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Abstract

Social isolation has been a central focus within international student research, especially with regard to international/host national relations. While a worthy area of study, we argue that the sheer volume of such research stems from the fact that universities' recruitment of foreign students is often justified by the claim that a more international campus will engender cross-cultural skills. The main argument of this paper is that, from this perspective, the endpoint of such sojourns is seen as social, and any lack of interaction becomes problematic. This is an intellectually respectable position, but it is problematic that it has come to dominate the field to such a degree that the students' own experiences and goals are rarely heard. This paper calls for a de-muting of international students in research, so that more research is oriented by their stated priorities. While there has been a shift in this regard around the turn of the millennium, presumptions as to the purpose of educational sojourns remain and continue to colour research. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)