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**INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR
EDUCATIVE AND MISEDUCATIVE ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCES
DURING COVID-19: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY**

By

Rana Abduelmula

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Faculty of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Education
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2022

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by

Rana Abduelmula

APPROVED BY:

R. Carriveau
Faculty of Engineering

A. Allen
Faculty of Education

F. Cherian, Advisor
Faculty of Education

May 18, 2022

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

This narrative inquiry will explore International Graduate Students and their online learning experiences due to the forced online setting of graduate courses caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of international students but specifically to explore what international students defines as educative and miseducative online experience. Given that faculties of education are to be thought and experience leaders in learning contexts the experiences of international students within its graduate program offers a legitimate critique of the faculty's ideologies, inspirations, and efforts.

Keywords: Online Learning, International Students, Graduate Studies, COVID-19, Pandemic

“Not bad, huh? For some immigrants.”

- Jay-Z

DEDICATION

To the greatest parents, Hoda and Bob.

To my husband and best friend, Abdu.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Finney Cherian for his constant support and understanding throughout this educational adventure. Thank you for mentoring me and providing great advice and encouragement through it all. You create an inclusive and enjoyable environment for all your students including myself. Thank you for being a role model for a child of immigrants like myself.

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To my parents, Hoda Nsair and Dr. Abduelghani Abduelmula, thank you for your constant support throughout all the ups and downs. Your constant love, guidance, and encouragement to never give up can never be replaced. Thank you for teaching me the meaning of hard work. I am ever grateful for all that you have done.

To my siblings, sorry you're going to have to hear about my greatness from now on.

To Abdu, thank you for your unconditional love always. You are my other half, and I would be lost without you.

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LIST OF ABEREVIATIONS

IGS

IGS

M.Ed.

Master of Education

PhD.

Doctor of Philosophy

CHAPTER 1 Introduction

Background Statement

With the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to socially distance and provide safe, educational environments, online learning has become the primary teaching format in education during this circumstance. Online education has replaced the physical need for students to be present in a classroom. Still, it presents itself as an environment that offers the same academic, and social needs students require for success. Faculty instructors are not readily equipped to take on all the benefits or assess the disadvantages of online learning (Elshami et al., 2021). Online learning, which was once an option, has now become mandatory for all students in post-secondary institutions. Students face a new learning environment and take on academic and social growth.

At the onset of the pandemic and the height of infections, the health policy mandates meant that online learning was the only option for all Canadian universities. COVID-19 has brought other academic, social, and economic changes to students' lives (EduCanada,2020; Government of Ontario, 2021). Students may not have physical interactions with their support systems or financially struggling due to job loss.

Today, students in the classroom come from many diverse backgrounds, one of them being international students. International students mirror the rich diversity of the University of Windsor. Although they are unique in their fiscal and residential status, international graduate students (IGS) pay an average of 19,252 / year in tuition fees alone compared to Canadian graduate students, who spend 7,304 /year. Statistics Canada categorizes international students as students in Canada at a post-secondary institution who are non-Canadians with no visa status, a study visa, other visa or refugee status (Trends in the Age

Composition of College and University Students and Graduates, 2010). International students come from various backgrounds, linguistically, culturally, and socio-economically. International students made up 14% (296,469) of all enrollments in post-secondary education in Canada in 2017-2018 (Statistics Canada, 2020). International students come from 225 countries, with a majority coming from China (28%) and India (23%).

Ammigan and Jones (2018) showed that post-secondary institutions are not ready to face the challenges when it comes to their international students. An online learning environment requires different forms of communication between both international students and their instructors (Allen and Seaman, 2013). Instructor perceptions of technology also factor in how an online classroom will be set up and used (Hutchison, 2011). Online teaching is still a relatively new field regarding international students, and the research presented in the literature regarding international students is limited.

Research Problem

The COVID-19 pandemic created an unprecedented shift to online learning across every university in Canada. Whether synchronous or asynchronous, online learning methods have become an emergency contingency reality. Students come from diverse cultural and educational experiences, focusing on the graduate level. These students' cultural, social, and intellectual readiness means that they require support to acclimatize to the academic requirements of their course requirements and degree streams. The literature on the experiences of international students identifies social phenomena such as alienation compounded by communication barriers with their professors and peers; the confluence of these harsh experiences is commonly referred to as "culture shock" (Cupsa, 2018; Belford,

2017; OUSA, 2018). What remains unexplored is the impact online learning, especially in emergency teaching in a pandemic, has had on IGSs' education. Through this study, I am curious about their perceptions of their educative and miseducative experiences during COVID-19.

Research Questions

The research question transitions to the next question while keeping the common themes of international students and education. A narrative inquiry allows the researcher to provide their views as a perspective and the perspective from the participant's narrative (Clendenin and Connelly, 1990). The research questions followed the nature of the narrative inquiry to allow for the "study of the lives of individuals and asks one or more individuals to prove stories about their lives" (Creswell, 2018). Wang and Geale (2015) stated that "The narrative approach allows for a rich description of these experiences and an exploration of the meanings that the participants derive from their experiences," which are reflected in the research questions:

1. In response to the emergency transition due to the COVID-19 pandemic, what are the perceptions of a group of IGSs in the Master of Education program at the University of Windsor regarding their educative or miseducative online experiences?
2. Drawing upon the voices and experiences of international students, do Canadian post-secondary institutions, like the University of Windsor actualize their commitment to democratic and equitable education in their programs?

3. Reflecting on the current policies and visions statements of the Faculty of Education Graduate program, did international students find these policies to be responsive and supportive to their social and intellectual needs?
4. What course ideologies, structures and practices assisted support international students' engagement and participation. Specifically, what assignments and course experiences impacted student participation and engagement?

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore IGSS' perceptions of their educative and miseducative online experiences during COVID-19. Given that faculties of education are to be thought and experience leaders in learning contexts, the experiences of international students within its graduate program offer a legitimate critique of the faculty's ideologies, inspirations, and efforts. The significance of this study was to recognize the challenges and needs of international students at the graduate level in an online setting due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It provided insight on graduate student experience for their international students and how it translated to an online environment at the Faculty of Education. The results from this study will provide us with information about the IGS experience and recommendations for course structure and program (Faculty of Education).

Definition of Terms

International students: are students who come to Canada with a study permit/student visa. This leading group's sole purpose is to complete studies at the post-secondary level. Other groups of students who are considered international students are those who have "other visa status, non-Canadians with no visa status, refugees and non-Canadians with status

unknown" (Statistics Canada, 2020). 67% of international students are enrolled in a bachelor's degree program or higher, representing 14% of all enrollments (2% are enrolled in distance education).

Online learning: is the use of the "internet to enhance the interaction between teacher and a student...both in classroom-based instruction and distance education modes" (Singh and Thurman, 2019). Online learning is an environment where education takes place through the internet (Stern, nd). Online learning can happen either asynchronously or synchronously. Online learning is similar to face-to-face teaching, except with the pace and delivery method of the course (Sadiku, 2018). E-learning or digital learning are other terms used interchangeably instead of online learning (Moore, 2011). Online learning, referred to as E-Learning, is an educational setting in which students cannot be physically present in the classroom and take their course entirely through technological tools.

Educative and Miseducative Experiences: An educative experience, first coined by John Dewey, promotes growth and maturity and allows students to use these experiences positively and beneficially. (Dewey, 2008). A miseducative experience stops the development of an individual in an educational setting. These experiences may produce "lack of sensitivity and responsiveness" (Dewey, 2008).

Democratic learning: the pathway that education needs to take to keep up with the ever-changing world. The term coined by John Dewey; democracy is not a separate entity but should go hand in hand with education; it should be included in all aspects of education (Quay,2016).

Limitations and Delimitations

"Limitations of any particular study concern potential weaknesses that are usually out of the researcher's control, and are closely associated with the chosen research design, statistical model constraints, funding constraints, or other factors." While "delimitations are in essence the limitations consciously set by the authors themselves. They are concerned with the definitions that the researchers decided to set as the boundaries or limits of their work so that the study's aims and objectives do not become impossible to achieve." (Theofanidis and Fountouki, 2018). The nature of this research is a narrative inquiry in which interviews occur in this study. The desirability to seem socially aware about topics may cause the data that is to be collected not accurately to represent the participant and their experiences. Mehra (2021), describes the notion of "social justice warriors" and how the global pandemic has increased social justice warriors. Advocating for a group of people who are vulnerable and a visible minority, especially a group of people with whom a researcher has close and personal connections, can lead to weaknesses in analysis. Sehijpaul(2021) discusses these weaknesses," SJWs may possess some drawbacks. For example, they may be acting with their personal biases.

Considering the various cultural backgrounds of IGSs, complaining and not being grateful for their experiences is frowned upon (Koenigstein, 2012). The interviews are not anonymous and can lead to unauthentic responses to the interview questions. Factors that may influence unauthentic can stem from:

- Discrimination (Lee, 2006)
- Isolation and socialization (Furnham and Alibhai, 1985)
- Position of power dynamic (McClure, 2007)

- Voices are not valued (Hanassab, 2016)

Delimitations for this study included:

1. Only IGS from the faculty of education could participate in the study.
2. Participants could be at any point in their studies (1st year, 2nd year etc.)
3. Students did not need to be in Canada. They could be attending their class in their home country.
4. Faculty and staff at the University of Windsor were not involved in the study.

Position in the study

"Our methodological considerations cannot be separated from our political contexts, that our researcher positionalities are part of the social contexts in which literacy, language, and discourse are being studied." (Wan, 2021). I identify myself as a female in her 20s. I was born in Canada to immigrant parents from Libya. I grew up in a middle-class background residing in a city near the American border. I grew up surrounded by many cultures and ethnicities. I spoke Arabic at home and with members of my community. I am a Muslim woman who wears the hijab. I have been easily identified as a visible religious minority for most of my life in my academic and social life. I have a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry and Psychology and a Bachelor of Education. As a female from both an ethnic and religious minority, I always felt the need to explain and assert myself in any academic or social setting I am placed in. I know there are stereotypes and stigmas that are placed on people who fit my physical description. I carry the weight of representing my community as I am continuously in positions where I am the only person of my background present. In this study, I came in with the perspective of understanding the feeling of being different.

The participants described their differences among the domestic students; although I could not relate to their specific differences, I understood what it meant to be different among peers. I find myself asking questions that my colleagues may not. I look at educational experiences as a tool (Goldstein, 2017); that I carry into the classroom as it contributes to my teaching philosophy and how I interpret data.

I grew up in a home that valued education. My parents immigrated to Canada for my father to complete his PhD. in Industrial engineering. My mother was a stay-at-home parent who devoted her time to my education and well-being. I had a support system that prioritized my growth. I was in an environment that was sheltered and allowed me to focus on myself. I grew up with parents who were involved in my education both at home and at school. I have had access to resources at home to help me with my educational journey.

As an educator, I have found my cultural, ethnic, and religious background to be an asset. Teaching in a city that is the fourth most diverse city in the province has allowed me to bring in my experiences and funds of knowledge about the diversity of my students into the classroom. As a female from a minority group, I know I stand out in the educational field. When I walk into the classroom, my age is also a factor; students are not accustomed to seeing a young female from a minority group in an adult education classroom. I know I bring in not only my knowledge of the material I am teaching but also bringing in my knowledge of being a child of immigrants in Canadian academia. I carry a schema that allows me to relate to my students' struggles, who may also come from immigrant backgrounds, may face in their daily lives.

Theoretical framework: Critical Theory

In my research, I like to reflect on who I am as a teacher and how it relates to other teachers in my field. For many decades, the instructor/institution position has been one of authority. A superiority complex can develop when a person is placed in a position of power. Critical theory suggests that human beings are "to transcend the constraints placed on them by race, class and gender" (Creswell, 2018). Critical theory is a theory that stems from Karl Marx's Marxism. Where those who have the power can dictate the lives of those affected by that power, democratic education should be seen in the form of IGSs to be in an educational environment that allows for their growth and individuality (Bohman,2005). Vaandering (2010) states, "critical theory is about more than producing further knowledge. Its commitment to action that will address injustices uncovered in the field being studied". Connecting Critical Theory to Narrative Inquiry, a narrative inquiry begins "with participants' own (unanalyzed) descriptions of their lived world and experience, moving to new insights during the interview, to the researcher's on-the-spot interpretations (to which the participant can respond); next comes analysis, re-interview in which the researcher gives back her interpretation, and a possible final step of extending "the continuum of description and interpretation to include action." (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2010). Understanding one's position as a researcher is taking descriptions of their participant's needs to connect the power, they have to deliver stories of vulnerable and marginalized groups. The participants not only shared their educative and miseducative experiences in an online setting but also their personal lives. An example of using critical theory in my narrative inquiry was when a participant shared that they had children, even though it was not asked of them to share.

As a researcher, I could have used that against the participant and blamed the child as the reason for the participant's struggles during school. As a researcher, I also had the opportunity to uplift a mother balancing school and her family. Critical theory is important in a narrative inquiry in this study as it provides a framework for a researcher to interpret and analyze participants' narratives and connect the insights to educative and miseducative experiences within an online framework.

CHAPTER 2 Literature Review

Overview

This literature review will be composed of a detailed overview of studies which researched and analyzed the educational experiences of IGSs from the Faculty of Education. IGSs (IGS) are unjustly grouped into one homogenous group. International students come from many backgrounds: religiously, culturally, racially, and linguistically. I acknowledge that although I use the term international students in my thesis, qualitative research recognizes the diversity of participants' perspectives and aligns the research questions to capture the uniqueness of each student's experience.

The literature review is organized with the structured themes:

1. Educative and miseducative experiences within adult education
2. Course Ideologies, structures, and practices

3. Online Learning

4. Democratic Education

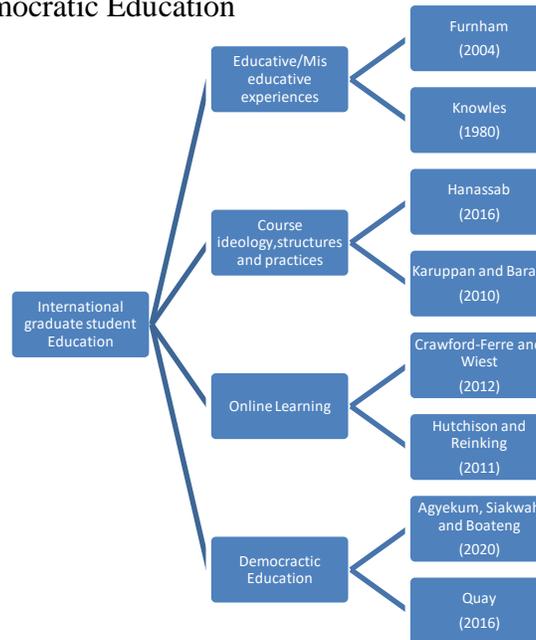


Figure 1: Literature Review Concept Map

Educative and miseducative experiences within adult education

Educative and miseducative experiences

There are many misconceptions about what makes an experience educative or miseducative. Dewey (2008) has coined these terms in his text *Education and Experience*. An educative experience promotes growth and maturity and allows students to use these experiences positively and beneficially. Dewey states that there are misperceptions about what an educative experience entails; "The belief that a genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative" (Dewey, 2008). There is an impression that an educative experience needs to be a grand gesture full of new and exciting approaches that need to occur outside the classroom. An educative experience is one that initiates thought-provoking ideas. A miseducative experience stops the growth of an individual in an educational setting. These experiences

may produce "lack of sensitivity and of responsiveness" (Dewey, 2008). Exposure to miseducative experiences can prevent students from participating in fulfilling experiences throughout their educational journey.

IGSs are in a position of having both educative and miseducative experiences. A new language in a social and academic context as well as learning new materials academically. Being in a new academic setting can be holding back IGSs' growth. In a study performed by Hsien (2007), international students have different perceptions from American peers in high education. International students are expected to conform to the monoculture of American society, which is highly based on Eurocentric ideology. Minority students, including international students, are judged and perceived based on their "willingness" to conform to the dominant culture (Yeh & Drost, 2002). International students are also perceived with negative implications for lack of understanding of the dominant culture as not conforming to the social norms of American society (Jansen and Wildemeersch, 1996).

Western Culture emphasizes assertiveness in one's characteristics as an asset (Hsien, 2007). Students in a lecture hall are unskillful when they do not speak up. International students face challenges when it comes to participation in lectures. Lecture halls are not ideal environments. They do not provide international students with a setting to have non-structured conversations with peers and professors. International students, therefore, remain quiet and refrain from participating. This quietness can be interpreted as international students' disinclination to assimilate into the dominant culture.

Culture shock is prevalent among international students (Zhou, 2008). Culture shock is defined by Xia (2009) as "the psychological disorientation experienced by people

who suddenly enter radically different cultural environments to live and work .
."International students are faced with a different experience than their perceived information. International students can fall victim to culture shock as they navigate a new society and academic experience. Yang (2017) has described the negative effects of culture shock on international students as "negatively impacts international students' psychological and sociocultural adaptation ."
."Socially, as international students start to settle into their new home, their social life or experiences can be grouped into three social groups (Furnham, 2004). Furnham (2004) describes these three social groups as the first group is the connections an international student may have with those who still live in their country of origin. The second group is the connections they have with their peers, professors, and councillors. The third group is the relationships they have with other international students. These three groups go on to serve each of their psychological function. Cummings (1996) states that identities are shaped through experiences. International students are being questioned and judged, which can shape both their educative and miseducative experiences.

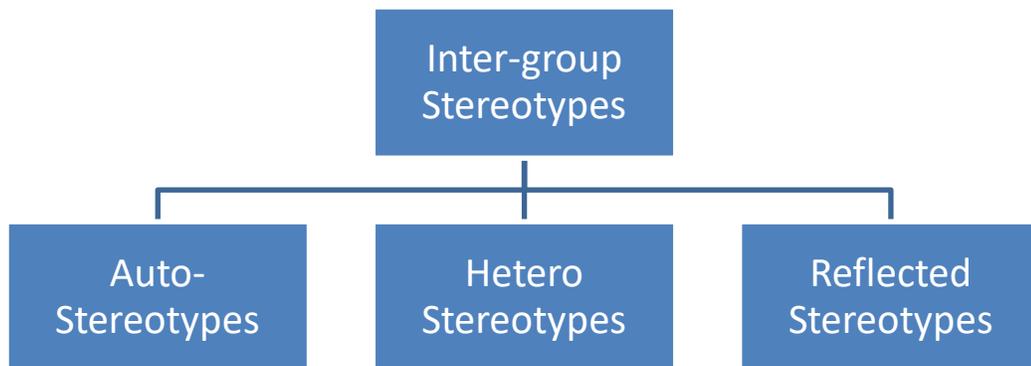


Figure 2: Inter-group Stereotypes. Bond (1986)

Adult Learner

Post-secondary education was not designed to create an equal environment for adult learners but rather for privileged youth. In the United States, over half of those enrolled in post-secondary are over 25 (Caruth, 2014). The non-traditional adult learner is seemingly increasing in post-secondary education. Post-Secondary education experiences were not designed for the adult learner but rather for the privileged youth (Thelin,2004). Knowles (1984) has also acknowledged that a failed adult learner experience is due to adult learners being taught the same way as children and not as adults. However, McGrath (2009) has said a shift from pedagogy upbringing to an andragogy learning environment could disturb an adult learner's learning experience.

Adult learners are now in the position to learn both the material as well as a new learning style. Courses are not consistent in their delivery, as some are introduced in a pedagogy approach for introductory and knowledge-based material; and then switched into an andragogy approach as the course progresses. Adults are problem-centred in their orientation, and this needs to be reflected in their learning (Mc Garth, 2009). This does create pressure for students to bounce back and forth between learning theories.

Teacher-directed learning vs. Student-directed learning

Teacher-directed learning involves instruction guided by the teacher/instructor. (Seifert and Sutton, 2011). Learning instruction is led by the instructor at the same pace for all students (Schweder, 2019). Teacher-directed learning is referred to as "traditional schooling" (Breunig,2017). Seifert and Sutton (2011) describe teacher-directed learning as "transmitting knowledge from teacher to student as clearly and efficiently as possible, even if they also require mental work on the part of the student.....listening and reading

are by nature quiet and stationary, and do not in themselves indicate whether a student is comprehending or even attending to the material." In the "banking concept of Education" by Paulo Freire in 1970 describes teacher-directed learning as "narration (with the teacher as narrator) leads the student to memorize the narrated content mechanically. Worse yet, it turns them into "containers" into "receptacles" to be "filled" by the teacher." Breunig (2017) discusses "traditional and nonformal pedagogies" where John Dewey (1938) is referred to as a progressivist and "asserts that traditional methods of teaching and classroom structures are often decontextualized from students' lived experiences, making the knowledge obtained in schools irrelevant to their lives" and how "Dewey (1938) notes that many students lose the impetus to learn." Though there is criticism that comes along with teacher-directed learning, Tan (2018) describes how there are both sides of the debate with regard to teacher-directed learning. Teacher-directed learning is described by Tan (2018) as having "usefulness in enhancing the students' learning of concepts."

Wehmeyer, Hughes, and Agran (2003) define student-directed learning as "involves teaching students to modify and regulate their own behaviour. The emphasis in such strategies is shifted from teacher-directed activities to enabling students to regulate their own behaviour by engaging in activities typically performed by others, usually the teacher." Students are, therefore, at the discretion of the teacher/instructor, given the opportunity to contribute and dictate how certain aspects of their learning will occur. Gibson (2011) discusses the power dynamic of student-directed learning; there is debate on whether institutions such as universities allow for the boundaries of their institution to be altered. Gibson (2011) also states that allowing teacher-student conversation permits students to have "some measure of power" in the (teacher-student) relationship.

Saltman(2012) discusses the importance of shifting the work of learning onto students from teachers, as it allows for students to become more invested in their own academic success. In post-secondary, students are required to take responsibility to achieve academic success; and student-direct allows for that responsibility to be placed on the student. Sormunen et al. (2019) suggest using a mixture of both teacher-directed learning and student-directed learning to reach an optimum teaching environment.

Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential Learning Theory comes from David Kolb's work on adult education. Experiential learning looks at education and learning as an experience. Using the knowledge gained through real-life experiences as the main resource for learning as well as lectures and literature. Critics of this theory have stated that the emphasis on experience being the main resource has allowed for other modes of learning, such as thinking and analysis, to take a step back. (Kolb, 2014). Placements, co-op and field projects are examples of Experiential Learning in post-secondary institutions.

There are four stages of experiential learning: Concrete experiences, reflective observations, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Cornwell, 1991). Concrete experiences are based around performing an activity which allows for the experiences to become a learning moment. Reflective observations are using the learning moment to develop and expand on the experience; this stage of the experiential learning theory reflects and reviews all aspects of the experience regardless of the relevancy. Abstract conceptualization filters the relevant and important parts of the experience. Active experimentation takes the reflections made from the previous experience and develops an approach to use what has been learned during new learning experiences (Gass and Russell,

2020). Experiential learning theory adds a personal aspect to learning as it attaches the person to the learning (Association for experiential education).

Faculty of Education: International Cohort

The University of Windsor's Faculty of Education webpage has a designated section for international students labelled as "International Cohort." There is a note at the top of the page that states:

"Note: The University of Windsor Faculty of Education graduate degree is a fully accredited, self-funded professional program. Students who register in this program are not eligible for government funding, i.e., Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP), and therefore must ensure that they have sufficient financial resources to meet their total cost of attendance."

This gives the impression that financial issues are their main concern, which reflects negatively on the faculty as universities are being attacked for their business models.

The site displays three areas of concentration but states, "students choose one of two areas of concentration" during their application process. Students in this cohort of the M.Ed. are to follow a course-based stream. Which is another section of their site, under "Master program," describes a course-based M.Ed. as "Students following the Course-Based stream will take ten courses, where the tenth course is the Final Project Seminar." Students who would like to take an alternate route, such as a thesis-based master's, would have to contact the office of the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, and Research, to pursue this stream. There is no direct entry if you are an international student.

International students at the faculty of education are in classes that only contain others from the international cohort. There are occasional opportunities to be enrolled in classes from

the "Regular" M.Ed. The program contains domestic students. This is supposed to provide the opportunity to "the experience of working alongside students who may be more experienced with the Canadian educational system."

There is explicit information about how Funding such as Graduate Assistantships and University scholarships is not available to international students in this specific cohort. There are, however, research internships for international cohort students. The sites define this as "authentic assessment tasks that situate their ongoing inquiries in a context that enables them to apply and further critique what has been learned previously."

There is a Pre-Preparatory Program that is required by all students who are admitted into the "international cohort" M.Ed. Program. Topics of emphasis (retrieved from the Faculty of Education site):

- the main pillars of the Ontario education system and provincial context
- stakeholders in education in the Province of Ontario
- lesson planning
- inclusive classrooms
- assessment and evaluation
- reflection as an educator

The site finally provides resources specified for international students, such as the international student centre and international student-academic support. There is also a link that refers students to the soft-landing program, a program to help international students acclimate to Canada.

Course Ideologies, structures, and practices

Social and Cultural Characteristics

There is a big push through post-secondary institutions to recruit and increase enrollment of international students (Ivy,2001). Although there is an enormous amount of effort and dedication to having international students on campus, after they arrive, they are not given the same amount of attention. International students come only to find that there are not enough resources to help them adapt and settle in (Arthur, 2017). On top of this, many international students are faced with discrimination from faculty, staff, peers, and the community (McWilliam, 2004).

The responsibility to acclimate and handle a new environment is placed solely on international students themselves. International students need to navigate discrimination as well. Many international students lack awareness of their rights, and therefore many instances of discrimination go unreported. The idea that being a student is a temporary situation also pushes international students to not report discrimination (Lee, 2006). The fear of causing "trouble" if they report their discrimination on campus is also a factor in why discrimination goes unreported. This is of significance as it places institutions and their policy regarding international students.

Institutions should be aware and conscious of the discrimination on campus towards their international students, as well as provide resources and support. In an interview with an international student, A study by Lee (2006) reported that when questioning the student about reporting discrimination, the student replied, "You get used to it (discrimination) .". "This is one of many international students who are present in our institutions who have decided to keep quiet rather than reach out for help.

International students felt unwanted by the administration on campus; one student's testimony revealed that: "One day when I went to our department to submit a form, a female staff member pretended that she did not see me and dealt with another White student who came in later than I did . . . she knew I was there but just ignored me" (Hanassab, 2016). The power dynamic that also exists in discrimination needs to be considered for international students. Many international students come from cultures where those in a position of power should not be questioned or reported (McClure, 2007). Faculty and administration may go unreported, which further impedes the experiences of present and future international students.

Participation and group work

Education in North America places emphasis on classroom communication and group work. This creates a space for students to learn from each other and analyze and discuss different points of view. Research has shown that this creates a space for discrimination to occur as well (Wadsworth, 2008). The way classroom communication can turn from a learning experience to one of alienation and discrimination may result from the level of acculturation. International students are expected to adapt to and learn the culture of their host country quickly, and this rate of how acculturation (Yeh and Inose, 2003) happens. International students are a "homogenous group of highly talented individuals" (Leong and Chou, 1996) but are expected to change their ideologies and conform to their host culture. Diversity is an important factor in the field of academia, and this acculturation has created a contradiction in this.

Social norms in the classroom are also different. Terminologies and non-verbal cues can also create an uncomfortable experience with classroom communication. Frames of reference

are also important to note when it comes to discrimination. Classroom communication is important for an efficacious learning experience, as well as the interactions that take place during group work are integral to the success of students. Discrimination in the classroom decreases the benefits that these activities offer to international students. International students who shown to have a low level of English proficiency were shown to be more discriminated against in classroom communication. Research has shown both positive (Karuppan, 2010) and negative (Hanassab, 2016) correlations to levels of language proficiency. Hanassab (2016) has also stated that international students did not feel that their ideas and contributions in class weren't valued; those different ideologies that weren't western-based weren't appreciated.

International students found that they were able to have more meaningful conversations with those has similar frames of reference (Karuppan and Barari, 2011). Discrimination towards international students can lead to socialization (Furnham and Alibhai, 1985), where one would isolate themselves from social settings to avoid discrimination. International students are not only here to learn but also to build professional connections, which they are being put at a disadvantage compared to their domestic peers.

Domestic/international student dynamic

Stereotypes may also influence how international students and domestic students interact (Zhou, 2008). An analysis performed by Bond (1986) demonstrates how stereotypes were seen by a group of Chinese students in Hong Kong and American foreign exchange students. The analysis looked at three inter-group stereotypes. The ingroup and their attitudes were referred to as the auto-stereotype. The outgroup and their attitude were

referred to as the hetero stereotype. The outgroup and their attitudes towards the ingroup were referred to as the reflected stereotype.

Social interactions with domestic students have been shown to have positive implications for international students. Pruitt (1978) had presented that international students had higher academic success as well as better social assimilation when they had interactions and associations with their domestic peers. There are also emotional benefits from having associations with domestic peers (Rohrlich and Martin, 1991).

Although there are benefits, there are studies to show that not all international students related positively to associations with domestic students. Discrimination and stereotypes have been recorded by Sodowsky and Plake (1992) when international students tried to associate with domestic students. Students from a study by Heikinheimo & Shute (1986) have described their relationship with American students as "Superficial" and abandoned the idea of building friendships with domestic students.

A relationship between domestic students and international students can become one mentor and mentee, or the domestic student assuming a Graduate Assistant position to international students. This can prevent domestic students from being willing to work or associate with international students.

Professor challenges and student relationships

In a study performed by Trice (2003), faculty members were questioned about the challenges that they observed with international students; from the results of their study, they found two reoccurring challenges; communicating in English proficiently, which led to faculty spending more time directing them. There was also concern about the TOFEL

testing; TOEFL scores didn't accurately reflect speaking efficacy. Instructors have also felt overstretched with the support and attention that international students need. Habitually, international students will seek out the advice of their instructors due to being accustomed to a different power dynamic between students and instructors in their home country. Due to the large scope of this section, as data is collected and analyzed, specific topics and issues will be addressed with reference to the University of Windsor.

Academic Culture Shock

Culture shock is when an individual can not apply their own schema and understandings to the culture that they are now immersed in (Cameron and Kirkman, 2010). International students find themselves not only experiencing social culture shock but also in the academic institutions that they attend. Academic culture shock is a phenomenon in which the components of an academic setting in the host country are unfamiliar (Godwin, 2009). Academic culture shock for international students stems from assessment styles, including plagiarism, resources available, learning styles, power dynamics and course structure.

International students have much on the line when it comes to their academics; not only do they have the pressure to do well as all students do the price at which this success comes is much higher. International students already pay more tuition than domestic students; Statistics Canada (2020) has stated that for the 2020-2021 academic year, international undergraduate students paid an average of \$ 32,019/ year, whereas graduate students paid \$19,252/ year. The funds for tuition frequently come from parents and scholarships. Failure for some international students can mean shame and reflects badly on one's self and their family, depending on the culture they are coming from (Koenigstein,

2012). These factors create a more difficult cross-cultural adjustment for international students.

International students are less likely to seek out help than their domestic peers. This comes from intimidation, the idea of not wanting to "trouble anyone" and not knowing the existence of the services available to them. International students come from many different forms of educational systems (Liestman, 2001). Resources that are available to our domestic students, such as mental health and academic advising, maybe unheard of to students who did not come from academic institutions that offered such services. Plagiarism is a problem among international students. It is one of the most common forms of academic misconduct among international students (Pickering and Hornby, 2005). Reasons for this are the unawareness of what plagiarism is and not understanding why resourcing needs to be done (Martin, 1994). In a study performed by Bamford and Sergiou (2005), one international student commented on why their instructor was "obsessed" with knowing where they found their information from.

International students come with very different expectations from their home country's institutions. International students come from education systems that are more controlled based and direct (Spence-Oatey, 1997). There is more of a focus on memorization rather than critical thinking. It is more exam-based than assignment-based. International students have shown to have an unfamiliar approach to studying and insufficient foundations for classwork; to make up for the gap, different coping mechanisms are used; help in a study by Mc Clure (2007), coping mechanisms such as self-determination, support from other peers and study strategies such as long hours and route memorization which do not produce the results that match the effort. Instructors have

also felt overstretched with the support and attention that international students need. Habitually, international students will seek out the advice of their instructors due to being accustomed to a different power dynamic between students and instructors in their home country.

Online learning

Online learning is not a new phenomenon in the world of post-secondary academics. It is a, however, new reality to nearly every student and faculty member at any institution around the world and especially here in Canada, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic where lockdowns are happening sporadically. Online learning has become the new medium of how education is happening for post-secondary students at all levels and backgrounds.

Research in online learning and the outcomes of all students being obligated to take online courses has not been abundantly documented. This pandemic has created a constantly moving circumstance in which our media platform has been reporting it before the research community has had the opportunity to do so. The CBC Windsor article, "UWindsor international students, say it's 'mentally tough' coming to Canada amid pandemic," discusses the experiences of two international students who have made the journey to Canada during the pandemic. Missing out on "true student-life experience" and describing being an international student "during a pandemic is strange." It is important to address this as online learning was an involuntary choice, and students are a diverse, homogenous group (international students, student accessibility, learning disabilities etc.) with many needs that may not have been addressed before. This section of this literature review will look at the research that was performed before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Previous research has shown that online learning can be as effective as traditional in-person methods of learning. The success of online learning does not lay into what technologies are present but rather what pedagogies are used to implement these technologies. The quality of online learning depends on two things: student achievement and satisfaction (Hill, 2004). Online learning gives instructors and faculty to try new methods of learning and assessment through new mediums. Online learning methods have been similar to those taught traditionally in person. For online learning to be effective, new methods of course design need to be implemented (Crawford-Ferre,2012). Therefore, previous courses or courses taught by the same professor or instructor need to be revisited and transformed to suit the needs of an online learning environment.

Effective online learning needs to follow a learning theory or methodology that needs to be "relevant, interactive and project-based" (Partlow and Gibbs, 2003) while also allowing students to have some control over the material and methods in which they are learning in. Accepting different modes of learning that have not been familiar to adult education, such as inquiry-based learning and inclusion of real-life experiences, allows for students to grow academically. (Keeton,2004). Traditional assessments of exams and papers can now be replaced with new methods of testing knowledge (Lee and Hirumi, 2004). Kim and Bonk (2006) found that instructors were applying critical thinking and experience-based learning between 23-45% of the time. Online learning isn't just a new medium to test out new learning theories for content and learning styles; it provides an opportunity to question our whole perception of what adult education is.

Online learning should be implemented social features. Creating an informal balance outdistance that interacting through a screen may create (Tee and Karney, 2010).

Creating a space that allows for open and honest conversation as well as feedback creates a relationship between instructor and peers. According to Moore (2013), an inclusive learning environment should be taken into consideration when developing an online course. Online learning should reflect the experiences of the student. Online learning is a social and interactive environment for students.

A 2006 study by Kim and Bonk provides valuable insight into what faculty members at various institutions thought of online learning. The survey found that they predicted that there would be little growth in institutions offering online master and Ph.D. courses. Nearly 50% predicted by the year 2013, online learning would be superior to traditional in-person learning. There was a clear indication of the potential of the capabilities of online learning but never any real determination to obtain it.

Online Learning Instructors

Perceptions of online teaching from both faculty and staff are extremely important. Collecting this data allows for policy implantation to occur to improve online learning and course development (Baird, 1980). Instructor commitment to online learning is extremely important to observe and enhance as it increases the quality of faculty engagement and dedication to online learning (Curran, 2008). Online learning is time-consuming and a learning curve for many instructors who only have experience with traditional lecture methods; online learning can lead to faculty fatigue (Hogan and McKnight, 2007).

Instructor perceptions of technology play a significant role in how positive an effect it will have on students; it is not just about incorporating it but rather how it is incorporated (Kozma, 2003). Carver (2016) also stated that research had shown evidence that technology increases engagement and positive attitudes for learning among students. A

positive perception of technology and knowledge of its benefits is important in determining the success of technology integration (Al-Jarrah, 2019).

A Survey performed by Hutchison (2011) showed that instructors in the United States presented a gap in instructors and their perceptions of integrating technology. Instructor and their use of technology can be analyzed from two barriers (Ertmer, 1999). The two barriers that may confront the use of technology are lack of resources and teachers' attitude to technology. Hew and Brush (2007) completed a meta-analysis of instructors and their barriers to the use of technology. The meta-analysis exhibited the following barriers: availability of technology and technical support that was available to instructors. Instructors and their attitudes to technology are reliant on the perceptions of instructors (Ertmer,2005). In a study performed by Chaklikova & Karabayeva (2015), factors that affect instructors' beliefs about technology in the classroom include availability, cultural and personal experiences as well as cognitive insight.

Professional development has been stated by Ertmer (2005) to be an opportunity to help bridge the gap between instructors and technology. There is a shift in how instructors designate instruction time and space; creating techniques which allow for student engagement is necessary for teachers (Davis, 2007).

Online Learning Outcomes

There are also negative effects of online learning. In a study performed by Chen & Lu (2013), instructors were overworked as they were more focused on designing the right platform to help the success of their students. Students may experience cognitive overload from learning a new medium of learning as well as trying to keep up with the workload.

Online learning has found that instructors are giving more activities than through an in-class model.

The challenges that are presented in the classroom are found to be like those in an online learning setting (Bawane, 2009). The contexts of the challenges may vary through different levels of education. Salmon (2000) categorized the success of online teaching into five categories: online understanding, personality, technical skills, communication skills online and understanding of the content being taught. Berge (1995) has included the following in the success of online teaching: pedagogy, social competencies and technological skillset.

Student-faculty engagement is considered insincere and not authentic. The interactions and communication between students and faculty are disassociated (Allen and Seaman, 2013). The formality of online communication creates a barrier for students, and student perceptions display faculty as distant and inattentive (Dumford and Miller, 2018). The positive of online learning is its accessibility of it. Online learning, especially when developed through applications that allow mobile access to have shown that students benefit from the easily accessible mediums. Online learning also allows for "higher-order thinking" as it promotes reflection as a means of class participation (Robinson and Hullinger, 2008). Students showed to have more quantitative reasoning skills when taking online classes, according to a study performed by Dumford and Miller (2018).

Democratic Education

Democratic learning at post-Secondary level

In 1903, John Dewey wrote his first book, *Democracy in Education*. In this text, Dewey defines Democratic learning as to how the pathway that education needs to take to

keep up with the ever-changing world. Almost 120 years later and the need to incorporate the themes and ideas of a democratic society in education has stayed the same. We live in a political climate that has seen social awareness and movements, the biggest since the civil rights movement (Atlantic, 2020). Dewey (1903) has stated there is a fundamental need of the school today is dependent upon its limited recognition of the principle of free intelligence. Democracy is not a separate entity but rather should go hand in hand with education; it should be included in all aspects of education (Quay,2016). Quay (2016) states that although Dewey's Democracy in Education was meant to be the blueprint of what democracy education should look like, there are many who are confused about what Dewey meant; "Education itself should be similarly reformed, reconstructed, reorganized, such that it could be part of, and contribute positively to, the ongoing changes being experienced."

Democratic education needs to prepare students for democratic life. Their minds, as well as their spirits, need to be built around an aspect of society that has value to them (Darling-Hammond,1996). A public setting such as a post-secondary institution is the perfect setting for incorporating democracy in education. It allows for the allocation of people from various backgrounds to share experiences and perspectives. A democratic education needs to create an environment through coursework and assessment for students to be themselves (Greene, 1986). Canada is a country with an ever-evolving country with an increasing number of people of colour, including immigrants; these minority groups have always struggled to have a voice which also translates to their educational experiences (Agyekum, 2020). Darling-Hammond (1996) has stated, "Infrastructure for adaptative, learning-centred education: policies that develop more intelligent professional preparation;

that appropriate support teaching, learning, and assessment practices; and that provide educators with continuous opportunities to learn and with the resources to enable them."There needs to be a reformatting of current policies and practices in regard to education, especially when it involves these minority groups.

Cohen and Barnes (1993) invite the idea of a policy using pedagogy as the driving force to develop policies. There needs to be accountability for the policies by the students who must exercise them. Gutmann (2014) has specified that education can become a space of freedom and opportunity, which needs to be explicitly integrated into course ideology and policy.

University of Windsor Resources: international student learning

The following documents were obtained from the University of Windsor's Website concerning the International Student Center. The international student center is a resource office available on the University of Windsor Campus and states on its home page that: "The ISC provides a variety of quality services and programs to support almost 4,000 UWindsor international students, scholars, and their family members from over 92 different countries". Resources or links to other services available include academic support for international students, Money, and Financial Information, avoiding scams, Dating and Relationships, mental health and housing.

There are supporting documents available for faculty and staff. These documents include: Supporting International Students Outside of the Classroom to Enhance Academic Success, Understanding the International Student Experience Tip Sheet and My Student Support program Staff and Faculty Reference Guide.

Supporting International Students Outside of the Classroom to Enhance Academic Success: This documentation was developed by the international student support team based on a survey conducted in 2018. The survey asked faculty and staff to participate; from the 187 participants, 59.6% were staff, and 35.76% were faculty. The survey results displayed that the faculty had a good understanding of both the definition of an international student and the challenges they face. Questions regarding where to refer international students based on inquiry found that the total of best responses was 69%. Finally, confidence regarding assisting international students was asked, and 67.76% of the respondents said they were confident or somewhat confident, whereas 13.16% were not at all confident.

Understanding the International Student Experience Tip Sheet: This documentation developed by the international student center provides a guide on how to identify international students as well as resources on where to refer international students for faculty and staff. It also provides the programs and services that the international student center provides based on health, safety, and well-being; housing, transportation, and communication; immigration, visa and legal; and social support, integration and culture.

My Student Support program Staff and Faculty Reference Guide: This documentation developed by Morneau Shepell (a technology-based human resources company) provides information about the keep.meSAFE program. This provides confidential support to students free of charge. There are multiple ways to access the program, such as an app, online or through a toll-free number. Students, faculty, and staff can use the program. Supports that they offer for issues regarding stress, adjusting to life in Canada, anxiety (life and academics), homesickness and time management.

CHAPTER 3 Methodology

The global pandemic, COVID-19, created an unprecedented shift in how online education at all levels was delivered. This study investigated the challenges and successful outcomes of online learning during the pandemic. A central investigative aim, through the voices of the participants, was to identify and analyze the educative and miseducative experience of international graduate students attending the Faculty of Education. In addition, it is hoped that the perceptions of students and the interpretation of results will inform universities and their departments of graduate studies to reform existing policy and program recommendations; and to provide support for the intellectual and social needs of international students they admit as Canadian universities are built upon democratic and social justice ideals. Therefore, it is incumbent on these institutions to reflect on these ideals. The students these institutions serve and are responsible for hold the most legitimate criticism of actualizations of these ideals. All institutions that profess progression democratic and socially just learning experiences need to explore the effectiveness of course structure and policies through the most credible source of critique, the students they are responsible for educating. As a qualitative study, this study provided multiple truths to identify the effectiveness of Canadian universities and international students. It does not look for a single truth but collective individual truths.

Research Overview

“After all, the ultimate goal of all research is not objectivity, but truth.” – Helene Deutsch.

When looking for the truth, there is not one distinct truth but the truths of lived experiences that collectively overlap. We all have our own truths. Each truth captures a

purpose and comes together to create a common truth. When developing my thesis, I found choosing the topic to be the most difficult aspect of the research process. When it came to choosing the topic, I found it challenging to turn my passion and personal experiences into a research topic. Research should give the research a platform to grow not only personally but also intellectually. It should provide the space to take my own curiosities and apply them to the theories that I learned in my graduate career. Research needs to give you purpose and drive. That's what it took from me to apply a methodology that encompassed all the ideas I had envisioned. Court (2013) describes the "truth in qualitative research is using all appropriate means to arrive at a deep understanding of the participants' world as they perceive it, and the meanings they ascribe to the elements of their world" As this research pertains to international students when developing this study, I started by incorporating a philosophical worldview into my research design. A transformative worldview focuses on the "need of groups and individuals in society that may be marginalized or disenfranchised" (Creswell, 2018). International students (graduates) are unjustly grouped into one homogenous group. International students come from many backgrounds: religiously, culturally, racially, and linguistically. I acknowledge that although I use the term international students in my thesis, qualitative research recognizes the diversity of participants' perspectives as well aligning the research questions to capture the uniqueness of each student's experience.

Gathering information regarding IGSs and their experiences in an online setting and my own personal connection to this study, qualitative research methods allowed for research to be performed by collecting and analyzing data in a non-numerical way giving insight and personal meaning to the data collected. As cited in Vaismoradi and Jones

(2016), qualitative research focuses on "the explicit description of the content of communication with a limited reflection on its implicit meaning ."Qualitative research allows for the explanation of social phenomena while minimizing the disruptions to the natural setting (Merriem, 1998). "We are all creatures of our own social and cultural past" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). For the researcher to find "social and cultural understanding," they need to understand the sources that drive their passion for this research. Qualitative analysis is how people collectively make meaning of their social world. The purpose of qualitative research is to "understand the unique meanings and significance of phenomena as experienced by the participants" (Smith and Bekker, 2011). It connects the different components of a topic to form a whole (Patton, 1990), which is important to this specific research as many topics come together.

For this study, a narrative inquiry was chosen to be the applied methodology. As this study focuses on IGSs, it did not only research their collective culture as international students but also the academic culture surrounding international students. A narrative inquiry "is both phenomenon and methodology for understanding experience (Caine, Steeves and Clandinin, 2018). Haydon, Browne, and van der Riet (2018) describe narrative inquiry as an opportunity to "gather rich data" of the experiences of the participants. Narrative inquiry provides the opportunity for diverse participants to share their experiences; as well as "proposing emancipatory alternatives has the potential to give voice to often silenced knowledge" (O'Grady, Clandinin and O'Toole, 2018). "Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as a story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about the experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use narrative inquiry" (Clandinin, 2006). Shaw (2017) discusses how

Narrative inquirers demonstrate the integrity of their research by including autobiographical information (narrative beginnings) that situates them within the research and by constantly reviewing, reconsidering, and attending to the key touchstones of narrative inquiry.” Bell (2003) describes her experiences with research and what guided her to using a narrative inquiry in her research, “accommodate my desire to interpret across personal accounts in order to investigate and represent the storylines and broader societal narratives which informed them. I wanted to explore not only the private constructions of individuals, as is commonly the focus in narrative research but also collective interpretations and constructions.” Using a narrative inquiry with IGSs provides a methodology that respects and acknowledges their diversities and will allow for their experiences to be shared in a format that is familiar to all cultures.

The literature review was created in mind to compass and provide a complete outlook on international students and their experiences with just not online learning but also their educative and miseducative experiences. The literature review did not start with structured themes. Adult education expanded into *educative and miseducative experiences*; what are the University of Windsor (Faculty of Education and Faculty of Graduate Studies) data and resources which led to the development of *Democratic learning*, which looked at intellectual capital, international student integration. *Course ideologies, structures, and practices / Social and Cultural Characteristics of courses* encompassed the academic culture of international students and *Online Learning* looking at the faculty positioning as well as online learning without specification to international students as international students, and domestic students are commonly in the same courses.

The sought-out domains in the literature and the themes (components) were used to develop and structure the research questions. The methodology of a narrative inquiry required the questions to be formulated to be highly interconnected with each other as well as provide a panoramic view of the research problem. As a qualitative study, the responses of the participants are guided by the nature of the questions asked (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).” Snyder (2005) describes the idea of truth as “the question of “whose truth” must then be answered: all truths, if at all possible—with the voices sometimes in harmony and sometimes discordant; with the participants’ voices featured much of the time and with the researcher’s voice carrying the melody at others; and with clarity about the reasons for the particular orchestration at all times.”

In response to the emergency transition due to the COVID-19 pandemic, what did international students deem educative or miseducative in their graduate program through online contexts?

1. What course ideologies, structures and practices assisted support international students' engagement and participation. Specifically, what assignments and course experiences impacted student participation and engagement?
2. Reflecting on the current policies and visions statements of the Faculty of Education Graduate program, did international students find these policies to be responsive and supportive to their social and intellectual needs?
3. Drawing upon the voices and experiences of international students, do Canadian post-secondary institutions, like the University of Windsor, actualize their commitment to democratic and equitable education in their programs?

In an online setting, how are the reasons, factors and issues that are translated into online learning (main research question); did online learning improve the issues in the current circumstances (COVID-19). This main research question extends into the three other questions. Question 1 and Question 3 are connected through engagement and participation and their linking to meaningful education for students who are marginalized. Questions 2 and 3 are connected through how university policy influences faculty of graduate studies (and faculty of education) policy.

Process for analysis

Qualitative research is not based around reproducing but on individuality. The individuality and lived experiences of its participants cannot be quantified (Court, 2013). To ensure validity and reliability, triangulation is used to provide a process to "assess the consistency of information" (Hayashi and Abib, 2019). Triangulation uses multiple sources of data (Stake, 1995) to assess consistency. It is not to compare different data sets collected through different mediums; but to collect different data sets to analyze different aspects of the same topic (Guion, 2002). In this study, triangulation is used by assessing interviews and data collected from other research and resources by the University of Windsor. Other methods are also used to ensure validity and reliability, such as member checks where the data collected (interview transcripts) are given back to the participants to check for the accurateness of interpretation (Candela, 2019). Member checks are beneficial in this study as the participant's (international students) interpretation and understanding of the questions may produce inaccurate responses. Researcher's Biases, where the researcher positions their selves and states their worldview (Merriem, 1998), are also implemented.

Merriem (1998) cites "Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research," such as the researcher's interpretation, generalization of a small non-random sample and authenticity of participants' answers. Although qualitative research is multifaceted and constantly changing, in reality, there is no one specific answer to a social phenomenon; quantifying such as a survey will only lead to the same issues of trustworthiness that are cited by Merriam. Reality is constructed by humans; it is a "multiple set of mental constructions" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). As this constructed reality is created by humans, we can provide a more accurate interpretation compared to a data analysis program. As this constructed reality is constantly changing, the validity and reliability of quantitative research are adequate.

Position of Researcher

As a child of immigrants, I grew up watching my father complete his PhD. as an international student. I grew up hearing the stories of the good and bad of his life as an international student. From learning to navigate a new academic system in a different language to discrimination, his journey is one that many international students take. I am a visible Muslim female with a North African Background. As a person from a marginalized group, I am aware that my own biases, opinions, and schema can influence not only the responses of the participants but also influence my interpretation and perceptions of the data collected. I am actively inspired to be outspoken about social issues in my community. I am also a college instructor, many of my students are international students, and I have observed and heard about what challenges they go through navigating their academic life. This has developed as an influence on my worldview as well as my upbringing. In the book "*Research as resistance: Critical, indigenous and anti-oppressive approaches*," the author

discusses their own position as a marginalized researcher. Brown and Strega(2005) explain how " The hegemony of the dominant world view is more than one way to view the world; it is successfully positioned as the most legitimate way to view the world. The existence of non-western, non-Eurocentric world views that are not founded on the hierarchical dualism, which posit that both existence and knowledge are contingent on others, and/or on the world and other living entities, have important implications for researchers". As a marginalized researcher, I bring in my own experiences to provide valuable insights to this study.

Ethical Considerations

Subjectivity revolves around data collected in a quantitative study. Since opinions and biases can't be quantified, the subjectivity of this study looks at the researcher's own biases. Qualitative research is connected to subjectivity, but it is not itself subjective (Karasz and Singelis, 2009) to assure that my own subjectivity does not affect the objectivity and quality of data interpretation. Reflexivity is a position a researcher takes to not only bring in their schema and worldviews to the interpretation of the qualitative data but as well as regarding the worldviews of the participants (Palaganas and Sanchez, 2017). As cited in Reid and Brown (2018), reflexivity is the "conscious revelation of the underlying beliefs and values held by the researcher in selecting and justifying their methodological approach."Being so close to this study, to hold a position of reflexivity instead of reflectivity where only the researcher's biases and opinions are looked at is as important as the study should focus on the voices of the participants and not the researcher.

Before the start of this study, the Research Ethics Board was consulted for this study. Due to the dialogue-based nature of the study and the content of the interview

questions, the identities of the participants were concealed. As the questions dealt with their opinions on course structure, faculty and the University's concealed identities allow for responses to be protected and for these responses to not affect participants negatively, whether it be on campus with administration and faculty or off-campus through work or networking.

International students can come from the marginalized group depending on language, culture, and identity. Respecting and protecting their responses create trust in academics with a marginalized group. Marginalized groups have historically been mistreated in research, which leads to hesitation in participating (Sanchez, 2019). The results from this study are meant to help and uplift the international student community. International students are not a homogenous group; they come from many different backgrounds and may come from marginalized groups. This study needs to benefit not only the researcher but also the participants. This study will not just provide insightful information for post-secondary institutions, but the participants will also gain empowerment through legitimizing their voices, amplifying their needs and exposing their truths (Martin and Garza, 2020). The results of this study will uplift international students through the result of their own voices being at the front lines of policymaking and course development (Galea and Vaughan, 2019)

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how important it is to have marginalized groups in policy implementation (Smalls, 2020). The pandemic has intensified the consequences of poor policymaking that often-hurt marginalized groups significantly more than non-marginalized groups (Smalls, 2020). Through my position as a child of

immigrants, I may be considered "part of the group," but I do have to understand my privilege and position of power. My voice cannot be louder than theirs.

Data Collection

The data collection began with obtaining six participants from the international cohort at the faculty of education. These participants will both be from the course-based, major paper and thesis-based stream. There is no restriction on gender, age or how long they have been in Canada. Participants were recruited through an email sent by the Faculty of Education. There was an incentive as a gift card offered to all participants that participated.

Two types of data were collected individual interviews and documents (graduate calendar, online resources from the faculty of education: course offerings, program structure and international cohort information). Interviews offer the researcher an opportunity to gain information about "matters that are unique to the experiences of the interviewees, allowing insights into how different phenomena of interest are experienced and perceived" (McGarth and Palmgren, 2019). The interviews were set to be between 30-60 minutes each. The individual interviews are one-on-one interviews (Creswell, 2018) through the web-based app "Microsoft Teams ."The questions will be both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The open-ended questions motivated participants to share valuable information that closed-ended questions might not address (Tasker and Cisneroz, 2019). Probes such as tell me more, what does "not much mean?" were used to help facilitate the participants to provide more information (Creswell,2018). Documents from the University

were also collected from various sources such as the faculty of education, the faculty of graduate studies and other resources available through the University.

The interview protocol included having the participants sign a waiver prior to the interview: one was for one for the consent of allowing the interview. The interviews were video and audio recorded for reference. Opening and closing statements were read to each of the participants regarding the length of the interview, what this data collection would mean to the study and information about the withdrawal of consent. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and share concerns.

Data Analysis

The data collected was first transcribed using the Microsoft Teams transcription feature. These transcriptions were also manually looked at to correct any errors and add missing words for accuracy. The transcriptions were sent to the participants for member checks to assure what the participants said was correctly recorded and expressed. Once returned, the data was then prepared for analysis. The data was first coded, the process in which data is organized by "bracketing segments and writing words to represent categories" (Creswell, 2018). Coding is valuable in qualitative research as it "provides an overview of disparate data that allows the researcher to make sense of them in relation to their research questions" (Elliot, 2018). These codes were grouped into common themes. The themes were then interpreted in accordance with the research questions.

CHAPTER 4 Data Analysis

Background Information of participants

Through the process of email recruitment by the faculty of education, 9 participants emailed willing to participate in the research. Of the 9 participants, one participant was ineligible to participate in the interview as they were not a student from the faculty of education but from the faculty of engineering. The other two participants were sent the consent form but did not respond. The six participants from the study all completed both interviews. Background information of the participants that was collected included: Program, year of study, stream of study, Area of Concentration, country of origin, primary language, and Experience with online classes before COVID -19. This qualitative study collected the transcripts of the interviews conducted with the participants. It should be noted while reading through the Data Analysis that the quotes used include the exact grammar and repetition of wording to allow for the authenticity of the research.

- Candy is a master student in her first year of study. She is in the Educational Administration and Leadership stream, course-based. She has identified herself as a Visual learner and had no experience with online classes before COVID-19.
- Kelly is a Ph.D. student in her first year of study. She has identified herself as a Reading and Writing/ Auditory learner and has no experience with online classes before COVID-19.
- Daisy is a master student in her first year of study. She is in the Educational Administration and Leadership stream, course-based. She has identified herself as a Visual/ Reading and Writing learner and has no experience with online classes before COVID-19.

- Mark is a master student in his second year of study. He is in the Educational Administration and Leadership stream, course-based. He has identified himself as a Visual learner and has no experience with online classes before COVID-19.
- Sarah is a master student in her second year of study. She is in the Second Language Acquisition, Culture and Society stream, a course based. She has identified herself as a Visual learner and has no experience with online classes before COVID-19.
- Mary is a master student in her first year of study. She is in the Educational Administration and Leadership stream, course-based. She has identified herself as a reading and writing learner and has no experience with online classes before COVID-19.

Table 1: Country of Origin of Participants

Country of Origin	Number of Participants
China	4
Vietnam	1
Bangladesh	1

Table 2: Language of Instruction prior to coming to Canada of Participants

Language of Instruction prior to coming to Canada	Number of Participants
Mandarin	4
Vietnamese	1
Bangla	1

Table 3: Location of Participant while taking online classes

Location of Participant	Number of Participants
Canada	4
China	2

Most participants in this study are from China (80%). There are many reasons why a high number of students who attend the University of Windsor originate from China. The University of Windsor has a Reciprocal Learning Program, "The Teacher Education Reciprocal Learning Program (RLP) was developed in 2010 between the University of Windsor and Southwest University (SWU) China, and in partnership with the Greater-Essex County District School Board." (University of Windsor, 2021). This program sees 20 students from the Southwest University come to the University of Windsor to "observe in local Windsor schools and to audit courses in the pre-service program at the Faculty of Education while participating in the SSHRC Partnership Grant research project ."This has created a well-respected connection between Chinese Students and the University of Windsor.

When conducting the interviews, Daisy states, "I have a friend working here who is the post doc. Yeah also in education. A friend of my friend actually, so we just chatted, and she shared some very good experience working here doing research here". Daisy also states that "Most education programs many Chinese students as well ." Daisy's comment expresses the reputation that the University of Windsor has with Chinese Graduate students.

Analysis of themes

In the process of creating my research questions, there were four major themes I wanted to analyze in my interviews. Through my literature review, I found areas of interest topics I would have liked to expand on. I was interested in expanding my knowledge in areas of Online learning when it was not a choice (due to COVID), online learning and international students, and what a democratic education looks like in Canada when it comes to international students. When creating my interview questions, I took each of my research questions and created interview questions to help answer them. These five major themes were:

1. Online Learning
2. Democratic Education
3. Professor and Faculty
4. Course Structure
5. Varied Student Experience

My Research questions reflected those major themes:

Online Learning: In response to the emergency transition due to the COVID-19 pandemic, what are the perceptions of a group of IGSs in Education Graduate programs at the University of Windsor regarding their educative or miseducative online experiences?

Democratic Education: Drawing upon the voices and experiences of international students, do Canadian post-secondary institutions, like the University of Windsor, actualize their commitment to democratic and equitable education in their programs?

Professor and Faculty: Reflecting on the current policies and visions statements of the Faculty of Education Graduate program, did international students find these policies to be responsive and supportive to their social and intellectual needs?

Course Structure: What course ideologies, structures, and practices assist support international students' engagement and participation. Specifically, what assignments and course experiences impacted student participation and engagement?

Varied Student Experience: This theme represents specific topics, and issues that might have been significant to one participant were labelled under "varied student experiences" as their lived experiences.

As educative and miseducative experiences are followed throughout the analysis. These experiences can be applied to Online Learning, Democratic Education, Professor and Faculty, Course Structure and Varied Student Experience. Throughout the analysis, documentation of what the participants stated were an educative and a miseducative experience.

From the transcriptions, the questions were already organized by major themes. To create subthemes from the data collected, I followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) "Six-Phase framework for doing a thematic analysis " This included six steps in performing an analysis:

1. Become familiar with the data
2. Generate initial codes
3. Search for themes
4. Review themes
5. Define themes
6. Write up

I started off by reading all the transcripts and familiarizing myself with the data. I started to see connections and patterns from the transcripts. After familiarizing myself with

the data, I started to generate codes for the transcripts. At first, I used a colour-coding method where I had six major themes I was looking for: educative experiences, miseducative, Professor, Course, Democratic Education, and online learning. Through coding educative experiences and miseducative experiences were applied to all the themes, which left the four major themes. From the four major themes, sub-themes were coded.

Subthemes were made based on the answers that participants offered as well as reoccurring topics and issues among the participants. I wanted the participant's voices to be displayed in the subthemes (Maguire and Delahunt, 2017). As a researcher, I didn't want my own conceptions and impressions to overshadow the lived truths of my participants. I wanted the voices of my participants to be reflected in the themes. The subtheme "Authentic Assessment" started off as "Interactive assessment" this was taken directly from the transcription of the interview with Candy.



Figure 3: Themes and Subthemes

Theme: Online Learning

Barriers to Engagement

An important consideration to keep while reading any of the themes is that online learning during COVID--19 was not a choice for students, with closures and variant waves that leave in-class learning ambiguous. Students, especially international students, become increasingly comfortable with the idea of online learning or at least a hyflex (in class-online) model. IGSs need to obtain a student visa as well as accommodations, health insurance, and driver's licenses and to help set up their families if they are accompanying them. One of the biggest concerns of the participants in this study was obtaining study permits to be able to enter Canada. Two of the participants were not able to come to Canada until halfway through their fall semester due to extended processing times for study permits during the COVID-19. According to the Government of Canada's immigration and citizen processing times, a study permit currently takes a minimum of 12 weeks. Whereas in 2019, the average time to receive a study permit was a maximum of 40-50 days (ApplyBoard, 2021).

Daisy describes the experience of coming to Canada during the semester and how online learning created a smooth transition from China to Canada:

“I'm feeling that you know I actually started online learning in September when I was still back in China by then. And then I moved to Canada in October 9th. So so I continue to join online, it's just there's no time difference. it's convenient. Of course, you don't have to go out. You know. Especially come here I I don't have a car yet, so it's it's easier if we can, you know, join class remotely at home and I I can also take care of the family. My daughter and housework cooking whatever. Yeah, it helps me to balance, yeah.”

Candy describes her feelings of fear of not being able to attend due to not obtaining her student permit in time to attend classes in September:

“Because of the pandemic, I was very nervous like we like we like get the visa. Will I able to attend? Like you know, uh, classes coming here from Bangladesh so that situation back in September was very scary, but I felt like when the University offered a Hyflex mode or like you know and online, it gave us more. I would say, like you know opportunity, so that was useful for me.”

The online model of learning that the University of Windsor has created for IGSs has created an environment of inclusion outside of COVID-19. Online learning in this capacity has provided Candy and Daisy with educative experience. IGSs can continue their studies regardless of what is happening in their lives due to the uncertainty of COVID-19. This form of learning has been quite well-liked by the participants in this study. The flexibility to be located anywhere and can still be completely involved in their education has been a game-changer for IGSs (Nikou and Maslov, 2020). IGSs must learn and navigate a new academic and social culture as well as set their life matters in order; this takes time, both physically and mentally. Providing students with this flexibility to either attend a hyflex model (in class depending on COVID-19 restrictions) allows for IGSs to be an active part of their learning regardless of what is happening outside their educational domain (Van Wart et al., 2020).

Candy describes how having the option of attending class online was convenient one day when the weather was too cold for her to leave her house. She described that she comes from a country that is extremely warm and the sudden drop in temperature deterred

her from coming to class; with an online learning option, she was able to attend the class from the warmth of her home.

“I actually loved the hyflex thing. Because I would say like, you know, sometimes I felt like online classes are very like you know useful. Like for me as an international student, like the weather. It changed its suddenly like in the in the December. So I came from a like country where the like winter is not even there. So I think it gave me the flexibility to like attend classes online.”

Kelly describes how being new to Canada and still hasn't been able to obtain a car, so her commute methods are either walking or bus; online learning has helped her be able to tune into her classes. It is also a time-saver; as a Ph.D. student, she can use the time spent commuting on her research.

“I find online learning rather convenient. UM, in terms of like first time saving, I don't need to spend time traveling to come campus and back home, and then I find it really supportive.”

Even though online learning is a well-liked form of learning among the participants in this study, in class, learning was still a priority for them. This is why the hyflex model was the most popular form of educative learning. When asked, "Do you think a permanent hyflex model for international students would be beneficial?" 5 out of 6 participants said yes.

Candy: “To give a balance between their personal and, like you know, academic life. So yes.”

Daisy: "I don't really think so. You know, temporarily, it's fine, but permanent. I think that it's time-efficient and effective after learning result."

Mark: "I really think yes. You benefit from it."

Kelly: "Yep, UM, although I take the the online asynchronous, but I think the hybrid model is very convenience for international student because at this time because of the COVID-19, lots of international students are still a staying in their home country and it's good for them to take the glass from their home country. Uh, without traveling to Canada. Well for their safety and maybe costs."

Mary: "I'd like hyflex is some people can go in class if they want to, but if they can't make it to class it could be online."

Sarah: "I think maybe for me I think it's good"

Even though there is support for a hyflex model of learning among the participants, there are also areas of improvement that can be further developed to meet the needs of IGSs. IGSs have unique needs when compared to domestic graduate students. In an online setting, the chat box has been the main form of communicating and participating in class. There has been some struggle among IGSs in participating online, which has created miseducative experiences. According to Sung (2021), "different sets of linguistic capital shaped their ability to claim the right to speak and to be listened". Language barriers and time to process their thoughts and questions have prevented IGSs from speaking up in an online setting. Through typing or voice participation, when there was a moment an IGS took to think about their answer or if they were taking a while to type out their answer, the discussion would have moved on to a different topic. Daisy describes this when discussing language proficiency as a barrier to engagement.

“For international student, sometimes we we need more time to to process to prepare what we want to say. And it seems that we would take a long time. And sometimes the professor may feel that while you're not participating or somebody else has already.”

Candy brings up her experience with communicating with her peers when she was giving an online presentation during class. She discusses a disconnect between her and her peers when in the online classes.

“You know if when we are seeing in person with body language as well, you can actually like, you know, understand if you're agreeing or hearing or so. I was giving a presentation and I felt like I don't even know like when classes are listening properly or not because I'm not able to see all of them in the video.”

Candy's and Daisy's comments lead me to ask in the second interview: "Is body language important to you when communicating?" All six participants said that it was important to see body language when communicating with peers and faculty. Kelly described emotions and feelings when it came to communicating through body language:

“Yeah, some help on body language help me to understand the speaker and also understand their uh emotion feeling when I look at the face is essential for online learning.”

Creating an Online Culture

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Theme: Professor and Faculty

Inclusion and Classroom Community

The onus to create an online environment that is welcoming and inclusive of all students, including IGSs has been given to professors and faculty. Professors and faculty not only need to fill in the gap between learning online and learning in person but to work with international students and their own needs (Peters and Anderson, 2021). The participants from this study have discussed the professor and faculty as "helpful" and "encouraging," providing educative experiences to the participants. There has been support and understanding towards the professors and faculty among the participants. The participants understand the dynamic and unfamiliar situation that professors and faculty are in with online learning during a pandemic. Sarah describes how "the university did a good job in this particular situation "She also discusses understanding that even though this is a new situation, faculty and professors have done a great job.

“I think the fact is also this is the first time to do the online online teaching. They they they did a good job to do that because we have many chance to to support ourselves. Academy academically learning and also we have a chance uh, to learn lot of knowledge is.”

Kelly also describes how thankful she was for the helpfulness of the faculty. She describes how the support with matters that are particular to international students.

"Since I started the program, I have lots of questions because I am now and I'm an international student so I have to do with a lot of concern before moving here. So they they provided a very great support. I got replies response from every email and instruction clearly, so it's very. Yeah I have very. I feel thankful for that."

Creating a relationship between IGSs and professors that goes beyond just academics was important to the participants in this study. Their prior concerns about online culture have been addressed by the professors and faculty (Elshami et al., 2021). Creating an inclusive environment where professors interact with international students on a personal level was significant to the participants. Mark remembers a professor sharing their experience in the education field. He describes how the professor shared an older photo of themselves to represent their journey.

"Talk from culture talk from how to be a good teacher, but it's really important because knowledge if you're a share some experienced, see if or if-else experienced he failing if really I, professor. It's really old professor. If a really old professor have share his experience. I know if you want to become a teacher or professor you have to work hard from the beginning and until finished you maybe you can become very professor, or you

you cannot be that, but you have to work hard from. Really young and maybe 13 years or 14 years. This, uh, he shared from old picture I feel if it's a long journey, but you have to work hard, you have to every day by day. And I mean little by little so."

Candy describes a sense of community in her classes when professors would share information about their background and had the students do it as well. Candy has described how important it was for her to know more about her peers being an IGS.

"Courses faculty members like you know he or like you know the shared like from where the background like each of the students we were introducing ourselves from our backgrounds. So I felt like you know though we are not in a classroom but I felt connected and at the same time"

Providing a setting in the classroom where students are asked about how they are doing and providing a few minutes to allow students to intermingle and talk outside of the academics can highly improve drive in students, especially during online learning and isolation due to COVID-19 (Kotera et al., 2020). Daisy also describes how some of her professors were encouraging their students to be involved in the classroom. Her professors were trying to recreate an inclusive classroom experience by having check-ins at the beginning of class.

"Some professors, well, ask some very you know, to warm up some warm-up questions like how you doing rank your your yeah mood, whatever from a scale of one to five etc. Or asking 'cause previously many haven't been Canada. Yes, so ask about your location, the weather there, whatever. Yeah just try to warm up a little bit. And encouraged they, of course, they encouraged us to, you know, to to open the the video that the the the video to show our image."

Participants of the study have vocalized the importance of professors and faculty providing an inclusive environment for personal and social growth.

Constructive and Timely Feedback

For international students, travelling to another country to obtain an education is no easy feat. There is more at stake; many international students leave their families, and those who don't bring their families along with them, such as Daisy, whose husband and grade school daughter have come to Canada with her. International students pay higher tuition than domestic students; IGSs pay an average of 19,252 / year in tuition fees on top of their living expenses. Feedback is important for IGS as some IGSs, including all six of the participants, have not been in a western post-secondary institution. In a study by Chugh, Macht and Harreveld (2021), they describe feedback as "important at every educational level, and there can be differences in the style and type of feedback provided. Constructive and timely feedback and whether a student receives it can make an educational experience educative or miseducative. Timely, supportive and high-quality feedback is critical for facilitating and supporting students". Kelly describes how all IGSs have more at stake with it comes to obtaining high grades and being successful in their studies. She describes being dedicated to her group work along with her fellow international peers because of the scholarships and funding she receives.

"I work with students from different countries, places, uh, my we, we we. We are like really dedicated to our group project everyone study the PhD thanks to the scholarship, so they have to maintain their great as high as possible to keep the scholarship and funding. So we work our best. We make the best."

To obtain the grades and perform well in their classes, constructive and timely feedback is essential. All 6 of the participants have not attended western universities prior to their respective programs. Learning what is expected from the assessment is as important as learning to perform the assessment. Candy describes her struggles with learning to write papers in a language that is not her first language.

“One of the challenges was writing as like you know, giving a writing a paper in English. So I have. I came from like fully Bangla, like you know know my communication is good but writing I'm still not here there because I've not written academic like paper. So, though our professors say like you know there are resources like you know there are English resources, so I went into workshops, and I've seen but I felt like the professors. Feedback, particularly about the writing that was useful.”

Candy found that with the professors who provided space for timely feedback, she performed better on their assignments. Whereas the professor who did not provide timely feedback caused her to struggle with performing and managing her time for assignments.

"Our professors gave the deadlines way ahead and then also offered space for feedback, but at two times, I was able to actually like finish my task earlier and get feedback. But one time I was really struggling with work and other as you know, responsibilities and I was not being able to get the feedback and like you know, I felt like having the deadlines ahead of time and having the space of feedback work."

She also described how important constructive feedback was for her. However, she was receiving feedback from one professor. It was not constructive; it did not include a grade or any explanation of what recommendations they would offer.

"For feedback, one of the professor gave feedback like he shared that you know you're doing well, but well, and having the grades are very different thing, right? So, I'm yet I'm here to waiting, but both of them have shared feedback. I would say in a negative way, like feedback like you know you're doing this then this then that, but I have not received the grades particularly"

Kelly described how providing scaffolding and models for feedback helped her to clearly follow along with the assignment's instructions.

"My professor gives us like a model for giving feedback and that model like scaffold the way we give feedback. So, we have the structure very clearly to not only to give our opinion evaluation, to relate to, resonate to our own perspective are linked to the the topic, or linked to the parts."

Kelly also mentions how she benefited from the convenience of her professor who provided virtual office hour time slots for students to drop by on Microsoft Teams.

"It's it's good that she reply very quick so.I feel is is is really convenient and also come we have something like quickly meetings. She saved some slots for us for anyone to register for, like of a talk, a meeting, any topic, maybe the lesson, the topic, the ratios are the assessment so it's really the into when we we work with the professor online."

Resources from Faculty

The participants from the study were impressed with the response from faculty and professors but still vocalized their apprehensions about being able to navigate the information they needed from different resources around campus. All six of the participants have not attended a western university before attending their respective programs. They

need guidance to help navigate the information they are required to know. Daisy speaks of her experiences navigating through the resources as an international student.

“Yeah, I really think that would be very helpful. Yeah, because I know and University of Windsor has a lot of different departments at all of resources, but as an international student I struggled in finding the right. Resources to contact the right people. because there're different, many different resources, so it'll be great if there's only one contact person that we can approach, and he or she will help us throughout the journey, yeah.”

Candy speaks of her experience navigating through the information on the University of Windsor site. She explains how it could become challenging for someone who is not "tech-savvy" and could lead to a miseducative experience.

"I think University of Windsor is trying to provide information like you know in some sections, but sometimes it gets difficult. If someone is not very tech-savvy like you know or don't know how to navigate things. Though in blackboard there are like you know I don't know like you know, for me I'm just going to share in Blackboard. It was initially there was a course how to utilize Blackboard like you know, but there should be an indicator like if students are actually completing it because I remember when."

Daisy describes how the "first part" of her experience at the University of Windsor made her feel "alone ."She reflects on her time at her University in Shanghai, China, and how there was an academic advisor that was designated for every student on campus. She says there is more the University of Windsor can do for international students to help.

"Of course, there might be more to do, but I think the structure is different. You know because I used to work in another university in Shanghai, China and they said there is a academic advisor who is in charge of. A specific number of students, so they are very close. Actually, they they were checking from time to time to see how are you doing and then what kind of support do you need and help you with course selection, whatever. So, you just know that the advisor I can go to whatever questions I have. Yeah, because but here because there are, you know, advisors that are just general advisors. They they're not. Specifically, you know coupled with you so. Uh, I'm feeling I'm more alone during the the starting process."

Theme: Democratic Education

Participation in Canadian Society

IGSs are not only navigating their new academic life but also their new surroundings in Canada. There is a long history of assimilation in Canada, and where those new to Canada are expected to conform (Zanoni Lopez and He,2021). With the rise of social justice and the Multicultural Act of Canada, we understand that those from minority groups are accepted, and Canada welcomes them to practice and be a part of their own culture. The first direct contact international students have with this new culture (Canadian) is through the University they attend. All six of the participants have stated they want to learn more about the people and the culture. They stated they would like to work in Canada and learn how to navigate this society. The universities these IGSs attend are the first places they are exposed to this new culture. When asked: "Do you wish to learn more about Canadian society?" five out of the six participants said that they did want to learn more.

A topic that came up among the participants was Indigenous peoples of Canada. They were unaware of the issues and history of the Indigenous peoples of Canada and the Government of Canada. Kelly describes feeling "uncomfortable" when discussing Indigenous issues in the classroom. She elaborates on how in her home country of Vietnam, they rarely speak about "those topics"; having not been exposed to the topic of Indigenous issues was an miseducative experience.

"Sometime I feel uncomfortable for online learning, especially for example here the last course in my program people discussed about indigenous indigenous learning etc. and in my country in Vietnam we rarely talked about those topics, so I had no prior knowledge about their topic, and I found it really like, uncomfortable or difficult to understand. To follow what people are discussing. They talk about, uh, current problems in Canada, some foundation, some organization, etc. Here, so I have no idea about what what is."

Daisy also describes her experience as an international student being exposed to this new information about Indigenous peoples in Canada, and she was not exposed to these types of issues in China. She describes how helpful a guest speaker to her educative experiences.

"Yeah, sure, especially when we talk about an indigenous education. Yeah, because it's new to us international students. We don't have that kind of issue back in our country, so the local students actually shared a lot of the knowledge and resources, and she even invited guest speaker from her school. One of her colleagues that she's been, you know, working on a certain project. She invited her to come to give us a speech, yeah, so I think

that's really helpful for us to better understand the current the situation here or the history here in Canada".

Candy discusses how she would like to learn more about the "culture," "background," and "events" in Canada in her classes.

“As I'm in Canada so I felt like only one of our course instructor actually additionally added some of the components to know Canada. Like you know, he constantly shared like you know, what are the cultures? What are the events, the backgrounds? Other than that? Like you know, this is something we have to explore on our own, so probably if there was some workshops or any sessions like where we want to know a bit more about like in in in society, be helpful.”

Of the six participants, four of them (Mark, Candy, Kelly, and Daisy) said they had some form of discussion about the Indigenous peoples of Canada. Sarah and Mary stated they did not know about the Indigenous peoples of Canada and hadn't heard about them in their classes.

Participation in Canadian Society also prepares IGSs for the work culture in Canada. Among the participants, there is vocalization about being able to work in Canada. From helping with living expenses to continuing to work in Canada after they finish their programs, being informed about the work culture and the environment they will be in them was important to the participants. Kelly describes how she would like to have part-time work to help with her living expenses as an IGS.

"How I felt up to update my situation I went in and then uh, like for the registration for classes for financial matter for the funding on. So, for the part time job that supports a

lot and there is, they give me some, not somebody one part time job which can help me to cover the living expenses here."

Kelly also talks about wanting to live and work in Canada after graduation and how to prepare for a job.

"I I really like studying in here and I also plan to stay and what I graduate. So, I would love to learn more about like, uh, uh, work culture, um, company culture uh, some like a principle or some something that is distinguished for Canadian when I work here at cetera, so have a the best preparation for job."

Candy describes how she doesn't feel ready to enter the Canadian workforce. She acknowledges that it is only her first semester, and she's just starting her employment journey, but she would like to know what employers look for in Canada as well as how to network with those in her field.

"To enter the Canadian workforce, I do not feel fully prepared yet because it's only the first semester and I'm observing for the like, you know, for initial starting jobs like there are minimum requirements, but if you really want to be in a job in your field where you are studying, you need to definitely get some advance. Like you know networking. I would say, like you know, one thing like you know network information like where can we work, what are the options like you know what? What does the employer look as a skill? I would definitely want to know like you know."

Participation does not equate to assimilation. A democratic education exposes students to learn and grow in their environment. Presenting the idea that involvement in a society one lives in is assimilation can have negative impacts on IGSs.

International Student Social Growth

Social growth is an important aspect of academics; it can't be denied that they do not go together (Soland and Sandilos, 2021). Learning does not only take place in the classroom, but as an IGS, it is important to make connections with those around them. Candy explains how education should be a "holistic" environment, and social and emotional well-being is important to academics as it can impede it.

"Social, emotional well-being and other social aspects severely impact. Like you know, the way you are achieving your academic or you're doing your academic work. I personally like you know at the mid of the courses I was feeling a bit homesick and a bit struggling as well. So, I think like you know what I did was I reached out to like you know, my classmates who we we met outside of the like. You know classrooms and I think that day was really nice for me so I do feel like you know. If you are not feeling well and you're struggling, and you're only focusing on academic and not your social-emotional well-being so that definitely is going to hamper your grades. So, you must find out, like you know other things. So, education should give like a holistic, like aim for holistic development, right? So that's."

Kelly also discusses how social aspects of a university experience is important to academics, social well-being, and homesickness.

"On some events, social events, social activity from the the the university, make them like help them too easily integrate into the new culture the new country, so each determine how, how, how, how good they study like a they don't need to worry about anything they feel they feel like a still living and they feel happy living in another country and all those things."

Mark explains how he wants a "study abroad experience and", that there is more to social interactions than professor-students and student-student. He would like to make friends with people who may not be in his classes.

“In class absolutely it is real experience. It's really experienced, and you can I I have. I have mentioned that you you can Office hours face to face with the professor and classmate you can make friends that the real meaning of studying abroad I mean not sure after a GPA, not after graduate diploma. Experienced I mean uh, study abroad experience.”

Daisy describes how not being on campus has discouraged her from looking for events in an online setting. Being busy with her studies has prevented her from seeking these opportunities.

“If it's already in campus, then maybe it's just natural. If there's an event you just go and see, or you just walk by something and you can stop and you know, engage something. But if you're at home that you have to take extra time to to, you know, then it's yeah. So I just avoid where I just because I have to focus on something else.”

IGSs are not only here to learn academics but also to learn about the place they live in. It is under the assumption that international students are here temporary, but that is not always true. Statistics Canada (2021) has stated that 58% of international students remain in Canada after graduation. Graduate programs can run between 2-5 years, depending on the program an IGS is enrolled in. Universities should provide IGSs with a platform to have a democratic education that provides them with the resources to participate and grow.

Theme: Course Structure

Authentic Assessment

Assessment, where real-world application and thinking are applied, is described as an authentic assessment. Wiggins (1990) defines authentic assessment as "assessment is authentic when we directly examine student performance on worthy intellectual tasks" The Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning at the Indiana University Bloomington states an assessment is authentic if:

1. Is realistic.
2. requires judgment and innovation.
3. asks the student to “do” the subject.
4. replicates or simulates the contexts in which adults are “tested” in the workplace or in civic or personal life.
5. assesses the student’s ability to efficiently and effectively use a repertoire of knowledge and skills to negotiate a complex task.
6. allows appropriate opportunities to rehearse, practice, consult resources, and get feedback on and refine performances and products

Providing IGSs, the opportunity to learn through authentic assessment is important to their academic growth. Sutadji. et. al. (2021) states, "to make it effective; assessments must be active and authentic in online education". To bridge the gap, between in class learning and online learning, and create educative experiences; authentic assessment is important to be implemented.

Candy elaborated on her experiences with authentic assessment. She compares her "interactive assessment" to a traditional assessment. She describes her experiences in detail in how different forms of assessment kept her engaged in her learning.

“I have both like you know, effect like you know both experiences when I was interacting, and I I have also experienced when I was not like you” know not that much interactive.”

Candy gives an example of one of her courses which provided an authentic assessment:

“I think like you know I'm going to give in one course because the course is actually like about like how to integrate ICT into learning. So, in that course I think a professor gives us a very different kind of projects like say for example making infographic and we have to critique.”

“I think we had more opportunity to like, you know, interact with peers because as a person I am actually giving feedback to another person's like work and also like you know the first few of the lectures he shared and then he distributed topics among them among us and we have to present and also we have to lecture questions for discussions and and then we need to also give summary. So, I feel in these course structure when it's a mixed method.”

Candy advocates for professors and faculty to provide more authentic assessments in the classroom.

“I feel for online classes how to make the interactions more engaging. You definitely need to think innovative ways. So, there are other options like you know, using Padlet are probably, or I don't know. Like you know, using whiteboard so different activities can be given. So, any as I instructor I feel you really need to like you know utilize

those components so not all the classes should be designing only like delivery amount. That's what I felt.”

Candy's experience with authentic assessment compared to traditional assessment describes how authentic assessment can provide real-world experiences to students in an online setting.

Opportunities to learn in assessment

Being their first time studying at a Western University, participants in this study have not had the opportunity to complete assignments completely in English. “Meaningful learning can be significantly enhanced if students were given an opportunity to personalize their learning through assessments” (Kulasegaram and Rangachari,2018). They have also come from educational backgrounds where tests and exams are the only formats of assessment they have had experience with. Mark has stated how in his educational experiences, he has only had final exams and being in a Canadian university has allowed him to perform different assessment. Through various forms of assessment Mark experienced educative experiences by reflecting on his assessments.

“We have a lot of assessment that makes sense to commit yourself to reflect. So definitely important. I really enjoyed that”

Candy has also described her experiences with her assessment. She describes two different experiences, one educative and one miseducative. One experience she has where her professor gave the students the opportunity to submit ten discussion board posts with the best eight grades to be reflected in the final grade. This allowed Candy to use the feedback to better structure her answers without losing out on achieving a higher grade.

“In his course there was a very good thing. Like you know, we had 10 discussion boards, so we need to interact with those discussion boards and out of 10 eight best marks he's going to get.”

Candy also describes her experience with writing an academic paper in English for the first time. She describes a professor who was using the scaffolding method with their students and providing opportunities to gradually write a paper. She found this to be beneficial, accommodating. Whereas her experience with another professor who is giving them a final paper due at the end of the semester is causing her concern over how difficult it is going to be.

"I felt like you know the professor who gave us three papers and we were building it gradually. That was useful as opposed to one professor we have. We have only written like you know our briefing notes and everything we have not written a paper. But at the end, like you know he has given us a paper. It's pretty heavy so I feel this is going to be difficult. So, this is, uh, skills, you need to build on within time."

Kelly discusses how being able to work in a group during her assignments allowed her to learn from her peers during the discussions they had.

“Diverse ideas and sharing are really interesting in the way that I can. I can have an overview about what people think. We have different interpretations on one topic and one problem, so sometime it's a it's like wow, I have never talked about that up, so we can. Uhm, combine different ideas so it's great things.”

As seen by Mark, Kelly and Candy, IGSs are in a new academic environment. Not only do they need to learn the content from their classes but also to learn the formatting of

their assignments as well as how to perform their assignments. IGSs need to attain the skills to perform their assessments.

Interactive Course Tools

Course structures of online learning need to take a different approach to use tools to provide interactive and engaging learning. Schroeder-Moreno (2010) states that "faculty not only must learn new technologies but consider effective instructional strategies to enhance student learning and interactions in a virtual environment "Using technology in online learning is not enough to create an interactive environment for the course. It is important to utilize the technology by using technology to create educative experiences. In an article by Tsai, Ku and Campbell (2021), they describe students as "more engaged in learning when their instructors provide diverse opportunities to interact, communicate, and discuss materials online ."With the participants, there have been mixed thoughts on how course tools were applied during their learning.

Kelly and Daisy described their experiences as lacking in interactive aspects. They described their experiences with course activities. Kelly discusses how in her classes, the only interactive course tool she had in her classes is discussion forums.

“We didn't have a lot of course activity except for the discussion forum.”

Kelly describes her experience with her asynchronous class as a self-study where she reads articles and texts on her own as the basis of the course.

“With the asynchronous we haven't received any lecture from the professor are mostly self-study. Read their texts, their article and write by our own. So, it's just one way like getting knowledge.”

Daisy suggests her professors should explore different avenues when developing interactive course tools and implement different pedagogies.

“I think as teachers we have to explore different learning technology tools that can best be integrated and to be utilized. And with the combination of pedagogical yeah pedagogies, and our teaching purpose and then so during the course, it's very important to engage students.”

Course structures need to implement authentic assessment, provide opportunities to learn in assessment, as well as employ interactive course tools. It can be seen from Candy's experience how having the opportunity to partake in an authentic assessment through her “integrating ICT into learning” assessment. She also had an opportunity to learn in assessment through being able to scaffold a paper. Her experience with how her courses were structured shaped her learning experience.

Theme: Varied Student Experience

Attitude of Adaptability

IGSs have hurdles in their way when moving to a new country and learning a new academic system as well as culture. Not only do IGSs need to navigate their academic life, but they also need to navigate their personal life from student visas, finding accommodations and insurance, as well as situating their families who may have come with them. The onset of COVID-19 created more obstacles to navigating these aspects of their journey. Omorodion et al. (2021) state that "the adaptability of international students depends on individual adaptability, which is a consequence of their class, race, the years of schooling, and socio-economic characteristics." Being ready to adapt to online learning, hybrid learning, and the uncertainties that COVID-19 has initiated over the past two years is important to the success of IGSs in their programs (Abbacan-Tuguic, 2021). Mark

describes how he adapts to learning in a new academic environment. He describes how working hard and committing to a daily schedule allows him to focus on his work.

"If totally different experience, I never been so if you're really challenging for me to adapt the environment, I have to work hard. I have to. But watch a lot of youtube and have to finish my assessment daily it was really challenging. But in China we don't have a lot of work that we just focus on the class and focus on next class".

Daisy also has a similar experience with adapting to her new environment of online learning and working hard, along with being proactive with her time management.

"I don't really think there's much difference between offline or online. I think the great much more. Yeah, it depends on how much effort you put in your study. So as long as you work hard you will get good grades."

"Another side [online learning] is actually it's very easy to get distracted, get interrupted by family members by my daughter. Just as so there's something, yeah, yeah, yeah, this is another thing that sometimes it's it's easy to get disrupted, yeah, so it's really you know it takes some effort to really manage my time. You know, to work and to work on assessment, study, or family time. So that is one thing."

Kelly describes what motivates her to adapt when it comes to group projects. She wants to maintain her GPA to allow for her to still be eligible for her scholarships and funding.

"We are like really dedicated to our group project everyone study the PhD thanks to the scholarship so they have to maintain their great as high as possible to keep the scholarship and funding. So, we work our best. We make the best."

There are various reasons an IGS would be willing to adapt. In the case of Daisy, being here with her family requires her to adapt differently than Kelly, who is motivated to adapt to group projects due to her scholarships.

Learning with Domestic Students

At the University of Windsor, the Faculty of Education has an international cohort for their Master of Education (M.Ed.) program. In this cohort, international students have separate classes with only international students as well as a few classes where they are mixed with domestic students as well. The participants' described learning with domestic students to be educative as well as miseducative. A study done by Buckner et al. (2021), "Higher education institutions creates the academic and social environments in which their international students live and learn: they are undoubtedly aware of the many challenges, including racism, that international students face and have both the responsibility and the resources to respond ."From the participants in this study, there have been mixed responses to the international cohort M.Ed. Program. Mark describes how he would like to learn from his domestic peers about the local culture.

“You can learn from different culture because I know you this is I mean uh, for in studying experienced that is really important. You can learn some culture from local, you can know.”

Whereas Sarah says, she rather be with only international students because of her language abilities. She states that not being a native speaker of English, it is difficult for her to keep up in classroom conversations with domestic students.

“More international, more international. Because I'm in the International Cohort, most of the students are international just. Some courses have four or three domestic like the English speaking.”

“We are not English speaking person so we do not have a high level speaking skills so more so I prefer to do the more international students because. Because we have a maybe the same level, or for English speaking skills or writing skills. So, because I think yeah, most of the English-speaking students so they speak very quickly. Sometimes we cannot catch up or what they heard say, and sometimes sometimes they are more engaged in the closet because before we.”

Daisy has also brought up concerns about language and being among domestic students.

“I think that domestic students they are more freely or more. Uh, yeah, just casually speaker. Maybe language proficiency is another. You know problem because they're they're very fluent their native speakers, so they need less time to to process, and they can just speak up for international students. Sometimes we we need more time to to process to prepare what we want to say. And it seems that we would take a long time. And sometimes the professor may feel that while you're not participating or somebody else has already. You know, being the first one, so then no, much not. Not that many opportunities left for others, yeah.”

Language has been a concern for both Sarah and Daisy. In the study by Schwieter, Jackson and Ferreria (2021), they describe the experience of "integrating oneself into another language and culture can be challenging for newcomers and can bring about varying degrees of acculturative stress, especially at the beginning of the sojourn. Several

issues explain why this transition may be difficult for some learners. For instance, low additional language proficiency levels and limited intercultural competence might cause difficulties initially, affecting other variables important to the adaptation processes, such as interaction with the host community and appreciation of a new culture.” The mixed response from the participant indicates that language and cultural differences may play a role in international graduate experiences.

CHAPTER 5 Discussion

Two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, students and educators alike are still navigating the world of online learning. The participants in this study shared their experiences as IGSs (IGS) through a narrative inquiry to provide insight and a platform to share and elaborate on their journeys. As a researcher and an educator, I knew that any student group from a diverse background with groups that include marginalized people needed their voices to be heard. This study has shown me that not only do we need to listen to IGS but also act. IGS need their concerns and needs not only to be implemented in the classroom and the faculty of education but through policy at the university level.

Online learning in this capacity, where the students are mandated to take courses online, needs extended awareness of the literature. Online learning and the diverse experiences of IGS, such as their cultural variations and experiences with education in their home countries. Insight and guidance on how to improve their classroom and learning experiences for online learning of IGS were provided throughout the interviews with the participants. The participants were able to voice their concerns and the benefits of being in an online setting as an IGS.

Through a narrative inquiry, I was looking for the truths of my participants and how their truths could capture a purpose and come together to create a common truth. IGSs is not a term that should be taken to homogenize a group of people, but rather to apply an understanding of the diversity of IGSs when using the term. “Narrative research is increasingly used in studies of health, education, and social sciences practice for its unique value in representing social phenomena in their full richness and complexity as well as providing a particularly generative source of knowledge about meaning individuals ascribe

in their daily social contexts” (Ntinda, 2019). Narrative inquiry “is viewed as a direct product of their previous experiences and is “Honouring lived experience as a source of important knowledge and understanding” (Haydon, Browne and van der Riet, 2018). Using a narrative inquiry as to the applied methodology provided the opportunity to expand on the meaning of IGSs by providing each participant with a platform to share their truth.

To provide the platform for the participants to provide their experiences throughout online learning in a global pandemic; the research question and sub-questions were created to provide an opportunity for “voice as the participant” and to provide a platform to “disrupt those systems of power and privilege that serve to marginalize” (Ashby, 2011). The interview questions reflect the research questions to provide a connection between the purpose of the study and the information provided by the participants.

Main Research Question: *In response to the emergency transition due to the COVID-19 pandemic, what are the perceptions of a group of IGSs in a Graduate Education program at the University of Windsor regarding their educative or miseducative online experiences?*

When describing their online experiences, the participants described their experiences through the lens of a group of people in a new academic and social environment. Learning to adapt and be flexible with the current situation of being an IGS had to become second nature to these participants as they navigated an academic world of uncertainty. A positive aspect of online learning for these IGSs was the hyflex/hybrid model offered through the Master of Education. As was said before, IGSs are not a homogenous group of people; each participant has their own set of needs that need to be addressed. Online learning helped provide each of these participants with a solution to a challenge they may be having.

Student permits were a concern among some participants as they were delayed due to COVID-19, but they did not have to miss out on attending class as they were online.

Participants also found online learning to be convenient as it provided them with the opportunity to settle into their new homes without having to navigate transportation and weather conditions. Convivence for IGS sparked my curiosity as a researcher, educator, and fellow graduate student. The online culture was important to the participants, as IGS who are new and are still navigating their new environment having an online culture provided them with a community. This community could provide support through peers and develop friendships. Being in a new country and not having access to in-person interactions, an online culture provided them with the opportunity to go from being isolated in a room and not having a support system to being able to express and share their experiences with friends. They wanted to have experiences that were important to the participants in in-person classes provided to be translated online. There was a disconnect in the participant's classes as many of their classmates did not participate in class discussions, language barriers, and knowledge of technology. There were also discrepancies in how students were expected to participate and perform in an online class setting. All participants have not participated in an online class structure before COVID-19. Along with navigating online culture in their classes, there was a learning curve in navigating a new academic culture here in Canada among the participants.

Online learning also created a gap in social interactions among the participants and their classmates, which led to feelings of isolation and loneliness. Among the participants, one participant did not see the need for social interactions in their classes as they saw their time at the faculty of education as a time for academics only. IGSs come from different

cultures and different social norms, which would provide a reason why the responses would be different when it comes to social interactions and isolation. It is important to understand the natural curiosity of the participants as IGSs, and their inkling to learn and discover their new environment. Social interactions with their peers would allow them to build connections which would provide them insight into their new environment.

Research Question: *Drawing upon the voices and experiences of international students, do Canadian post-secondary institutions, like the University of Windsor, actualize their commitment to democratic and equitable education in their programs?*

IGSs depend on the university they attend to provide them with a democratic and equitable education during their time at their institution. As a country that prides itself on its Multicultural Act of Canada. The participants' first interactions with Canada are through their university and peers. The participants have been vocal in their intent to learn about Canadian culture and people.

Canada's history with Indigenous people is a history that should be shared with IGSs who have come to learn about the Canadian education system. The participants were not familiar with the Indigenous peoples of Canada and their history. They described uncomfortable feelings when the topic was brought up in their classes. Some of the participants described how they do not speak of topics that may be deemed political in their home countries. The University of Windsor has asserted its values and beliefs about truth and reconciliation with the Indigenous community to its students. It has the duty to provide IGS with the experiences to learn about truth and reconciliation.

Participation in Canadian society for the participants meant learning about the work culture here in Canada. Some participants have expressed working and living in Canada after they finish their studies. The participants describe not being ready to enter the Canadian workforce as they are unaware of the work dynamic with employers. Democratic education should allow the students to grow in all aspects of their lives.

Social growth was a concern among the participants; being in an online environment has caused social and emotional well-being to be impacted. Making connections with their peers outside the classroom is important for their social growth as IGSs. IGSs deal with homesickness and loneliness; this can affect their social and emotional well-being, affecting their grades. Experiences as an IGS are also important for their social growth during their time at the faculty of education. The participants craved educative experiences from their academic careers to provide a well-rounded education.

Research Question: *Reflecting on the current policies and visions statements of the Faculty of Education Graduate program, did international students find these policies to be responsive and supportive to their social and intellectual needs?*

Creating a relationship between IGSs and faculty was the main priority for their interactions with the faculty of education. It was important for the participants to be able to approach and communicate with faculty. Personalization of conversation has helped the participants as they were able to learn and apply the advice and knowledge of their professors. The participants have shown that an inclusive environment through educative experiences for IGSs is necessary for their social and intellectual needs. Personalized interactions have been stated multiple by the participants and create a sense of community among IGSs and their professors.

Constructive and timely feedback was important to the participants as IGSs benefit from feedback on assignments as they are new to Canadian academic culture. IGSs are unique when it comes to the effort and dedication they have put into their academic careers, such as leaving their home country, learning a foreign language, and bringing their families as well as financially. There have been mixed answers from the participants regarding feedback. Some professors have provided timely and constructive feedback, some just offered timely feedback in the form of a grade with no feedback, and others waited until the end of the semester to provide feedback. The participants found this to be a miseducative experience to them, as constructive and timely feedback is important to their academic growth here at a Canadian university.

As the participants were new to the Canadian academic culture, resources from the faculty of education to IGSs were deemed an educative experience. The participants described their experiences; both educative and miseducative, navigating the University of Windsor site for information regarding their program requirements and other important information. Technology literacy also played a role in how an IGS could or could not find the information they may need. Designated advisors for IGSs were brought up by one of the participants as a resource they would find useful. The participants would utilize resources dedicated to IGSs and their unique needs.

Research Question: *What course ideologies, structures, and practices support international students' engagement and participation. Specifically, what assignments and course experiences impacted student participation and engagement?*

Providing the IGSs with authentic assessments provides IGSs with the opportunity to apply their knowledge to a real-world situation that they might not experience naturally

with online learning. The participants describe their educative experience with authentic assessments; and their miseducative experiences with assessments that did not incorporate an authentic assessment. The participants said that they performed and learned more through their assessments that provided authentic assessment opportunities. It provided them with more opportunities to interact with their peers and receive feedback from their professors.

The participants are all new to Canadian academic culture as they have no academic experience before their current programs. They are not only learning about academics and topics related to education; they are also learning how to perform assessments that may be unfamiliar to them. IGSs need the opportunity to learn the new material taught to them in class and apply that material to their assessments.

There is a lack of interactive course tools provided online to IGSs. The participants described how their experiences with their courses were miseducative due to interactive course tools not being used as an advantage. Interactive course tools can be used to support the many needs and concerns of IGSs and provide effective learning in an online setting.

The participants have shown adaptability and flexibility with the current situation of COVID-19 and the challenges it has brought to their academic careers. The participants describe how working hard and time management have provided them with techniques to adapt to the ever-changing academic world.

CHAPTER 6 Conclusion and Future work

When starting this study at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the summer of 2020, I did not believe I would be here today, in the spring of 2022, writing the study's conclusion with the COVID-19 pandemic still ongoing with multiple variants. This reflects how this pandemic has shifted our reality into a "new academic normal ". The same could be said for the participants of this study. Five of the six participants started their Master of Education in the Fall of 2021 with a hybrid model. The university predicted that the Winter 2022 semester would be in-person classes. With the COVID-19 pandemic creating uncertainty in every aspect of life, including academics, IGSs have learned to work with uncertainty. Uncertainty about their classes, student permits and their educative experiences.

Reflexivity

Before this study, I saw my father and myself as the same. We both had the opportunity to be educated in Canada. During the study, I went in with this notion that the participants and I were the same in terms of being from an immigrant background and studying in Canada. I was wrong; for once, in my academic career, I was different. I was the one who was born in Canada and had experience with a western education my whole life. I was, for once, in the position of privilege. I was not familiar with the experiences of the participants. Although they were from minority groups, just as I was from a minority group, their lived experiences were different. One of the participants asked me if I was an international student, and I replied no. They continued to ask questions about how I came to speak "good English," and I explained my own life, but it was at that

moment I knew I walked in with a perspective that needed to be changed. I thought we were the same, but we weren't.

I went through school seeking out other children of immigrants because I related to them. It didn't matter where their parents immigrated from because we had a collective Canadian culture and an immigrant parent upbringing to bring us together. Similar experiences with our parents, the weight of being successful because our parents gave up everything, they knew to give us everything we had. The participants didn't have my experience; they were living my father's life. I remember one time my dad told me, "I wish I was born here," and I thought, "well, you went to school here; what does it matter?", It did. I heard the first account of the experiences, stories, and journeys IGS takes. I see what 30 years of work and dedication have brought to my family through my father. I did not see the sacrifice that my father had to make to give me my life.

Future Work

The education system has constantly been told to adapt. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that adaptability is our greatest tool. Educators have shown their dedication to their field by constantly adapting and modifying their courses to provide students with the best experiences during online learning. The world after the pandemic is here to stay but has also reminded us of the world's uncertainties. We may see ourselves in future pandemics or other "unprecedented times," but we cannot compromise learning principles.

Policy Analysis

Policy considerations for IGS and online learning should be reanalyzed and implemented by post-secondary institutions. Toquero (2020) states with the onset of the

COVID-19 pandemic, "There is an increasing interest in policy-makers and practitioners worldwide regarding the effectiveness of interactive remote learning approaches and conditions ."Emergency policy and recommendations were implemented as emergency contingencies. Still, the time has come to provide educators and students with permanent policies that come from research about the experiences of educators and their students.

A policy analysis of the University of Windsor's current online learning and IGS policies would provide the next steps for this research project. Through the data collected in this study regarding IGS and their needs for online learning, policy analysis can "identify current or impending problems, create solutions, and evaluate other proposed solutions. Once a problem is recognized, researchers might attempt to determine its causes. They may then analyze how various policy ideas and proposals could affect the problem and suggest solutions" (Blanchard, 2007). Online learning policy needs to reflect all students who are enrolled in online courses, the University of Windsor has a duty to implement IGS concerns and needs in their policies.

Recommendations for the Faculty of Education

The following recommendations would be valuable for the faculty of education to implement for their IGSs.

Academic Advising: Academic Advising for IGSs would provide the opportunity for IGSs at the faculty of education; to designate a person who is knowledgeable and qualified to help with the unique needs and concerns of IGSs. The participants have described how helpful and responsive the faculty of education program secretary was in providing information and resources. However, they felt like they were being a burden by constantly reaching out. The participants also described how they had to be proactive by looking for

information online and through other resources on campus to find a solution to their needs. The needs of IGSs need to be addressed through "dedicate resources that specifically enhance and support the needs of international students" (Lau, Garza and Garcia, 2019). A designated academic advisor for IGSs at the faculty of education would be an invaluable resource.

Implementing the "Co-design" Learning Principle

Paul Gee has implemented video game designers' approaches to learning. Gee (2004) describes how a "good video game" designer will implement different strategies to "make worlds where people can have meaningful new experiences, experiences that their places in life would never allow them to have or even experiences no human being has ever had before. These experiences have the potential to make people smarter and more thoughtful." This same design approach can be applied to a classroom environment. By applying the Co-design learning, principal students can be a part of a "buy-in, engaged participation. It is a key part of the motivation. It also means learners must come to understand the design of the domain they are learning to make good choices about how to affect that design" (Gee, 2005).

The participants in the study described how they had experienced a lack of interactive education, authentic assessment, and an underdeveloped online culture. Providing IGS with the opportunity to implement a Co-design learning principle in their learning would provide a space to design their learning. Gee (2005) states that "The whole curriculum should be shaped by the learner's actions and react back on the learner in meaningful ways ."It will also allow these educators to practice developing their

curriculum for their classrooms. A further study to provide ISG in online learning an environment to implement the Co-design learning principle will provide an insight into how IGS in Education graduate programs perceive their education.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Email for Faculty of Education Graduate Office

Hello,

My name is Rana Abduelmula, and I am a master's Student working at the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. I am currently working on my thesis, A Narrative Inquiry: International Education Graduate Students Perceptions of their Online Learning Experiences during Covid-19.

I am emailing regarding the Faculty of Education Graduate office to advertise my research study. If this is accepted, I have attached the Recruitment email that I would like to be sent to the Graduate students (Master and PhD) at the Faculty of Education. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your time,

Rana Abduelmula

Appendix B: Email- Response to participants contacting to participate in research (1st interview)

Hello,

My Name is Rana Abduelmula. I am currently a Master Candidate for the Faculty of Education. Thank you for your interest in participating in this study: A Narrative Inquiry: International Education Graduate Students Perceptions of their Online Learning Experiences during Covid-19.

Attached is the consent form. Included in this form is the Purpose of this study, the procedures, potential risks and discomforts, potential benefits of the study (to the participant and society), compensation for participation, Audio and Video consent, confidentiality, and withdrawal.

I have also attached additional resources for your use. These resources are not directly correlated with the information that will be shared during the study, but resources offered by the University of Windsor to its international students. Hopefully, they are beneficial to you.

The following resources are attached below:

1. International student center Newsletter: <https://www.uwindsor.ca/international-student-centre/290/isc-newsletter>
2. Understanding the International Student Experience Tips Sheet retrieved from ISC website
3. keep.meSAFE Program information sheet retrieved from ISC website

Please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor (Dr. Finney Cherian) if you have any questions regarding the study or the consent form.

When all your questions are answered to your satisfaction and you consent to participating, please sign the consent form, audio form and video form and send it to Rana Abduelmula at:

Thank you for your time,

Rana Abduelmula

Appendix C: Email- Contacting to set up a time for first interview

Hello,

My Name is Rana Abduelmula. I am currently a Master Candidate for the Faculty of Education. Thank you for your interest in participating in this study: A Narrative Inquiry: International Education Graduate Students Perceptions of their Online Learning Experiences during Covid-19.

I am contacting you to set up a meeting time for the first interview of the study. I am available Monday afternoons, Tuesday mornings and Friday between 12-3 pm. If none of these times work for you, please let me know of time that work for you.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding the study.

Thank you for your time,

Rana Abduelmula

Appendix D: First Interview Questions

Introduction Script:

Hello, my name is Rana Abduelmula. I will be conducting the interview today. As mentioned in the email I am a master candidate at the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. I am currently working on my thesis; A Narrative Inquiry: International Education Graduate Students Perceptions of their Online Learning Experiences during Covid-19. I would like to start by thanking you for participating in this study.

Do you have any questions?

During this interview, I will be asking questions about your experiences as an international graduate student taking online classes during Covid-19. This interview is going to be 1-1.5 hours long. The information from this study will be used for future recommendations and to provide insight. All information disclosed today will be confidential. All identifying information will be deidentified. As a token of participation, you will be compensated with a \$15 gift card to Starbucks.

Do you have any questions?

It is recommended that you be seated in a room or area alone, where you will not be disturbed or where you can be overheard. I will also be in a room alone to protect your confidentiality. It is also recommended that the call history be cleared after the interview and to clear your browser history.

Do you have any questions?

You may withdraw from the interview at any time during the interview. You may skip over any questions you do not want to answer. You do not have to state any names, course codes/names or any other identifying information if you do not wish to. Any identifying information will be deidentified.

Do you have any questions?

All information collected during this interview will be audio and video recorded. All information will be kept confidential in a password protected file only accessed by the Primary Investigator (Rana Abduelmula). All information will be deidentified by the Primary Investigator. You will have the opportunity to read the interview transcripts after they have been deidentified to elaborate and add. You may withdraw your information for two weeks after the first interview has occur. After this time, you will not be able to withdraw information.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Background questions:

1. Are you a masters or PhD student?
2. What year of study are you in?
3. What stream are you in? Administration, Second, curriculum?
4. Are you course based, major paper or thesis?
5. Why did you choose to attend the university of Windsor?
6. Before coming to the university of Windsor, what other degrees have you completed?

7. What is your primary language? What language was used for instruction during your undergraduate degree?
8. How would you describe yourself as a learner? (Explain what a learner is. Visual, auditory, kinesthetic, reading or writing learners)

In response to the emergency transition due to the Covid-19 pandemic; what are the perceptions of a group of international graduate students in Education Graduate program at the University of Windsor regarding their educative or mis educative online experiences?

1. How did you feel about having you all your courses online? Have you taken online classes before the Covid-19 Pandemic?
 - a) If yes, Were any of them at the University of Windsor? How would you describe your experience with online courses before Covid-19? Can you provide examples?
2. What were some of the more memorable (enjoyable) aspects of online learning? How did these memorable (enjoyable) moments shape your online experience?
3. Can you describe any challenges you experienced online? How did these challenges shape your online learning experience?
4. If given a choice for online learning, which do you prefer, in class experiences or online experiences? As an international student, what recommendations would you make for online experiences?
5. Is there anything else you would like to share?

1. How many of your classes were Synchronous (live class) compared to asynchronous (pre-recorded and uploaded)?
2. Effective learning allows for students to share and discuss ideas. Did your online learning experience allow for you to share and discuss ideas with other students? Please provide examples.
3. Did you have group experiences? How would you describe your group experience?
 - a) If yes, please provide an example of a group experience.
4. How would you describe the online communities due to your courses? Were the relationships in these communities supportive of your learning? Can you provide examples?
5. What resources were available to you as a student in an online setting? Were the resources provided in the courses engaging and helpful to understanding the concepts and the issues being discussed weekly? Can you provide an example of resources offered to you?
6. How did the online learning environment impact your participation? Can you provide examples?
7. How did your online experiences influence communication with your professors? Can you give examples of interactions with your professors?
8. How did the professors in your course encourage participation in your course? Can you provide examples?
9. How were your assignments presented and assessed? Did you have any concerns while completing assignments? How did the online experience influence the

assignments you submitted? What influence did online learning have on your grades?

10. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Reflecting on the current policies and visions statements of the Faculty of Education Graduate program; did international students find these policies to be responsive and supportive to their social and intellectual needs?

1. What was the balance of international students to domestic students in your classes?

a) If international students only, would you have preferred a balance of both?

Explain why.

2. How is learning in an online setting where the instruction language is not your first language?

3. Describe the types of social interactions occurring in your online education?

4. In Effective Learning, social interactions are critical, how did online learning impact opportunities inside and outside course activities?

5. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Drawing upon the voices and experiences of international students do Canadian post-secondary institutions, like the University of Windsor actualize their commitment to democratic and equitable education in their programs?

1. Did you feel that your concerns and needs were meet? How would you describe the support for your concerns and needs from the Graduate department at Faculty of

Education? Were there any problems or concerns that the administration or professors assisted you with? Were you satisfied with their support?

2. Have you ever interacted with the international student center or any other service on campus? If yes, please share your experience.
3. What improvements would you like to see the University of Windsor's offer to support the learning of international students?
4. What are some resources you would like to see the University of Windsor to offer for international graduate students?
5. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Closing Statement:

I would like to thank you again for participating in this study. The information from this study will be used for future recommendations and to provide insight. All information disclosed today will be confidential. All identifying information will be deidentified. It is recommended that the call history be cleared after the interview and to clear your browser history.

All information collected during this interview was audio and video recorded. All information will be kept confidential in a password protected file only accessed by the Primary Investigator (Rana Abduelmula). All information will be deidentified by the Primary Investigator. You will have the opportunity to read the interview transcripts after they have been deidentified to elaborate and add. You may withdraw your information for two weeks after the first interview has occur. After this time, you will not be able to withdraw information.

Do you have any questions?

Do I have your consent to contact you through email regarding the second interview?

I will be contacting you to set up a time for the second interview. I will also be sending the transcription of this interview for member checking when I contact you for the second interview. Member checking is when you may look over what you have said, and you may elaborate or expand on what you have said. Please note that after two weeks of this first interview, you will not be able to withdraw your information.

Is there a preferred email you would like your compensation forwarded to? Your compensation will be sent as a link to the gift card.

Do you have any questions? Thank you for participating.

Appendix E: Second Interview Questions

Introduction Script:

Hello, my name is Rana Abdueilmula. I will be conducting the interview today. As mentioned in the email I am a master candidate at the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. I am currently working on my thesis; A Narrative Inquiry: International Education Graduate Students Perceptions of their Online Learning Experiences during Covid-19. I would like to start by thanking you for participating in this study.

Do you have any questions?

During this interview, I will be asking questions about your experiences as an international graduate student taking online classes during Covid-19. This interview is going to be 1-1.5 hours long. The information from this study will be used for future recommendations and to provide insight. All information disclosed today will be confidential. All identifying information will be deidentified. As a token of participation, you will be compensated with a \$15 gift card to Starbucks.

Do you have any questions?

It is recommended that you be seated in a room or area alone, where you will not be disturbed or where you can be overheard. I will also be in a room alone to protect your confidentiality. It is also recommended that the call history be cleared after the interview and to clear your browser history.

Do you have any questions?

You may withdraw from the interview at any time during the interview. You may skip over any questions you do not want to answer. You do not have to state any names, course codes/names or any other identifying information if you do not wish to. Any identifying information will be deidentified.

Do you have any questions?

All information collected during this interview will be audio and video recorded. All information will be kept confidential in a password protected file only accessed by the Primary Investigator (Rana Abduelmula). All information will be deidentified by the Primary Investigator. At this time, you will not be able to withdraw information.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

1. What could the University of Windsor advertise to make it appealing to international students?
2. Do you think a permanent hyflex/hybrid model for international students could be beneficial? Explain why or why not?
3. As an education major/teacher, how would you deliver an online class?
4. What suggestions would you make to faculty (professors) for online learning?
5. What other methods do you think professors can use to get students to participate in classes?
6. What types of assignments did you excel in (individual, group, paper, exam)?
7. What assignments did not translate well online?
8. Does making friends in class matter to you? Why or why not?

9. Do you believe social aspects of learning are as important as academic aspects?
10. Have your classes discussed indigenous peoples of Canada?
If yes, can you describe the experience?
If no, do you know about indigenous peoples of Canada? Do you wish you had the opportunity to learn about them?
11. Did you have any miseducative experiences? A miseducative experience is one that stops the growth of an individual in an educational setting.
12. Did you have any educative experiences? An educative experience is one that initiates thought-provoking ideas.
13. Would a designated advisor for international education students be something you support? Why or why not?
14. Do you feel prepared to enter the Canadian work force? What can the University of Windsor offer international students to help prepare them to enter Canadian work force?
15. Do you wish to learn more about Canadian society? Why or why not?
16. Is body language important to you when communicating? How has online learning affected that?
17. How easy was it to find the information you needed regarding classes, events, resources etc.? How do you think the University of Windsor should organize the information for international students?

Closing Statement:

I would like to thank you again for participating in this study. The information from this study will be used for future recommendations and to provide insight. All information disclosed today will be confidential. All identifying information will be deidentified. It is recommended that the call history be cleared after the interview and to clear your browser history.

All information collected during this interview will be audio and video recorded. All information will be kept confidential in a password protected file only accessed by the Primary Investigator (Rana Abduelmula). All information will be deidentified by the Primary Investigator. At this time, you will not be able to withdraw information.

Do you have any questions?

VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Rana Abduelmula

PLACE OF BIRTH: Ottawa, ON

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1995

EDUCATION: Vincent Massey Secondary School, Windsor,
ON, 2013

University of Windsor, B.Sc., Windsor, ON,
2017

University of Windsor, B.Ed., Windsor, ON,
2019

University of Windsor, M.Ed., Windsor, ON,
2022