



International Tuesdays

**A glance at the study about support for international students in
the United States of America, Republic of Korea and Germany
from a comparative perspective**

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Imagine

Introduction and Methodology Employed

- **Research question**

What social and cultural support features are provided by host universities and are considered important from international students' perspectives to be integrated?

- **Title**

Internationalization of higher education: a comparative perspective on support for international students in the United States of America, Republic of Korea and Germany

- **Main actors**

Listen to the voices from institutional and international student perspectives in the USA, Korea, and Germany → qualitative and comparative research

Introduction and Methodology Employed

Fifteen universities with the highest number of international students from each country (document analysis)

Source: academic year from 2010/11: 1) the USA's *Open Doors* 2) Germany's *Wissenschaft Weltoffen* 3) Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI)

| Country | USA | Korea | Germany |
|--|---|---|--|
| Collected data of experts | From 6 different universities: Total of 8 experts | From 6 different universities: Total of 7 experts | From 7 different universities: Total of 8 experts |
| Collected data of international students | From 5 different universities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 regular degree students (4 undergraduate and 4 graduate) 3 exchange students Total of 11 students | From 4 different universities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 regular degree students (2 graduate and 6 undergraduate) 5 exchange students Total of 13 students | From 3 different universities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 regular degree students (4 graduate) 5 exchange students Total of 9 students |

Data Analysis

- **Qualitative content analysis** (Schreier, 2012; Mayring, 2000):
Systematic analysis to describe the *meaning* of the qualitative material to reduce the data and find patterns
- **Comparative analysis** (Gibbs, 2007)
In order to “*focus on the relations*” of the categories (Schreier, 2012), an effective approach to “carry out these kinds of comparisons is using tables”; Generally termed also as **a text matrix** (ref. Schreier, 2012)
- The matrices represent **the main summary of all the results** gathered in the interviews including the main categories and central themes.
 - 1) Table 10. Matrix comparing lived experiences of experts’ support for international students
 - 2) Table 11. Matrix comparing lived experiences of international students with support by host institutions

Results: Matrices for Comparison

- **Central outcome of the matrices**

Enables to generate findings in a way case-by-case comparisons are identifiable, namely, cross-referencing of the responses

Examples:

- 1) Support services to integrate domestic and international students
- 2) Providing services in different language
- 3) Ways of distributing and receiving information

Reflection on the Comparative Perspective

- The underlying preconditions are to be reminded when interpreting data:
 - 1) ‘the reflective opinions and lived experiences (tertium comparationis)’ lie as the central issue and
 - 2) expert and international student interview participants are sampled data

- Reflecting upon the comparative approach and challenges by preventing “decontextualization” (Freitag, 2014)
 - 1) “methodological nationalism and culturalism” (Adick, 2008; Dale, 2005)
 - 2) “tendency to search for the better” (Freitag, 2014)

Reflection on the Comparative Perspective

- This brings us to the question whether my research or inquiries were looking for local ways of e.g. ***Koreanness*** – and this is the exactly the point that was not the focus and which was to be avoided
- The heart of fixing ***tertium comparationis*** was not to fall back to the danger of relying on national borders – especially looking for the “**otherness**” (my translation: **Fremdheit and Alterität**, Freitag, 2014) → This is the criteria of openness (Nohl, 2007 in von Bargaen, 2014) which similarities of the units of analysis of an individual counteracts the natural expectations of the country comparison (my translation: “**Landervergleich**”)

Contribution and Future Perspectives

- The details of individual insights instigate thoughts and initiate more questions “for elaboration, development, or even reform of support for international students for an individual, institution, and even countries involved in this process” (Kelo, 2006)
- Evaluative perspective on the issues at hand showed the importance of social and emotional support for international students to feel integrated
- Founded on the reflective responsibilities of comparative perspective within the scope of qualitative research, the key role of the current study is to open up *dialogues based on the given results...*
 - Dialogues that are not about best practice but ***next practice***

Thank you for listening!

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