces of globalization.

With the goal of informing future policy and practice, scholars should consider these questions that help to interrogate the forces of globalization:

- What are the social, cultural, historical, and racial implications of the research topic and approach?
- How do local and world events impact how internationalization is discussed and researched?
- What are the economic and political factors that must be examined in HE internationalization research?

HE is heavily influenced by global and local politics, markets, and dominance. Like a piece of yarn, these facets of globalization are intertwined with internationalization research and practices, thus necessitating a critical examination of contemporary globalization forces affecting scholarship.

Research-Informed Equity-Driven Internationalization Practice and Policy

As stated by Ness (2010), “The need to connect research with policy and practice remains one of the most commonly identified challenges for education researchers” (p. 1). While we recognize the continued challenge of enacting research-informed practice and policy, we argue that our equity-driven internationalization lens can help practitioners and policymakers to engage with internationalization from an equity-focused perspective.

A consideration of how to enact an equity-driven approach to contemporary policies and practices is needed, especially in light of how internationalization

may contribute to inequities and power differences (George Mwangi 2017; Buckner and Stein 2019; Vavrus and Pekol 2015; Yao et al. 2019b). Future research should consider how internationalization is enacted and implemented, addressing questions like:

- Who has the power, authority, and resources to shape the direction of internationalization efforts? What does this mean for others impacted by internationalization efforts?
- Who is included in campus conversations on how to internationalize the curriculum, teaching, and learning?
- Who benefits from increased internationalization practices and policies?

We recognize that HEIs have different missions and priorities. Missions and priorities are influenced by multiple factors, including internal and external constituents, economic factors, and institutional priorities. Because of the nuances and context of different HEIs, we avoid a one-size-fits-all approach to engaging in praxis.

Instead, we argue that it is important to consider how research can be useful and in service to HEIs, if it is to create greater awareness of educational inequity and positive change. That utility can be achieved in many different ways. Partnerships can be created between practitioners and academics to pursue scholarly inquiry and/or implementation of evidence-based findings. Practitioner knowledge and experiences can be used to understand, extend, and dispute theory. Researchers can work with practitioners and policymakers in disseminating research in accessible venues. These approaches may require scholars to cede some of the power within their own research agendas to talk with practitioners and policymakers about the real issues regarding internationalization that should be investigated. These suggestions could require collaboration between scholars and practitioners, nonacademics, policymakers, and research participants both in the USA and around the world to enact more equitable approaches to internationalization. Mutual partnership is relevant to an equity-driven approach to research as well as to the practice of internationalization, which is also often grounded in collaboration and relationships.

Conclusion

In sum, we argue that, without reflective practice, HEIs can reify US-centric and imperialistic approaches to practice and policy. The foundations of US HE are rooted in issues of colonization, racism, and imperialism, and we do not assume that changes to these systems will occur at a fast pace. As a global society, we are continuing to face vast inequities that exist within education systems around the world stemming from xenophobia, racism, nativism, and other social and economic forces. As identified in this chapter, these inequities are reified by the ways in which internationalization efforts are pursued in US HEIs, such as in how individual US institutions often embody a dominant role in internationalization partnerships with Majority World countries. The use of an equity-driven internationalization lens

allows HE researchers to engage in deliberate reflection and action in the pursuit of scholarship that will contribute to a more equitable and just global society. It is important to be intentional in ensuring that research can keep pace to address and challenge inequities in internationalization. Through scholarly inquiry, researchers can remain not only relevant but useful in developing research that is transformative and that works to inform equitable practices, policies, and processes of internationalization in higher education.

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