



Going places

**Facilitating Good Practice in  
International Social Work  
Student Exchange in the  
Asia Pacific**

Collaboration and Reciprocity in International Social Work  
Student Exchange: A Critical Review

# Presented by :

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# Background information

Internationalisation of social work education:  
Context; aims; social justice and equity

Neo-colonialism and international student exchange

Reciprocity and collaboration

Outcomes of student exchanges

## Discussion

## Going Places Project



# Internationalisation of the Higher Education Experience

Priority under New Colombo Plan.

Aims for Australian students to be work ready and connected to the Asia Pacific Region on graduation.  
Graduates to have intercultural skills and understanding.

(Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2014).

International student exchanges .... in order to develop global citizens, leaders and relationships (Universities Australia, 2013)

Student exchanges...prepare for impact of global and work globally (Cleak & Fox, 2011)



# Internationalisation of social work education

International social work = international professional practice and the capacity for international action by the social work profession and its members (Healy, 2001)

Working across cultures (Engstrom & Jones, 2007)

**Potential** of fracturing Anglo-Western pedagogical hegemony and adding multicultural awareness in social work curricula, yet **danger** of continued colonisation and dominant Western voice (Noble, 2004)



# Aims of Internationalisation of social work education

Students can gain a great deal from international placements (Lough, 2009) and internationalisation activities (Bell & Anscombe, 2012; Cornelius & Greif, 2005; Gammonley, Rotabi, & Rotabi, 2007; Nuttman-Shwartz & Berger, 2012).

Intercultural learning, intercultural competence and global citizenship (Trede, Bowles, & Bridges, 2013)

Develop students' practice framework (Yu, 2011)

Pedagogical frameworks to achieve this? ... Just immersion danger of reinforcing racism (Trede, et al., 2013)?



# Social Justice and Equity

Tension: participants in the neoliberalist higher education market and yet hold responsibility to educate students for social and environmental justice (Tesoriero & Vicary, 2007).

Acting in a socially responsible manner is relevant corporate social responsibility taught (Crowther and Seifi, 2013)

**Corporate social responsibility:** engaging in behaviours that are considerate of all stakeholders (Crowther & Seifi, 2013).



# Social Justice and Equity

Concern: cumulative impacts of student field placements and contribution to the increasing number of western, middle class people seeking short-term international experiences in developing countries.

Constant turn-over may:

- Be destabilising

- Drain human resources

- Impacts long term sustainability (Heron, 2006).

Power imbalance





# Social Justice and Equity

Dialogue and relationships essential: avoiding further oppression of the host countries (e.g. Brydon et al., 2014; Cocks et al., 2009; Hines et al., 2015).

Need to understand more about:

- Processes work well in international collaboration

- What can provide a genuinely reciprocal relationship with partner organisations

Acting in socially responsible manner is both ethical practice and sustainable (Crowther & Seifi, 2013).



# Neo-Colonialism and International Student Exchange

International connections and relationships especially between the Global North and South (geographically incorrect terms used as slightly less pejorative)

Traditionally relationships between the Global North and the Global South ...based on domination rather than cooperation (Tasse 2006).

Overt colonisation replaced by cultural and linguistic forms of neo-colonialism (Askeland & Payne, 2006; Razack, 2009).

Dominant positioning of Western ideas and Western knowledge systems.. Inadequate (Haug, 2005).



# Neo-Colonialism and International Student Exchange

‘Education is perhaps the most insidious and in some ways the most cryptic of colonial survivals, older systems now passing, sometimes imperceptibly, into neo-colonialist configurations’ (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1995, p. 425).

‘Apolitical’ agenda, and does not include the historical context of colonisation, imperialism and hegemony (Joseph, 2008; Razack, 2009).

Collaboration? .... flows are unidirectional, with people and knowledge flowing freely from the Global North to the Global South but not vice versa (Hugman, Moosa-Mitha, & Moyo, 2010; Joseph, 2008)



# Neo-Colonialism and International Student Exchange

Countries of Global South may have long traditions of social care ... danger of side-lining these (Haug, 2005).

In the context of international social work placements this can lead to 'professional imperialism' that is based on a lack of reciprocity and inadequate analysis of the nature of these relationships (Razack, 2005)

Are alternate voices being heard through contestation and analysis?

# Reciprocity and Collaboration

Questions around the “mutual benefit” of exchange (Gilin & Young, 2009; Nuttman-Schwartz & Berger, 2012).

A call for partner institutions to collaborate on curriculum design, assessment activities and research partnerships (Barraket et al., 2009; Alphonse, 2008; Razack, 2002; Gilin & Young, 2009).

Danger: “partnerships” become less than mutually beneficial and or even harmful or exploitative

Authentic relationships...“choose to act so as to foster the growth and development of each other’s being” (Craton, 2006, p. 7).



# The Notion of Reciprocity....

**Transactional partnerships** aim for a mutually-beneficial exchange of goods and/or services, are task-oriented, work within established systems, and do not produce deep change.

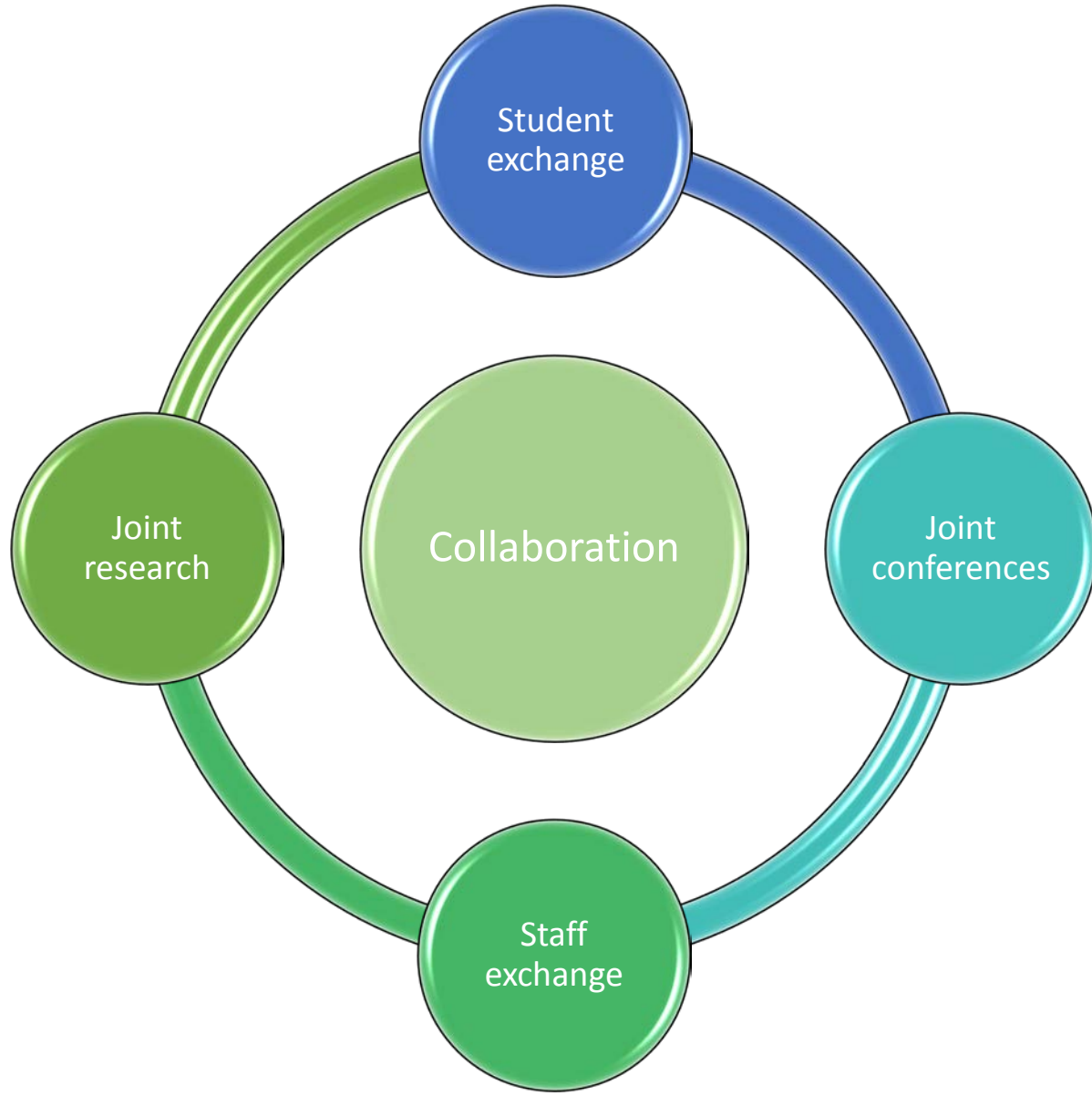
**Transformational partnerships** involve deeper commitments and expectations of shifts in identities and values, challenge norms and systems, and outcomes extend beyond mutual benefit (reciprocity) to mutual growth and change. (Enos and Morton ,2003)

**Thin** vs **thick** reciprocity (Jameson, Clayton, and Jaeger 2011)





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Is this  
reciprocal?

What does  
reciprocity  
mean?

Gratitude?

Equal  
opportunity?

Attitude?

Transactional?

Transformational?





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# Outcomes of international student exchanges

Benefits of student exchange generally explored in terms of the benefits and outcomes for students going overseas: own growth and learning and their development as global citizens and global leaders (Universities Australia, 2013).

Recorded outcomes of exchange programs include students:

- developing 'international skills'

- achieving academically better after the exchange

- adapting a greater international outlook (Malicki & Potts, 2013)

- fitting the idea of preparing students as global citizens.





# Outcomes of international student exchanges

## What about the hosts?

Host organisations must have role in determining the placement outcomes (Lough, 2009, p. 475)

Both parties must be adequately prepared (Mirsky & Barasch, 2004)

Anecdotally.....

- Positive welcome
- attitude of entitlement and demanding of host staff.
- students approach “tourism” which upset host partners
- expense and resources needed for student placement difficult



# Outcomes of international student exchanges

## **What about hosting international students on exchange?**

Anecdotaly.....Non-engagement of Australian students-  
disappointing

Singaporean students found interactions were mainly limited  
to a welcome upon their arrival in Australia and some visits  
to supermarkets (Bell, 2008)

Student expectations of engaging with local students about  
their discipline or learning about cultural through visiting  
local families were not met (Bell, 2008)



# Discussion

- In ISE, can relationships be partnerships when one side lacks power over
  - Flows of Resources?
  - Production and Flows of Knowledge?
  - Flows of People?
  - Flows of Language?
- Can a tradition grown in one cultural context be a universally applicable Knowledge System?
- Is there a likelihood that systems implanted without an understanding of power relationships can actually exacerbate local social issues and destroy long traditions of care that may have existed there.



## Discussion

- Is there continued prevalence in the forms of linguistic and cultural neo-colonization?
- Are students and academics on both sides equipped to engage with these questions?
- Can we examine our own positioning within these exchanges?
- Can we move from safe spaces where power relationships are often not acknowledged, to brave spaces where these are analyzed and challenged?



## Key research question

Is international student exchange applied in practice according to the social work values of social justice, equity, sustainability and reciprocity?





# Methodology

Collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data.

Quantitative survey.

In-depth qualitative interviews.

Workshops to review findings.

Inductive analysis and triangulation of findings through literature review, survey, interviews and consultations.





# Anticipated outcomes

The Guide to Good Practice is incorporated into core curricula across a range of disciplines.

Students are engaged in curriculum and structured learning support which challenges their perspectives and facilitates their learning about respectful and reciprocal relationships in international student exchange.

Placement hosts experience more two-way, respectful and mutually beneficial exchanges, have a greater level of input to curriculum design, assessment activities and the research partnership.

# Questions?

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