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THE EXPERIENCES OF IN/EXCLUSION AND MARGINALIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT A PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

by

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ABSTRACT

Globalization of education has reached unprecedented levels as students traverse the globe in search of better standards of higher education. Education is seen as a key factor in acquiring employment and enhancing cultural capital. The impact of student migration on South Africa is significant since 1994 when the birth of our democracy opened up opportunities for students. Although, from a political viewpoint, student access into the country is welcomed, the statutory and institutional practices may be viewed as exclusionary. It is often assumed that access to education equates to acceptance and inclusion, yet the voices of international students are seldom heard. In this qualitative study, grounded in phenomenography, a multimodal approach was adopted to listen to the voices of the participants, so as to obtain information-rich data. By listening to the experiences of the student participants in a study that was framed by the concept of 'voice research,' it was found that while students were granted access to study at a private higher education institution, they faced exclusion and marginalization. However, students are able to build resilience to exclusionary pressures through networking and support of fellow international students. This study concludes with recommendations for private higher education institutions and statutory bodies to become more inclusive. It also highlights the implications of this study for future research on inclusive education.

KEY WORDS:

inclusive education, inclusion/exclusion, marginalization, international students, private higher education, social capital, voice research