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Christel Adick

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Contemporary societies are strongly influenced by cross-border processes and dynamics. The implications and effects become visible at different levels; the phenomenon of transnational biographies at the micro level, for instance, or the influence of international governmental and non-governmental organisations at the macro level. Also, the mobility of ideas (knowledge transfer) and people (migration, displacement, exchange) across national borders is indicative of developments that are increasingly relevant for educational practices and reforms as well as for education policy and debates on educational theory. These processes lead to globally changed conditions of socialisation and education in childhood, family, school, youth and adult life. Therefore, current education and training systems can no longer be captured by country- or culture-specific perspectives alone, but instead require analyses of their cross-border – geographical, sectoral and historical – linkages, entanglements and dynamics.

This book series invites research and critical debates on the changing conditions of socialisation and education in different countries and cultural contexts, reflecting their historical origins. This includes studies from international comparative perspectives as well as research on transnational developments and the interdependencies of socialisation and education in today's world society.

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Foreword

The following volume addresses the broad field of internationalization of and in higher education, and more specifically, how international students are catered for in the specific host universities they attend. Taking into account the rising numbers of internationally mobile students around the world, studying abroad for a shorter or longer period has become quite normal in the biographies of younger people in our interconnected world society.

The author of this book, Eun Young Park, has herself been a former international student; she has experiences and a background in three different national university systems which motivated her to undertake first hand empirical research in Germany, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America. Beyond these her biographical entanglements, it should be noted that the three countries of this study are not haphazardly chosen, since the Republic of Korea is the major sender of international students, whereas the United States of America and Germany in Europe are the main receivers of these students worldwide.

The author focuses experiences of both sides of the international students' programs: on the one hand, university staff who are in charge of them, in most cases from the international offices of a university; and on the other hand, the international students who receive and experience such programs and support. How are foreign students integrated into their host universities? Who cares for them? Are there special programs devoted to their integration into existing structures and programs? What have international students experienced? Do they feel to receive enough help and attention? – While a broad range of literature explores the expansion of internationalization of higher education in the last decades, identifying main sending and main receiving countries, such research focuses international students and their real-life experiences in host universities, if at all, mainly 'from above'. In contrast, the author of this study looks at conditions on the spot. Her research promises insights 'from below'; thus, enlightening our knowledge about what it really means to be an international student.

This approach adds to existing policy research on different programs of international student exchange and study abroad programs and how these are financed and monitored, by focusing the actors who sustain and live these programs. In her empirical research design, the author submits a comparative study of international students in three countries: Germany, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America. Her qualitative research design includes semi-structured interviews with both sides of the encounter, i.e., experts and staff from different universities as well as international students of such host universities. Illustrative quotations from these interviews give lively impressions on the experiences of organizers as well as participants of existing international student

exchange programs. This way, her research might inspire the remodeling of existing programs on the spot as also the design of future international cooperation projects.

Topic and research presented in this volume fit well into the concept of the book series, which is devoted to the analysis of changing conditions of socialization and education in different countries and cultural contexts. Contemporary societies are strongly influenced by cross-border processes and dynamics. The implications and effects become visible at different levels. These include, for instance, transnational biographies and family relations at the micro-level, international education programs in universities at the meso-level, or educational campaigns of international organizations like UNESCO or UNICEF at the macro-level. All these developments imply some kind of international communication across national borders including the mobility of ideas (knowledge transfer), the mobility of capital (student fees or fundings from international agencies, like those of the ERASMUS Program of the European Union) and the mobility of persons (migration, student exchange). This calls for studies from international comparative perspectives as well as research on transnational developments like in this volume. The book offers comparative experiences from three countries: Germany, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America. It summarizes and analyses insights on how staff and experts in charge of international students handle international exchange programs and how international student participants experience such efforts and evaluate their study and life at these host institutions.

In the process of the internationalization of higher education, a meaningful integration of international students at host universities has gained increasing policy and research interest in the past decades. The book is welcomed to add to our knowledge in these fields of international education.

Ruhr-University of Bochum, June 2024 Christel Adick

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List of Abbreviations

AIEA	Association of International Education Administrators
AStA	The General Students' Committee (in German: Allgemeiner Studierende-nausschuss)
CBIE	Canadian Bureau for International Education
CIEE	Council on International Educational Exchange
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service (in German: Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst e. V.)
DSW	German National Association for Student Affairs (in German: Studierenden-werk)
DZHW	German Centre for Higher Education Research and Science (in German: Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung)
EAIE	European Association for International Education
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
IIE	The Institute for International Education
JSIE	Journal of Studies in International Education
KEDI	Korean Educational Development Institute
MEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NAFSA	National Association of Foreign Student Advisers
NIIED	National Institute of International Education of Ministry of Foreign Affairs
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
RA	Resident Assistant
SEVIS	Student and Exchange Visitor Information System
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

List of Tables and Figures

1 Introduction

Over the last few decades looking across borders has become a central aim for every university[1] and on the basis of this idea, one can witness that the acceleration of networks between universities across national borders has been in progress.[2] Existing individually organized as well as incidental activities such as cooperation in research as well as exchange of academic scholars and students have been replaced by institutionalized and structured initiatives under the influence of the national level and even regional level policies in the context of the internationalization of higher education.[3] Since then, the mobility of students studying at higher institutions across borders has grown drastically and the numbers have increased more than five times in the last thirty years.[4] With regard to the mobility of students studying abroad, it is not surprising to detect the development of services explicitly targeting supporting international students to successfully carry out their studies in host institutions and adapt to new environments.

So far, the indication of positioning and constructing the theoretical conceptualization and related empirical studies in the research area of the internationalization of higher education have been mostly concentrated in North American and West European contexts (ref. Bedenlier et al., 2018, p. 124). With the emergence of the research focus in the late 2000s in the internationalization of higher education which concentrated mainly on "the social and support features" (ibid.), an insight into the daily lives of hosting and supporting international students has drawn much attention from scholars as well as practitioners of the field. Of the actors involved in internationalizing universities and providing such support services, a qualitative research utilizing semi-structured interviews from staff members, especially from international offices, and international students is placed in the foreground of the present research. Selecting the given two groups of actors is the limitation of this study as faculty members and domestic students, who have crucial influence at host institutions could not be covered.

Since most empirical studies are published in English language and not much represented under the "Western dominance" (Bedenlier et al., 2018, p. 128), a comparative perspective was taken to reveal varying "forms of internationalization being experienced in [a non-Western setting] (ibid.)," in this case, the Republic of Korea (henceforward

1 Ref. Kehm & Teichler, 2007, p. 262; Rumbley et al., 2012, p. 2.

2 Ref. Knight, 2004, p. 5.

3 The terms "higher education" and "universities" will be used which can be utilized interchangeably with the terms, "post-secondary education," "tertiary" and "third-level" education depending on the sources and authors in terms of the origin of the country as well as institutions.

4 Ref. OECD, 2012, p. 362.

referred to as "Korea") together with the United States of America (from onwards referred to as "USA") and Germany. Furthermore, from a personal point of view, as a Korean, I had the experience of studying as an international student in both countries, the USA and Germany, as well as, as a domestic student in Korea. Aside from the study experiences in these countries, the language ability to collect data and carry out interviews in each language played a crucial role. Hence, these two factors are the main biographical motivations for narrowing my comparative studies to three countries.

Against such background, the current research is designed to search for the answers to the key question:

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

The purpose is to reveal the varying forms and implementations of social and cultural features of support for international students at the institutional level and the meanings from individual voices who participate in the process. The term *integrated* takes on the working definition applied by Knight (2004) to "denote the process of infusing or embedding" international students so that these students exist as "central, not marginal" at host institutions (p. 12). Moreover, within the progression of the research, by no means should the national context and its policies be overlooked. Finally, this study has its significance in contributing to the gap in the marginalized comparative research field of examining the micro-level of participants of internationalizing universities. In particular, the relevance of the empirical research – based on documents and qualitative research design – lies in detecting such insights of the lived experiences and implications for strategies in which universities can improve their approaches supporting international students "beyond the purely academic and immediate institutional context" (Bedenlier et al., 2018, p. 126).

Delving further into the given research topic, Chapter 2 lays out the developmental spectrum of the concept internationalization of higher education based on literature reviews of the field. Once positioning the current research alongside the developmental process, the gap in the internationalization of higher education research area can be recognized, which this study aims to fill in. The chapter then elucidates the terms and their definitions in the framework of the theory regarding the concept of the internationalization of higher education, in particular by Jane Knight (2004; 2012). The term globalization with reference to internationalization in higher education is clarified as relationships between these two progresses are highlighted. Of the influence of globalization, the current issues regarding internationalizing universities in the USA, Korea and Germany are mentioned.

Based on the theoretical framework defined in the previous section, Chapter 3 continues to explore the national level policies, which emerged to facilitate the internationalization of higher education recognizing the national contexts of the three countries under investigation. Based on the main features of the internationalization of higher education specified for this research, key policies and initiatives taken by (supra-)national

initiatives, which have influenced and driven the internationalizing universities at the institutional level, are summarized mirroring the contemporary issues at hand.

Against the theoretical background and varying national strategic approaches to the development of the internationalization of higher education, Chapter 4 examines the research design employed by shedding light on the role of the researcher and the comparative perspective in the procedures. The rationales for choosing qualitative research and employing semi-structured interviews are stated with the explications of systematic procedures taken, followed by reflective stance on the process.

Chapter 5 proceeds to reveal the steps employed in search for the meaning mirrored through micro-level voices based on the qualitative content analysis (ref. Schreier, 2012). The focus is on analyzing the collected data in a transparent and systematical approach taking into account the aspects of multilingual and multicultural elements as well as the methods taken for transcription. Based on methodical procedures of qualitative content analysis and themeing the data (ref. Saldaña, 2013), main categories are generated and central themes are extrapolated based on the interview data of the two actors (experts and international students). On the basis of the given results, a further step of comparative analysis (ref. Gibbs, 2007) is carried out by drawing attention to the relations of the main categories and corresponding central themes between the two groups of interviewees across three countries. Moreover, text matrices (ref. Schreier, 2012) are employed to display the data to make cross-referencing of the findings possible and such process assists the results to go beyond the descriptive level to an analytical understanding.

The findings based on the central themes and matrices are described with reported quotes to reflect the authentic voices of the individual perspectives in Chapter 6 followed by the analytical discussion points regarding the results in Chapter 7, which exceed the descriptive level. In this section, interpretations of daily experiences and challenges, which experts and international students are confronted with, lead to detecting the issues at hand against the considerations from the given literature. Implications for future practice surface within the procedure of discussing each matter.

Finally, Chapter 8 indicates the contribution this study makes to the field of the internationalization of higher education and future research. A future outlook emphasizes the need for the extension of interrelated potential research investigations on the topic of supporting international students based on the findings, methodological approaches, and limitations that this study entails.

2 The concept of the internationalization of higher education

While the term internationalization "has been used for centuries in political science and governmental relations," internationalization in education has gained its attention as an academic field only during the last decades (Knight, 2004, pp. 8–9). The following chapter provides an overview of the development of the concept internationalization of higher education based on the latest literature reviews. While recognizing the position of current research in the spectrum of the last three decades, the theoretical framework by Knight (2004; 2012) is employed in order to define the border of the corresponding conceptual features, and related literatures are considered that are pertinent to the given research focus. These features include working definitions, rationales, key actors and drivers of internationalizing universities. Moreover, the mobility data of the three countries corresponding to the time of the interview data collection and the current state will be briefly covered followed by indicating several issues concerning internationalizing universities due to the pressure of globalization. These include recruiting international students for profit, "Westernization" of higher education, and implementation of English as a medium for instruction when internationalizing higher education systems.

2.1 Emergence of the concept and its evolving trend

When referring to the starting point of global aspects of universities, "[m]any publications on the internationalisation of higher education refer back to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period" (Streitwieser & Klabunde, 2015, p. 41) indicating the European educational development. In this period,

> *"the journey was 'to a university city [in search for] learning, friends, and leisure'"* (de Ridder-Symoens, 1992 in ibid.; emphasis added).

This statement is highlighted in particular as this research aims to lead back to this statement alongside the fundamental idea of studying across the borderlines outside of one's realm.

With the reference from the statement above, the historical roots of the internationalization of higher education is found in *The SAGE Handbook of International Higher Education*. The first two chapters primarily deal with the origin of internationalizing universities in Europe and how "[h]igher education in the United States was based on European influences" (Rumbley et al., 2012, p. 4). According to Rumbley et al., "[t]he main areas of international academic attention in that period were the individual mobility

of a small group of well-to-do and academically qualified students to the top centers of learning in the world" (ibid.). Along similar lines, though less widely known due to limited publications in English,

> "[i]t may be inferred that Korea had already experienced [the internationalization of higher education] in various forms and contents at the individual, university, and government levels before the term [internationalization of higher education] officially appeared in the academic world, because the structure and development of the Korean [higher education] system have historically been greatly influenced by the political and economic effects of the surrounding great powers. Before the twentieth century, Korea had long been influenced by China and was subsequently impacted by Japan and the United States over the course of the twentieth century. During the Japanese colonial period (1910–1945), Japan sought to transplant the Japanese university system to Korea. During the US occupation (1945–1948), the United States transferred its [higher education] system to Korea. Since the establishment of a nativist government (1948), Korea has organized and changed the Korean [higher education] system again, based on the American model" (Yeom, 2019, p. 18).

Review of literature

Leaving the point of origins of the internationalization of higher education and coming back to the current state in focus, as noted previously, "[i]t was only in the 1980s that the internationalisation of higher education became a strategic process" (de Wit, 2001, p. vi). Beforehand, single initiatives or varying programs were enacted, the terms were named based on "specific activities," i.e., "study abroad, exchange mobility, multicultural education or area studies" (ref. de Wit, 2013 in Streitwieser & Klabunde, 2015, p. 43; de Wit, 1997, p. 4). The term, *international education*[5] has been utilized before the internationalization of higher education surfaced in organized forms after World War II first and most eminently in the USA, then followed by Germany in the 1980s within the European regional influence and then in Korea from the mid-1990s.

In the beginning phase, researchers largely focused on conceptualizing the term internationalization in education as a theory and detecting as well as classifying various thematic fields. The pioneers of this new field are de Wit (1997), Scott (2000), and Knight (2004). While de Wit (1997) analyzes the theoretical progress and research methods of internationalization, Scott (2000) relates the development of internationalization in the light of globalization. In addition, Jane Knight (2004) conceptualizes the definitions, rationales and, approaches of internationalization at not only a national but also an institutional level.

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5 De Wit (1997), in his article "Studies in international education: A research perspective," defines the meaning and the developmental process in the area of educational research (p. 1). Within that context, the term, international education is primarily employed "in the field of internationalizing higher education" by "[t]he Institute for International Education (IIE), NAFSA: Association of National Educators, and the Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA) in the USA; the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) in Canada; and the European Association for International Education (EAIE) in Europe" (pp. 4–5).

First of all, the overview of existent studies on the internationalization of higher education can be found in Kehm and Teichler's (2007) literature review. Given that the literature review provides a wide-ranging outline of most of the core and existing literature from the beginning of the academic discipline, it is reasonable to provide their findings and indicate the direction of this current research. Based on the literature review from the mid-1990s until 2006, the authors found that "internationalization in and of higher education is regarded as something positive and important," in which every university is at the forefront of including the international vision in its mission statements or profiles.[6] In their main findings, the authors distinguished seven "thematic landscapes"[7] after "screening a broad range of publications of the past 10 years" (ibid., p. 264) and noted the fact that these areas were being broadened and researched (ref. ibid., p. 269). In terms of methodologies and approaches in the thematic areas, Kehm and Teichler (2007) detected a considerable number of case studies including diverse programs, institutions, actors, and countries (ref. ibid., p. 266). These case studies depend on interviews or small survey samples from international students in institutions or classrooms, which cover mostly the students' individual perceptions on provided offers by host universities (ref. ibid., p. 268).

In addition, continuous literature reviews have been in existence, e.g., Adams and de Wit (2010) and de Wit et al. (2013). Nevertheless, the most recent comprehensive literature review by Bedenlier et al. (2018) reveals the developmental trends and focus of the internationalization of higher education based on the most distinguished *Journal of Studies in International Education* (JSIE[8]), which was first published in 1997. The given scientific journal marks a "milestone both for the consolidation of internationalization as a research field on its own within higher education research and for the dissemination of research on the topic" (ibid., p. 109). This literature review analyzed the titles and abstracts of 406 articles of JSIE from 1997 until the first issue in 2016 and identified four main evolving trends. They are

1. Delineation of the field (1997–2001): As the title suggests, this first phase focuses on indicating the boundary of the research area by "clarify[ing] the meaning and role of internationalization within higher education" (ibid., p. 118).
2. Institutionalization and management of internationalization (2002–2006): In the second phase of the development, the emphasis was on implementation at the institutional level under the influence of "(economic) *globalization*" (ibid., p. 122).

6 Ibid., p. 262. Quote and the profile information.

7 Ibid., p. 264. 1) Mobility of students and academic staff 2) Mutual influences of higher education on each other 3) Internationalization of the substance of teaching, learning, and research 4) Institutional strategies of internationalization 5) Knowledge transfer 6) Cooperation and competition 7) National and supranational policies as regarding the international dimension of higher education.

8 The given journal was "published by the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) in cooperation with the European Association for International Education (EAIE) [and] is a marking point, both for its scholarly and global perspective, and its ability to position the study in international education in a specific place and platform within the broad field of educational research" (de Wit, 1997, p. 1).

3. Consequences of internationalization: student needs and support structures (2007–2011): The primary focus is on the social features of coping with "diversity, intercultural relationships, and social interactions" (ibid., p. 123).
4. Moving from institutional to transnational context of internationalization (2012–2016): Together with the social component of addressing students' needs through support structures, cultural and language elements are brought to view in supporting international students as well as their family companions to feel connected to campus and have meaningful adjustment (ref. ibid., p. 126). Furthermore, this phase draws attention to transnational education regarding branch campuses and distance learning.

Against the listed phases of the research field of the internationalization of higher education above, the present research can be placed in between the third and the fourth phases of the development, also implying that a phase does not "end" in terms of the general necessity to focus on the aspects given in their temporal development. Referring to the aim of the study (ref. Chapter 1), the individual cases of interviews from experts and international students seek out not only the institutional and managerial perspectives of providing social and cultural support for international students but also investigate "the social and support features" (ibid., p. 124) related to campus life and diversity (ref. ibid., p. 126).

The vital reason for such need for international student support socially, culturally, and emotionally is due to the fact that

> "[e]xperience suggests that simply bringing home and international students together in class and on campus does not necessarily result in meaningful interaction between them or the development of valuable intercultural communication skills and international perspectives" (Leask, 2009, p. 206).

The given circumstances of difficulty of social interaction between international and local students and the need for institutional engagement to initiate meaningful contact as well as encourage meaningful friendship has been discussed in these third and fourth phases. Studies suggesting implications to effectively support international students by "those service international students" have been in existence (Hanassab & Tidwell, 2002, p. 317) as well as identifying "perceived discrimination" faced by international students at host institutions (Hanassab, 2006). Such studies go beyond simply observing the need of international students to adjust at host universities. The attention is drawn to "issues to question how institutions may marginalize international students" by detecting "a range of discriminatory behaviors against international students, not only from members of the local community but also from faculty, administrators and native students" (Lee, 2008, p. 318).

In addition, social connectedness between international and domestic students, faculty members, as well as staff on campus has gained focus (Volet, 2004; Volet & Ang, 2012; Montgomery, 2009; Montgomery & McDowell, 2009). The so-called "internationalized curriculum" (Leask, 2009) in order to enhance opportunities for 'meaningful interaction' of international students and domestic students has been recognized that institutions and their actors, staff and students, have the "responsibility to be proactive in

fostering social cohesion and intercultural learning" (Volet & Ang, 2000 in Volet, 2004, p. 5). Leask (2009) underpins the point that the responsibility of creating "dynamic and supportive institutional culture of internationalization" can be achieved by "strategically us[ing] the formal and informal curriculum" (p. 207). The former includes a "sequenced programme of teaching and learning activities and experiences around defined content areas, topics, and resources" while the latter contains "various extracurricular activities that take place on campus" (ibid.). On the basis of such exemplified theoretical background, the focus on the current study lies in identifying such diverse social support services under the term, *informal curriculum*, namely, the extracurricular activities revolving around contextual university life.

Statement of the research concern

Recognizing the fact that the given literature review was limited to JSIE and "monographs, handbooks, and compilations that have had crucial influence on shaping the field as such could not be considered" (Bedenlier et al., 2018, p. 128), the analysis of this study shows that "research in the field has so far been largely Anglo-Saxon and Western European driven, in content as well as in disseminating a certain understanding of internationalization" (ibid., p. 128).

Alongside such outcome of the analysis by Bedenlier et al. (2018), Kehm and Teichler (2007) previously brought up the issue that a large extent of the reviewed literature sources are written in English and the question can be asked whether these sources can represent the internationalization of higher education in other countries in which publications in English are limited (ref. p. 267). Secondly, because the literature was reviewed based on publications in English, regions such as the United States, Canada, Western Europe, and Australia were the primary focus, namely, "[a few], economically advanced countries" (ibid.).

Nonetheless, when one looks at the vertical movement of international students worldwide due to "existing international inequality between nations and world regions" (Kehm & Teichler, 2007, p. 262; Rumbly et al., 2012, p. 4[9]), it is not very surprising that the large proportion of publications is mainly in English and the primary center of attention of literary works concerning the internationalization of higher education is on Anglophone countries or Europe. Both of the literature reviews are cognizant of the fact that expanding the research to areas, which have not yet widely been focused on, such as Asian, African, and South American countries, is required; and therefore, more comparative studies on the international dimensions of higher education are in need of continuous attention. Hence, based on the current accessible literature, a critical lookout for advancements on the diverse regional research on the internationalization of higher education is crucially important.

9 According to Altbach et al. (2009), "the global playing field is inherently uneven" that developed countries possess "more options and opportunities when it comes to how (and to what degree) to internationalize" (in Rumbley et al., 2012, p. 4). And such state is reflected as one can witness international students aiming to study in a few "advanced developed countries," e.g., "Asian countries tended to send their human resources to North America, Europe, and Australia" or to branch campuses of "prestigious universities from those areas" (ibid., p. 10).

2.2 Theoretical framework and literature pertaining to the current research

After placing the current study into the developmental trend and recognizing the thematic focus within the internationalization of higher education research, it is necessary to set up the theoretical boundary by examining the working definitions of related terms and features in order to investigate the corresponding aspects in a comparative perspective. As it is the "most frequently cited from the JSIE" and considered "the most prolific author" (Bedenlier et al., 2018, p. 115), the working definitions of the terms by Jane Knight (2004) will be applied to progress with the present study. This will also help to find definitions that resound in international developments and thus become applicable for empirical research.

2.2.1 Working definition and terms

With the given aim to carry out a comparative research regarding the USA, Korea, and Germany, the definition of the concept needs "to be generic enough to apply to many different countries, cultures, and education systems" (Knight, 2004, p. 11). On the basis of such condition, the definition of internationalization at the national and institutional levels is

> "the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education (Knight, 2003, p. 2)" (ibid.).

The reasoning[10] behind selecting the mentioned words is to indicate that the internationalization of higher education entails the idea of an evolving component as a *process* (by stressing the use of the suffix, "-ization" compared to "-ism" which possesses the meaning of ideology, ref. Knight, 2012, p. 5). In addition, the notion of "relationships between and among nations, cultures, or countries" is considered as well as the notion of "diversity" and "worldwide scope" of the three dimensions. When explaining the terms, *intercultural* and *global,* Knight (2004) clarifies that "*intercultural* is used to address the aspects of internationalization at home" "relating to the diversity of cultures that exist within countries, communities, institutions, and classrooms" (Knight, 2012, p. 5). Taking the two terms further, under the concept of the internationalization of higher education, Knight provides two main streams: 1) internationalization activities on home campus and 2) activities across borders (ref. Knight, 2004, p. 16). She notes that the latter cross-border-activities deal with building and implementing cooperative research between nations/universities as well as academic exchanges of students/scholars. Activities on home campus, on the other hand, are on site activities, which integrate "the inter-

10 Detailed definitions of the terms are defined in Knight, 2004, pp. 11–12.

cultural and international dimension in the teaching learning process, the extracurricular activities, and the relationships with local cultural and ethnic community groups."[11]

2.2.2 Key driving actors of internationalization at home

In order to concretize the theoretical framework focusing on the "internationalization activities on home campus" based on the given working definition, it is noteworthy to refer to the historical roots of the concept internationalization at home,[12] primarily found and discussed in the European context as the following. The references, which explain the given concept, serve as a momentum to select the two primary actors substantial in internationalizing universities as research variables: 1) staff from international offices (or similar staff under varying names) and 2) international students.

In keeping with the evolving phases previously mentioned (Bedenlier et al., 2018), before a more systematic research field of international higher education emerged in the 1980s, a traditional form of internationalization was prevalent.

> "'It was a purely individual experience' (Teekens, 2004, p. 57) via '[c]ampus-based internationalization initiatives includ[ing] study-abroad experiences, curriculum enrichment via international studies majors or area studies, strengthened foreign-language instruction, and sponsorship of foreign students to study on campus'" (Siaya & Hayward, 2003 in Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 293).

However, changes have come about as internationalization has gained importance and "mobility became organised and now took place in the framework of international networks (of university departments). It also happened on a much greater scale than before" (Wächter, 2003, p. 7). This was the case between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s in Europe, especially with the implementation of the Erasmus program (ref. Chapter 3.3) of exchanges of students within European countries. After 1995, the enactment of International Contract via newly modified Erasmus program led the internationalization in Europe "to shift the responsibility for cooperation matters from individual volunteers at the academic base to the leadership of higher education institutions" (ibid.). Due to

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11 Ref. Wächter, 2003, p. 6 as cited in Knight, 2004, p. 17.

12 Bengt Nilsson, a former vice-president for international affairs at a university in Malmo, Sweden, published "an article in the spring issue of *Forum,* the magazine of the European Association for International Education (EAIE)" (Teekens, 2004, p. 57), regarding the topic, internationalization at home and received in 1999 an "enthusiastic welcome [. . .] at a conference of the EAIE in Maastricht" (Wächter, 2003, p. 6).

Currently, EAIE expanded the concept of internationalization at home by adding digital activities, which have gained much attention due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Regarding digital activities, the terms "virtual mobility" and "virtual exchange" have been defined (ref. Reiffenrath et al., 2020). Projects such as "Digital at home, new steps in internationalization of education" has begun in 2021 with the grant from the Swedish Institute (ref. Granvik, 2022). In this research, it is to note that this digitalization aspect of internationalization at home is not considered and thus the given terms mentioned will not be elaborated in detail.

such change, "an understanding of internationalisation [. . .] went beyond mobility and a strong emphasis [was] on the teaching and learning in a culturally diverse setting" (ibid., p. 6). Moreover, "[i]nstitutions were faced with the responsibility of receiving students and not only sending them" (Teekens, 2004, p. 58).

Hence, unsurprisingly, during the given transformation, "control over student mobility and international project work slipped out the hands of academics and started to resort under the influence of administrators in the international office" (ibid., p. 59; ref. Heyl & Tullbane, 2012). The institutionalized internationalization has since increased not only bureaucratic procedures for administrative staff of international offices but also led to critical issues incorporating international and intercultural dimensions in institutions for the faculty, staff (who are not directly related to mobility), non-mobile domestic students (who are the majority) as well as incoming international students. Needless to say, the roles of the non-mobile students and faculty as well as administrative staff "who are not involved in mobility schemes" (Teekens, 2004, p. 61) are crucial in the internationalizing teaching and learning environments but these actors could not be considered beyond this recognition due to the limitations of this research.

By all means, due to the shift to "beyond mobility," internationalization at home "has put diversity issues [regarding the intercultural dimension] more clearly on the agenda within the context of the work of international relations officers" (Teekens, 2004, p. 65) at host universities.

Based on such growing role of international offices or similar divisions under different titles, it deemed to be necessary "to explore the underlying issues of their daily work [, in the midst of] ever increasing workload, institutional financial pressures and the aftermath of September 11 [13] [which] made the task more difficult and stressful" (ibid.).

1) While examining the managerial support services of international offices by practitioners and gaining insight into their "expertise" of daily challenges, the micro-level experiences of receiving the corresponding support by international students at host universities were investigated.
2) Emphasizing the fact that intercultural dimensions stressed by Knight (2004) exists between cultures and among people, "the social intercourse between students themselves (domestic students with international students on campus) and their surroundings (international students with the local community[])" (ibid., p. 62) were considered.

Henceforth, the term "home campus" refers to the destination in which international students reside, other than that of the university or country of origin which they had left. *In order to evade ambiguity, instead of adopting "home campus," the term, "host universities" is used in this dissertation to indicate the given meaning mentioned above.*

13 Ref. The momentum of change in tasks for international officers after September 11 is mentioned in Chapter 6.9.1.

2.2.3 Encompassing national and institutional level: rationales and approaches

As the working definition "purposely addresses the institutional and national system levels of higher education" (Knight, 2012, p. 5), the first step is to understand the profound policies and programs at the national level and approaches that institutions implement which have "change[d] during periods of [(supra-) national] development." When comprehending the terms used, Knight (2004) clarifies that the policies of the national level can be connected to "foreign relations, development assistance, trade, immigration, employment, science and technology, culture and heritage, education, social development, industry and commerce and others" (p. 13) while "programs can be seen as one of the policy instruments" (ibid., p. 16). On the basis of the institutional level, the approaches to internationalization can be different when it comes to implementation due to "priorities, culture, history, politics, and resources"[14] of the nation involved. Therefore, the context of the national level should by no means be disregarded in understanding its rationales for the existing programs and strategies at the institutional level for the international students.

Table 1. Rationales driving internationalization

Four categories of rationales (Knight, 1999 in Knight, 2004, p. 21)	Two levels of rationales (Knight, 2008 in Knight, 2012, p. 7)
Academic International dimension to research and teaching Extension of academic horizon Institution building Profile and status Enhancement of quality International academic standards	Institutional International branding and profile Income generation Student and staff development Strategic alliances Knowledge production
Economic Revenue generation Competitiveness Labor market Financial incentives	National Human resources development Strategic alliances Commercial trade Nation building Social cultural development
Political Foreign policy National security Technical assistance Peace and mutual understanding National identity Regional identity	
Social/cultural National cultural identity Intercultural understanding Citizenship development Social and community development	

14 Ibid., p. 18. Not only approaches reflect such background context of the values, priorities, and actions of the national context but also can be altered throughout the development.

Against such notion, "[t]raditionally, the rationales driving internationalization have been presented in four groups: social/cultural, political, academic and economic" (de Wit, 1995; Knight & de Wit, 1997, 1999 in Knight, 2004, p. 21). Such macro-level rationales have been expanded to distinguish between the institutional and national level rationales ten years later as indicated in Table 1 (taken from ref. Knight, 2008 in Knight, 2012, p. 7). However, clearly drawing the boundaries between the two levels (institutional and national level) against the four traditional categories is to some extent complex and at times, certain rationales can be applied simultaneously. Thus, in this given study, the initial four traditional categories (social/cultural, political, academic and economic) will be used as reference when examining the national level policies and programs in the USA, Korea, and Germany.

2.2.4 Selected framework of the internationalization of higher education at home under investigation

Instrumental forms of programs at the institutional level are influenced by national level policies. The national level regulates policies, financial distribution, and national and supranational cooperation programs; however, Knight emphasizes that the actual tangible process of internationalization takes place at the institutional level (ref. 2004, pp. 6–7) through the systematized programs or initiatives by academic and administrative staff members and students. If one takes such notion further, when looking into the lives of the actors under exploration, it is important to recognize the precondition that "[u]niversity still has a very strong sense of place. […] Its physical presence, whether spread around a city or on an out-of-town campus, is still very powerful" being an "autonomous space protected from the transgressions of politics or the market, a space in which free inquiry and critical learning can flourish" (Scott, 2000, p. 7).

Keeping such dynamic and subtleties between the national, institutional, individual levels in mind, within the extensive framework of the internationalization of higher education outlined by Knight in 2004 and 2012, my research aims at analyzing the stream of internationalization at host universities. Furthermore, as indicated in Figure 1, this research concentrates on investigating the *two areas* of the institutional-level program and organizational strategies:[15] 1) services and 2) extracurricular activities.

Against the background development of existing theoretical conceptualization of the internationalization of higher education, the theoretical structure under analysis for this study can be visualized as shown on the illustration Figure 1 below (Knight, 2004, pp. 14–15; 2012, p. 11).

The two areas (services and extracurricular activities) are divided into seven categories. These categories serve as the theory-driven categories to begin with in devising interview guidelines to inquire the expertise in daily lives and challenges, which staff

15 Knight (2004) intentionally uses the term strategies to include the programs and organizational initiatives (p. 13).

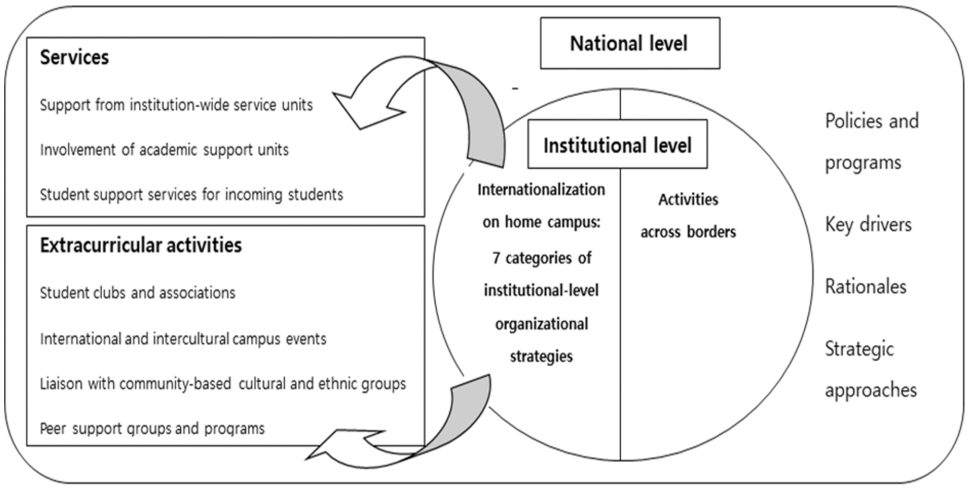

Figure 1. The theoretical framework under investigation solicited from the concept of the internationalization of higher education by Knight (2004 and 2012) (my visualization)

members in international offices (or at times, similar departments with varying names) and international students face.

Knight (2004) explicitly provides examples of the three categories under 1) services (p. 15). Together with the previous knowledge based on website data of international offices (ref. Chapter 4.5), the following services are examined:

- Support from institution-wide service units can involve student housing, registration office, alumni, health services, counseling services, etc.
- Involvement of academic support units can include services from libraries, teaching and learning services, faculty and staff training options, etc.
- Student support services for incoming students covers orientation programs upon arrival, cross-cultural training, visa-advice, excursions, etc.

The features mentioned regarding the 2) extracurricular activities are (ibid.):

- Student clubs and associations
- International and intercultural campus events
- Liaison with community-based cultural and ethnic groups
- Peer support groups and programs such as “language partners, friendship programs” (Knight, 2012, p. 11), etc.

As inquiries are based on qualitative research, the findings can lead to data-driven categories, which were not initially defined. Furthermore, as the given categories are developed under Anglophone and European contexts, they leave room to investigate whether they apply in the Korean context. Regarding such contextual variances, detailed methodological procedures and rationales for the decisions made for the approaches are explained in the subsequent chapter (ref. Chapter 4.3). It is necessary to point out at this stage that one of the main streams of internationalization, which is the aspect

of ‘Activities across borders’ at the institutional level, is not included in this study. As the national level context influences the overall strategic approaches implemented at the institutional level and as three countries, the USA, Korea, Germany are under scrutiny, key driving forces behind the national policies of each country are revealed (ref. Chapter 3). Based on the rationale on the given fact that the current state of research of the internationalization of higher education is largely restricted to the USA, Western Europe, Canada, and Australia, the subsequent chapter on mobility displays the reasoning behind selecting the three countries, USA, Korea, and Germany for comparative analysis.

2.3 Growth in mobility of international students and the present state of affairs

The selected framework (ref. Chapter 2.2.4) reveals that the studies have been restricted to ‘Western contexts.’ Since the three countries under examination are predominant drivers of internationalization by hosting and sending international students, it is important to look at how international student mobility has developed. Therefore, the following section displays general developments of student mobility while subsequent chapter focuses on the data of student mobility in each country investigated in this study. It is important to note that the data collection was carried out during the academic year of 2014/15 (ref. Chapter 2.3.1), which is why the focus of display is on the period from then up to the years of publication in order to denote up-to-date trends of international student movement flows. On this basis, the results have to be reflected (ref. Chapter 2.3.2) as to whether they can be a reliable statement for current developments of the internationalization of higher education when aiming to compare similar contexts with each other.

Against this backdrop, the countries chosen for the comparative research are two major receivers and one major sender of international students of each continent:

1) the USA, an Anglophone country with the most international students worldwide;
2) Germany, which receives the most international students in Europe;[16] and
3) Korea, representing Asia, where the government and institutions have been taking new measures to attract and recruit more international students over the last decades.

The following mobility data in this subsection aims to provide a general overview of the total number of international students as related to the rationale mentioned.

16 Ref. UNESCO/OECD/Federal Statistical Office from DAAD & DZHW, 2020.

2.3.1 Frame of mobility data reference at the point of field research for interviews

At the point of collecting interview data during the field research of the academic year 2014/15, statistics on the mobility of international and foreign students[17] was referenced from the report published in 2012 by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics (for most data on non-OECD countries).[18] When stating the figures, compared to 0.8 million students studying abroad at higher institutions in 1975, the number has reached 4.1 million in the year 2010 (ibid., p. 362).

Within the past 30 years,[19] the internationalization of higher education was taking its tangible form in the USA and Germany within the European Union. According to the data set of the academic year 2009/10[20] of the given OECD (2012) report, the major destinations of international and foreign students were the United States (16.6%), the United Kingdom (13%), Australia (6.6%), Germany (6.4%) and France (6.3%). The OECD (2012) report shows that Europe and the United States have been the most favorable destinations for international and foreign students. Meanwhile, the major senders[21] such as China, India, and Korea, received less than 2% of foreign students.[22] Therefore, the balance between the number of the intake of foreign students and the students of origin enrolled abroad is significantly negative.

Nevertheless, the trend shows that "the fastest growing regions of destination are Latin America and the Caribbean, Oceania and Asia, mirroring the internationalization of universities in an increasing set of countries."[23] In relation to the outlook by

17 The term "international students" is used to indicate free-movers who moved from the country of origin to another country with the intention of studying. They differ from the classification "foreign students" who have permanent or usual residence permits. These two terms are used separately in describing the mobility data. The rationale for this distinction is due to countries, which separate these two groups of students. Particularly the above indicated data from the USA, the United Kingdom and Australia consist of the numbers of international students and not foreign students on the basis of their country of residence. ref. OECD, 2012, p. 364, 371.

18 These data are based on the academic year 2009/10 and are provided by the countries of destination. Since the number of matriculated students is counted on a particular date or period these years, it is difficult to have the exact count of the students who came before or later than this day or period for shorter time exchange programs, language course programs, interuniversity exchanges or short-term advanced research programs – depending on the country and the university, international students partaking in such programs do not require official enrollment. Therefore, the actual sum of the international students can be higher than that of the indicated data above. ref. OECD, 2012, pp. 360–381.

19 The spectrum of the three decades range from 1975 until 2010 according to the OECD, 2012, p. 362.

20 The academic year in the USA and Germany begins in the late summer/autumn months (August – October) and ends before the late spring/summer months (May – July), while the academic year stretches from March until December of the same year in Korea. The statistics are collected with the start to the academic year in the USA and Germany. This is also the case for Korea, in which the collection of data is around April, one month after the start of the semester.

21 Asian countries accept up to 52.5% of foreign students worldwide, ref. ibid., p. 370.

22 Ibid., p. 364.

23 Ibid., p. 361.

the OECD, the study by United Nations Populations Division also foresaw that the "[f]oreign student enrollments are likely to grow in Asia and Oceania in the years ahead due to concerted government efforts in several countries to attract foreign students" (Kritz, 2006, p. 22).

2.3.2 Status quo of the mobility data

When examining numbers of internationally mobile students in higher education, one can observe that "[i]nternational student mobility has been expanding quite consistently over the past 20 years. [Compared to 4.1 million in the year 2010 (OECD, 2012)], [i]n 2019, 6.1 million tertiary students worldwide had crossed a border to study" (OECD, 2021, p. 215). However, the prognosis for the upcoming years is that "international student mobility is expected to decline" as "higher educational institutions around the world closed down to control the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic" (OECD, 2021, p. 213), particularly in 2020.[24]

Based on the USA data, "[t]he 2020 *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange* [...] from the Institute of International Education (IIE) reveals that for the fifth consecutive year the United States hosted more than one million international students (1,075, 496) during the 2019/2020 academic year. Despite a slight decline of 1.8%, this group still represents 5.5% of all students in U.S. higher education." (IIE, 2020). One year later, "the total number of international students declined by 15% [...] due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic" (IIE, 2021). The latter dataset from the academic year 2020/21 was the first time that *Open Doors* "included international students enrolled at U.S. higher education institutions in the United States and *online from abroad*"[25] (ibid.; emphasis added).

In Korea, according to the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI), the number of international students was 6,926 in 2005, increased to 39,029 in 2011 and reached 66, 479 in 2020.[26] In spite of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the year 2020, the total number of international students enrolled in Korea has gradually increased over the past years since 2014, whereas only the numbers of non-degree seeking international students decreased from 52,354 in 2019 to 34, 318 in 2020, thus a 34% decline (ibid., p. 90).

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24 The challenges that higher education institutions face regarding the decline of international student mobility due to the COVID-19 pandemic is not further discussed in this study as the initially collected research data was not influenced by the pandemic.

25 The main attention is drawn to the latest trend in the mobility data and the numbers of international students partaking in an online form of studies are also taken into the statistics in *Open Doors 2022.* It is to note that support services can take different shapes in the future. However, as the focus of this research is on internationalization at home, not including the digital activities, further information on the corresponding topics are not mentioned.

26 Only absolute numbers of total sum of international students are mentioned based on KEDI statistics and not the percentages from all students of Korea.

The main findings of the Wissenschaft Weltoffen 2022 in Germany[27] show a similar tendency as of that in Korea as "the number of international students at German universities continued to rise in the winter semester 2020/21, despite the [COVID-19] pandemic, to 324,729 (1.5%). They account for 11% of all students in Germany."

The number of mobile international students of countries selected for this study allows the assumption that the host universities are offering services for such number incoming international students to adjust and carry on with academic studies. In addition, it has taken into account the fact that a comparison of two major receivers (the USA and Germany) and the least receiver with growing potential (Korea) can provide results in a field of comparative studies, which has been marginally researched. It is to distinguish whether similar programs and services for international students at host universities are taking place although differences exist in the following two aspects: 1) the influence and implementation of the concept of internationalization and 2) the national context in which the institutions are located. In the process of comparative analysis, it will be kept in mind that results may also indicate factors beyond national or institutional concepts and policies when attracting international students (e.g., image and conventional perceptions of the academic destination).[28]

2.4 Current issues derived from internationalizing higher education: reflected in contexts

Amongst various spectrums of themes that are of point of discussion under the process of internationalizing higher education, the present study touches upon the primary issues emerging from the impact of globalization on internationalization. Whilst defining the term, globalization in relation to internationalization, the results from globalization impact on universities are briefly mentioned in this chapter. Of several effects of globalization, *increasing the revenue* based on international student recruitment, the notion of *westernization* of higher education and *the English usage in academic scientific research* are stated.

2.4.1 Definition and the influence of globalization

According to Altbach and Knight (2007), the term globalization is defined "as the economic, political, and societal forces pushing 21st century higher education toward greater international involvement" (p. 290).

27 Wissenschaft Weltoffen is published annually by Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst e. V. (DAAD) and Deutsches Zentrum für Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsforschung (DZHW).

28 Ref. William, 2011, pp. 209–222.

With regard to the definition, De Wit (2001) further notes that

> "internationalisation of higher education and globalization are and become more and more linked phenomena, in the sense that institutions of higher education – privatized, deregulated and more entrepreneurial – become active players in the global market place, but trying to maintain their autonomous position as academic institutions, holding strong to diversification" (p. xiii).

Such forces are intertwined with "the 'information age' we live in" (de Wit, 1997, p. xiii) which notes the importance of the "knowledge society" (Scott, 2000, p. 6). In addition, globalization imposes the idea of global competitiveness of previously stated "knowledge products and highly educated personnel for economic growth" (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 290). Thus, the market economy underscores education sectors to become more privatized as education becomes a commodity to be marketized as well as traded "within the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the World Trade Organizations (WTO)" (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 291; Mok, 2007, p. 434; van der Wende, 2001 in Roberts and Palmer, 2011, p. 1).

2.4.2 International student recruitment

Against such free-trade context, it is inevitable to realize that "[g]lobalization tends to concentrate wealth, knowledge, and power in those already possessing these elements" (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 291); and one factor evidencing such phenomenon is the vertical movement of international student mobility (ref. Chapter 2.3) to "well-developed education systems in [northern] institutions" (ibid.). Moreover, from an institutional point of view, "internationalization efforts may even run counter to institutional identity, which may force higher education institution to *sacrifice quality and integrity* for the perception of meeting globalization demands through rudimentary internationalization policies" (Wong & Wu, 2011, p. 197; emphasis added). One particular example of *sacrificing quality* is related to recruiting high numbers of international students focusing only on quantity and not quality of qualifications as well as diversity of student demographics with the aim of only enlarging economic revenues for institutions, namely, profit.

According to the OECD (2012) report, the USA charges higher tuition fee for international students than for domestic students, "as international students pay the same fees as domestic out-of-state students" in public institutions while same tuition fees apply for both domestic and international students for private institutions (p. 366). In the case of Korea, "[i]n general, most international students [...] pay tuition fees that are somewhat lower than those paid by domestic students." (ibid., 366); and the tuition fees differ depending on the institutions and grants that students receive. As for Germany, it is very much distinguishable that "German internationalization [...] continues to be tuition-free higher education [...] not only for domestic students but also international students seeking full degrees" (Streitwieser, 2015, p. 24). However, even though Germany does

not take tuition fees, the "anticipated impact that international students will have on German economy" is at the center of focus, which involves "retain[ing] the talent pool that Germany will need in the future, not to mention the 4.3 billion euros international students may add to the economy" (ibid.). Based on the given facts, it is possible to note that the economic drive is at the heart of recruiting international students in the given countries under investigation.

2.4.3 Westernization of higher education and the implementation of English in academia

In terms of the term mentioned above by Wong and Wu (2011, p. 197), *sacrificing integrity* underscores the issue of "primarily follow[ing] the Anglo-Saxon paradigm when internationalizing universities" (Mok, 2007, p. 434).

There exist tensions as

> "[h]igher education institutions in East Asia, consciously or subconsciously, equate internationalization to Westernization, and in particular, Americanization. This is reflected in universities emulating Western instructional styles, adopting a customer-orientation common in Western education" (Wong & Wu, 2011, p. 199),

and enforcing English language usage in academia for local faculty and students. The significant question that comes to mind is how far the actors themselves consider these aspects within the local context.

Of different impacts of globalization in the process of internationalization, the "leading thread of discourse of [the current international comparative research]" (Roberts & Palmer, 2011, p. 2) examines the micro-level perspectives of how "internationalization in ways shaped by the West, especially by the United States" (Wong & Wu, 2011, p. 1) is reflected in supporting international students in Korea or even in Germany, especially with the concepts of customer service and English usage in academia and daily lives of international students. In such sense, it will be interesting to detect how the service mentality is mirrored in the local context when providing the services, which are offered by international offices or similar institutions in supporting international students in the given three countries.

As stated in the OECD (2012) report, "[t]he language spoken and used in instruction sometimes determines in which country a student chooses to study" (p. 363). One of the major consequences of globalization is "the use of English as the lingua franca for scientific communication" (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 291). "[I]n an effort to internationalize campuses and also increase their competitiveness," implementing English, "a dominant language globally," has been the most appealing and effective choice to make (Jon & Kim, 2011, p. 169). Against the background of the implementation of English, the usage of English when providing support for international students in non-English speaking countries in Korea and Germany are under investigation.

Despite the mentioned issues due to the pressures of globalization, the focus is on the local approaches to the internationalization of higher education in Korea and Germany. Even then, the weight is on the similarities that derive from the personal experiences of the actors involved while recognizing the fact that "[g]lobalization may be unalterable, but internationalization involves many choices" (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 291). Such varying choices in contextual settings are sought when examining the development of the internationalization of higher education in each country as the following chapter elucidates.

3 The development of national level policies and approaches under the concept of the internationalization of higher education

The boundary of my research covers the two areas at the institutional level (services and extracurricular activities, ref. Chapter 2.2.4) reflected in Figure 1 focusing on the activities on home campus, namely, host universities. Along the same lines to the emphasis that "it is usually at the individual, institutional level that the real process of internationalization is taking place" (Knight, 2004, pp. 6–7),

> "[o]ne might argue that the internationalisation process takes place concurrently with a certain degree of de-governmentalisation in *the daily life of higher education* (emphasis added) in terms of administrative control and determining the position of the individual higher education institution on a national map. This de-governmentalisation affected the international arena even more strongly because governments also only had limited control of international cooperation between institutions in the past. But nations and strategic policies of national governments continue to play a major role in setting the frames for international communication, cooperation and mobility as well as for international competition" (Teichler, 2004, p. 21).

Regarding the final note of Teichler's (2004) quote above, one cannot overlook the impact of national level policies and approaches which to a certain extent shapes the institutions and actors involved in the historical development. Considering the fact that this research does not exclude the national and cultural contexts that influence the internationalization process in higher education, it is necessary to examine the features, i.e., the key changes and drivers of national level policies, affecting the development of the internationalization of higher education in the USA, Korea, and Germany before investigating the "*the daily life of higher education*" (emphasis added). The development of national policies and approaches is summarized in Table 2 as the columns entail the features[29] dealt within the concept of the internationalization of higher education and the rows specify the three countries. The following chapters mirror the contents of the given table by describing the main characteristics of changes in the history of the internationalization of higher education in each country. Identifying such historical and national backgrounds of the development helps understand and place comparative perspectives (ref. Chapter 4.2) on the given topic, which are embedded in every step of the main research process. As indicated in Table 2, the development is described in the following subsections.

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29 The rationales are divided into four categories: political, economic, social and cultural rationales as explained in Chapter 2.2.3 (ref. de Wit, 2001; Knight, 2004).

Table 2. Development at a glance: features of the internationalization of higher education in the USA, Korea, and Germany

Features		USA[30]	Korea[31]	Germany[32]
Emergence of key changes of the internationalization of higher education		After World War II	Since the mid-1990s	Since the 1980s
Rationales	Political	Foreign policy and national security after World War II	Nation's competitiveness	Political rationale of Europeanisation
	Economic	Economic competitiveness	Increase income generation for universities (mainly in provinces)	Economic benefits
	Academic	International cooperation, development of global competencies among students and faculty, and profile and status	Enhance research quality and international ranking	Extension and diversification of academic specialization and increase institutional rankings and international competitiveness
	Social/cultural	National cultural identity and intercultural understanding	Build cultural ambassadors	Develop a European identity
Main drivers of the internationalization of higher education		• Department of Foreign Affairs and Defense • Private foundations and organizations • Institutions of higher education and their representative bodies	• The Republic of Korea, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology • National Institute of International Education of Ministry of Foreign Affairs	• The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research • The German Research Foundation • The German Rectors Conference • The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) • Alexander von Humboldt Foundation

30 Ref. Horn et al., 2007, p. 331 and de Wit, 2001, pp. v-xii.

31 Ref. Byun & Kim, 2011, pp. 467–481.

32 Streitwieser et al., 2015, pp. 24–26 and de Wit & Hunter, 2015 in Streitweiser & Klabunde, 2015, pp. 41–59.

Features	USA	Korea	Germany
Strategic approaches	• The Fulbright Act (1946) • Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship • Title VI of the National Defense Education Act (1958)	• May 31 Education Reform Plan of 1995 • Initial Plan for Opening the Higher Education Market to Foreign Countries in response to WTO negotiations (1996) • Study Korea Project (2004, 2008, 2012) • Brain Korea 21 (1995–2005; 2006–2012) • World Class University Project (2008)	• Erasmus (1987); Erasmus+ (2014) • Bologna Declaration (1999) – European Credit Transfer System • Federal and state ministers' joint strategy to internationalize German higher education institutions (2013) • The Excellence Initiative (2005 – in progress; the latest information on funding is indicated until 2032/33)
Language of instruction	• English	• Korean • English-mediated instruction	• German • English-mediated instruction
International student mobility	The world's 1st receiver of international students	The top sending country and lowest among developed nations as a host country (Jon & Kim, 2011, p. 147)	The world's 5th most attractive host country for internationally mobile students

3.1 The development in the USA: the dominant model[33]

The major transformation and governmental regulations regarding internationalizing higher education institutions came about after World War II (ref. de Wit, 2001 & Deardorff et al., 2012) in the USA. While "Europe was still too heavily focused on recovering from the severe wounds of two world wars and on reconstruction" (de Wit & Merkx, 2012, p. 7), "[t]he world of academia was turned upside down" (ibid.) as higher education in the USA began to become the center of international educational exchange (ref. ibid.). The main rationale for internationalizing higher education was established based on the political background regarding foreign policy and national security (ref. de Wit, 2001). Compared to chiefly military focus during World War I, the government of the USA, namely, the War Department, realized the absence of foreign area knowledge of the oppositions. Whilst recognizing such lack of knowledge, university faculty was hired for the foreign language competence and foreign area knowledge to function as "intelligence analysts" (ref. de Wit & Merkx, 2012, p. 7). In addition, army and navy officers[34] were provided with foreign language and area studies to gain competence in these fields in American higher institutions. These two programs were the foundation of "a model of university-government collaboration that was to be the inspiration for Title VI of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958" (ibid.) and the Fulbright Act of 1946.

From a chronological perspective, the direct "spin-off of World War II" (ref. de Wit & Merkx, 2012, pp. 7–8) is the Fulbright Act, which "authorizes the Secretary of State to conduct a broad program of educational activities and exchanges through grants to students, professors, and specialists in countries all over the world" (Ward, 1947, p. 198). The faculty and student exchanges through the Fulbright Act created the grounds for building "personal networks" (de Wit & Merkx, 2012, p. 8) and increasing impetus in research abroad. With such opening of exchange of faculty and students, the number of mobile international students enrolling in American higher education grew from mere nothing before World War II to 48,000 in 1959 and up to 690,000 in 2009 (ref. ibid.). Concurrently, "[t]he Institute for International Education reported 18,000 Americans studying abroad in 1965, 49,000 in 1985, and 224,000 in 2005" (ref. ibid.). When taking the latest mobility data into account (ref. Chapter 2.3), there existed 1,075,496 international students during the 2019/20 before the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic (IIE, 2020). Regarding the U.S. students, 347,099 students were studying overseas during the 2018/19 academic year (ibid.). As also noted previously, the higher education institutions in the USA are the "top destination[s] for international students" (ibid.).

The second key strategic approach at the national level which accelerated the process of internationalization was Title VI in the National Defense Education Act, which was the by-product of the Cold War as an immediate response to the "Soviet Union's 1957

33 de Wit & Merkx, 2012, p. 4

34 the Army Specialized Training Program from the U.S. Army and the V-12 Navy College Training Program

success in launching the first orbiting satellite, Sputnik" (ref. ibid., p. 10). Derived initially from the Army Specialized Training Program for the U.S. army, since the establishment of Title VI, "new Title VI missions were added, such as outreach, citizen education, internationalization of the undergraduate curriculum, international business education, minority recruitment, language research, and support for overseas research centers" (ref. Scarfo, 1988 in Merkx, 2012, p. 10).

From the enumerated missions which were supplemented in the course of time, it is possible to witness that the organized take-off and expansion of internationalizing universities were mainly driven based on political rationale by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Defense (de Wit, 2001, p. ix). In relation to the increased numbers of foreign students in American universities and American students studying abroad, "[f]or longer, to a larger extent and more professionally than anywhere else, American higher education has been developing a broad variety of activities, programs and projects in international education" (ibid., p. vii). Such process has been coupled with economic, social-cultural, as well as academic rationales from the 1980s. Concerning the economic rationale, international students have generated income for universities as well as local economies as more than half of the international students are fully self-supported (ref. Horn, et al., 2007, p. 331). The 2020 *Open Doors* report reveals that "[a]ccording to the U.S. Department of Commerce, international students contributed $ 44 billion to the U.S. economy in 2019." Moreover, when it comes to the underlying cultural and social rationales, the government and the higher education institutions focus on intercultural understandings (de Wit, 2001, p. ix) together with disseminating American national values and ideologies (Horn et al., 2007, p. 331). Finally, as of academic rationales, the key aim is achieving "international branding and profile" to excel in international ranking based on international networking as well as collaboration of research between scholars and students (Knight, 2004, p. 23; Horn et al., 2007, p. 331).

A feature that is conspicuous in the development of the higher education in the USA is that the main drivers of the given process in the last years are "private foundations and professional associations and from institutions of higher education and their representative bodies" (de Wit, 2001, p. ix), aside from the initial onset from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Defense. Hence, it is important to illuminate the fact that compared to the initially organized activities controlled by the government after World War II, at present, "there is a lack of strategic approach and the tendency towards fragmentation" (ibid., p. x) regarding national policies and governmental influence. This feature stands out in the context of the USA in comparison with Korea and Germany as the impact of (supra-)national policy levels are further explored in the next subchapters.

3.2 The development in Korea: in quest of attracting international students as a major sender

Referring to the immediate statement of the role of national level policies and as one can infer from the title of this subchapter, the dominant push for the conceptualization and the implementation of the internationalization of higher education comes from the Korean government policies as focal points change according to the presidents and their individual political stance. Moreover, such political courses take paths in an effort to adjust to the international world order and the pressure of globalization. While recollecting the major incidences of the given development, it is possible to detect from the Korean case that

> "national governmental policies play a major role in the extent to which they encourage and support study, teaching and researching abroad or discourage it in the name of increasing the export balance in higher education and research" (Teichler, 2004, p. 21).

Especially, for the past few decades, the main rationale of internationalizing higher education in Korea has been to recruit international students for income generation for universities (via Study Korea Project) coupled with enhancing national competitiveness in research quality and international ranking (via Brain Korea 21 project), which resulted in establishing English-mediated courses and inviting prominent international scholars. Mainly two central governmental institutions, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) and the National Institute of International Education of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NIIED), lead the process of the internationalization of higher education explained in the following.

The momentum of change in internationalizing the higher education system, which mirrors the underlying economic rationale, emerged in the mid-1990s with Korea joining of World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995 (Byun & Kim, 2011, p. 468; Dewi, 2018, p. 73). From then on, higher education was regarded as a tradable good in the world market and in reaction to the roundtables for the WTO, "May 31 Education Reform Plan" (1995) and "Initial Plan for Opening the Higher Education Market to Foreign Countries" (1996) were declared by the Kim Young Sam[35] administration. The main aims were recruiting international students to study in Korean universities (ref. Dewi, 2018, p. 73) and opening the higher education market, i.e., allowing foreign branch campuses to be established in Korea.

It is not surprising to understand why the economic rationale has been the key driver of the internationalization of higher education in Korea once recognizing the fact that how much the external influence of free trade due to globalization has influenced the educational policies to a great extent. Along the lines of WTO conception, "deregulation, competition, and marketization in higher education" (Byun & Kim, 2001, p. 470) were stressed during this initial phase. In addition, "private institutions located in smaller cities outside of Seoul metropolitan region" were in need of income via students' tuition

35 the 14th president of Republic of Korea (1993–1998)

as the number of first-year university students declined since the 1990s due to Korea's low birth rate (ibid., pp. 470–471).

However, the two initial policies of such "market mechanism and [...] global competition" (Byun & Kim, 2001, p. 470), retreated shortly after its announcement from its course as the Asian financial crisis hits Korea in 1997. In order to diminish the trade deficit in the crisis, the Korean government in the Kim Dae Jung's[36] presidency appealed to the public to reduce Korean students to study overseas (ref. ibid.). From such change of course in this period of economic crisis, it is possible to detect once again the prevailing lead and the impact that the Korean government has on the internationalizing higher education in which the "market forces [...] determine the details" (Teichler, 2004, p. 21).

From then onwards, as Korea recovered from the financial crisis, the succeeding Roh Moo Hyun[37] administration launched the Study Korea Project in 2004, which aims to recruit international students overseas and Brain Korea 21 in 2006, which focuses on supporting research programs. The purpose of the Study Korea Project in 2004 was to increase the number of international students to 50,000 students and "[i]t reached this goal by the year 2007 and then set its sights on recruiting 100,000 foreigners by 2012" (Palmer & Cho, 2011, p. 126). As the latter goal was also met, the third phase was "set up in 2012 [,] aiming to attract up to 200,000 international students by 2020" (Dewi, 2018, p. 75), which has been extended to the year 2023 (ref. NIIED). This given project was strengthened with the initiative Global Korea Scholarship for incoming international students with the underlying social-cultural rationale of building cultural "ambassadors" (Byun & Kim, 2011, p. 471) and a "Korea-friendly global human network" (Dewi, 2018, p. 75). Over the last fifteen years, the emphasis has turned to the quality and diversity of international students and not only on the quantity as criticisms have been emerging from the aftermath of the launching of the project in 2004 (ref. Byun & Kim, 2011, p. 471).

The second main initiative, the Brain Korea 21 project[38] was focused on enhancing the research quality of Korean universities. Byun and Kim (2011) state the specific aims concerning the two rounds of the Brain Korea 21 project, which were making ten world-class universities and increasing the number of scientific research papers in the Science Citation Index until 2012 (p. 475). Along the lines, the World Class University project was introduced in 2008 by the Lee Myung Back administration[39] to recruit outstanding international scholars to instruct and research in Korean universities.

Such kind of setting of the grounds for the internationalization of higher education allowed financial support from the government to Korean universities transforming to meet the international curricula. The initial funding was with Study Korea Project for the expansion of courses offered in English from 2005 to 2007 and providing Korean

36 the 15th president of Republic of Korea (1998–2003)

37 the 16th president of Republic of Korea (2003–2008)

38 There exist two phases of the Brain Korea 21 project, one lasted from 1999 to 2005 and the other one from 2006–2012.

39 the 17th president of Republic of Korea (2008–2013)

language courses for incoming international students. In relation to this, several Korean universities introduced both graduate degrees (Graduate School of International Studies) and four-year undergraduate programs offered only in English (ref. Byun & Kim, 2011, p. 477; Dewi, 2018, p. 75).

When looking back at the past three decades of the internationalization of higher education in Korea, several critical stances have been revealed which leaves room for reflective perspectives on the rationales and the role of English. Taking Teichler (2004)'s indication into account, it is not difficult to accept that "[t]he strategic options which higher education institutions, programmes or individual scholars can choose are strongly shaped by factors such as: the economic strength of the country, the international status of the home country language, [and] the academic reputation of the national system of higher education" (p. 21).

In the midst of the given competitive environment of globalization and the pressure to transform the higher education system to attract international students and scholars, the primary focus on the economic rationale and the use of the English language seem almost inevitable as "developing countries and their universities try to accommodate the various types of intellectual and cultural assets built up by developed countries" (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Knight, 2004 in Yeom, 2019, p. 17). With respect to the role of English, "[m]any scholars in this field (i.e., Altbach, 2004; Mok, 2007, Tsuneyoshi, 2005) also emphasize the Americanization of higher education as one of side effects of increased English usage in academic." (Byun & Kim, 2011, p. 478). Referring to "Americanization" and to further understand the developmental context of Korean higher education in history, "[s]ince the establishment of a nativist government (1948), Korea has organized and changed the Korean [higher education] system again, based on the American model" (Yeom, 2019, p. 18). From then on, the Korean universities "actively accepted and imitated the university operating system and academic characteristics accumulated by American universities" (ibid., p. 29) and "[t]his is confirmed at government, university, and individual levels" (ibid., p. 30). *It becomes obvious that for this research such given context is crucial in understanding and identifying the support services for international students in Korea.*

As a major sender of international students (ref. OECD, 2012 in Chapter 2), the past government policies have made targeted efforts to attract international students for economic profits. The shortfalls of such partial weight on economic rationale were the lack of diversity and quality in terms of recruitment of international students. Further critical perspectives of such influence are sought out in this research in the following sections. Coming back to the critical discussions on such shortcomings, Byun and Kim (2011) point out to the fact that "there is a need to place greater priority on the 'social and cultural rationale,' and particularly on such rationales that serve to promote cultural identities and cross-cultural understandings, even though these do not seem to hold as much importance as the economic, political, and academic rationales" (p. 481). In addition, the implementation of English in Korean higher education has brought about controversies, i.e., the fluency of English of Korean faculty, the capacity to follow English-mediated instruction for Korean domestic students and the quality in general. Though the given emphasis in internationalizing higher education in Korea appears

unavoidable, the quest for daily life experiences of actors involved aims to identify how such issues are mirrored under the influence of given national contexts.

3.3 The development in Germany: the vanguard of hosting most international students in Europe

From a historical point of view, the internationalization of higher education is positioned in the developmental process of Europeanization taking its political shape after World War II and the Cold War. Individual activities of studying in different countries and networking between faculty members on a rather small scale have been exchanged with the emergence of the concept international education from the USA to more organized, funded, federal as well as institutional initiatives. The political rationale driven by the mobility of students, which began in the late 1980s, has expanded by including rationales encompassing economic, social and cultural aspects which includes a wide spectrum of actors (not only international students and scholars but also domestic students and faculty, and especially administrative staff members) and space (not only the university but also the community in which the university is located (ref. de Wit et al., 2020, p. 15).

When elucidating the initial take-off, the development of the internationalization of higher education in Germany cannot be understood without the influence of supra-national policies "strengthening the European dimension in education" (de Wit, 2001, p. viii). As hinted previously, while international education was taking a tangible form in the USA via organized structures such as the Fulbright program after World War II, it wasn't until the late 1980s that Europe began to take on systematical stances towards internationalizing universities in the current sense. The most prominent program, which Germany has been part of, is the Erasmus program launched in 1987. The underlying political rationale from the influence of European Community was enhancing mobile students through exchange (ref. Streitwieser & Klabunde, 2015, p. 44). "[I]n the period of 1987–2011, more than 2 million students have been exchanged, and the program expanded to other European countries outside the European Union" (de Wit & Merkx, 2012, p. 11). The impact of this first Erasmus program has continuously expanded to a wider scale covering countries in and outside of European Union via the Erasmus+ program (2014). According to Ingeson (2020), "[b]uilding skills, employability, and intercultural awareness of students w[ere] the Key Action in the Erasmus+ plan and [this] speaks to the growing interest in preparing students to enter the global workforce" (p. 47). Moreover, the main driving force for the internationalization of higher education was due to "the European economic and political integration process" (de Wit, 2001, p. ix) and the aim is educating European citizens "with the emphasis on exchanges" (ibid.) of scholars and students. Hence, "the different programmes and organizational aspects are more integrated into an overall strategy" (ibid., p. x).

The given overarching strategic approach was accelerated with the Bologna Process (1999) which aims to "mak[e] European qualifications more transparent and comparable, thus more competitive" (Streitwieser & Klabunde, 2015, p. 44). The Bologna Declaration on the European Higher Education Area organized equivalent degree levels

(bachelor and master levels) and "compatible credit systems" (European Credit Transfer System). Under the influence of strategic internationalization of European Higher Education approaches, "through efforts at the federal, state, and institutional levels, Germany" has developed its own course of internationalizing universities. It is noteworthy to mention that Germany is at the forefront of attracting international students in Europe, i.e., it is the world's fifth most attractive host country (Streitwieser et al., 2015, p. 24) and in 2019, "the proportion of internationally mobile [German] students in relation to the total number of German students is 5.1 %" (137, 900 in absolute numbers, ref. DAAD & DZHW, 2022, p. 62).

In reference to the given fact, the political rationale set by the European perspective has been shifting towards "increasing Germany's institutional rankings, participating in the global circulation of talent, developing a stronger sense of European identity among citizens, and diversifying a population challenged by low birth rate and a rapidly aging population" (ibid.). The global competitiveness coupled with economic benefits on the German economy are regarded important in trying to make Germany an attractive host country for international students. In order to achieve this, more than half of German universities offer graduate level studies in English, specifically intended for international students (ref. Streitwieser et al., 2015, p. 24).

The five key drivers of the internationalization of higher education are the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the German Research Foundation, the German Rectors Conference, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. These organizations work together with federal, state and universities to meet the previously mentioned rationales. With reference to these main acting institutions, it is necessary to illuminate the fact that "[w]ith 16 federal states, each with their own Ministry of Education, Cultural Affairs and Science, German universities are decentralized and therefore function independently based on the jurisdiction of the state in which they reside" (Ingeson, 2021, p. 45). On that note, the German specific "joint strategy" effort[40] to meet the set rationales for internationalizing universities was implemented in 2013 from federal and state ministers (Streitwieser et al., 2015, p. 25). Another profound strategic approach was via The Excellence Initiative launched in 2005. The initial goal when launching the initiative that year was to enhance international competitiveness of German universities against the idea of creating elite universities with high reputation via funding of prominent performance in institutions in Germany. In order "to make Germany more attractive research location, making it more internationally competitive, focusing attention on the outstanding achievements of German universities and the German scientific community" (ref. German Research Foundation), 1.9 billion euros were funded during the first phase (2006–2011) and in the second phase, 2.7 billion euros were subsidized for the given aims (2012–2017). At present, the funding has been divided into two excellence initiatives; one is Clusters

40 "The strategy identified nine common goals that addressed themes related to student mobility, internationalization at home, staff development, international research cooperation, increased student services, strategic frameworks for action, and targets for transnational education" (Streitwieser et al., 2015, p. 25).

of Excellence and the other one is Universities of Excellence. The former "funding line is designed to support project-based funding in internationally competitive fields of research at universities or university consortia" while the latter "funding line serves to strengthen universities as individual institutions" (German Research Foundation, 2023). Both of the funding streams that are in progress are expected to run until 2032/33 with further prospects for continuation.

A large sum of funding and the effort to make world-class universities in Germany are noteworthy, especially because, "[t]raditionally, the German higher education system was rather homogeneous regarding institutional quality and reputation" (Ingeson, 2021, p. 46). Nevertheless, despite such targeted funding, Ingeson (2021) further notes that German universities still do not take tuition fee from both domestic and international students and hence, most of the internationalization efforts lack enough funding (p. 46) to finance individual programs and activities that institutions create for continuous operations for internationalizing universities. Of the "third-party funding[,DAAD] is probably the most significant supporter of German higher education internationalization through various funding and support programs" (Streitwieser & Klabunde, 2015 in Ingeson, 2021, p. 46).

After two decades of the internationalization of higher education in Germany since the 1980s, which were mainly driven by political and economic rationales, the focus has recently shifted towards to social and cultural rationales, mirroring the theoretical developments in general. In the midst of such gradual turning point, nonetheless, the economic benefits of international students in future German workforce and the economy remain important and much thought has been put into supporting international students to successfully finish their studies as "there is a 41 percent drop-out rate before graduation in undergraduate courses" and 9 percent in the master's studies (Streitwieser et al. 2015, p. 24).

The necessity to provide services and support so that international students can adjust successfully has been recognized with the necessary participation of all members (academic and administrative staff as well as domestic and international students) to provide *a meaningful interaction at host institutions*. According to the DAAD report (2020), the theoretical concept of Hudzik's (2011, p. 6) comprehensive internationalization sheds light on the significance of entire campus life (de Wit et al. p. 15) affecting the daily lives of international students to "integrate with German students in a meaningful way" (Ingeson, 2021, p. 44). Such focus on comprehensive internationalization goes along with the concept of internationalization at home (ref. Wächter, 2003; Knight, 2004; ref. Chapter 2.2.2) in which "internationalization activities on home campus" (Kinght, 2004, p. 16, ref. Chapter 2.2.4) are brought to notice. Taking such perspective further, along the similar terms, the notion of an internationalized curriculum (Leask, 2009, p. 206, ref. Chapter 2.1) has gained attention. Meaningful interaction on campus embraces "developing international and intercultural competences in all students" (Beelen & Leask, 2011 in Streitwieser & Klabunde, 2015, p. 59) and going past employing "activities [,which] extend beyond the classroom and the campus into the local community" (Beelen & Jones, 2015 in ibid.; ref. Wächter, 2003, p. 6 in Knight, 2004, p. 17). In other words, simply hosting international students and them joining courses with domestic students as

well as offering courses in English, which is one of the profound strategies in attracting international students, do not bring about the overall change of the internationalization of higher education mentioned above.

3.4 Summary of the key features in comparison

When applying a comparative approach, cautiousness is required particularly to prevent oneself from merely detecting factual differences between the variables (ref. Chapter 4.2). Being cognizant of this aspect, the succeeding part aims to summarize the key points. Common aspects derived from the mentioned developmental features will be identified. The differences of the detected features will be indicated being sensitive to the national contexts of the USA, Korea, and Germany.

First of all, the developments of the internationalization of higher education in the given countries are all faced with the pressure of the environment of globalization together with the ever-changing marketization which push forward the economic competitiveness and academic profile, branding, and ranking. Though the starting points in history regarding systematical approaches to internationalizing universities differ, the initial focus was on mobility of students and scholars, which continues to keep their importance at present, interrelated with the aforementioned rationales.

Secondly, when summarizing the key rationales, the acceleration of the internationalization of higher education was mainly due to political rationales. For the case of the USA, the national security and foreign policy were the main underlying aims and these still influence much of the tasks of administrative staff supporting international students when processing immigration documents. For Germany and South Korea, the development was rather politically driven based on enhancing economic competitiveness and academic quality of research as the emerging phase of the internationalizing higher education took place three to four decades after the take-off in the USA. Whether the purpose is to obtain and deepen worldwide perspectives via exchange of academics and students or not, the economic benefits are consistently becoming more important for all three countries selected for this research. The given economic rationale embraces not only the income generation for the institutions (with the exception of German universities, which still maintain the tuition-free policy) but also the impact that the country's future workforce will have in the national economies.

Thirdly, one conspicuous national context to be aware of is the difference of the key drivers of influencing the internationalization of higher education. As mentioned regarding the development in the USA, the private foundations and universities push forward the initiatives, and there exists not one national policy leading the movement encompassing all the higher education institutions. Whilst central government bodies are in charge of setting up the overall strategy in Korea, the way in which the administrative policies are enacted could differ as individual conditions of the institutions and their actors vary. Such case also applies to Germany, even though European policies highly affect German universities, based on the third-party funding and a rather decentralized system of higher education institutions under the separate federal state influence, the

effect of national level influence leaves room for understanding the differing various regional and institutional, individual circumstances.

A final point to mention is that even though the starting point of a structured internationalization of higher education has been different, the matter at issue for the selected three countries for this research lies in creating an environment in host institutions to accommodate and attract international students. These two aspects have gained significance in relation to cultural and social rationales when striving to host international students. Not only has the focus been on internationalizing the curriculum by employing English-mediated instruction for non-English speaking countries but also on offering services in and outside of classrooms to support international students to help adjust and make most out their study and living experiences at host institutions.

Against such developmental backgrounds, this present research intends to explore how given recognition of the issues are realized in "*daily life of internationalization of higher education*" (Teichler, 2004, p. 21; emphasis added) to achieve "meaningful international experience" (Streitwieser & Klabunde, 2015, p. 51) within the comparative perspectives from the USA, Korea, and Germany.

4 Methodology employed: the rationale and the research design

In this chapter, the applied methodology and the procedures of the research design based on Knight's (2004; 2012) theoretical framework of the internationalization of higher education (ref. Figure 1) are described. This process leads to answering the central research question (ref. Chapter 1). With regard to the question, the concept of the internationalization of higher education was defined (ref. Chapter 2) and the framework was realized within the national as well as the context of the destination of a university, however, the results were not confined to national borders.

The investigation involved sampling and analyzing the documents and interviews from three countries: two major receivers of international students, the United States and Germany and one major sender as well as the least receiver with growing potential, Korea. In each country, fifteen universities[41] with the highest number of international students were selected to clarify whether support from host universities follow similar tendencies to promote the adjustment of international students. To go beyond the theoretical ground, experts were selected who are staff members of international offices or who work in supporting international students in similar institutions to provide the information of the program and services, which are offered by their universities and their viewpoints on the effectiveness on such offers as they have firsthand encounters with international students. In addition, international students were interviewed to find out whether the sampled international students truly do make use of support offered by the universities and how they perceive such assistances. The main rationale in carrying out the research on this topic is to address the research gap by cross-referencing micro-level perspectives of international officers as well as international students (ref. Chapter 1 and 2).

In the following sections, firstly, the role of the researcher is explored under the auspices that the researcher's identity affects the way in which the qualitative research procedure takes its course. Critical outlook on the merits and limitations against the background of the researcher is discussed. In addition, as the aforementioned three countries are selected for investigation of the given research questions, the next part

41 The selected universities are defined under the term, tertiary education type (A, B, and Advanced research programs) that includes bachelor and master degrees as well as advanced study, e.g., Ph.D (ref. OECD, 2012, p. 23), as all three countries investigated are members of OECD and provides statistical information from the selected sources in this research (ref. 4.5). Other variables of higher education features are not distinguished due to varying contexts of defining universities in each country. This is regarded as the limitation of this present study.

sheds light on the implementation as well as reflective responsibilities when applying the comparative method in the area of international education. Foremost, within the context of the researcher's role and in accordance with the reflective responsibilities of the comparative method, it is necessary to be sensitized about the researcher's "hybrid cultural identity" (Macht, 2018) which affects international and intercultural dialogue in this qualitative research.

After exploring the above-mentioned reflexive conditions, the next section explains the suitability of 1) the qualitative approach and 2) the qualitative content analysis, which is the central foundation for my research design. The final part describes the detailed procedures of the research design followed by the reflection on the trustworthiness of the corresponding approaches.

4.1 Role of the researcher: critical stance on the advantages and constraints

Qualitative research is grounded on the idea that "reality is subjective, and to some extent, knowledge and scientific interpretations are situated within the experiences of the participants and researchers" (Castelló et al., 2020, p. 570). Such a process of discovering and examining the research in qualitative inquiry "mak[es] it critical for the researcher to engage in reflexive practices which call upon her/him to become aware of her/his role in the research process" (Roger et al., 2018, p. 532). Such reflexivity helps the researcher to continuously acknowledge the fact that "assumptions drive the research and colour the resulting interpretations" (MacNaughton et al., 2001 in Castelló et al., 2020, p. 568). Engaging in this procedure means that the researcher needs to check on one's own bias at every stage. In the light of maintaining reflective "analytic lens" (ref. Gee, 2000) of the researcher, elucidating my personal background and the relationship to this research project becomes essential to comprehend how the "guiding decisions regarding research questions, conceptual frameworks and methodological decisions" (Castelló et al., 2020, p. 570) have been made.

In the process of facilitating this research project, my research questions for investigating the internationalization of higher educations in the USA, Korea and Germany are rooted in my personal educational background. As a Korean national, I was able to witness the number of international students significantly increasing during my bachelor studies (2003–2007) in Seoul, Korea. However, concrete questions on how these incoming international students live and study did not surface until I traveled to the USA (as an international exchange student from 2004 from 2005 and in 2011) and Germany (as a regular degree-seeking student from 2007 to 2011) and became an international student myself. An array of personal incidences and university support systems of these two countries had a strong impact on my perception on the support system for the integration of international students. In addition, such experiences have especially awakened the curiosity of finding out the state of affairs of Korean higher education in the context of internationalizing and accommodating international students as a host institution, which was my initial contact to the research under consideration.

Based on the given premise, my inquiry aims at discovering whether similar support programs and services exist which assist international students based on the concept of the internationalization of higher education. When it comes to international students, the division of student status – exchange program and regular degree program[42] – was made against my personal biographical background that different support offerings were provided by the host institutions. Here, to my mind, the exchange programs that I experienced were organized systematically by the international offices of the universities and reaching out for assistance from my side was easier. Furthermore, as an exchange student, I was largely motivated to immerse into different cultural events provided by the university as well as to acquire academic achievement. In contrast, being a free-mover regular degree student meant that I had to manage the stay and the studies at the destination self-sufficiently as the national students and mostly, my general focus lay on the academic accomplishment of successfully completing my degree.

From my perspective, reaching out for assistance when necessary and gaining access to information as an exchange student were more available. Having no ties and being a regular degree student in a different country in the beginning was quite different and that momentum motivated me to explore the different experiences, which could arise based on the status of international students (non-degree exchange program or regular degree program).

Furthermore, after my studies in Germany, experiences gained working as an English instructor[43] at language centers of German universities were an additional driving force to examine how integration programs work for international students. My daily teaching involved contacts with students – both German national and international students (non-degree exchange and regular-degree). In the course of the semesters, through course dialogues, I learned about the experiences from the host universities in Germany shared by the international students. Most of the time, comparisons were made to their lives of the universities they came from. Based on individual utterances on these topics, I was able get an insight on how various campus environments can influence the life and perspectives of international students at the host country.

When devising the research proposal, the initial starting point was uncovering the voices of experts' and international students' lived experiences concerning the social and cultural support and services for international students. A systematized understanding based on my individual experiences and the relationship to this study as an English instructor was largely sought. Against the backdrop of my personal background and

42 The terms exchange program refers to "credit mobility" and regular degree program refers to "degree mobility" (DAAD & DZHW, 2019). In defining and differentiating the two terms, "degree mobility covers all study visits in the course of which a degree is gained abroad, while credit mobility refers to study-related visits abroad […] which formed part of a study program leading to a degree in the students' [country of origin]" (ibid.). Credit mobility covers short-term stays for "language courses, study tours, project work and summer schools" (ibid.). Varying terms, such as short-term studies, non-degree studies are also used to indicate credit mobility.

43 At the time of the data collection phase, I worked as a freelancer instructor at three German universities and currently I work as a full-time English instructor at TU Dortmund University.

language proficiency, three countries (the USA, Korea and Germany) were selected for the investigation of the specified research question.

Taking the researcher role and the relationship with the topic into account, the following points are considered beneficial in the process of my research:

1) Awareness and familiarity of social and cultural support programs and services offered to international students in the USA, Korea and Germany
2) Language proficiency in English, Korean and German when it comes to data collection (documents and interviews as well as literature and reference materials)
3) Cultural sensitivity and awareness when transcribing and analyzing the data

To prevent personal bias throughout the research process, conscious attentiveness to any existent preconceptions were required in the following aspects at every stage of the research design:

1) Questioning of personal bias which could lead to quick judgements or steering the path of the data collection into a certain direction based on the researcher's experience
2) Reflective responsibility when integrating comparative perspective within the international education research
3) "Grasping meaning not only in one's own native language, but also in another" (Reinke de Buitrago, 2019, para. 1) when working with multilingual and multicultural contexts

Cultural sensitivity and awareness as well as challenges of working with multilingual and multicultural contexts will be addressed within the context of collecting data (ref. Chapter 5.1) and for the most part, during the transcription and the data analysis phase (ref. Chapter 5.2). In the immediate subsequent chapter, conducting the comparative method in this research project within the context of the qualitative research will be discussed as follows.

4.2 The comparative perspective in the scope of qualitative research

Implementing the comparative method is inevitably to be expected in this research as three countries are involved. However, when it comes to extracting the features under investigation (i.e., the support for international students at host institutions) and comparing them in three countries "always [bears] a risk of losing the sight of uniqueness" (Freitag, 2014, p. 75, my translation). Moreover, applying such comparative stance in the field of international education research entails "the danger of extensive decontextualization" (ibid., my translation). Thus, it is important to be critical not to lose the surrounding meaning of the comparing aspects, which, once more, emphasizes the importance of "higher sensibility of contexts" (ibid., my translation). The mentioned statements from Freitag (2014) serve as the starting point to elucidate the following reflective responsi-

bilities with the aim of "enhancing the scientific quality of the comparative research" (p. 76, my translation).

The first challenge of maintaining reflective responsibility in comparative research is to avoid "methodological nationalism[44] and culturalism" (Adick, 2008, p. 184, my translation), which are seldom reflected and monitored (ref. Adick, 2014a, pp. 30–31). Such "taken-for-granted assumption that national states and their boundaries are the 'natural' containers of societies and hence the appropriate unit of analysis" (Dale, 2005, p. 124) leads to circular reasoning or generalizations such as "the French education is very 'French' because it involves typical 'French' features" (ref. Adick, 2014a, p. 30, my translation). The "location comparisons" or comparisons on "systems of education, many of which are described, rightly or wrongly as national systems" (Bray, 2005, p. 239) are to be scrutinized for any hasty simplifications.[45]

To prevent such shortfalls of methodological nationalism, Adick (2014a) mentions that subnational fields such as federal states, regions, districts or cities are taken into consideration (ref. p. 33, my translation). In addition to the given efforts, examining the phenomena across-nations or across-cultures have emerged with the intention of "ensuring the basis for comparability and opening up insights" (Schreiber-Barsch & Bernhard-Skala, 2018, p. 265) into the *issues* at hand (ref. Nóvoa & Yariv-Mashal, 2003). Moreover, "the concept of supranational (literally above nations) denotes a separate, distinct and non-reducible level or scale of activity" (Dale, 2005, p. 125). In said direction, the framework for comparative educational analyses by Bray and Thomas (1995) cannot be overlooked. This framework involves "multilevel analyses" of seven levels,[46] referred to as "the cube" (Bray, 2005, pp. 240–241). Along these lines, in German comparative educational system discourse, three levels[47] have long been discussed by Schriewer (1982) (ref. Adick, 2014a, p. 34).

Having the above mentioned aspects in mind, it is necessary to be aware of the idea that

> "[t]he focus of Comparative Education should not be on the 'facts' or the 'realities,' but on *problems*. By definition, the facts (events, countries, systems, etc.) are incomparable. It is possible to highlight differences and similarities, but it is hard to go further. Only *problems* can constitute the basis for complex comparison: problems that are anchored in the present, but that possess history and anticipate different possible futures; problems that are located and relocated in places and times, through processes of transfer, circulation and appropriation; problems that can only be elucidated through the adoption of new

44 The corresponding translation of the term 'methodological nationalism' was taken from Dale (2005, p. 124). In German, Adick (2008) uses the terms 'methodologische Nationalismus und Kulturalismus.'

45 Bray (2005) notes that Sir Michael Sadler's (1900) comparison between Hong Kong and Macao as well as Issac Kandal (1933) was "in this category" of generalizing within the frame of 'nations' (p. 239).

46 Level 1: World Regions/Continents; Level 2: Countries; Level 3: States/Provinces; Level 4: Districts; Level 5: Schools; Level 6: Classrooms; Level 7: Individuals.

47 macro- or context-level, medium- or organizational-level and micro- or individual-level

> *zones of looking* that are inscribed in a space delimited by frontiers of meaning, not only by physical boundaries" (Nóvoa & Yariv-Mashal, 2003).

Thereby, the main focus of the present research lies on deepening the insight of the lived experiences of experts (who practice supporting international students at the host institutions) and individual international students (who are provided with such support at the corresponding institutions). This given challenge then can be tackled by clearly setting the unit of analysis on the micro-level, namely, the *individual interview participants* under investigation instead of on the territorial borders (ref. von Bargen, 2014, p. 106; Schweisfurth, 1999, p. 337). Moreover, within the theoretical foundation of qualitative methodology in this research, "the comparative component of the issue under scrutiny" (Schreiber-Barsch & Bernhard-Skala, 2018, p. 264), the so-called tertium comparationis (the third part of the comparison), can be defined as *the actions and the reflective opinions of experts and international students*.

Attentiveness to these two aspects and utilizing them as methods assist not to fall back on comparisons focusing on national containers (ref. Adick, 2008; ref. Dale, 2005), especially when collecting and analyzing the the central issues at hand from micro-level interview participants. Another step in this challenge, which has to be sensibly reflected, is when presenting the findings as the following citation discloses:

> "There exists a danger in which *a specific group* in a corresponding country is selected, which in turn is considered 'special' for the respective context and thereby possibly influences the interpretation of the data" (von Bargen, 2014, p. 17, my translation; emphasis added).

In the given research, this aspect was cautiously contemplated when interpreting and summarizing the findings of the interview data of sampled interviews (ref. 5.4.2). The main goal is to avoid generalizations, which can lead to representing a nation only based on a single statement of an interview of the selected groups.

The second challenge when comparing systems in educational science is to prevent the "tendency to search for the better or best practice which bears the risk of only perceiving the conditions and contexts in a highly marginalized way" (Freitag, 2014, pp. 75–76, my translation). In this regard, it is also vital to avoid "tak[ing] the ideas of western modernity and the western nation-state as the norm against which other arrangements are compared" (Dale, 2005, p. 124). As this research investigates whether the theoretical concept by Knight (2004; 2012) on the internationalization of higher education can be found in three countries, "potential for the uncritical, and perhaps unrecognized, international transfer of emergent western research paradigms, approaches and strategies" (Crossely, 2010, p. 426; 1999, p. 255) should be carefully monitored by continuously identifying the "contextual and cultural factors" (ibid.).

From this standpoint, Crossely and Jarvis (2001) highly stress the importance of "strengthening […] local research capacity, and […] increased cross-cultural sensitivity in education research and development" (p. 406) as well as "other small state nationals [playing] a more central and international role in comparative and interna-

tional research" (ibid.). As for my research, against the role of the researcher and the reflective responsibilities within the framework of the comparative method, it is evident to discover that "a hybrid cultural identity is formed" (Macht, 2018, para. 7). When speaking of my case, "the researcher has lived and studie[d] in a certain country situated at the margins (referring to Korea in my example)" (ref. ibid.) and then works on the dissertation in Germany. There is no doubt that the field of the internationalization of higher education "has so far been largely Anglo-Saxon and Western European driven" (Bedenlier et al., 2018, p. 128). This equally holds true for the application of the qualitative research methods that mostly "stem [. . .] from the 'Anglo-American core'" (Hsiung, 2012, para. 1). Hsiung (2012) uses the term "peripheral" countries as a contrasting term to the core countries and emphasizes the significance of "forging a collective identity as peripheral scholars in relation to the Anglo-American core" (para. 10). One of the efforts can been seen through "the publications of *FQS* [Forum: Qualitative Social Research; 'Qualitative Sozialforschung' in German], which was designed to publicize 'what is happening in the non-Anglo-Saxon 'peripheries' of our globalized qualitative research world'" (Cisneros Puebla et al., 2006, p. 6 in Hsiung, 2012, para. 10).

In this light, the research data contains, alongside the USA, not only non-English speaking resources (from Korea and Germany) but also draws attention to 'peripheral' contexts, particularly, Korea. Based on the latest literature review on the internationalization of higher education, Bedenlier et al. (2018) have examined 406 articles published between 1997 and 2016 (first issue) in JSIE (ref. Chapter 2). According to the bibliographic analysis based on the association of the first authors, there have been nine articles from Germany and six articles from Korea. Journals from the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom provide more than 50% of the published articles. (ref. Bedenlier et al., 2018, pp. 113–114).

In that connection, as for the implementation of qualitative research in Korean settings, Kim and Cho (2005) stress that

> "[s]ince the purpose of doing science is not confirmation of law-like theories or generalization across contexts anymore, to use the Korean field as another sample for generating generalizable principles or a context-free hypothesis is inappropriate" (p. 370).

The authors urge for "de-centering" and "decolonizing the research topics" (ibid., p. 371) evolving around internationalization. To achieve such consciousness, qualitative researchers need to "listen [. . .] to natives' voices through qualitative research frame" (ibid.) and "address issues and topics that are relevant and meaningful to members" of the given environment (Hsiung, 2012, para. 14). Such awareness, most certainly, is essential in the fieldwork settings and during the analysis phases of all three countries under investigation in this research.

With aforementioned aspects considered, conscious recognition of researcher roles provides a vital contribution to the quality of the research procedure. Concurrently, it is beyond doubt that utilizing the "'toolbox' created by the core" (Hsiung, 2012, para. 26) – whether it is for the qualitative or the comparative research approaches –

can be challenged and simultaneously expanded through reflexive practices. And this conscious action can lead to making the

> "researcher from the periphery feel more valued and […] visible in the center and help produce certain types of knowledge that not only serve to be consumed by the periphery but can as well as represent it" (Macht, 2018, para. 7).

In this respect, the mentioned reflexive measures in the research process when working with *the issue* in question (i.e., Knight's (2004; 2012) theoretical concepts of the internationalization of higher education) in a comparative setting can conceivably lead to "widening dialogue between cultures" (Crossley & Jarvis, 2001, p. 406) as well as creating "globalized 'toolboxes'" for research knowledge (Hsiung, 2012, para. 27). That is to say, the prime underlying aspiration in this qualitative research is to achieve contextual international and intercultural discourses by fulfilling the reflective responsibilities of the comparative approach.

4.3 Rationale for employing qualitative research approach

Bearing the reflexive comparative perspective in mind and remaining in accordance with the micro-level unit of analysis, before conducting the research, it is necessary to clarify the methodological foundation for this study and the reasons for selecting a qualitative research approach. As mentioned previously, the nature of my study concentrates on describing experiences of specific subjects and contexts of environments – international students, international officers, and universities in three countries.

Founded on examining experiences and contexts of the above mentioned agents, it has become clear that "people, institutions and interactions are involved in producing the realities in which they live or occur and that these productive efforts are based on processes of meaning-making" (Flick, 2007a, p. 12). Based on this premise, theoretical positions of phenomenology and interactionism are the core philosophical pillars of the research. Under phenomenology, "lived experiences" (ref. Kvale, 2007; Roulston, 2010) become the main focus and methods within this philosophical background are utilized to "elicit the 'direct description of a particular situation or as it is lived through without offering casual explanation or interpretive generalization'" (ref. Adams & van Maren, 2008 in Roulston, 2010).

The suitability of a applying a qualitative research approach is based on the fundamental notion that the researcher "can take on an interpretive approach to social knowledge" (Kohlbacher, 2006, para. 47), which can be "series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 3 in Kohlbacher, 2006, para. 48).

Based on this idea, my first aim was to conduct pre-investigation "to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena"[48] or "cultural particulars grounded in given patterns of

48 Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 3 in Kohlbacher, 2006, para. 48.

social organization"[49] based on "manifest contents,"[50] i.e., documents of the homepage data and on-site brochures of international offices of the selected fifteen universities in each country.[51] The main reason for looking into this source of international offices' webpages was based on the assumption that the international office homepages are the initial formal information source for international students when planning their study abroad. In addition to the homepage data, on-site brochures (retrieved during field site visits) of international offices were also collected for analysis. The goal was to have an overview of the tendencies of offering support for international students under the concept of the internationalization of higher education.

To complement the manifest information and in order to gain a holistic picture, the agents of implementing support services and subjects who participate in the offers were interviewed to "generate detailed and in-depth descriptions" (Roulston, 2010, p. 16) of the phenomenon. In the framework interactionism, it is important to note that "interviewees are to be viewed as subjects who actively construct the features of their cognitive world" (Silverman, 1985, p. 162) and are "not reduced to an isolated variable or to a hypothesis, but are viewed instead as part of a whole" (Bogdan, 1975, p. 4). As "most interactionists tend to reject prescheduled standardized interviews and prefer open-ended interviews" (Silverman, 1985, p. 162), the attention was given to eliciting international officers' and student's perceptions on support services based on their lived experiences. Semi-structured interview guiding questions were prepared but as Denzin (1970, p. 125) states, interview outcomes were founded on permitting the interview participants' "unique ways of defining the world," having "no fixed sequence of questions is suitable to all respondents," and allowing interview participants to "raise important issues not contained in the schedule" (Silverman, 1985, p. 162).

In order to produce descriptive data in reference to the written and spoken information (ref. Bogdan, 1975, p. 4), qualitative content analysis was utilized as it "can be applied to a wide range of materials: interview transcripts, transcripts of focus groups, textbooks, company brochures, contracts, diaries, websites, entries on social network sites, television programs, newspaper articles, magazine advertisements, and many more" (Schreier, 2012, pp. 2–3). As Mayring (2000) notes, manifest content of the semi-structured interviews from experts and international students can be analyzed (para. 4; ref. Kohlbacher, 2006, para. 52). Most of all, framed within qualitative research, qualitative content analysis aims to reduce the data to find patterns that emerge, which are similar within three countries or at times different when dealing with accumulated data (ref. Schreier, 2012, pp. 2–3).

Against the background of the above-mentioned theoretical rationales, the following data collection and analysis methods are the foundations for my qualitative research:

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49 Silverman, 1985, p. 162

50 Mayring, 2000, para. 4

51 Sampling of fifteen universities is mentioned in Chapter 4.5.

1) Methods of data collection were
   a) the pre-investigation of documents of homepages of international offices (and brochures during the field site visits) of fifteen universities from each country and
   b) semi-structured interviews with experts from international offices as well as individual international students in each country.
2) As a method of data analysis, qualitative content analysis on b) was conducted.

The rationale and criterion for fixing the number of sample universities to fifteen and detailed number of expert and international student interview are outlined in Chapter 4.5.

The collection of data from a) served mostly as a background informational knowledge to acquire overview of the tendencies of the support services from the universities of three countries and especially when conducting the interviews with experts and international students during the field site visits in order to efficiently retain the time restrictions and avoid inquiring redundant questions. As for the pre-investigated data, the collected data were not summarized and analyzed for reporting due to its limited objectivity solely based on the webpages or brochures of universities as well as tentative modifications and the amount of information being updated constantly. Thus, the analyzed data for reporting were referred back to the quotations from the interviews as these disclose the lived experiences of the agents involved concerning the topics in question.

4.4 Developing semi-structured interview guides

As this research aims to examine the seven categories from the two sectors (services and extracurricular activities) specified in the theoretical framework by Knight (2004; 2012, ref. Chapter 2.2.4), the interview script contains "an outline of the topics to be covered with suggested questions" (Kvale, 2007, p. 57) based on corresponding theoretically given categories and documents collected from each university. Such theory based approach justified utilizing a semi-structured interview script. Since two groups are under investigation, separate interview guides were created for each group, one for the experts and the other for the international students (ref. Appendices). Interview questions were written in English as the working language of this research and English was used primarily during the interviews. German translation and Korean translation of the semi-structured interview questions were implemented when necessary.

In line with the phenomenological approach to the interview, semi-structured interview questions centered on "generating participants' descriptions of particular lived experiences" (Roulston, 2012, p. 19), i.e., experts' perceptions of offered support for international students and international students' feelings on such provided support. In order to elicit the interviewees' experience "in their own words" (ibid., p. 16), the main strategy employed was "to generate probes" in order to prevent interview participants "tak[ing] up the researcher's terms at a later point in the talk – in effect recycling what the interviewer has said rather than selecting their own words" (ibid., p. 13). Such

probing guidelines were indicated in the beginning of the interview scripts. In keeping with the purpose of eliciting interviewees' own words, the interview questions were to be "easy to understand, short and devoid of academic language" (Kvale, 2007, p. 57), especially when devising the script for international students. However, the terms of categories from Knights' theory (2004; 2012) were explicitly indicated when interviewing the experts in the field to examine if such terms exist at the field sites and to specifically gain information about the topics. Thus, to effectively conduct phenomenological interviews during the field site visits,

> "it [was] essential that the interviewer has identified participants who have both experienced, and are able to talk about the particular lived experience under examination" (Roulston, 2012, p. 17).

To achieve this, background document analysis of the corresponding institutions and their support services were previously conducted to 1) be prepared and 2) to efficiently carry out the semi-structured interviews at the destinations. Such procedures prevented from deliberately starting the interview with indefinite open questions, as time for the face-to face interview was limited during the field visits.

4.5 The research design and procedures

In the beginning of the research phase, documents from international office websites of three countries were gathered in Germany as I live and have worked in Germany as a freelancer English instructor at three universities[52] at the time of the data-collection phase. Two thirds of the data-collecting phase, i.e., the interviews, was carried out with the grant from the German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD) as I traveled to university campuses in the USA and Korea.

As for selecting data for qualitative content analysis,[53] I chose fifteen universities with the highest number of international students from each country because I expected that the universities with the highest number of international students have been supporting international students to adjust at host institutions. This should present a data set for comparison in which differences between countries and institutions can clearly be distinguished. The sources of the number of international students were taken from the academic year from 2010/11: 1) the USA's *Open Doors* 2) Germany's Wissenschaft Weltoffen 3) Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI).

Once the fifteen universities with the highest numbers of international students were selected, between June and August 2013, I accumulated documents of support for international students provided by the international office homepages. Supplementary on-site brochures and handbooks, especially targeting incoming international students of

52 University of Duisburg-Essen, TU Dortmund University and Ruhr University of Bochum

53 "Selecting sites and events" (ref. Flick, 2007a, pp. 30–31).

the universities were accessible by those universities that I visited during my interview phase (ref. Table 3).

Regarding the research participants for the interviews, qualitative data from 56 semi-structured interviews of experts and international students were collected. The expert and student interview participants were selected within the fifteen universities of each country. As mentioned, a scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Service was awarded to carry out the interviews in the USA and in Korea between July and October 2014. The research period for conducting interviews in Germany (April 2015 – September 2015) concluded the phase of data collection.

Before the field site visits, the first step was taken to contact the expertise in the field via email provided on the international office homepages of fifteen universities in each country under investigation. The emails for expert interview inquiries were sent out to senior international officers. The contacted senior international officers responded to the interview inquiry by either accepting to the interview or by forwarding the initial email inquiry to varying staff in charge. Once the experts accepted the interview requests, interview appointments were made. All expert interviews took place face-to-face[54] in the offices of the corresponding experts or meetings rooms made available by the experts. The participants chose the location of the interview to secure comfort of each interviewee. In one setting, two experts from a university were in the same meeting room notifying me in advance.[55] As they had different positions in the office, the outcome of the interview was two separate experiences (two units of analysis, ref. Chapter 5.3.1) in supporting international students based on the semi-structured interview guide.

Once the expert interview appointments were confirmed, I searched for student interview participants. These experts were crucial in setting up interviews with students during the visits as they supported me by sending out the research interview inquiry via university email listing of international students.[56] In addition, I approached the students directly during the visits on campuses in each country. The overview of the characteristics and criteria of the interview participants is summarized in Table 3 below. It is important to note that all the expert interviews were conducted face-to-face within the scholarship period in Korea and in the United States as well as the six-month-period of research in Germany. For the student interviews, the interview period goes beyond the scholarship period due to follow-up interviews and email responses from international students after the field visits on campuses (ref. explanation in 4.5.2 International student interviews).

54 The interviews with experts and international students were “one-to-one interviews” (ref. Kvale, 2007, p. 72).

55 The given interviews with two participants did not “rely[…] on generating and analyzing interaction between participants, rather than asking the same question (or list of questions [based on semi-structured interview guides]) to each group participant in turn” (Barbour, 2007, p. 2).

56 This option was limited since every university had its own data privacy regulations, which at times did not allow experts to access the email lists of the international students for such individual inquiries.

Table 3. Timeline of the data collection period and summary of the interview data

Country	USA	Korea	Germany
Interview period	July 2014 – November 2015	September 2014 – September 2015	April 2015 – September 2015
German Academic Exchange Services Scholarship Period	July 21 – September 6, 2014	September 7 – October 4, 2014	
1. Planned expert interviews	• 3 experts from each country (Senior) staff members in international offices or on campus who support international students		
Collected data	From 6 different universities: Total of 8 experts	From 6 different universities: Total of 7 experts	From 7 different universities: Total of 8 experts
2. Planned international student interviews	• 4 students in regular degree (undergraduate or graduate) programs in each country • 4 students in exchange (undergraduate or graduate) programs in each country Note: These students should have studied a minimum of one semester at the destination at the time of the interview in order to be able to deliver more than their first impressions.		
Collected data	From 5 different universities: • 8 regular degree students (4 undergraduate and 4 graduate) • 3 exchange students Total of 11 students	From 4 different universities: • 8 regular degree students (2 graduate and 6 undergraduate) • 5 exchange students Total of 13 students	From 3 different universities: • 4 regular degree students (4 graduate) • 5 exchange students Total of 9 students

4.5.1 Expert interviews

I conducted 23 semi-structured interviews with experts from 19 different universities from all three countries who are either (senior) staff members[57] from international offices or staff members who are working for the international students' support on campus, since "a specific professional position or function is the criterion in the background of [my] sampling."[58] All the sampled experts are (senior) staff members from

57 Except for the title of the position, senior international officer who is the director of international offices (with varying names), the term, staff member was chosen for the employees at international offices as titles vary in each institution and country, e.g., international officer, immigration advisor, program advisor.

58 "Logics of sampling in qualitative research" (ref. Flick, 2007a, pp. 26–29).

international offices, except for three participants. The latter three experts are not hired by international offices but work with international offices and support the integration of international students. They have the main task to support international students at the university affiliated language center (USA), in the project affiliated mentoring program on campus (Germany), and at the university affiliated counseling center for international students (Germany). As for reporting the results, the structure and the role of primarily international offices are mentioned and individual centers that work parallel and closely with international offices are not dealt with separately. The contributions of the experts' lived experiences, nevertheless, on the given guiding interview questions still apply when providing the information on the offers for supporting international students at host universities.

The expert interviews were to show

1) what kind of support for international students is offered at the host universities;
2) whether the collected support for international students follow similar or different focal points;
3) and future developmental perspectives on supporting international students based on the experts' lived experiences.

The central focus was to investigate whether the support for international students at the host institutions follow the general internationalization concepts. Furthermore, comparative findings based on different national context were discovered during the analysis procedures, which go beyond the descriptive analysis of the collected data. The overview of sampled expert interviews is indicated in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Overview of the expert interview participants

Location	Code name	Position	Male	Female	Time in position	Duration	Language
USA	IO-1-US	International officer		○	15 years	55 min.	English
	IO-2-US	International officer		○	3 years	55 min.	English
	IO-3-US	International officer	○		9 months	39 min.	English
	IO-4-US	International officer		○	1 year and 6 months	30 min.	English
	IO-5-US	Senior international officer	○		20 years	54 min.	English
	IO-6-US	Staff member from the university affiliated language center	○		5 years	39 min.	English
	IO-7-US	International officer		○	19 years	1 hr. 9 min.	English
	IO-8-US	Senior international officer		○	14 years	56 min.	English

Location	Code name	Position	Male	Female	Time in position	Duration	Language
Korea	IO-1-KO	Senior international officer	○		18 years	53 min.	Korean
	IO-2-KO	International officer		○	6 years	32 min.	Korean
	IO-3-KO	International officer		○	1 year	49 min.	Korean
	IO-4-KO	International officer	○		2 years	51 min.	Korean
	IO-5-KO	International officer		○	1 year	40 min.	Korean
	IO-6-KO	International officer	○		6 years	40 min.	Korean
	IO-7-KO	International officer		○	1 year 10 months		Korean
Germany	IO-1-DE	Senior international officer	○		8 years	57 min.	German
	IO-2-DE	Senior international officer		○	3 years	1 hr. and 3 min.	English
	IO-3-DE	International officer		○	25 years	1 hr. 22 min.	German
	IO-4-DE	Senior international officer		○	6 years	57 min.	English
	IO-5-DE	Staff member of university affiliated peer advising program		○	2 years	41 min.	German
	IO-6-DE	International officer		○	3 months	34 min.	English
	IO-7-DE	Senior international officer		○	2 years	1 hr. 20 min.	English
	IO-8-DE	Faculty member supporting international students		○	7 years	1 hr.	English

4.5.2 International student interviews

For the student interviews, the semi-structured interviews were carried out to 33 international students from 12 different universities to examine how the selected international students identify their living and studying conditions in Germany, Korea and the USA. The underlying thought of investigating the students' perspective began with the assumption that one cannot ignore the national context and the situational reality of campus life of each country and that such surroundings can influence the integration of international students even though the institutional framework of support from the university, at times specifically from international offices, are provided.

The international students under investigation are enrolled as regular degree students (free movers[59]) for a bachelor's (or termed as undergraduate) and a master's program (referred also as graduate) and should have studied at the destination a minimum of one semester at the time of the interview. The students who are partaking in exchange programs (exchange students[60]) should have also studied at the destination at least for one semester. The division of regular degree students and exchange program students is designed in a way to observe whether each group partakes differently in support services offered by the university and how each group perceives the university life of the destination. For exchange students, the division of undergraduate and graduate degrees is not very clear as students can take both degree courses offered by universities. In addition, the degree status of students is explicitly marked as "exchange program" (ref. Table 5).

Students participating in language courses or short-term programs less than one semester are not included. Such sampling is based on the supposition that the students who have stayed at least one semester have experienced full-time academic and social life at the university. Moreover, due to the limitation of the sample participants, students residing at the destination for a specific research purpose or doctoral students, who focus more on individual research, are excluded from my research.

A minimum of one semester at the destination at the time of the interview was set as a criterion based on the underlying assumption that students are able to deliver more than their first impressions of their stay at the destination once they had lived and studied for one semester. Reaching out to the international students were mainly through two ways. As mentioned previously, the first attempt was via experts who accepted the interviews and had forwarded the international student interview inquiries. The second approach was to directly inquire time for the interviews on the spot during the research site visits at destinations. The places I met with students were mostly in international office buildings, cafeterias, and libraries. There existed interview settings, which involved asking two students consecutively, i.e., two separate units of analysis (ref. 4.5), as they were sitting together when the researcher made the request. For interview settings for previously fixed appointments, the students decided on the location and time of the interviews. For on-the-spot inquiries, in order to secure the comfort of the interviewees, the researcher asked whether they feel comfortable with the location before the interviews began.

Due to the circumstances of on-site sampling of international students, I was able to get in contact with five international students in Korea and two international students in the USA who had just arrived and experienced the first few months of the orientation phase of their study abroad at the time of the initial interview. For these seven cases, I was able to carry out the first few categories of the interview questions[61] during our

59 "Foreign students who have independently organized their studies" (ref. Isserstedt & Kandulla, 2010, p. 26).

60 "The term 'exchange students' is used to describe students who came […] as part of a mobility, partnership, cooperation or exchange program" (ref. ibid., p. 25).

61 The numbers of categories questioned vary depending on each interview participant based on their experiences at host destinations.

initial encounters and conduct the rest of the interview questions after these students had completed the semester. These students were informed about the follow-up interviews during the initial interviews and they had agreed to meet virtually or in person once the semester was finished. These follow-up interviews were administered via video conference or in person and were transcribed together as one complete interview unit. In addition, there were three students who received the interview inquiry from experts and these students contacted me via email after my research stay at the destination of the universities in the USA and Korea. Due to these circumstances, the interview phase goes beyond the regulated time of scholarship period. Table 5 displays the overview of the sampled international student interview participants.

Table 5. Overview of the international student interview participants

Location	Code name	Degree	Male	Female	Country of origin	Duration	Language
USA	I-1-US	Regular under-graduate		○	Kenya	17 min.	English
	I-2-US	Regular under-graduate		○	Zim-babwe	21 min.	English
	I-3-US	Regular under-graduate		○	Malaysia	48 min.	English
	I-4-US	Regular graduate	○		Nigeria		English
	I-5-US	Regular graduate		○	China	38 min.	English
	I-6-US	Regular graduate		○	China	33 min.	English
	I-7-US	Regular graduate		○	China	25 min.	English
	I-8-US	Regular under-graduate	○		Taiwan	27 min.	English
	I-9-US	Exchange student		○	Germany	26 min.	English
	I-10-US	Exchange student	○		Germany	25 min.	English
	I-11-US	Exchange student		○	Republic of Korea	23 min.	Korean
Korea	I-1-KO	Regular graduate		○	Malaysia	41 min.	English
	I-2-KO	Regular under-graduate		○	Gua-temala	19 min.	English
	I-3-KO	Exchange student		○	Austria	17 min.	English
	I-4-KO	Exchange student	○		Belgium	28 min.	English
	I-5-KO	Regular under-graduate		○	Thailand	36 min.	English
	I-6-KO	Regular under-graduate		○	The Philip-pines	60 min.	English
	I-7-KO	Regular under-graduate	○		Jordan	25 min.	English

Location	Code name	Degree	Male	Female	Country of origin	Duration	Language
Korea	I-8-KO	Regular graduate		○	Japan	16 min.	Korean
	I-9-KO	Exchange student		○	France	51 min.	English
	I-10-KO	Exchange student		○	Germany	36 min.	English
	I-11-KO	Exchange student	○		The Nether-lands	51 min.	English
	I-12-KO	Regular under-graduate	○		China	35 min.	English
	I-13-KO	Regular under-graduate	○		Malaysia	32 min.	English
Germany	I-1-DE	Exchange student	○		Brazil	36 min.	English
	I-2-DE	Exchange student		○	Poland	59 min.	English
	I-3-DE	Exchange student		○	France	38 min.	English
	I-4-DE	Regular graduate		○	China	48 min.	English
	I-5-DE	Regular graduate	○		India	28 min.	English
	I-6-DE	Regular graduate		○	Ecuador	56 min.	English
	I-7-DE	Exchange student		○	Spain	21 min.	English
	I-8-DE	Exchange student	○		Spain		English
	I-9-DE	Regular graduate		○	China	40 min.	English

4.5.3 Reflection on the research design procedures

There exists no doubt that "quality in qualitative research is produced [...] through the whole process" (Flick, 2007b, p. 139). In order to ensure the quality of this given qualitative research, the concept of "*trustworthiness*" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 in Flick, 2007b, p. 19; Elo et al., 2014, p. 2) was applied as the reflective method instead of using "classical criteria of empirical social research" (ibid., p. 11), which "are mainly rooted in a positivist conception of research" (Elo et al., 2014, p. 2). In maintaining trustworthiness, transparent documentation stands in the foreground to secure the quality; and thus, the checklist of "data collection, analysis, and presentation of the results of content analysis" (Elo et al., 2014, p. 2) and guiding questions by Flick (2007b, p. 132) were checked when indicating the procedures in each chapter.

As "relevance" and "[q]uality of research [are] precondition[s] of ethically sound research" (Flick, 2007b, p. 129), it is crucial to mention how ethical conditions are safeguarded. With regard to the relevance, this research can be "justified [as] it produces insights" (Flick, 2007b, p. 123) into lived experiences of experts and international students concerning support from host universities and leaves possibilities for "contribut[ing] to solving problems – by new knowledge or by concrete suggestions

for practical implications" (ibid.). Such underlying relevance allows the researcher to intervene and gather data regarding appropriate ethical guidelines for social science research (ibid., pp. 26–27). Informed consent was provided during the briefing and debriefing sessions of the interviews. Both the interviewer and the interviewee signed the letter of consent after informing the purpose of and the procedure of the interview. In addition, when briefing the interview, the interviewer asked for the permission to use the recording device and ensured the confidentiality of the private data. The names and institutions in the reporting of the results remain anonymous. As the samples were collected from the set of lists provided by statistical references mentioned, in order to avoid tracing back to the institutions, indications of locations were not revealed and the interviewees were named in pseudonyms. Moreover, the digital audio files were saved securely. In addition, transcribed data and the information of the private data of the interview participant were saved separately.

For the main process of conducting the interviews, the head supervisor and second supervisor, who wrote the recommendations for the DAAD scholarship, reviewed the interview scripts before being implemented. The researcher's role and potential bias (ref. Chapter 4.1) during the interviews were continuously reflected in a field journal, which contains "written entries that record the researcher's reflections, ideas, commentaries, and memos throughout the research process" (Roulston, 2012, p. 121).

Overall, the number of sampled interview participants was a personal success as compared to what I had expected before the inquiries were made. In the preliminary research proposal, I had planned to collect 3 expert and 8 student interviewees (both regular degree and exchange programs) in each country (33 interviews in total was initially planned). Compared to the initial planning of acquiring 3 experts in each country for expert interviews, I received unexpectedly more number of positive responses from experts from all three countries. Readiness of the experts and their support (sending out my interview inquiry emails to international students) as well as the receptiveness of international students to my personal inquiry, e.g., in libraries, cafeterias or hallways in front of international offices, had led me to collect a total of 56 interviews.

This gathered data was regarded realistic for me as an individual researcher to grasp during the phases of transcribing and analyzing the data. In order to tackle the ample data, I utilized the coding and categorizing methods with the emphasis on the meaning of the collected data. Due to the openness of the interview process, the categories created in the semi-structured interview framework can be added and expanded in accordance with the transcribed data. These latter analytical steps are explained further in detail in the next chapter.

5 Procedures of data analysis: comparative perspective and national contexts

The previous chapter elucidates the theoretical foundation of the methodology employed for the data collection and the corresponding research design implemented to answer the related research questions. The following chapter explains the procedures taken to "identi[fy] essential features and the systematic descriptions of interrelationships among them" (Wolcott, 1994, p. 12) by looking at the collected interview data.

As interviews were conducted from various national field sites, i.e., the USA, Korea and Germany, the initial step of working with the multilingual and multicultural data is discussed by mentioning the benefits and challenges before explaining the steps taken to transcribe the recorded interviews.

In order to first discover the central themes and then their relationships to the collected data, the method of qualitative content analysis was applied to reduce the data systematically to extract the gist of the descriptive meaning of lived experiences of the experts and international students (ref. Schreier, 2012, p. 1). From descriptive observations based on the semi-structured interview questions to classifying identified patterns based on careful methodical coding procedures of such interview data, it was possible to detect how host universities support international students.

The group experience of experts and international students was analyzed to decipher what offers were provided by host universities and how the selected international students experienced the provided offers. The central themes generated from qualitative content analysis were used to further analyze the interrelationship by cross-referencing the experiences of the experts and international students.

Aiming to go beyond the descriptive level of the findings, as three countries were selected as field sites, comparative perspectives of the national context cannot be overlooked. As the research aim was to search for similarities of the applied theoretical concept by Jane Knight (2004; 2012), differences pertaining to these national contexts have drawn vigilant attention to significant aspects, namely social and cultural features constituting university life, which exceeds the descriptive level of analysis. Such procedures of data analysis of personal experiences of experts and international students as well as the comparative analysis of support for international students from the host universities in the USA, Korea, and Germany are explained in the succeeding chapter.

5.1 Multilingual and multicultural data: acknowledging the benefits and challenges

Working with multilingual and multicultural data generates challenges in the transcription together with the analysis phases due to the fact that translation processes are involved. Evidently, the working language is English and texts in Korean and German are translated into English. In this respect, "the cultural and linguistic implications of translation in research" require "negotiation" between meanings as "literal translation is impossible" (Tarozzi, 2014, paras. 7–8). The researcher does not only have the obligation to accurately grasp the subtle social-cultural context when conducting and transcribing but also has the ability to handle the coding and the analysis of the collected data by excluding personal biases. And these conditions are to be particularly emphasized as the outcomes are examined within comparative perspectives in this current research.

To begin with, research in the field of dealing with challenges "inherent in cross-cultural and/or multilingual transcription" (MacLean, 2005, p. 121) has been scarce. From the given, the idea that "transcripts might work best when analyzed in the original language rather than being translated prior to analysis" (Twinn, 1998 in ibid.) is supported against the notion that transcripts in the original language are considered to be more precise. In addition, there exists complexity along with difficulty when searching for exactly the same corresponding words or expressions in the course of translating the transcriptions as the working language of this research is English. Consequently, it is believed to be "best to conduct, transcribe, and analyze whenever possible in the first language of the interviewee" (ibid.) and this conception has been applied as follows.

Regarding the document data collection, information provided for international students on websites of international offices are offered primarily in English. However, some information is presented only in Korean and German as well as in the brochures obtained during the field visits. In such a case, instead of translating the texts into English, the original terms in each language were maintained when collecting the data for future coding and analysis phases.

As for the interviews, the international student interviews and expert interviews were conducted mostly in English; nevertheless, Korean and German were used dependent on the participants' requests. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed in the language spoken during the interviews. The coding as well as the analyzing of the data was processed with the text transcribed in the original language. When undertaking the analysis phase of the study, of the few literature discussing the difficulties of implementing a qualitative content analysis in several languages, Reinke de Buitrago (2019) draws attention to the importance of the "deep knowledge of and familiarity and experience with each" language and culture when working "across languages and cultures" (p. 1). Along these lines, Kull et al. (2019) stress the role of the researcher with intercultural competence as well as cultural understanding when working with linguistic and cultural demands in qualitative content analysis.

In this regard, the initial step to achieve the purpose of the study when working with data from the USA, Korea and Germany was "develop[ing] a coding frame that can capture meaning in each language in a comparable manner" (Reinke de Buitrago, 2019,

p. 3). As for grasping the *trustworthy meaning* in qualitative research, Roth (2019) also highlights the fact that "[d]oing good theoretical and empirical research across languages requires attention to the choice of words" (p. 45), and researchers need to be cautious when translating native languages into English (ref. p. 1). When taking such idea further, Tarozzi (2013) points out that the "familiarity with the original language is not enough, it is essential to know the topic" (para. 14), namely,

> "direct knowledge of and specific experience with the research so that he or she can clarify terms and concepts that would otherwise remain ambiguous or decontextualized. That is the value of having 'lived experience,' as opposed to being widely read, in this or other methods. One has to have undergone the same process in order to deeply understand and accurately translate the meaning of endogenous expressions, textual examples and nuances" (para. 15).

Based on such premise, aside from the language competences to work with English, Korean, and German, the researcher's own "lived experiences" (ref. Chapter 4.1) "proved highly helpful in being aware of [. . .] own position towards the research interest, and to work with and in each language and cultural context" (para. 7). Such self-awareness of "biographical positioning and interaction with research material" (Reinke de Buitrago, 2019, para. 6), can be achieved through "sensitivity that ha[s] to do with momentum, insight, and seeing possibilities" (Tarozzi, 2013, para. 26). Therefore, throughout the research, a "foreignizing" approach was preferred over "domesticating" the translation of the given materials as the former approach "purposely maintain[s] some 'estranging' elements of the parlance of the culture of origin," whereas, the latter stance "play[s] down cultural differences as much as possible by bringing the original text within the philological parameters of the target culture" (para. 18).

Although such process requires continuous self-reflection and positioning of the meanings in contextual settings when translating, "the translation cost can be a gain rather than a loss" (ibid., para. 45), as this research aims to serve the limited research outcomes from the peripheral country, i.e., Korea in comparison with dominant North American and European cores in the research field of the internationalization of higher education. In relevance to "negotiation skills to constantly mediate the inevitable gap of equivalence between cultural and linguistic systems," the way in which the analysis procedure proceeded are mirrored in the subsequent chapters.

5.2 Transcription: denaturalized approach and its limitations

As transcription is perceived "as an interpretive process about what is transcribed and how it will be transcribed" (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019, p. 416), it is necessary to go through the transcription procedures and also reflect on the limitations of the transcriptional choices before proceeding to the data analysis. By and large, the researcher alone conducted all the interviews as well as the transcriptions and checked the corresponding transcriptions repeatedly. Two digital audio recorders were used at the time of the

interviews to avoid any technical errors and the digital recordings were saved as files on the computer with data codes and numbers to secure confidentiality. The names of the participants and affiliated institutions were removed during the transcription phase. The spoken text (recorded talking data) was represented in written discourse (ref. Widodo, 2014, p. 100) with the help of the computer software f4transkript.[62] "[T]hrough carefully repeated and attentive listening" (Widodo, 2014, p. 102), a total of 56 interviews were transcribed in the language spoken during the interviews, as aforementioned English, Korean and German were used in the interview process.

When transcribing the verbal data, in view of "that within speech are meanings and perceptions that construct our reality (Cameron 2001 in Oliver et al., 2005, p. 1)", a denaturalized[63] approach (ibid.; also termed as the "written style" in Kvale, 2007, p. 95) was applied. In this respect of placing denaturalized method into practice, "idiosyncratic elements of speech (e.g., stutters, pauses, nonverbal, involuntary vocalizations) [were] removed" (Oliver et al., 2005, p. 1).

The main reasoning behind choosing the denaturalized approach in this research is based on the notion that the "transcription technique depends on the method of analysis employed" (ref. Chizzotti, 2006 in Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019, p. 421); and "[j]ust as discourse analysis is for naturalized transcription, *content analysis* is for *denaturalized transcription*" (ibid., p. 422). When considering that the qualitative content analysis is implemented as the method of analysis in the current research, selecting the denaturalized transcription technique is justifiable as the aim of content analysis lies in detecting "the substance of the interview, that is, the meanings and perceptions created and shared during a conversation" (Oliver et al., 2005, p. 4). Since the content analysis examines the content of the text, whether the data include manifest or latent content, such methodical stance enables "the researcher to use reflexivity to leave the text in accordance with the formal language and extract the necessary analytical content to conduct the research" (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019, p. 422).

When implementing the denaturalized method, two levels of transcription steps took place against the specific intentions in mind. During the initial transcribing phase, grammar was left uncorrected "as long as the intended meaning is successfully communicated or understood" (Widodo, 2014, p. 105). The coding as well as the analysis phases have taken place after this first round of transcription. The next step involves "demonstrate[ing] [ungrammatical] words correctly (formal language/denaturalized language)" only on the selected quotes that require comprehension when "reporting of the subject's accounts in a readable public story" (Kvale, 2007, p. 95). This procedure was taken in order to not only have "the text concise and clear to the readers" (Nascimento &

62 f4transkript software was utilized as it assists manual typing by using a USB foot switch to control repeating the audio data. The functions that were continuously used were the inclusion of the time stamps and using the automation program that "structure[s] transcripts into line-by-line dialogs to show turn-by-turn dialogic interaction between the participants and [the researcher]" (Widodo, 2014, p. 105).

63 The other dominant method, the naturalized transcription approach (termed as the "verbatim oral" in Kvale, 2007, p. 95), which "reflects a verbatim depiction of speech" (Schegloff, 1997 in Oliver et al., 2005, p. 1) was not taken into consideration in this research.

Steinbruch, 2019, p. 422) but mostly not to "expos[e] participants' identities" (Oliver et al., 2005, p. 2). This stance was taken to avoid disclosing "indicators on ethnicity or geo-ethnic accent and basic demographic data" (ibid., p. 6), which could "endang[er] participant confidentiality, particularly when combined with other sensitive information revealed in the interview" (ibid., p. 2). Furthermore, these evidences might lead to involuntary assumptions about the participants "that were not conducive to collaborative data analysis" (ibid.). Especially, above all things, maintaining consistency within the text when reporting the quotes for the readers was also the crucial reasoning behind modifying the transcribed text into 'formal language' as excerpts in Korean and German were to be translated into English.[64] In the translating phase from Korean and German into English, preserving identical corresponding grammatical structures or colloquial expressions spoken by the participants could generate a different set of issues and this was to be avoided in this research.

The decision to apply a denaturalized approach and "presenting [the chosen quotes for reporting] as a more *polished* and selective transcription" (Azevedo et al., 2017, p. 161 in Oliver et al., 2005, p. 13) only when necessary can be held valid in accordance with the purpose of the research questions and what these questions try to examine. Since informational content, namely, the *meanings* and *insights* of the experiences of experts and international students are the matter of focus, the researcher

> "interprets what was said, the way it was said, [...] being responsible for this understanding, making the necessary adjustments in the transcription and passing this data to readers, thus everyone will have the same view of what was said" (Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019, p. 421).

The limitations to this choice of denaturalized approach is to acknowledge the fact that "depending on the author who does this refinement of the interviews, the results may vary, as well as the data analysis" (ibid.) and this approach "could result in *white-washed* data, which removed the fine-grained social-cultural features of the data" (Oliver et al., 2005, p. 8). In order to minimize the shortcoming of the former aspect, effort was taken to reflect on my choices and findings through member checking in colloquiums and consulting the doctoral supervisor during the course of the procedures. In addition, the constraint of the latter aspect was to be minimized by conducting the analysis phase before the transcriptions were translated and modified into 'formal language' when necessary and thus, the researcher was careful not to lose sight of these 'social-cultural features' that might help to enhance the resultants of the study. There is no doubt that it is "a political act to standardize nonstandard linguistic forms, for such revisions can imply that the original is inadequate" (Bucholtz, 2000, p. 1453). Thus, continuous awareness and effort were taken to accomplish "responsible practice of transcription" (ibid., p. 1440) throughout the process and thus, it is plausible that the two steps of transcription

64 In this research, interviews were transcribed in the original language, findings were generated, and finally only the excerpts for reporting were translated into the working language, i.e., in English (ref. Roulston, 2012, p. 108).

phases are suitable in compliance with the purpose of the present research aim (ref. ibid., p. 1453). The following Table 6 shows the symbols used in the transcriptions.

Table 6. Symbols used in denaturalized transcriptions[65]

Symbols	Meanings
I	Interviewer
IO-(number)-(country)	Expert interviewee ex) IO-1-US (USA) / IO-1-KO (Korea) / IO-1-DE (Germany)
I-(number)-(country)	International student interviewee ex) I-1-US (USA) / I-1-KO (Korea) / I-1-DE (Germany)
xxx	Anonymization of the interview participant or the institution
[location]	Anonymization of the location
()	Unclear words
(?)	Inaudible text segment
/	Pause, stopped speaking
inc. (reason)	Incomplete (low voice)
CAPITAL LETTERS	Emphasis or stressed word or syllable
(laughter)	Emotions (if needed to emphasize)

5.3 Searching for the meaning: developing main categories and discovering the central themes

To analyze the transcribed interviews of experts and international students from three countries, the method, qualitative content analysis by Schreier (2012, p. 6) was implemented. Schreier (2012) notes that the selection process of analyzing every pertinent data is systematic (p. 5) when applying this method. In other words, "[t]he material is to be analyzed step-by-step, following rules of procedure, devising the material into content analytical units" (Mayring, 2000, para. 7).

Against this methodical understanding, as the first step, transcribed interview data were "putted into categories" (Mayring, 2000, para. 7) "of a coding frame" (Schreier, 2012, p. 5). As two groups were interviewed, one coding frame was created for the experts and another for the international students. Both coding frames were generated based on combining concept-driven and data-driven strategies[66] (Schreier, 2012, p. 84). Once the initial coding frames were set, the materials were segmented into units of coding (ref. Chapter 5.3.1). During the trial segmentation phase, the coding frames were continuously modified along the process to be ready for the main analysis. Finally,

65 Ref. Roulston, 2012, p. 185 and Azevedo et al., 2017, p. 164.

66 Termed also as directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1281).

the main analysis phase constitutes of "themeing the data" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 175). The selected approaches and corresponding procedures, which lead up to the central themes and comparative matrices are explained in detail below.

5.3.1 Identifying the meaning with qualitative content analysis

In order to analyze the interview transcripts and interpret the analyzed material, qualitative content analysis is applied as it "is a method for systematically describing the meaning of the qualitative material" (Schreier, 2012, p. 1). Along the lines of Schreier's (2012) definition in that 'describing the meaning' is the primary focus of qualitative content analysis, the aim is to "describe the characteristics of the documents' content by examining who says to what, to whom, and with what effect" (Bloor & Wood, 2006, in Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 400). Pertaining to this purpose, this research searches for the concrete offers, the opinions and intentions of the experts concerning support for international students at the host universities and experiences of international students with the provided offers (ref. ibid., p. 400).

In connection with the definition and the aim, qualitative content analysis also attempts to reduce the data to find patterns that emerge. Thus, when analyzing the collected semi-structured interview data from three countries, "a systematic coding and categorizing approach [was] used for exploring large amounts of textual information unobtrusively to determine trends and patterns" (Mayring, 2000; Pope et al., 2006; Gbrich, 2001 in Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 400).

Here, the term coding can be defined as a procedure to find out, in general terms, "what the data you are analyzing are about" (Gibbs, 2007, p. 38) and, in specific, as "a way of indexing or categorizing the text in order to establish a framework of thematic ideas about it" (ibid.). Such kind of categorizing helps to

> "retrieve all the text coded with the same label to combine passages that are all examples of the same phenomenon, idea, explanation, or activity. This form of retrieval is a very useful way of managing or organizing the data, and enables the researcher to examine the data in a structured way" (ibid., p. 39).

The resulting list of codes can be made of use "to examine further kinds of analytic questions, such as relationships between the codes [. . .] and case-by-case comparisons" (ibid., p. 39), which will be dealt in and beyond main analysis phase (ref. Chapter 5.4).

As for the initial step to prepare for the main analysis, coding frames were constructed "using a concept-driven, deductive strategy" (Schreier, 2012, p. 84), which primarily "draw upon an interview guide" (ibid., p. 87) based on the theoretical framework of Jane Knight (2004; 2012) and from "everyday knowledge" (Schreier, 2012, p. 86) of the researcher.[67] As two groups – experts and international students – were interviewed,

67 The theoretical conceptual framework of the internationalization of higher education from Knight's theory (2004; 2012) was used to build the coding frames. From the conceptual framework men-

a semi-structured interview guide for each group was used as the conceptual source of building each corresponding coding frame.

To discover the meaning of the lived experiences told by experts and international students, the objective is to "'translate' all those meanings in [the] material that are of interest […] into the categories of the coding frame" (Schreier, 2012, p. 5). In order to achieve this, each unit of analysis is segmented into units of coding, i.e.,

1) the unit of analysis is each interview that mirrors the micro-level of individual interviewees and
2) the units of coding "are the parts of the units of analysis that can be interpreted in a meaningful way with respect to" (ibid., p. 131) the categories of the generated coding frame.

Throughout the research design and analysis procedures, only manifest content was sought due to a) the large amount of data; b) as the categories were clearly based on the conceptual theoretical framework; and c) as semi-structured interview questions were explicit in asking about the experiences and feelings. Thus, overtly direct content was investigated in this research.

After setting the units of analysis, units of coding as well as deciding on covering the manifest content, the segmentation procedure was conducted. As the definition of the units of coding imply, the units of coding were segmented according to the interview guides, namely, the interview data were divided into parts in such a way that each segment fits into one category of the coding frame (ref. ibid., p. 127). At this stage, it is important to "decide in advance how much context" needed to be separated in order to avoid decontextualization in segmentation (ref. ibid., p. 133). As context defines the meaning for interpretation, the inherent structure of the interview structure was made of use to segment the units into "interviewer questions and 'turns'" (ref. ibid., p. 134), which is termed as the *formal criterion of segmentation* (Rustemeyer, 1992 in ibid., p. 134).

Once the coding frames and units of coding are set, the second step of the analysis procedure was to implement a trial coding on the two coding frames, namely, checking whether the concept-driven categories apply before "starting to code all the material" (Schreier, 2012, p. 146). In this pilot phase, it is crucial to meet the requirement of variability in selecting the material for testing the coding frames (ref. ibid, p. 149). Concerning variability, different groups of persons were examined (ref. Table 7). Particularly, when noting the fact that this research encompasses comparative perspective, it was essential to check whether the coding frames apply in each country (ref. ibid., p. 149).

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tioned, this research primarily focuses on the two categories under the institutional level: services and extracurricular activities. There exist seven subcategories from the two main categories combined. I devised semi-structured interview questions based on these seven subcategories and detailed subcategory questions were added based on researcher's experiences gained as an international student in the USA, Korea and Germany (ref. Gibbs, 2007, p. 45).

Table 7. Overview of the trial coding variability

Experts	International officers	IO-1-US; IO-2-KO; IO-3-DE
	Language center staff member: USA Project affiliated staff member: Germany Faculty member: Germany	IO-6-US; IO-5-DE; IO-8-DE
International students	Non-degree seeking	I-9-US; I-3-KO; I-1-DE
	Undergraduate degree seeking	I-1-US; 1-2-KO
	Graduate degree seeking	I-5-US; 1-1-KO; I-4-DE

1) The pilot phase of the coding frame for experts included:
   a) one interview each, with international officers in the USA, Korea, and Germany;
   b) individual cases such as staff member of the language center in the USA; and a project affiliated staff member for a mentoring program and a faculty member in Germany[68]
2) The trial coding on international students' interviews involved looking at the different levels of degree (degree mobility and credit mobility) in each country. In addition, it was ensured that the nationalities of the international students vary.

As a general rule, "at least one unit of analysis per criterion" (Schreier, 2012, p. 150) was taken into consideration to check for consistency of and to modify the coding frame. While segmenting the coding frames, with reference to the intrinsic feature of semi-structured interview guides, it was not surprising to discover unexpected responses from the interviewees. Reoccurring answers that stood out and are related to the research questions but do not fit in the given categories were first included in the residual categories for forthcoming analysis to generate data-driven categories.

Up to the point of working with data-driven residual categories, the previous steps (inserting the two coding frames onto the software files, importing the transcribed files, segmenting each interview into units of coding) and the subsequent steps (expanding and modifying the coding frames) were carried out with computer-assisted qualitative data analysis, i.e., the MAXQDA software. Using computer-assisted qualitative data analysis was effective in working with large amount of 56 interview transcripts, two coding frames, field notes, and researcher memos to maintain "consistent and systematic data management" and to ensure "easier, more accurate, more reliable, and more transparent" qualitative analysis (Gibbs, 2007, p. 106).

68 Even though the interview questions were asked about the structure and its function of individual centers as mentioned above, the findings of these separate institutions will not be reported in the results as the central focus of this research lies primarily on international offices' structure and role (ref. sampling method in the research design from Chapter 4.5).

Before the trial coding was processed with MAXQDA, the initial concept-driven coding frames (one for the expert and the other for the international students) were created (ref. Schreier, 2012, p. 247). The functions of the given software used are as follows:

1) Inserted codes of the two coding frames[69] into the Code System with corresponding colors and code memos were written down for each name of the code as "a description of the analytic idea it refers to" (Gibbs, 2007, p. 40)
2) Interview transcripts, which were transcribed with the f4transkript, were imported to each MAXQDA file
3) Pilot coding was conducted as each transcribed interview material was segmented according to units of coding. Unexpected units of code were included in the residual categories
4) Continued with the segmentation procedure of all the interview data after the trial coding and continuously included unpredicted answers into the residual categories
5) Modified and expanded the coding frames along the process in the Code System
6) After being finished with segmentation phase, passages were retrieved "to examine all the text [that has been coded] with a particular code" (Gibbs, 2007, p. 121)

The retrieved passages for each coded segment were used for the main analysis phase. Being cognizant of the fact that interpretation of the data comes down to sole "responsibility of the researcher" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 28; ref. Schreier, 2012, p. 242), the tools mentioned above were utilized as a support in terms of systematically managing the data. Hence, the main analysis was performed manually with the word processor by using the retrieved passages as described in the subsequent chapters.

5.3.2 Generating main categories and uncovering the central themes

After the interview data were segmented according to the coding frames and residual categories were created for each coding frame, this upcoming analysis involved systematical abstraction of the segmented data and thus finalizing the residual as well as fixing the main categories of the coding frames. Furthermore, the aim of the main analysis was to reach the stage of identifying the central themes of the given categories for further comparative analysis and interpretation. According to DeSantis' and Ugarriza's (2000) literature review (ref. Saldaña, 2013, pp. 175–176), the term, theme can be defined as follows:

> "A theme is an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent [patterned] experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole (p. 362)."

69 A separate MAXQDA file was created for each group, i.e., experts and international officers as the interview guides and the corresponding coding frames differ. The functions of MAXQDA were conducted in the interview data of both groups.

With regard to this definition, the approach termed as "themeing the data" by Saldaña (2013) coincides with the underlying methodical objective of qualitative content analysis (ref. Schreier, 2012, p. 1). Accordingly, Saldaña's approach was applied to "explore a participant's […] experiences" as this is the point of departure of searching for the meaning of the lived experiences of experts and international students concerning support.

In order to accomplish these twofold purposes, the main analysis phase constitutes of

1) "themeing the data" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 175) by utilizing "an eclectic combination of attribute, […], descriptive, [and] in vivo […] coding" as well as applying the procedures of "meaning condensation" (ref. Giorgi, 1975 in Kvale, 2007, p. 107).
2) In addition, segmented data of residual categories were refined by creating data-driven categories and adding them to each coding frame to capture the unanticipated details that emerged along the coding and segmentation processes (ref. Schreier, 2012 p. 87). This strategy used to create a category was "successively *summar[izing]*" the interview transcripts (Mayring, 2010 in Schreier, 2012, p. 88) by paraphrasing the data and "using the paraphrase to generate category names" (ibid., p. 88 and ref. pp. 107–110).[70]

The process leading up to themeing the data involved several coding procedures. The first step was the attribute coding which included the notation of the descriptive information on the variables such as interview participant characteristics and demographics (ref. the list of interview participants in Chapter 4.5.1 and 4.5.2). Secondly, with descriptive coding, a basic topic was summarized in a word or a short phrase to identify the topic; and it was important to note not to abbreviate the content (ref. Saldaña, 2013, p. 88). The shortfall is that this method can only used to categorize the data at a basic level; and thus, descriptive coding alone was not able to grasp complex analysis of lived experience emotions of being an international student at a different location coping with different cultural adjustment. To amend this shortfall, in vivo coding was applied because the collected data is about *life* and in vivo coding "prioritize[s] and honors the participants' voice" (ibid., p. 91). The main application strategy for in vivo coding is to trust researcher's instincts when something in the data appears to standout, then it would be applied as a code. Nevertheless, the limitation of this method is that the

70 In terms of Schreier's concept of qualitative content analysis, Mayring perceives that the "description of inductive category development, a detailed coding guide (category definition, anchor examples, and coding rules) is not necessary" and that Schreier "only seems to be concerned with a more descriptive representation of the text through a hierarchical category system with dimensions and subcategories" (Mayring, 2019, para. 21). The three steps of Schreier's coding guide are redundant from Mayring's perspective and "far too time consuming in the case of inductive category development. Instead, [he] suggest[s] both developing the categories and assigning them to text in a single pass through the material" (Mayring, 2019, para. 19). With regard to Mayring's viewpoint, definitions of the inductive categories in the coding frame were not included. Selected units of analysis serve as the example of the newly created data-driven categories as explanations of the category name become redundant.

process is solely dependent on the researcher's instinct. Hence, in order to diminish such drawback, it was important to continuously reflect on the decisions and "be wary of overdependence on the strategy because it can limit [the] ability to transcend [the data] to more conceptual and theoretical levels of analysis and insight" (ibid., p. 95).

The final step of identifying the major themes of the given research was processed by thoroughly classifying the interview data through the method of meaning condensation (ref. Giorgi, 1975 in Kvale, 2007) and progressively summarizing the material (ref. Mayring, 2010 in Schreier, 2012). *Both of the strategies are similar in terms of reducing the data by rephrasing the statements to move them from concrete to the abstract level*. As the latter method focuses on repeated paraphrasing to generate a new category name as the final goal (ref. Schreier, 2012, p. 107), meaning condensation aims to "analyze extensive and often complex interview texts by looking for natural meaning units and explicating their main themes. These themes may thereafter be subject to more extensive interpretations and theoretical analyses." (Kvale, 2007, p. 107) Therefore, Mayring's (2010) summarizing method was primarily used to work with the residual categories to create data-driven categories for the coding frames during the modification phase. Alongside the summarizing technique, "the essential, non-redundant themes[71] of the entire interview [were] tied together into a descriptive statement." (Kvale, 2007, p. 107).

To systematically track the procedures of the aforesaid approaches, a visual display of the mapping processes in tables was helpful to indicate patterns and meanings in data to modify the categories or detect major themes (ref. Findings "at-a-glance" in Saldaña, 2013, p. 253) as illustrated below (e.g., Table 8).

Table 8 shows the list of experts from the three countries in question in the first column, followed by examples of a datum that supports the major category (code) in the second column, then the detected theme in the third column and finally a short interpretive summary of researcher's thoughts and memos related to the analytic scheme (ref. Saldaña, 2013, p. 254).

71 The eclectic application of meaning condensation method displayed in Table 8 (ref. Table 9.2 Meaning condensation in Kvale, 2007, p. 108) was combined with the features of the table Findings "at-a-glance" by Saldaña (2013).

Table 8. Example: a display of a mapping process of the category 3. Language competence and support

Experts	Datum supporting the theme	Theme	Researcher's interpretive summary
IO-1-US	• The admission policy at the university is that you can only be accepted if your GRE and TOEFL scores meet certain standards. I am suggesting if they are accepted, their English is all great. • Some especially from Asian countries their writing is better than listening or verbal, so, there is an office, a English Language Institute. They offer listening clinic, writing clinic and students can take the courses as their general credit. • **Are there differences between students coming from western European countries and Asian countries in terms of integrating in the university, just from your personal experience?** I think, language is one. I would make a generalization saying "Students from Asian countries, their languages are not that good as the ones coming from European countries." They have different challenges. With this generation, their language is getting better and better.	Proficient English level of students when accepted Language is the primary factor in integrating into the university life	Some students from Asia do have better skills in writing than listening and speaking and there are internal English language programs geared towards improving these skills. A staff member states there is a general tendency students from Asian countries are challenged more in terms of language proficiency compared to European students.
IO-2-KO	• Korean language courses can be taken as a part of a regular credit if needed. • Even if international students have met a certain level of language requirement, they still have difficulties mostly with the language. • There are case by case situations in which the instructor might accept the written assignments in English. • Writing Center exists but it's rather a translation service from Korean to English Counseling – there is a Chinese colleague on campus who translates if students need support with language but other students need to be able to converse either in Korean or English.	Language level is a prerequisite but international students have trouble following the course content Limited support programs for language aside from language courses Chinese staff member for counseling	The students can take internal Korean language courses during their studies and is part of their regular credit, meaning that the cost is included in the tuition.

Experts	Datum supporting the theme	Theme	Researcher's interpretive summary
IO-3-DE	• Different language courses are offered by the university language center. Regular degree students need to pay and for direct exchange students, Erasmus and American students, they have a German language course for free of charge. • How important is the importance of German language? 100% important – based on my 25 years of work experience. In the beginning, all international students had to meet the German language requirement and could speak English when they came to see me. But suddenly in the past few years, students didn't need to meet the language requirement as English track majors have begun. I noticed that students who can't speak German have huge problems when living in Germany. People in this area can't speak English and people speak dialects. If you want to get to know the country, a little bit of language ability is needed. And the speed of integration process is faster. • Sometimes individual instructors allow students to write or hand in reports in English if the students can't write or present tasks in German.	Various language courses offered Based on 25 years of work experience, language is the most important factor for international students – integration is faster when international students speak German. Alternative exams or tasks are allowed depending on the instructors	Regular degree students need to pay for the language courses whereas exchange student do not.

The list of experts is color-coded in order to easily differentiate the countries (yellow for the USA, green for Korea, and blue for Germany) in the tables. The data supporting the theme in the second column are generated by reading and going over the segmented category *consecutively*, meaning "one dimension after another" (Schreier, 2012, p. 153) by utilizing the retrieval function of the MAXQDA software. Here, the segments of one category from all the experts from three countries were retrieved to write down the key summaries, paraphrases, abstracts, and short direct quotes (ref. Gibbs, 2007, p. 81) extracted from previously mentioned methods, themeing the data and progressively summarizing the data. During the process of writing down the key themes and researcher's note, noteworthy passages were bolded or highlighted in yellow for later citation (ref. Saldaña, 2013, p. 254).

After themeing the data by using such a table illustrated above for each category, 'essential and non-redundant themes' were selected and a researcher memo was written down for each given table (of the existing categories) on separate word documents to be used for the subsequent reporting phase of the results. All things considered, based on the previously mentioned procedures, Table 9 below demonstrates the major categories and central themes constructed from interview transcript analysis of experts and interna-

tional students concerning support for international students by host universities in the USA, Korea, and Germany.

Table 9. Overview of main categories and central themes of the interview data from experts and international students

Categories International officers		Themes	Categories International students
International office	Role of international office and structure	• Role of international offices • Centralized-decentralized structures	
	Program development	• Reusing programs from previous years • Benchmarking ideas from different countries • Creating programs based on individual experiences of the staffs and feedback from students	
	Personal and academic backgrounds of the international officers	• Role of personal and academic diversity in hiring staff • Role of personal and academic backgrounds in student advising	
	Training for employees	• Types of trainings for employees • Access to trainings for employees	
	Customer service	• Role of customer service	
Support services	Initial support services	• Welcoming programs – Advising immigration regulation – Pick-up services from the airport – Orientation programs – Cultural training or workshops for incoming students • Excursions • Weekly, monthly, or random get-together hours	Experiences with the initial support services
	Programs for target groups	• Criteria of differentiating the programs 1. non-degree seeking 2. degree-seeking (undergraduate and graduate) 3. Students with families (spouses and children) • Degree of involvement depending on the target groups	Experiences with programs for different target groups

Categories International officers		Themes	Categories International students	
	Peer advising	• Types and role of peer advising	Experiences with peer advising	
Ways of distributing information		• Conditions of contacting international students • Role of networking through social media	Experiences with ways of receiving information	
Student clubs		• Types of offers that students receive • Engagement opportunities of students on campus	Experiences with student clubs	
Support services to integrate domestic and international students		• Nature of the programs • Collaboration of offices involved in the support services • Challenges regarding support services to integrate domestic and international students	Experiences with support services to integrate domestic and international students	
Language competence and support		• Types of language support • Role of language competence	Experiences with language competence and support	
Institution-wide service units		• Types of institution-wide units • Degree of collaborative work between institution-wide service units and international offices • Measures of promotion of institution-wide service unit information by international officers	Experiences with institution-wide service units	
Community-based programs		• Types of community-based programs	Experiences with community-based programs	
Future outlook on the developments in supporting international students		• Changing developments in supporting international students • Importance of campus wide effort beyond international offices • Importance of effective management • Improving service infrastructures • Importance of quality and diversity in student recruitment • Challenges of understanding, implementing, and evaluating the concepts of the internationalization in higher education	General evaluation of the support services and feeling of integration	• Possibilities to reach out for academic and emotional support on campus • The notion of feeling welcomed by the host university

As mentioned in the pilot coding selection of the variables (ref. Chapter 5.3.1), there exist three staff members, who are not directly affiliated with international offices, but work with international students also offering support by different offices on campus. Since the majority of the experts was staff members at international offices, the categori-

cal characteristics of only international offices were considered and reported. Hence, the three different offices on campus from each corresponding country were not analyzed.

Having this decision in mind, the first column of the table shows the finalized main categories constructed from the experts' interview data, followed by central themes identified from each category.[72] The third column displays the corresponding categories of international students' lived experiences. At this point, this visualization verifies that cross-referencing of the central themes of the main categories between experts' and international students' perspectives is possible: 1) experts' statements on the major activities, events, issues, opinion concerning support for international students at the destinations and 2) international students' experiences and feelings with the provided offers. Such parallel concept mapping of the categories of the two groups enables comparisons between the given two groups' experiences.

5.4 Matrices of comparative analysis into lived experiences and the significance of national contexts

By detecting the patterns illustrated in Table 9, it is possible "to go beyond the individual unit of coding and beyond [the] results for individual categories" and to "focus on the *relations*" of the categories (Schreier, 2012, p. 225). This final main analysis procedure of the retrieved and coded data is called "comparative analysis" (Gibbs, 2007, p. 77), covering the cross-referencing of the interviews from experts and international students including also the comparative perspective from three countries. This comparative viewpoint requires additional data exploration and analysis in investigating the descriptive results from the qualitative content analysis (ref. Schreier, 2012, p. 228), which is displayed in the subsequent chapters. Moreover, the findings of the cross-referencing of the two groups and including national contexts will be reported by using continuous text together with corresponding quotes of the interview participants.

5.4.1 Developing the matrices for comparison

In examining ways as to how things are similar and different as well as searching for underlying explanations for such variants to avoid decontextualization (ref. Freitag, 2014 in Chapter 4.2), Gibbs (2007) mentions that an effective approach to "carry out these kinds of comparisons is using tables" which helps to "display text from across the whole dataset that makes systematic comparison easier" (p. 78). Such table, which mostly contains texts, is generally termed also as a text matrix (ref. Schreier, 2012, p. 223).

On the basis of such premise and in order to reach the final level of comparative analysis of the findings, the strategy taken to present the results was creating text matrices for the two groups, one for the experts and one for the international students as illustrated in the following tables:

72 Category definitions are not mentioned separately though elucidated in detail when reporting the results (ref. Chapter 2.2.4).

Table 10. Matrix comparing lived experiences of experts' support[73] for international students

Categories		Themes	Participants from the USA	Participants from Korea	Participants from Germany
International Office	Role of international office and structure	• Role of international offices • Centralized-decentralized structures	• International offices are the main contact point for immigration procedures and each school has separate academic advising	• International offices are the primary contact for immigration procedures, admissions, and general campus support • International students are sent back to international offices	• International officers are in charge of immigration and administrative processes • Faculties are responsible for academic advising • Designated staff members in faculties for Erasmus students
	Program development	• Repeating pre-existing program offers • Benchmarking ideas from different countries • Creating programs based on individual experiences of the staff and feedback from students	• Repeating pre-existing program offers • Creating programs based on individual experiences of the staff and feedback from students	• Benchmarked the buddy program and the international faculty lounge from Hong Kong and Singapore	• Staff exchange in the United Kingdom and in the USA – benchmarked the service point system
	Personal and academic backgrounds of the international officers	• Role of personal and academic diversity in hiring staff • Role of personal and academic backgrounds in student advising	• Different set of skills for certain positions in international offices • Comfort in reaching out to the advisors with similar national and ethnic background/language access	• Study abroad experiences of international officers • Diverse national and ethnic backgrounds of student assistants employed at international offices	• Diverse national and ethnic backgrounds of student assistants employed at international offices

73 It is important to note that the offers mentioned by the participants of the interviews are displayed and this does not mean that other support services and offers do not exist.

Categories		Themes	Participants from the USA	Participants from Korea	Participants from Germany
	Training for employees	• Types of trainings for employees • Access to trainings for employees	• On-demand cross-cultural trainings from international offices for employees on campus • Internal and external continuing education offers for international officers	• Unaware of trainings offered internally or externally	• Internal cross-cultural trainings as an extended vocation training on campus • Personal choice of partaking in external cross- cultural trainings
	Customer service	• Role of customer service	• Prevalent notion of customer service • Service desks • Emotional support and care as core bases for reaching out to international students	• Recruiting students for revenues together with various scholarship opportunities • Service desks	• Procedural engagement of staff members • Emerging concept of customer service mentality in German universities
Support services	Initial support services	• Welcoming programs – Advising immigration regulation – Pick-up services from the airport – Orientation programs – Cultural trainings or workshops for incoming students • Excursions • Weekly, monthly, or random get-together hours	• Advising immigration – Visa processes • Pick-up services from the airport organized by international offices • International offices' orientation programs – some schools have orientation programs for all international students and some have separate orientation depending on the degree levels • Each school has a separate orientation program • Variety of cultural training programs • Weekly coffee hour	• Advising immigration – information on visiting immigration offices • Pick-up services from the airport organized by international offices • International offices' orientations offered in English, Chinese and Korean – separating the groups on the basis of degree levels • Each school has a separate orientation program • Happy Hour –three times a semester	• Visa liaison officer at two universities • International offices' orientations are offered in English and German – groups are separated on the basis of degree levels • Each school has a separate orientation program • Regular get-together (Stammtisch)

Categories		Themes	Participants from the USA	Participants from Korea	Participants from Germany
	Role of target groups	• Criteria of differentiating the programs 1. non-degree seeking 2. degree seeking (undergraduate and graduate) 3. students with families (spouses and children) • Degree of involvement depending on the target groups	• Academic advisors support graduate international students • Undergraduate students receive structural support • Degree seeking international students focus on academic success • Non-degree seeking international students focus on experiencing culture in short time	• Degree seeking students focus on academic success • International offices organize programs for cultural experience for non-degree seeking international students	• Designated Erasmus coordinators in faculties – support depends on the individual staff • Degree seeking international students focus on academic success
	Peer advising	• Types and role of peer advising	• Student workers paid by the university • Voluntary mentors	• Voluntary buddy or mentor programs	• Academic tutors (mentors) paid by faculties • Voluntary buddy and mentoring programs
Ways of distributing information		• Conditions of contacting international students • Role of networking through social media	• Open access to emailing list of international students • Social media platforms and messenger services (nationality based)	• Open access to emailing list of international students • Social media platforms and messenger services, and mobile phone text messaging	• Due to privacy regulations, emailing list on a voluntary basis of international students • Social media platforms and messenger services
Student clubs		• Types of offers that students receive • Engagement opportunities of students on campus	• National and ethnic student clubs (e.g., Chinese student groups, African student unions) • Service learning	• Fixed student groups created and run by international offices for international students • Domestically run student clubs	• National and ethnic student clubs

Categories	Themes	Participants from the USA	Participants from Korea	Participants from Germany
Support services to integrate domestic and international students	• Nature of the programs • Collaboration of offices involved in the support services • Challenges regarding support services to integrate domestic and international students	• International offices primarily work with international students • Collaboration of offices that work with domestic students	• International office establishes international student clubs and runs peer advising services	• International office programs mainly aim at international students
Language competence and support	• Types of language support • Role of language competence	• Varying language support programs (included in the tuition) • Language academies (university affiliated institutions – student fee)	• English-mediated information, courses, and studies • Extensive language courses (included in the tuition) • Alternative language(s) for exams, papers, thesis depending on the instructor	• English-mediated information, courses, and studies • Language courses (varies in terms of fees and institutions) • Alternative language(s) for exams, papers, thesis depending on the instructor
Institution-wide service units	• Types of institution-wide units • Degree of collaborative work between institution-wide service units and international offices • Measures of promotion of institution-wide service unit information by international officers	• Counseling centers, career services, health centers, etc. • International officers promote services and connect with offices to support international students	• Counseling offered in English and Chinese • Career centers and job postings via international office websites	• AStA and Studierendenwerk as a separate entity support international students
Community-based programs	• Types of community-based programs	• Community outreach projects, e.g., with the local police departments or property managers	• Global Center • The police department	• Religious and cultural organizations • Local job agencies

Categories	Themes	Participants from the USA	Participants from Korea	Participants from Germany
Future outlook on the developments in supporting international students	• Changing developments in supporting international students • Importance of campus wide effort beyond international offices • Importance of effective management • Improving service infrastructures • Importance of quality and diversity in student recruitment • Challenges of understanding, implementing, and evaluating the concepts of internationalization in higher education	• Turning point due to the tracking system after 9/11 – change in role of staff members at international offices from supporting international students' integration to spending time on immigration regulations • Changes of communication due to technological development • Recognizing the discrepancy between the purpose and the reality of hosting international students due to bias and limited interaction	• Preparing staff and faculty members for the influx of international students and English-mediated instruction • Strengthening the infrastructure to support students during and after their studies – lack of job opportunities in Korea • Focusing on enhancing the quality of international students and not only on quantity	• Critical stance on English-mediated instruction • Transparency and promotion of the service programs related to the privacy data protection regulation • Working on the internal procedures of staff members – enhancing motivation, granting rewards, enlarging capacities, structured and streamlined processes on the basis of transparent responsibilities of the staff members

Table 11. Matrix comparing lived experiences of international students with support by host institutions

Categories		Participants from the USA	Participants from Korea	Participants from Germany
Support services	Experiences with the initial support services	• Provided with necessary immigration regulations • Supportive airport pick-up service (international offices, national student clubs, fellow students) • Provided on and off-campus housing assistance and information • Informative and various orientation programs from international offices and schools – primarily joining orientations from schools • Helpful academic advisors • Many program offers by international offices (cross-cultural trainings and workshops) – international students do not attend them based on relevance, interest, and time restrictions • Comfortable environment in weekly snack hours • Helpful and affordable excursion opportunities	• Provided with necessary immigration regulations • Varying airport pick-up offers • Responsive contact and assistance for complicated course registrations • Well maintained facilities and interactive activities in residence halls – more information necessary for off-campus housing options • General orientation for all students in Korean language • Informative international office orientations for international students in three languages (Korean, English, and Chinese) – primarily partaking in orientations from international offices because of the Korean language use in departmental orientations	• Self-sufficient immigration processes and difficult experiences at immigration offices • Helpful information on student dormitories • Complicated course registration and lack of information in English • Low participation in orientation programs due to lack of information
	Experiences with programs for different target groups	• Necessity of academic advising (e.g., planning studies) for non-degree students • Prefer separate orientations for non-degree exchange students	• Helpful programs for exchange student for initial contacts and general cultural aspects about Korea • Well-organized and informative separate orientations depending on the degree status • Less opportunity to engage as graduate students	• Direct access to advisors for Erasmus programs

Categories	Participants from the USA	Participants from Korea	Participants from Germany
Experiences with peer advising	• Motivated and ambitious buddy programs for exchange students	• Varying experiences from helpful to redundant depending on the peers and the group dynamics	• Helpful buddy programs
Experiences with ways of receiving information	• Quick and responsive email correspondence with international officers • Helpful email alerts from international offices and other institutions on campus → well informed about the offers but do not read and participate in everything • Social media platforms and messenger services are vital for networking	• Friendly and responsive email contacts with international officers • Informative program offers via email alerts from international offices • Important and helpful: the usage is differentiated according to the target group – Korean messenger services between domestic and international students – social media platforms such as Facebook for peer support groups – Emails from the university	• Responsive email contact with Erasmus coordinators • Necessity of reliable email correspondence with advisors, mentors, faculty members, and international officers • Helpful and necessary use of social media platform among fellow students to be informed
Experiences with university life	• Student centered approach and friendly faculty members • Warm and welcoming atmosphere on campus • Importance of interconnectedness between campus and city • Prevalence of diversity • High level of identification with the university	• Varying opinions: from receptive and passive learning environment to warm and interactive small courses • Varying opinions: Not much interaction with the professors to competent, responsive, English speaking, interactive, and friendly faculty members • Competitive university life • Experience with campus festivals and identifying with the university • Vibrant campus life, especially interconnected universities • Feeling of security (safety at night)	• No effort from the faculty members for international students • Less interaction with German domestic students in and outside of the lessons • University life is focused on academic aims and career • University life requires self-sufficient planning of studies and proactive search for necessary information

Categories	Participants from the USA	Participants from Korea	Participants from Germany
Experiences with student clubs	• Helpful experience to connect to students with similar interests and domestic students • Helpful support from nationality clubs (e.g., Chinese student clubs)	• Need to speak Korean to join domestic student clubs – limited amount of English speaking clubs • Opportunities are provided – constrained to time and pressure on academic success • Interest based clubs	• Active nationality clubs (Chinese students' associations)
Experiences with support services to integrate domestic and international students	• Helpful cultural workshops but only international students take part and not enough chances to meet domestic students • Part-time job opportunities helpful to get into contact with domestic students and locals • Not many opportunities/programs provided to have contact with domestic students	• Helpful weekly meetings organized by international offices and student clubs • Active and engaging activities of residence halls • Joining student clubs are helpful to have contact to Korean domestic students • Preference of Korean domestic students to international students from the USA and Europe	• Joining a community or sport club is helpful to communicate with domestic students
Experiences with language competence and support	• High tuition for prerequisite language academies	• Speaking Korean well helps to get in touch with Korean domestic students • Very necessary to speak the language to immerse into the culture • Demanding but helpful Korean intensive courses – important to acquire Korean proficiency to finish the studies • Only English courses as non-degree seeking international students • Academic work can be submitted in English	• Academic work can be submitted in English • German language is essential for surviving daily life • Non-degree seeking students take courses mainly taught in English

Categories	Participants from the USA	Participants from Korea	Participants from Germany
Experiences with institution-wide service units	Positive and helpful experiences with • Counseling centers • Career centers/job fairs • Alumni networks • Gym/recreation centers • Health services	Positive and helpful experiences with • Residence hall support • Gym • Campus facilities	Positive and helpful experiences with • Sports programs • Campus facilities • Career services (information via a fellow student)
Experiences with community-based programs	• Meeting different needs via church community has been helpful • Malaysian community is very supportive in integrating into the daily life • Chinese or Korean community for support is very helpful	• Thai, Jordanian and Malaysian communities are informative	• Brazilian and Indian communities are helpful support • Christian group helps out with cultural conflicts and stress management
General evaluations of support services and feeling of integration	• Cognizant of the support opportunities • Hospitable environment • Satisfied with the study abroad and much support was provided • Help and feedback were given in timely fashion • More events needed to meet domestic students	• Fellow students for emotional support and academic support from international offices or corresponding faculties (none of the interviewed students partook in counseling offers) • More engagement and responsibility necessary from mentors or buddies • Satisfied with the support provided from international offices • More events necessary to get international students get in touch with domestic students • More student clubs for international students who do not speak Korean	• Mainly seek fellow students for academic and emotional support • Information needs to reach the students – adequate and elaborated information for newcomers • Better course registration procedures • Quicker and reliable email replies • Further effort by international offices to promote interaction between international and domestic students • More support on affairs with the immigration office • More program offers and personal contacts as better information source

Table 10 presents the views of experts as Table 11 shows the experiences mentioned by international students residing in three countries. As demonstrated in the two matrices, first of all, the columns denote the main categories (and corresponding central themes) derived from the coding frames, the rows[74] indicate the selected interview participants of three countries under investigation, and the cells contain abstract summaries which "sample what respondents" mentioned (Gibbs, 2007, p. 80).

Deciding on what to include in the cells from the coded text had "the added advantage that it [forced the researcher] to think about what the text is saying and begin to recognize what is significant about it" (ibid.). During the process, continuous reflective process took place to keep

> "the summary long enough to preserve the richness of the original words but at the same time short enough to fit in the cell and to ensure that [the researcher does] not remain bagged down in the detail of the original text" (Gibbs, 2007, p. 80).

Guiding questions for generating the summaries of the cells of the text matrices in this research were:

1. For experts:
   a) What are the offers provided and significant rationales behind such programs for international students?
   b) What factors have changed in supporting international students over the years in the position and what is the overall future perspective, which needs to be improved in supporting international students at host universities? (meta level → Category: Future outlook on the developments in supporting international students)
2. For international students:
   a) How did international student experience . . . ?
   b) How do international students evaluate their experience abroad with regard to feeling integrated on campus? (meta level → Category: General evaluations of support services and feeling of integration)

Laying out the data of two groups and from three countries in text matrices made it possible to generate the findings in such a way that case-by-case comparisons are identifiable. As "cases can be a variety of [aspects]," in this research, they are responses of experts and international students from three countries. In terms of reporting the results, comparative analysis is possible by cross checking the relations 1) of the main categories and corresponding themes between the given groups of experts and international students and 2) across the three countries.

74 Reflective stance when indicating the rows with countries' participants in Tables 10 and 11 are to be cautiously considered when interpreting the visualized data (ref. Chapter 5.4.2).

5.4.2 Acknowledging the national context within comparative perspective

When it comes to transforming the qualitative data as indicated in the title of Wolcott's (1994) text, data was collected based on the qualitative and comparative research design scheme to answer the questions "What is going on here?" (p. 12) to describe the Knight's theory (2004; 2012) regarding the support from host institutions offered to international students by taking in the opinions of the experts from three countries under investigation.

The next stage of transforming the data was through qualitative content analysis procedures to find meanings from "systematic description of interrelationship among [identified essential themes]" of the main categories based on the interview transcripts (ibid.). With regard to the research questions, the objective was to discover support for international students at host universities in the USA, Korea and Germany based on Knight's categories (2004; 2012). The underlying inspiration to examine the applicability of Knight's theoretical framework (2004; 2012) of the selected categories was to find out whether the internationalization of higher education at host universities has similar tendencies in its offers for incoming international students albeit regional differences, regional popularity as well as number of recruiting international students. In addition, the analysis was also "employed evaluatively to address questions of why a system is not working or how it might be made to work 'better'" (Wolcott, 1994, p. 12) based on the expressed feelings and opinions of experts and international students.

When designating the countries (e.g., Participants from the USA, Korea, and Germany) in the rows of the created tables, it is crucial to reflect upon the comparative approach and its challenges (ref. 4.2). The presentation of the analyzed data (the text matrices in Tables 10 and 11) were employed as tools to visualize the findings in each national context. Nevertheless, the underlying preconditions,

1) 'the actions and the reflective opinions (tertium comparationis)' lie as the central issue and
2) expert and international student participants are sampled data,

are to be reminded when interpreting the visualized data. Moreover, the emphasis is on revealing the context of each experience of interview participants in question. This stance acknowledges the assumption that, at all times, lived experiences of individuals vary in a single university or even with a single incident. Thereby it is important to note that the sampled interview participants and universities are *selected under specific criteria for this research and these individual voices cannot be generalized to characterize a nation.*

Against such a backdrop, conducting comparative analysis facilitated the understanding *the relations* of the matter at hand concerning the support for international students at host institutions from three countries by two groups of actors. Especially, generating the visual display of two text matrices made the comparisons of the two groups of interviewees possible to detect the significant occurrences of the given categories and corresponding central themes. Along the process, understanding of the relationships helped to go beyond the descriptive analytical level and to identify the distinct causes as

well as environmental context that lead to such circumstances based on the respondents' shared experiences. These finding lead the researcher to address what is important and the rationale behind it as well as what can be learned from the results. When reaching the stage of reporting the descriptive analysis and the corresponding interpretation, it is crucial to reflect on the trustworthiness of systematical analysis of the employed procedures.

5.4.3 Reflection on the data analysis procedures

When reflecting on the procedures of segmentation, dividing the units of analysis under the concept-driven coding frames was helpful to check whether all the data were covered[75] and not to stray away from the main research aims. In addition, the deductive coding frames were useful to keep reliability in terms of consistent applications of the generated categories throughout the collected data *across points in time*, i.e., "[t]he coding frame is considered reliable to the extent that the results of the analysis remain stable over time" (ref. Schreier, 2012, p. 127, p. 167).

The vital advantage of employing, however, both a deductive and a inductive approach in building the coding frame was to check in how far Knight's theory (2004; 2012) applies but also to investigate the phenomenon that goes beyond the borders of the given theory. It has to be considered that the application of a pre-determined theoretical framework, namely, Knight's theory (2004; 2012), and devising the interview questions accordingly has limitations. A critical reflective point is the possibility of "approach[ing] the data with informed, but nevertheless, strong bias" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1283). Thus, it is important to "recognize that the researcher will need to amend the list of codes during analysis as new ideas and new ways of categorizing are detected in the text" (Gibbs, 2007, p. 45).

To reduce such bias and "not to become too tied to initial [constructed] codes" (ibid., 46), continuous "returning again and again to the data" (Elo et al., 2014, p. 2003) and self-reflection are necessary in detecting patterns. With regard to distinguishing patterns, the essential question was not only on how many times certain utterances reoccur to decide on a pattern to build a new category. However, in this process, it was noteworthy to be conscious of the fact that

> "as social scientists […], we often walk a fine line between the few repetitions we actually observe and the behavior patterns into which we quickly transform them in our accounts. Nevertheless, this is where we look for and discuss the relationships, the what-goes-with-what that realizes in the study of a single case the potential for understanding something beyond it. Our small samples and always too-brief opportunities to observe preclude us from reporting authoritative correlations, but careful reporting of what we actually observe – even in single instances, is an important contribution" (Wolcott, 1994, p. 33).

75 When creating the coding frames, it was important to adhere to the requirements (unidimensionality and exhaustiveness) mentioned by Schreier (2012) during the process (pp. 72–76).

Hence, the primary deciding factor of "identifying patterned regularities" (ibid.) of the collected data was not on frequency of the reoccurring data but on deciphering the meaning of the cases. Thus, when creating a new data-driven category, it was important to "stay close to the data" for the labeling of the category name.

With regard to contextual understanding and comparative analysis, the emphasis was on similarities of the investigating factors and not on simple differences of structures or events (ref. Chapter 4.2). Differences that emerged along the process were to be interpreted within the social context to understand the provided lived experiences. These in-depth contextualized analytical interpretations are the key findings of this research to be reflected in the next chapters of reporting of the results.

In order to improve the trustworthiness of the transparent data analysis, in addition to the previously mentioned reflective points, the methods and procedures taken were presented in the doctoral colloquiums regularly to discuss about analytic issues and obtain a constructive "perspective on future directions with the study" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 206).

Above all, the analytic memos in the researcher journal helped during the interim phase to move from "coding to the more formal write-up of the study" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 50). This process was shared step-by-step with peer doctoral colleagues and the supervisor for feedback during the colloquiums,[76] which provided an opportunity to check the quality of the procedures and to engage in self-reflection on the decisions.

76 Saldaña (2013) uses the term "shop talking" (p. 206) and Flick (2007) labels such sharing and discussing in regular meetings with others as "peer debriefing" and "member checks" (p. 19).

6 Exploring the meanings reflected in lived experiences: findings from the investigation

The findings from the two sets of interviews with experts and international students demonstrate their experiences regarding internationalization efforts focused on supporting international students at host universities. The experiences of the experts uncover the managing and organizing support services for international students at the institutional level while international students' interview findings offer their perceptions on the provided assistance by their corresponding host universities.

The statements from the semi-structured interviews concentrate on two main categories of Knight's theoretical framework (2004; 2012) of internationalization strategies of higher education (services and extracurricular activities) at the institutional level. Based on the inherent nature of semi-structured interviews, aspects beyond confined borders of theoretical categories also emerged from the interviews. The clear distinction of concept-driven or data-driven is at times difficult as new aspects are generated during the narrative exploration of the topics. Nevertheless, through systematical and transparent data analysis procedures, the given findings from the matrices are described in this chapter concentrating on the central themes of the theoretical as well as data-driven categories in the light of comparative perspectives from the USA, Korea and Germany.

In line with the researcher's biographical background and reflective procedural decisions of the sampling criteria, international offices were selected (ref. Chapter 2.2.2). None of the authors from the literature review had confined the institutional level programs only to international offices. However, in order to obtain comparative data sets from three different countries and based on the assumption that international offices gained importance in the last three decades and are often the initial contact that the students obtain information on admission and studies, the research findings are mostly based on the interview data of staff members from international offices.

Against this background, the first category concerns the institutional dimensions of international offices investigated. Interviewed experts provide organizational structures of corresponding institutions and the role they play in supporting international students. Moreover, interviewees outline various programs for international students, training opportunities for staff and customer service attitude the position entails. Besides identifying the managerial features, the shared experiences allow to comprehend the perception of actors who organize support settings for international students adapting to life at host universities.

6.1 Institutional level approach: international office

To begin with, as mostly international officers[77] from the three countries investigated were interviewed, the experts' lived experiences provide insight into the daily responsibilities as well as detecting managing and organizational features of international offices when it comes to offering programs and services to integrate international students at the host universities. Experts' interview data led to identifying five main features: 1) the role and structure of international offices, 2) program developments, 3) personal and academic backgrounds of international officers, 4) trainings for employees, and 5) customer service. In the following section, central themes derived from these categories will be explored, evidenced by interviewees' statements.

6.1.1 The role and structure of international offices

With regard to roles and structures of international offices, international officers interviewed across three countries confirmed the fact that international offices are the primary contact institution for international students before and upon arrival. Moreover, international offices specifically attempt to support incoming international students in the beginning phase to facilitate initial adjustment at host institutions.

The central task, which takes up most of the work proportion, is processing immigration documents and at times admission procedures. However, the admission procedures are processed at a separate admissions office depending on each university's structure.

Especially, decentralized structures can be found based on the interview data from all three countries but with a varying focus. According to the experts' interviews from the USA, international offices have their own programming; however, many institutions on campus collaborate with international offices and facilitate programs in various areas from housing to career services, which are explicitly geared towards international students. Based on the USA experts' awareness and information given, they were very well informed of the distinct programs offered by other institutions on campus and were ready to forward the information on services to international students (ref. Chapter 6.7).

> "We are the primary contact for visa and immigration information. And we certainly like to be their first stop if they are not sure where to go on campus when they have questions. But sometimes it's easier to tell you what we do do by telling you what we don't do. So, we are not the student activities office or full programming office. So, we don't have full programming staff. We are not academic advisors. So, they get their academic advising from the academic advisors at the schools and colleges and in some cases from faculty members of the school or college. We are not the housing office. And there's a robust housing office here on campus. We house over 15,000 students on campus, mostly undergraduates. And they're very very active support services within the housing office community and network as well. We have an active Career Services Office that does a lot

77 Except for three staff members who work to support international students from varying offices (ref. Chapter 4.5.1).

of career placementing and career counseling. We have an Educational Resource Center that does a lot of tutoring, a lot of / there's language labs and language learning, they have a mentor program, they offer workshops throughout the year to help students succeed in test taking, becoming used to the US classroom, they help them plan their schedule, break down the syllabus, they help with a lot of academic resources" (IO-8-US, para. 26).

The reasons for having such decentralized systems at investigated universities in the USA are due to not only a high number of international students but also the large scale of the university with different departments involved. In this respect, one international office cannot cope with all the separate needs of such a large number of international students and departments at once.

In comparison to the decentralized USA universities, international offices in Korea are both the main contact for immigration procedures and general campus life support. Such responsibilities lead to more centralized structures of international offices; and the role of international offices is significant in dealing with administrative tasks as well as daily demands that international students encounter. Such double roles are indicated by this expert:

"After welcoming the international students from the international office and even if we forward these students to separate departments, these students are sent back to our international office. Why? Because language becomes an issue" (IO-1-KO, para. 56).

The primary reason for the centralized structure at most Korean universities investigated is because staff members in other offices on campus speak only Korean whereas international students are not necessarily required to have Korean knowledge when accepted at Korean universities. Thus, most international students are forwarded back to international offices. There exist some universities that have colleges or departments in which English is the main medium of instruction and which have designated staff members who speak English, but this is not prevalent in all institutions investigated. Although centralized structure is rather dominant in the universities, which are sampled for this research in Korea, few universities take on a more decentralized structure in a way that a staff member is appointed in colleges that a part of their responsibility is to accommodate the academic advising of international students. In what way these tasks are carried out in coming up with support programs was not mentioned by the experts interviewed; but the main information these designated staff members were providing was academic information. Such academic information was about general regulations (e.g., information on how many credits to take, which exams to pass, etc.) to successfully finish one's studies and does not share the traits of individual academic advising which we can find in American universities of the sample at hand (ref. Chapter 6.2.1.3).

When looking at the question whether the role and structure of international offices are centralized or decentralized, in German universities

"it depends a lot on the programs. This is actually a very important question – not to say a dramatic question – because it is all about the question of what is centralized and decentralized. The Erasmus program is a completely decentralized program in terms

> of who maintains which partnership, which students should come, which students are selected. But the administration of the incoming students is centralized [. . .]. Then again, in the Erasmus-program students need a learning agreement. They have this study contract in which it is exactly said which courses the students need to take. And they need the departmental coordinator to sign the contract. So, our division of labor would be that everything in terms of administration is centralized, but when it comes to teaching contents, you will have to go to the departmental coordinator. As for the direct exchange program, people would not necessarily sign such a learning agreement. They would come here with all of their questions. If there are questions, the students would always contact us" (IO-2-DE, para. 16).

In German universities examined, there is a clear division of support depending on the target groups, Erasmus program students, direct exchange students, and degree-seeking students (refer to Chapter 6.2.2; ref. Heyle & Tullbane, 2012, p. 7). As stated by the expert in the quote, Erasmus exchange programs have designated officers at international offices as well as in faculties. With regard to degree-seeking students, administrative and immigration processes are dealt with in an international office whereas each faculty carries out academic advising. Overall, as to the initial statement of this category, international offices are the main contact for almost all of their inquiries that may surface when living and studying at host institutions. The varying features in how international offices support international students with which programs and how they collaborate with other offices are uncovered when taking a look at further aspects in the subsequent categories.

6.1.2 Program development in international offices

Within the institutional frame of international offices, one essential question was to discover the way in which support programs were created to support international students in host universities. When asked, most international officers mentioned that customarily the programs have been taking place over the past years and they have repeatedly offered pre-established programs.

> "So, the three weeks of orientation, I would say, it's not my idea. I inherited it, okay? It's what we've been offering decades and decades. We want to do a three week orientation, workshops will be really tailored to meet incoming students' needs, from banking, shopping buying a used car, and getting a (inc.,unclear pronunciation), safety, things to do, cultural training, all basic needs as well as some of the highlights of cultural differences in the classroom. [. . .] Those are the orientation workshops and we have some social events during the orientation because we don't want them to just go back to the apartment and feel lonely missing their family. We want to keep them busy and we want to help them make a connection with other international students who are sharing similar experience of transition at this particular stage. So, to answer your question, for the most part, we repeat the program" (IO-I-US, para. 23).

International officers in general stated that new programs are added and existing program are modified. Another noticeable aspect was that international officers orientate ideas from universities outside of their own. In Korea, one staff member explained that she has been sent on several business trips to Hong Kong and Singaporean universities to benchmark the buddy program (ref. Chapter 6.2.3) and the international faculty lounge on campus. Having experienced the procedures of enacting the programs from ideas from other countries, this officer criticized the university's approach as the programs are implemented without regarding the institutional context of the university (ref. IO-4-KO, para. 121). She notes that more thought and discussions need to take place with a long-term outlook. Only then, she believes that the implementation of benchmarking programs from other countries can be effective at all. Based on her own opinion, these two ideas, which had been applied, do not operate as the ones from the original countries as the contextual background for the programs are different.

In relation to benchmarking programs from universities of other countries, one staff member of a German university had applied for a staff exchange to universities in the United Kingdom and the USA. She had modeled the idea of a daily "service center" that functions as a front office for international students where general questions can be answered instantly once students walk into the international office. She mentioned that before this service point was established, students could only inquire information during the limited office hours of designated staff members, and thanks to this service point, students have better access to information and support (ref. IO-7-DE, para. 44).

Aside from these examples of benchmarking ideas from other countries, when it comes to exchanging ideas between international offices for ideas for program development, one international officer acknowledged the following:

> "To be honest, we do check what other universities are offering. But the main question is how we could support our students here. And since we have had programs for a long time here – also my colleagues have been working here for quite a long time – they do have the experience" (IO-6-DE, para. 67).

In addition, one German expert pointed out that the buddy programs (ref. Chapter 6.2.3) started to be popular from the year 2007; and that was when she had implemented the program in her office. Moreover, international officers meet regularly at conferences from German Academic Exchange Services to share best practices of supporting international students and exchanges of ideas take place regionally as well.

In general, it was possible to identify that creating programs or modifying them is context specific and depends on the motivations of the staff member in charge to apply for staff exchanges as well as the funding to actually implement the ideas. Overall, most interviewed experts rely on direct feedback from the students and regular official survey evaluations carried out by the university at times.

6.1.3 Personal and academic backgrounds of the international officers

The diversity spectrum of the USA staff members in question is manifold in terms of nationalities and ethnicities compared to international officers in Korea and Germany. One of the experts mentioned how the diversity of the staff members changed over time:

> "[P]art of that 35 years that I've worked here doing immigration and then I left and I came back and have been doing this programming. And one of the things that I've / When I first worked here, it was almost homogeneous. I am of African American decent and I am a mixture. I was the exotic one in the group. But now it is much more. We have two people who were born and raised in mainland China who are advisors. We have an African American gentleman along with myself. We have people who are from / born and raised in this area. We have people – someone from Spain, someone from Serbia and we have people – students wouldn't know this but we have people who are married – they are two people and they happen to be married to Peruvians. And we have a staff member who is Bolivian. So, I would say that we have a pretty big diverse group. There are people of Jewish heritage in the office, Christian, and perhaps agnostic people, atheist, we've got everybody. Because even if students are not dealing with that person but they see someone in the office who looks like them, I would imagine it would help" (IO-7-US, para. 114).

In connection to the last statement above, an expert of Chinese decent shared her experience of how Chinese international students approach her during the programs or events. She felt that her presence could help international students to feel comfortable and secure when interacting with her:

> "Yes, not necessarily just see me as a Chinese and sometimes they say, 'What you say make a lot of sense because a lot of people do not understand what I am talking about.' But I must say that among the advisors, we have advisors who taught English in another country or maybe, have you heard of Peace Corpse in the US? And they are Peace Corpse returner and some are former international students as well or travelled around or lived in another country. So, they have that cultural experiences. So, people in this field, generally speaking are, I am not saying everybody" (IO-1-US, para. 57).

With regard to diverse cultural backgrounds and language competences, an international officer from Germany notes that only having cultural experiences or having lived abroad does not necessarily lead to possessing intercultural competence in general. She emphasizes that other competencies such as friendliness and politeness are as important (ref. IO-1-DE, para. 92).

Nevertheless, most experts interviewed acknowledge that experiences of staying abroad can help in comprehending the situations that international students face when coming to a new environment. For example, one expert expresses the advantages of having one-year teaching experience in China pertaining to cultural understanding and (limited) language competence:

> "I got a really good understanding of Chinese culture and a lot of the differences in Chinese culture and US culture, obviously, which has helped me to understand where the students are coming from, the differences especially in the classroom, which is huge" (IO-2-US, para. 58).
> "And the other thing that helped me with is, I know a few phrases in Chinese, I didn't unfortunately get the chance to study Chinese. I wish I had but being able to understand how to read the pinyin of the names. So, I can pronounce Chinese names, which is really useful in my job. So, even though I just grasp a little bit of the language, even the helping with the pronunciation of the Chinese names, knowing how to see an 'x' and how to pronounce it, that helped a lot" (IO-2-US, para. 62).

When it comes to academic backgrounds of the international officers, one expert in the USA emphasized the theoretical academic background that staff members possess:

> "A lot of the people who work in the office have specific degrees and training in cross-cultural communication or intercultural communication. There's a program […] that specializes in Intercultural Communication as Master's Degree program and almost a half of the staff has gone through that program. Or some kind of graduate degree program where there is a cross-cultural communication element to it" (IO-8-US, para. 42).

Along the lines, senior international officers highlighted specific skills are required for varying positions in the international offices and such tasks are considered when hiring staff members.

> "It takes most of our time and so we are really looking for very very unique people that kind of have the blend of cross cultural people advising skill but also people who can work through systems, people who can work through complicated immigration cases and who has some case management experience because a lot of the work that we do is similar to what a law firm would do. It is a lot of legal work. We are almost looking for folks with the balance of the analytical and the organizational and the case management and the immigration strategy skill with the people skill" (IO-8-US, para. 32).

The experts in the USA express that the given discrete and concrete abilities for responsibilities depend on the position. Such kind of required criteria or standard is more or less determined by the individual staff member in charge and general tendencies were less conspicuous in experts' statements.

Against such varying conditions, nevertheless, several international officers in senior positions in three countries confirmed that the personal and academic background containing diverse experiences and language competence are essential criteria when employing international officers as well as student assistants.

> "[W]e want people to be open-minded, to have international experience, to have been abroad themselves – it is always important to have been in the shoes of those who come here. And they have to have an interest of anything international. That is our main goal, everything else you can learn" (IO-4-DE, para. 44).

An expert in one international office in Korea purposefully hires students from different countries such as Indonesia, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and Kyrgyzstan (ref. IO-5-KO, paras. 118–119). Moreover, in German international offices, experts stated that students with migration background or former international students from, e.g., Greece, Russia, Afghanistan and Turkey are prevalent in the student assistant positions.

6.1.4 Training opportunities for employees

In line with the preceding features of staff characteristics, experts were inquired about the types and availability of training opportunities for both international officers and similar staff (as well as faculty) members on campus related to supporting international students.

It is noteworthy to detect the prevailing use of the term, cross-cultural training, (as evidenced by the field of studies that international officers acquired their degree in) by the experts in the USA and Germany. Experts in the USA offer cross-cultural trainings for the staff members on campus, which are available upon request.

> "We do some training just how to work with international students, how to understand different cultural norms, because a lot of the people that we train haven't necessarily been exposed maybe to other cultures. […] I've also done a series called 'Understanding Students,' basically, we do 'Understanding Students from China, India, [inc.].' We invite staff and students to come and then get a panel of students from that country who talk about what it's like to study, what's the visa processes like, what their countries' education system is like, what their challenges and positives are. That's been well attended" (IO-2-US, para. 94).
>
> "We are asked to give trainings to different groups, so, sometimes we will do a faculty training or an administrator training. So, there's a sort training that runs in different levels. We help a lot of that training – we do a small on demand training. It's something that the university is looking at now is to see what as an university we could do in more collaboratively, instead of just every once in a while having one of the schools and colleges ask [us] to come and do a training" (IO-8-US, para. 48).

Three other experts from the USA mentioned how they have the opportunity to take external cross-cultural trainings and forward the knowledge learned to their colleagues:

> "Yes, we do offer, 'Intercultural Communications Training' from our office. Several of us especially in on a programming team have spent some time out in Portland, like [one colleague] just did at the Institute for Intercultural Communication. We kind of work to be more aware and ready to facilitate these intercultural communications workshops or dialogues" (IO-4-US, para. 12).

In this case, experts were given the opportunity to visit trainings that would further help and support international students in their position. Similar to the USA examples, most officers in Germany were aware of the internal on-the-job trainings, which deal with

cultural topics but in how far staff members from international offices or employees on campus participate in those trainings was not revealed in the interviews. One international officer of a German university points out the fact that one needs to be proactive in terms of both partaking in such trainings and acquiring extra financial support from the university, which is mostly only travel expenses and not for the program fee. Nevertheless, from her perspective, on most occasions, not much reward is given to such efforts since, "it's a personal thing" (IO-2-DE, para. 50). In this respect, one German international officer was of the opinion that

> "[in] administrative areas, there are definitely a lot of personnel who require on-the-job trainings. Probably it is needed more for the employees at the immigration offices. There I hear over and over again from students that they are dealt very badly. If we could organize trainings there, it would be great but I believe that they are not very interested in such things" (IO-1-DE, para. 92).

When asked about further training options in Korea for staff members on campus, one expert expressed her doubt:

> "It is true that we don't have such trainings. Even if I call the immigration office to ask about certain information, the answers are different depending on the person at that office. If there had been a training session for immigration work in beforehand, it would reduce my workload since I would not need to call for every case. If there had been cultural sessions or similar / I would like to forward such information to students if I had the ability or materials. I am not so sure whether there are any staff members in this office in Korea who can explain concepts such as culture shock or similar fields. I am quite skeptical" (IO-4-KO, para. 115).

Similar responses regarding the lack of further on-the-job training opportunities for cross-cultural understanding apply to all the experts interviewed at Korean universities.

6.1.5 Customer service

During the interviews, the comments on customer service were noticeable mainly from the experts interviewed in the USA and Germany while the staff members in Korea did not indicate the topic in a discrete manner by using the given term. Most experts in the USA refer to the importance of customer service in supporting international students and catering to their needs; and there is no doubt that tuition plays a significant role in universities of the USA.

> "Because YOUR TUITION, EVERYTHING YOU PAID FOR THIS SERVICE. YOU SHOULD USE THE SERVICE TO GET PROFESSIONAL HELP AND SERVICE" (IO-1-US, para. 59).
> "Uh! Because the biggest word is an American context is 'ACCESS.' We want access. I want students, I am here to serve students and again, this notion of student services in a European is just not there. But they don't pay tuition. So, money drives everything. Why

do we have student services? Keeping people in school. Why do we need to keep people in school? They are paying tuition" (IO-5-US, para. 35).

"We have a health center, we have a counseling center, we have academic advisors – we have all these support structures and we have all these studies about how to retain people and I believe it is all driven by money because if people drop out, first of all, we are not achieving our educational goals, if that happens but I also think that we lose money, if they don't pay tuition" (IO-5-US, para. 37).

Especially one expert was a part of the official university assessment team surveying international students' satisfactory level at the host institution. She was able to share that the aspect concerning customer service was problematic based on the answers of the student survey:

"The rest of the services were mixed feelings. Like one of the issues that was unfortunately not high was 'Customer Service' and this was kind of across the board for a lot of different departments just especially with frontline staffs. So, like the people who are behind the desk, the first people that they see when they come in. There was unfortunately some negative feedback about that" (IO-2-US, para. 24).

On the same subject, a question was asked as to how a limited number of international officers could support sometimes up to 9,000 international students on campus. When considering all the international offices investigated in the three countries, there was one to maximum three staff members in charge of programming responsibilities. It is clear that at times student assistants are hired to help but most of the programming advisors whom I interviewed had several responsibilities in a position, such as immigration advising together with the programming tasks.

In response to the concretizing customer care as service, experts in the USA mentioned three distinguishable features. First, in every international office that I visited there exists a general service desk once one enters the international office. It helps visitors, mainly international students or domestic students, who are interested in going abroad. Basic information can be acquired on the spot, and when an individual inquiry needs more support, a student can walk into the offices of the advisors, mostly, without appointments. As mentioned by the expert above, it was possible to notice that "access" is the key principle in customer service in the international offices investigated. In connection to physical "access" to a personnel at offices, speedy email replies and continuous updates of webpage information "access" were also considered important (ref. Chapter 6.3).

The second distinct feature that experts in the USA mentioned was their effort to reach out to international students, especially focusing on "personal stories" or difficulties that the student might come across when living and studying at the host institution:

"We want make sure that they have a good relationship established so when international students really experience personal stress, they feel comfortable saying, 'You know what I want to come and see this advisor, even though it's a personal story.' We want to make sure that we are not just being perceived as compliance. [. . .] We also want to make sure

> our international students and scholars and family see our office as home away from home. When they encounter some difficulties / even though we may not have the answer but they feel comfortable walking into our office. They want to feel comfortable sharing their personal stories and we can help them connect with the people either on campus or community, who can help. So, that has a lot of what we do for programming (inc., unclear pronunciation)" (IO-1-US, para. 13).

In connection to the openness and taking the time to listen to personal stories, the expert elaborates that one of his key purposes is to "build personal relationship":

> "So, when students do come, we first try to help them with the issues that they are asking, but more importantly to develop that personal relationship. So, my personal motto is to develop that personal relationship with the students because the students are not just here for once to visit the office, maybe it could be more than once. But after that personal relationship building, first the student will feel more comfortable coming back for help, secondly, it also helps us as advisors to be more comfortable with the students" (IO-3-US, para. 8).

Along the lines of establishing comfortable rapport with students, the following expert presents few examples of "personalized attention" and how such kind of support is difficult once the number of international students increases:

> "For students who want a personal experience, they need to know. The advisors would go out to dinner with the students. I can't even imagine that here. Not because that I wouldn't want to but because it would never even scratch the surface of how many and how do you decide which ones, and, you know. There's so few at schools like that they can do things like [inc.]. They can organize dinner with the advisors. I have colleagues at schools where she feels comfortable giving the students her cell phone number. I can't imagine that. But if that's the kind of relationship that you have, you can't do that with 9,000 students. But you could do that with 150, if you wanted to. I think that benefits are definitely if you want that personalized attention, but then of course, it depends on what you are looking for academically because this is a huge, a large research institution is going to award opportunities that smaller scale experience doesn't" (IO-2-US, para. 88).

It is possible to sum up the overall strategy of customer service among the international officers in the USA with the following quote. One of the senior international officers states that the key emphasis is on emotional support, namely friendliness and attention, when approaching and reacting to inquiries made by international students:

> "What we say here a lot is people will not always remember what you did – but they will remember how you made them feel. And that's a huge thing in terms of our thinking here. Now again, that comes from me and my vision of customer service. How can a total team of 17 people serve really close to 9,071 students, 1,000 visiting faculty and 10% of spouses and children. We've got an international community; and 70% of the work of our office is bureaucratic, issuing I-20 [Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status] forms and all the other visa issues that how can somebody get here, come into the country, teach, study, do research. So, we need to have a plan for how do we make

people feel important, how do we make people feel at the other end of the phone call, 'I care about you'" (IO-5-US, para. 47).

In the context of customer service, while the notions of access, personal relationship building, and friendly care are mentioned and are practiced by the experts in the USA,[78] statements of experts interviewed at German international offices take on different perspectives.

Corresponding to the relationship between tuition and customer service, one international officer in Germany notes that one of the merits of German universities is that the universities do not take high tuition from international students compared to other countries (ref. Chapter 3.3). Thus, he could imagine that the service mentality could not be as catered towards the needs of students, as it is the case in the USA (ref. IO-1-DE, para. 100). Along the lines, however, there are transitions taking place with regard to customer service attitude in German universities as another expert mentions:

"It is not like in the US or in Great Britain, because you don't have this money from the students, on the one hand. On the other hand, it is something that is very popular right now. So, I think that German universities really are becoming more and more service orientated and are looking at students like clients, for example. On the other hand, I also have the feedback from international students, who started some years ago when we didn't have as many offers as we have now, and they said that they also liked the idea of not having any service because it helped them develop as a person. They learned how to be more proactive and self-sufficient. 'If I made it here, I can make it anywhere.' So, we also got this kind of feedback. So, it is a good idea to look at what other universities do, and to look at the students' expectations. But I think, it is a mixture of doing what is typically German – which would be also encouraging this proactive behavior, because it helps you later in life – but still offering some basic services. Especially, I think, it is important to offer things in terms of – something we are intensively working on currently – emergency situations" (IO-7-DE, para. 46).

The idea of in featuring service desks at entrances at international offices could be found at half of the universities visited for the expert interviews in Germany. Against the background, a transition is taking place within specific German traditions of accommodating international students on campus. One expert mentions about the establishment of the service desk and the notion of instant access of information on support services to students:

"So, the people work here, they work in an administration; but with a friendly face, and I think that it is quite well coming now that they can come here. I mean, they can also contact the information service with their questions every day from nine until five, which is nice. Before it wasn't like that. The student service center just opened last September. So, I won't tell you how it was before, because it was horrible. I think, the exchange students always find someone to help them – maybe not immediately" (IO-2-DE, para. 38).

78 This research does not measure how effective these features are implemented in the universities examined.

She further touches upon the aspects of tuition, friendliness and care. In addition, it is possible to perceive that notions of personal relationship building and emotional support are not mentioned in German university contexts:

> "As for the students at the information service this is relatively easy to answer, because they are service institution. We tell [our administrative staff], 'look, you are the first face, please be friendly.' Even though we don't take money from them [the international students], I mean, the state pays us for taking up students, I think. And the back offices used to be different, but things have changed a bit, I would say. We always have limits. And I am a pro-limit person. Because you can be very friendly, but there can also be people who try to abuse this. So, it is completely okay to say, 'this is the procedure.' Whether you are fee-paying or not, this is the procedure. So, I think, we are a very German administration, you know – sticking to procedures and one person is totally nice and the other person is personally unfriendly but it's still the same procedure" (IO-2-DE, para. 44).

The two main features frequently mentioned by the experts interviewed in Germany are 1) concentration on the 'procedure' in dealing with the matters by university staff members with or without being friendly and 2) the need to be proactive from students' side, which leads to developing self-sufficiency.

As touched upon very briefly, what was attention grabbing was that when asked about customer service and tuition, utterances explicitly referring to the term customer service were not provided by the staff members in Korea. The responses focused on how the universities in Korea are dependent on recruiting international students to increase the revenues in general (ref. Chapter 3.2). However, many international students receive Korean government scholarships as well as national funding of the country of origin to study in Korea. All the universities visited had service desks at entrances of international offices, but this could be the influence of Korean universities primarily following the American model of university structures (ref. Chapter 3.2). Moreover, the concept of caring for international students as in the sense of American universities was noticeable. However, none of the experts mentioned about listening to personal stories or building relationships with students in daily work.

From the interview findings, it was possible to recognize that the role of customer service mentioned by experts show different foci as Korean and German universities try to incorporate more service mentality depending on the context of each country's university setting.

6.2 Support services for international students

The results in this research reported in this section mainly cover the support services from the international offices for international students, primarily the services for incoming international students. Hence, the following section is divided into three subchapters in describing the support services that international students receive. The primary descriptions are programs offered upon students' arrival at the host institutions.

Additionally, a question was sought out to identify whether varying programs for different target groups exist and whether the engagement differs depending on the target groups. Finally, types of peer support were investigated, as peer support components could be found in all the international offices examined. From the forthcoming sections, the results are displayed by disclosing, first of all, the experts' viewpoints followed by students' responses of the interviews, which allows case-by-case comparisons possible.

6.2.1 Initial support services

6.2.1.1 Advising immigration

Experts' interviews

Pertaining to the central role of international offices in processing immigration procedures (ref. Chapter 6.1.1), advising immigration regulation for international students is the foremost and the core activity for international offices in the beginning phase of students' stay at host institutions. At times, as visa is required to enter the host country, even before and upon arrival of international students, information on immigration processes is delivered mostly with the admission documents. According to an international officer who shares programming and immigration advising tasks,

> "they each have to physically come [into the office]. They have to bring their immigration documents I-20 or DS-2019 [Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status], their passport with the visa and the entry stamp and we do a few things and put them active in the system" (IO-2-US, para. 44).

This is also the case for Korea but the students do not have to "physically come" to report at international offices. On the basis of one expert's statement, there exists a staff member who has access to the Immigration Control System and is able to track international students' entry into Korea (I-3-KO, para. 17). While staff members advising immigration in universities in the USA issue immigration documents mentioned in the quote above and must have individual contact to inform the students of the regulations in detail, this is not the case for sampled universities in Korea and Germany. In the latter cases, basic information is provided together with the "invitation letter" (IO-2-DE, para. 56) but each student needs to "take care of it themselves" (ibid.), namely, collecting the necessary documents and apply for a visa by contacting and visiting the corresponding immigration offices either before (Korean and German embassies abroad) or after the entry to the host country (local immigration offices). By the end of it all, students need to have their official resident permits. At two universities investigated in Germany, there exist visa services in which the immigration offices of the corresponding cities have their "liaison officers" (IO-2-DE, ibid.) working on campus for international students and scholars.

> "The visa service on campus has been here for 20 years. In the end, it depends on the university whether it wants to organize such things and hire student assistants accordingly.

> Also, question of availability of space for such external office is not so unproblematic, but one really has to really want it. One must think that perhaps it is an important service. Perhaps it might be that dealing with immigration offices is easier in smaller cities; but here we have a big immigration office with many visitors that eventually one stands in line for four hours in order to even get an appointment. To avoid such incidences and to make it a little bit more pleasant for international students, we have established such a thing" (IO-1-DE, para. 12).

It has been acknowledged by international officers that international students have difficulties at immigration offices in Germany, which could be observed by the experiences of international students in the following section.

International students' interviews

With regard to immigration advising, international students received information regarding the visa application when needed together with the acceptance letter. All international students interviewed in the USA and Korea replied that the procedure of obtaining the required documents in order to apply for the study visa and residence permits went smoothly:

> "I got the form I-20 to apply for my visa which was issued by the university and also the Welcome Package with all the introduction: what I have to do for the visa, what I have to do for the accommodation but the formal stuff was generally the I-20. […] [I]t was fine because they had kind of a To-Do list and so, I really just went to the websites they told me and did exactly what they told. It was annoying because it was pretty costly, you paid a lot. But it was fine" (I-9-US, paras. 3, 11).

In the same way, a student interviewed in Korea said:

> "Yeah, it was all in the information package, information on how to get it and then I did it all back in Switzerland and it was quite easy" (I-10-KO, para. 31).

Although the responses of international students questioned in Korea all shared positive experiences at immigration offices, one student's statement implies that appointments with immigration officers could turn out differently.

> "Yeah it was easy because I was a bit more proactive as compared to normal students. I tried to at least gather information of what I need to prepare. Because I heard stories about how dreadful it is in the immigration department" (I-13-KO, para. 41).

In most cases in Germany, most international students shared the opinion that the visits to the immigration offices were difficult in terms of being confronted with impolite workers from their perspectives and having long waits for the appointments.

> "People are professional there. They were not so like rude and not so friendly. Even my friends had some problems. When the official was telling them and harassing them like,

> ‘You are in Germany, so, you should speak German. So, I won’t help you when you are in English.’ My friends had this problem but not me” (I-5-DE, para. 63).
>
> “Oh! yeah, that’s terrible! Sorry for saying that but I hate Auslandsbehörde (the immigration office, my translation). It’s so complicated. I feel so sad. I don’t want to see the building again in my life but I have to because the meetings are at 7 o’clock. But I remember that I was waiting since 6 a.m., I was waiting outside freezing. This was terrible and it was so depressing for me. After I got my paper, I had to go there four times” (I-6-DE, para. 33).

The experiences of the students correspond with two German international officers’ statements of why there exist liaison immigration officers on campus at their universities, which is to reduce the stress of having to deal with the aspects mentioned by the international students in Germany.

6.2.1.2 Pick-up services

Experts’ interviews

Most experts in the USA and Korea mentioned that they have pick-up services for international students from airports or train stations. While the pick-up services generally cover both non-degree and degree-seeking students in the USA, only exchange students are applicable to such services in Korea and Germany. One international officer from the USA was able to share the rationale of starting the pick-up service and what the given service looks like as she is a part of the pilot project which was about to take off in a few weeks after the interview:

> “Up until this fall, NO. But you have to keep in mind I mean that we are 9,600 plus international students so, it was very difficult. So, it was something that we would have always wanted to do but it’s very, I mean how do you even coordinate that? And then on top of that there’s the added complication that there is an airport here but it’s very small and it only has American airlines in it, and pretty much only flies to [this city] with one flight per day to [another city]. So, it’s really tiny planes so, you know, so, there’s all kinds of issues with that, right? So most of our students […] are actually using [the airport] as their final flight destination and then going to use ground transportation to come to the campus. […] So, one of the things that came out on the […] survey the first year was that there is no ‘Welcome and Pick-Up.’ And so, they arrive, undergraduates maybe their first time in the US and there’s you know there’s nobody really there. So, if you are not familiar with how to get a bus, or how to get a taxi, it can be really difficult. So, this was one of the biggest themes […], and so, we’ve actually taken that into consideration and this Fall, this August, for the first time, from August 16 through 20th, there will be a shuttle running. We rented out with a shuttle company and there will be several shuttles per day […]. It’s a pretty big operation. We have a lot of people involved. There’s going to be three staff members up there, myself included.
>
> […] I am going to sort of be a point of contact to help students with any questions that they might have, even if they are not taking shuttle with us like we can point them into the direction of like because there’s the bus option, there’s the train that goes […], the Amtrack. You know, help them make sure they know what they are doing. And then the

> Chinese Students and Scholar Association is also going to help and as well as people from other departments, the Union, Campus Recreation. Some people are going to be here, waiting at the Union to help once they get to campus to help find them the residence halls. So, this year, we are making a very very concerted effort to make that Welcome a lot smoother. So, it's kind of our pilot year. When we are going to be up there, it's when most of the undergrad students arrive. The grad students are more than welcome to use the shuttle but a lot of grad students are working on campus so, they have to be here earlier, which means they will miss the shuttle time. But the other thing is / I mean a lot of grad students have already lived or visited the US. They tend to be older and a little bit more able to navigate for themselves. So, hopefully that will be okay but yeah" (IO-2-US, paras. 38, 40).

In Korea and Germany, international officers mentioned that student workers, either voluntarily or as part of their job responsibilities, offer pick-up services for incoming international students from airports. One staff member from Germany explains that a pick-up service is offered in specific cases as indicated below:

> "Yes, but it is a very small pickup-service. One week before the orientation week, we have two students, who work a lot here, our student assistants, we don't really employ many people, but we have many students assistants in the whole team. So, we have two students ready to pick up more the direct exchange students. My colleague who was responsible for the direct exchange program says that it's mostly for the Asian students, who would feel a lot safer when there's somebody at the airport and tells them, 'this is where you go.' For the Erasmus students we do not actually bother because Europeans travel so much within [. . .] that it is just not necessary. Sometimes we organized the bus for the Erasmus students. So, it really depends on the program and on the target group. We used to have, for example, and Erasmus program with Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. So, the students would have traveled three days from Fiji to come here. Well, and then, of course you pick them up" (IO-2-DE, para. 18).

An extensive pick-up service for short-term exchange students by buddies (ref. to Chapter 6.2.3) is existent at one university in Germany:

> "The program itself is split up: we have a pickup service for international exchange students – also for the Erasmus students and the students from overseas who stay here for a semester or two. They can apply for a pickup service – we do have an online form which they can fill out and they will try to find a buddy. Then they get picked up by one buddy, however, a buddy can of course pick up several students, but not at once. So, there is only one buddy waiting for one student. If, however, there are students who know each other from the same university and they are on the same flight, one buddy will pick them up together. [. . .]
>
> The other part of the program is those information stands: these are placed in different train stations and we do have one at the airport, one on campus, and one at the Bürgerbüro (town hall, my translation) where they have to register. So, our buddies stand there and wait for the new students to arrive. And they can go up to them and ask them any question related to their first days. So, for example, at the airport it is probably, 'how do I get to the city?'; 'how do I get to my dorm?'; 'where do I live?'; 'what train do I have to take?';

> ‘what ticket do I buy?’ These are probably the most important questions at the airport. And on campus the questions are of course: ‘Where do I live?’; ‘How can I find my dorm?’; ‘What do I have to do next?’ And our buddies help” (IO-6-DE, paras. 46, 47).

International students’ interviews

With regard to the question of how international students arranged to come to the destination, international students were provided with airport pick-up services by international offices (except for three students who studied in the metropolitan area of the USA in which there existed an international airport directly within the city limits). And at times, nationality student clubs, e.g., the Malaysian Student Association would contact the students in beforehand and offer pick-up services when necessary.

In general, international students would send the information concerning travel arrangements and sign up for the pick-up services on the designated webpages that are forwarded from the international office (I-1-US, para. 61). As expressed by a Zimbabwean student, such pick-up service was regarded as very helpful:

> “Yes, [the university staff members] had a table that had the ‘Welcoming International Students,’ so, I was able to go there and I told them ‘I am a new international student and I am learning’ and they were able to give me the information I needed. I was able to get a TAXI ride, a free TAXI ride, from the airport to come to campus. That was really nice, especially considering that it was my first time in the US and I had NO IDEA what I was supposed to do. That’s some of the information that they also gave me when I got my acceptance letter. So, it was VERY SEEMLESS” (I-2-US, para. 41).

As for Korean universities, most international students, especially all non-degree seeking international students interviewed were aware of the pick-up services and some took advantage of them. Even though most exchange students knew that they existed, students arranged the travel to the destination on their own. Some chose this option due to the fact that they had someone to pick them up from the destination, or some needed to pay a fee which was more expensive than just taking the public transportation. Compared to organized support from many different departments as indicated in the quote from the international officer (ref. IO-2-US), student assistants who were voluntarily working in buddy programs would individually come to pick up the international students from the airports.

> “My friend picked me up but you can apply for it [. . .] and they like provide such services. They do the pick-up service” (I-3-KO, para. 13).
>
> “Yes, that was a bit tricky because they asked us before that you have to pay 40000 KRW for the buddy to pick you up but the bus is actually 10000 KRW. We didn’t know and we wanted to meet the buddy too so, we can talk and stuff, we paid. But thinking afterwards, that’s too expensive. We took the limousine bus which is more convenient because it comes to [. . .] but 40000 KRW and 10000 KRW is a big difference” (I-4-KO, para. 25).

When asked if pick-up services or similar services were offered in Germany, the international students who participated in the interviews were not informed or were not aware of pick-up services to the destination.

> "No, the university did not offer us anything other than the admission" (I-5-DE, para. 39).
>
> "Pick-up service? No…no…no…(laugh). That would be great but no" (I-6-DE, para. 21).

6.2.1.3 Orientation programs

Experts' interviews

Based on the interview data of the experts, the first few weeks of the academic year[79] consist of the most vigorous welcoming programs for all students including international students.[80] All international officers questioned used the term "orientation" programs or sessions when indicating the various information and services offered to international students during that phase.

Although hasty generalizations are to be avoided, based on the information provided by the experts in this study, the duration of the orientation days in the USA tend to be longer (minimum of three days to three weeks) than in Korea (minimum of few hours to two days, but generally within one day) and in Germany (one to three days).

In these orientation sessions, basic information, which is necessary to settle down at host destinations, is offered starting with the core immigration regulations. It is important for international officers to guide the students in maintaing their legal status during their studies abroad. Other information is about how to register for courses, how to open a bank account, and how to get around campus, to name a few examples that could be found across the universities examined. The question of mandatory participation of international students in orientation programs varies depending on the individual university examined.

As no other language aside from English is used for delivering the information to international students in the USA, information sessions are provided in different languages in addition to the mother tongue of each country in Korea and Germany. In Korea, aside from Korean, generally, English and Chinese are spoken and presentation materials as well as printed materials are provided in the given languages. As for Germany, the orientation sessions are carried out in German for degree-seeking international students, based on the understanding that they have met the required German language level to study at German universities. For non-degree international students, mainly English is used during the orientation sessions.

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79 The main academic year begins during the late summer or fall months, ranging from mid-August through mid-October in the USA and Germany. In Korea, the new academic year starts on the first working day of March.

80 One Chinese international student who started in the mid of the academic year expressed the lack of programs to have contact to domestic students; and that had a large impact in terms of socializing with both international and domestic students from the faculty (I-12-KO).

In relevance to different language uses, orientation sessions in most universities take place separately for degree seeking, non-degree seeking and scholars as well as faculty members as information specifics differ. Such differentiated orientation sessions apply in all the international offices investigated in this research, except for one university in the USA that hosts orientation sessions for international students with general freshmen admissions department. The discrete rationale for this international office trying to include international students to general orientation programs with domestic students is shared by the expert (ref. Chapter 6.2.2).

During the orientation sessions, in addition to the immigration information, a variety of social adjustment programs is offered via either cultural trainings or workshops. These introduced programs during the orientation sessions take place during the first few weeks of the semester or are stretched throughout the first semester or year in all three countries. The primary goal for such programs is to provide opportunities for international students to learn about the host culture and get accustomed to new academic as well as social environment in and outside of classes. Several examples of these programs are preparing for winter, how to interact with and meet domestic students, how to write academic papers, and how to give presentations in courses.

To enhance international students' experience in the host culture and interactions with other fellow international students, excursions are introduced during the orientation sessions. The variety and frequency of excursions largely depend on the financial means and individual staff capacity of each international office. Finally, most international offices inform international students about get-togethers that they host regularly. These types of meetings are called, for example, coffee hours, happy hours, "Stammtisch (in Germany)."

Besides the orientation programs from international offices, sometimes each college/school/department/faculty/major offers a separate orientation session for all newly starting students or only for international students in all three countries. In this research, such orientations in separate institutions could not be covered individually because it is not the focus of the current comparative analysis.

International students' interviews

Two international students in the USA took part in each corresponding orientation sessions upon arrival provided from the international offices and found the programs to be very helpful:

> "Definitely, without the orientation program, I don't think I would have fully understood much of what I was supposed to do. I learned a lot about adapting to a new cultural environment, classes. I think, it helped me to prepare for the next two years being on campus. I had experiences that I can only learn through my own experiences outside of the orientation. It definitely did prepare me for that" (I-2-US, para. 51).

Nevertheless, depending on varying reasons, some international students in the USA took part only in a few offers or did not take part in the orientation sessions hosted by the international offices. As noted by the international officers mentioning that each college

has its own welcoming programs in the beginning of the semester, all international students in the USA who participated in the interview took part in orientation sessions from their own majors.

> "So, I attended a couple because for me the priority was to attend the mandatory check-in and be done with that. I think, I attended two or three but ones that had to do with stuff that I couldn't pick up on my own. For example, like tax, immigration stuff like that. Those I needed but stuff that I had to do with cultural adjustment – I didn't exactly need. I grew up on a lot of British and American culture and I had friends who / closest friends back home actually came here for undergrad and some of them came from grad schools. I basically knew what I was going to get as far as cultural integration went. But for the nitty gritty stuff that required specific information, those I attended as much as I could and then because of my school also had its own orientation for international students. My school had a general orientation where they took us up North. They took us to northern [part of the state] and we were there for three days. I knew there was already going to be stuff dedicated to integration so to speak with my classmates and people in my cohort. So, I didn't bother too much with workshops that the International Center had but they had a lot. So, it's not because / I didn't go because those options weren't available to me. I didn't go because I felt I didn't need them" (I-3-US, para. 35).

The orientation sessions from schools provided opportunities to interact with future fellow students and receive tailored information according to the field of studies. Similar to the international student just mentioned above, the orientation session, which also took three days can be exemplified by the experiences told by a Chinese undergraduate engineering student studying in Korea.

> "All international students were divided into three parts. One is Science major, one is Society major, One is Language & Literature. And every major has different homework or different projects to do so and we have three or four Korean students to do some help for us to adjust to the university life. First day we played games. We played traditional Korean games and then Korean students introduced videos about the university and courses. And on the second day, we listened to a lecture. There were Korean students to teach us how to write reports and how to write other articles. And on the third day, there was a little thing in the morning and in the afternoon, we had an interview all together to communicate about what we receive in that three days and then we had dinner together. And that was the end" (I-12-KO, para. 33).

Most international students in the USA graduate schools interviewed stated that they were assigned to academic advisors during that time. And they would consult with them individually for academic guidance which they found to be very supportive in terms of course registrations or information on job opportunities during the studies. These students relied on academic advisors' support more than international offices during the course of the studies.

> "[He] was the first one who helped me to prepare for everything. From the introduction to the course at the reception, housing and that kind of stuff. After that in my school, the Journalism school [. . .] and I got most help from my advisor." (I-5-US, para. 11).

> "I think, he is the only person who would help me. I don't think any other professors are giving me personal guidance or instruction of living in America. They just give me some academic instructions" (I-5-US, para. 13).

It is recognizable that academic advising from colleges especially for graduate students is existent. Moreover, personalized support was not mentioned by the interviewed international students from Korean and German universities.

As for international students in Korea, it was possible to observe the contrasting tendencies compared to the US international students. Such divisions of orientations also take place in Korean universities, meaning that there are general orientations hosted by colleges for newly starting students and separate orientation sessions offered by international offices intended only for international students. Most interviewed international students in Korea only took part in the orientation sessions provided by international offices and did not consider taking the ones given by their colleges. The context for this state is based on the fact that orientation sessions hosted by colleges are carried out in Korean. Although degree-seeking international students are required to have a certain level of Korean knowledge, most felt comfortable acquiring the information provided by international offices which are delivered in three different languages.

> "Yes, for the international office orientation but I didn't join the department orientation which was in Korean" (I-1-KO, para. 35).
>
> "They just explained how to do everything and it took place before the semester started at the end of February. The provided programs for exchange students so that we can get to know each other or like tours and stuff like that. Then they explained us about the course registration and general things about Korea" (I-3-KO, para. 15).
>
> "It was really really great and the PowerPoints as well. They were conducted in English and in Chinese and they gave us printed version of the PPTs. There is an English version and a Chinese version as well, so, it was very nice!" (I-6-KO, para. 21)

In Germany, it was difficult to find a common thread of international students' experiences concerning orientation sessions in the beginning of the academic year. Even though, based on expert interviews, orientation programs are offered by every international office, interviewed international students responded that they either did not attend them due to varying reasons or were not informed as well as aware that orientation sessions took place. When adjusting at the host destinations, the interviewed international students self-sufficiently dealt with settlement procedures by gathering information on their own or by resorting to fellow senior students with the same nationality from the same departments or from online platform communities.

Of much information provided from international offices during orientation sessions, international students found the information on housing options to be important and helpful. In the USA, several students mentioned that both on- and off-campus housing information was given for assistance whereas more support could be provided for off-campus housing for international students in Korea. Once settled in on-campus resi-

dences, most international students were very satisfied with well-maintained facilities and activities in residence halls on campus.

Another aspect besides housing information that is provided during the orientation sessions is about course registrations. With regard to course registration information, international students frequently expressed the need for more information that is comprehensive or individual assistance with regard to course registrations in Korea and Germany. International students could navigate their ways without much difficulty on online course registration webpages as English versions existed. Although, information sheets with detailed guidelines with webpage snapshots were provided, international students found the procedures complicated at first. Thus, in most cases, inquiries were made to staff members at international offices and most of international students received responsive replies and assistance in Korea. At some universities in Korea, interviewed international students mentioned that there existed fellow students from senior years or from nationality student clubs assisting during the course registration period in the beginning of the semester on campus. As for Germany, one international student in Germany expressed lack of English translation in German course registration webpages and the need for more tailored support.

> "That was not an easy process. It's very complicated because the homepage is in German. You have to use the Google translator every day. It's my best friend now. And I think, it would be better if there is an introduction meeting in which we can learn about the webpage" (I-6-DE, para. 43).

When coming to the final point of provided support for extracurricular activities during the orientation, the participation in excursions or regular social meetings organized by international offices varied among each individual. It seemed as if international students did take part in some programs and enjoyed joining them occasionally.

> "Yes. I heard about this one class called "American Culture" which is a free class especially for international students and the teacher will teach how to / what's the difference and about the cultural conflicts. That one is good. But the students who go to that class are also international students, so, I don't think we have enough chances to meet those American students" (I-7-US, para. 41).

After the introduction to diverse programs during the orientation sessions, in the course of the semesters, most international students took advantage of excursion opportunities such as affordable tickets to events and regular get-togethers that enhanced interaction with fellow international students together with food and beverages.

6.2.2 Programs for target groups

Experts' interviews

Concerning the role of target groups in devising services, it is recognizable that the main criterion for separating services is based on the degree level according to the expert interview data from three countries:

1) Non-degree seeking programs include exchange programs, language programs, summer programs.
2) Degree seeking programs are mostly divided into undergraduate and graduate studies.

An initial issue for international students is the duration of international students' stay at host destinations, which affects the way in which the services are catered to students' needs:

> "I think, it's to recognize the time frame that is spent here in the US may increase their likelihood of adapting and knowing about the culture. The goal is for short-term scholars or students to have many exposures as possible. And we do have a different separate office for exchange and short term scholars" (IO-3-US, para. 49).

In addition, the number of non-degree seeking students is less than degree-seeking students, which allows individual support in terms of providing the services, and these students are willing to actively participate in the provided programs, as they are ready to immerse into the new culture:

> "I think, they have a different goal because they are here for the experience and they are not here to earn a degree. […] They are more likely to go on field trips […] or trips to […] basketball games and other kinds of things. I will also say that they get more personal attention because the exchange students are part of kind of club. We only have about 120 and so, they have special activities designed for them. I am dealing with a mass of 9,000 and we can do the Coffee Hour and we can do some of the other things, I really can't do the personalized attention. That's one of the sacrifices when you've got so many" (IO-5-US, para. 83).

For this reason, orientation sessions are separated between the non-degree and degree seeking international students as the required information differs. These separate orientation sessions were identified from most international offices based on the expert interview data.

> "For exchange students who stay for one or two semesters have definitely different information during the orientation sessions. That is because the exchange program is more about learning about new culture and socializing with new people. Based on this purpose, we focus on enlarging study abroad experiences and less academic aspects. Six months is rather a short period and we cater towards the needs that the students can adapt well during that short period and achieve what they wanted to take out of the study

abroad experience and provide fun activities. For degree seeking international students we emphasize on services that promote academic support" (IO-6-KO, para. 15).

In relevance to focusing on academic support programs for degree seeking students, one expert mentioned that degree seeking students inquired separate services as they complained that "services are fixed on having too much fun" (IO-2-KO, para. 82). Such direct feedback from the students has led to dividing the international office led student club into two groups, namely one for the degree seeking and the other for the non-degree seeking international students.

Within degree seeking students, services are again differentiated between undergraduate and graduate students, as one expert mentions:

"We are cognizant of how the undergraduate students are more by numbers here to graduate students. The need from both graduate and undergrad is different. What the difference here at [this university] is the graduate students they do have their program advisor. Their program advisor will actually serve as their mentor. And the programs that we have for graduate students are mainly to collaborate with their colleges. Now, with the undergraduate students, their undergraduate students we try to focus on their first year experience. Why? Because we know that when students do come here in their first year, they are more likely to face culture shock and how do we buffer that; and how do we make that easier for them to continue on their second, third or to graduation year in the fourth year? So, we do have tailored programs to differentiate both undergrad and grad. However, we do welcome if let's say, if a graduate student would like to attend our program, they are more than welcome" (IO-3-US, para. 43).

As mentioned in the following expert's quote, undergraduate international students are higher in numbers and most of them are starting to study for the first time. Thus, the first year experience is regarded important compared to graduate students who are beginning to specialize in their fields and have experienced university life. Having said that, student (nationality) clubs and residence halls offer many programs for 1st year undergraduates' initial adjustment phase and create opportunities to connect with each other:

"The difference between undergrad and graduate? I think, just developmentally obviously they have different needs. For graduate students, we see them more interested in programs, especially in some of our programs that involve spouses and children of students. Obviously that's going to be more likely graduate students. The undergrads are I don't know, harder to reach because they are so busy with class and the dorm, this and that. The graduate students maybe have a little more time because they are working. Some hours are taking lots of classes / They seem to be more interested sometimes in our programs than undergrads. Undergraduates are very connected with their nationality clubs with their student groups on campus. So, I think, they kind of turn to them as the first resource and the first group who will be looking out for them whereas maybe graduate students would be more likely to come often up to us just for just general assistance and looking to get connected. Undergraduates, especially freshmen live on campus in our dorms, so, we work hard to be more connected in the residence halls. We actually moved the coffee hour, it used to be in this building but we moved it to a residence hall, so, the basement of a residence hall. Because we wanted to be very accessible, especially to undergrads.

> We have adjusted our programming to meet undergraduate needs because more of our population is undergraduate now. So, we can see there's student population changing and so, we have to adjust ourselves and shift our own focus, too" (IO-4-US, para. 30).

As for graduate international students, they seem to be more closely associated with the colleges that they belong to compared to undergraduate students. Especially in the case of graduate students in the USA, they have academic advisors or receive individual assistance directly from administrative offices of corresponding colleges about the academic details (ref. Chapter 6.2.1.3).

Aside from different academic information and adjustment needs, one very vital reason for distinguishing services in Korea for non-degree and degree seeking students is the knowledge of Korean language of the international students. Not regarding the degrees in which primarily English is used for instruction, most degree seeking students are required to meet a certain level of Korean language proficiency depending on the universities. In this respect, non-degree seeking students do not have any prerequisites for Korean language proficiency (ref. IO-5-KO, para. 13). In order for the students to comprehend and be able to interact in the provided programs, the division becomes inevitable. Moreover, on the basis of meeting the requirements to finish one's studies, tailored language as well as career advising programs are offered depending on the degree levels. Degree-seeking students are provided with intensive Korean language courses in the course of their regular studies and career advising in their senior years (ref. Chapter 6.6 and 6.7).

In the case of Germany, non-degree seeking Erasmus program students have individual coordinators from faculties who take over the academic and administrative support. Moreover, when it comes to the topic, active engagement of international students in general in the provided services offered by international offices, one expert mentions the low participation of the international students and possible reasons:

> "We have actually tried a lot. We have tried to get in touch with the regular students and they wouldn't reply. They wouldn't come, they would look for help, as I said, they would readily participate in the orientation week. Their study success is not the best – Germany wide, but also at our institution. We do not have enough data or manpower to track why that is the case. We do of course have structures at the department, they are our students counseling there. I think that this would be a way to get knowledge about the topic. But it is not – let's say – an important topic for the whole university, which, I think, is not necessarily wise. But it's a question of priority. So, we get a lot of incoming students, and the efforts were more about attracting many international students. On the master-level no one really thought about why we actually want international students and who we want. So, the recruitment of these international students in the master programs is also the responsibility of the coordinators. We do not have a central university marketing department. On the one hand we politically want international students in our master programs that we offer – quite an infrastructure of services which we can offer them – but somehow, maybe, they have their own communities. The Chinese might have their Chinese community, and they might actually ask other Chinese people and might not want contact us, they might rather go to their country-mates. They might have family

here, which is probably true for a lot of Turkish and Arab students who come here" (IO-2-DE, para. 60).

As a final point, a portion of programming is catered towards international students with families, which is also one of the criteria differentiating services depending on the target group. Services for international students with families were prevalent in the USA. International offices worked on the immigration documents for spouses and children and by collaborating with other offices on campus, tailored services were offered based on the needs of studying with a family.

> "J-2 is the dependent of a J-1 and F-2 is a dependent of a F-1. And those are two visa types. The majority of our students are F-1, and only, we have less than a 1,000 J-1s, probably so, that tells you that we have a lot of F-1s. But the F-2 status is not permitted to study or work, so, basically they can just exist here with their spouse; so, it can be very boring for them sometimes. [This progam] can work with them specifically, we do invite spouses and children to attend some of our events. The [program] also – a lot of those spouses attend those English classes. There are things for those people" (IO-2-US, para. 100).
>
> "For example, we have an orientation coming up, and we will dedicate the orientation just for the families. And at that orientation, we have 'Family Resources Center' to collaborate with us" (IO-3-US, para. 47).
>
> "Yes, we do, absolutely. So, we help them quite a bit with the visa and the immigration services. We include them in some of the orientation programs and certainly help answer any questions they may have about things like day care, childcare, schools, housing that sort of thing. But mostly from an advisory capacity. We don't have a formal spouse program here at the university and it's not just students who bring spouses. We have our scholars who bring spouses as well so they are finding assistance through our HR [Human Resources] office, some of the employment based support services that we have" (IO-8-US, para. 28).

In Germany and South Korea, support services are offered to international scholars or faculty members with families on an individual basis, namely by individual host faculties or general student services for domestic students. In general, international offices examined in these two countries do not have officially fixed accommodating services for specifically undergraduate or graduate level international students with families.

International students' interviews

With regard to international students' experiences of programs for different target groups, one exchange student in the USA mentioned that academic advising or similar support services, which mostly regular degree seeking students receive in the USA, would have been helpful. She shared her difficulty of not knowing which courses to take during her one semester at the host institution.

> "At first you had to get the course descriptions, which was kind of hard because you had to choose the courses that you can transfer back to Germany. So, it was kind of a random

choice. You saw the name and you thought it could be interesting and you read the course description and added them to my list. That was not too easy actually" (I-9-US, para. 71).

As for exchange students who stay for one semester, such discrete services of assisting course registration could help them select appropriate courses to be recognized after their study abroad.

On the subject of hosting orientation sessions for both domestic and international students, it was possible to find diverging opinions on a joint orientation of degree and non-degree students. The aim of such joint orientation is to have international students experience the exact same procedures as domestic students when starting university life. Despite such intended objective, two international students rather felt that a separate orientation might have been more helpful in getting the tailored information that applies only to them:

> "I have to admit all people I was hanging out [with], I met them in the orientation week. But I met them in the orientation week because they also thought that orientation week is helpful. It was helpful to meet people but the content which was presented there was not helpful at all. But the problem mostly for this was that there were almost only people who were 18 or 19 years old who were are not allowed to drink. So, the whole orientation was about not drinking alcohol. And most of us were 21 and 22 and we were thinking, 'which bar are we heading to afterwards?' It was about one week almost. But it was actually mandatory for all of them but because we're internationals and over 21, we decided not to attend all of them. They didn't really check whether we were showing up or not" (I-10-US, para. 31).

Later the same student mentioned:

> "Still about the orientation week, we were together with the whole freshmen. No, I think, we should have a separate orientation week for international students. We are at totally different stages in life. But they were behaving like children and they were very young" (I-10-US, para. 81).

In relevance to experts' interviews, first week programs together with orientation sessions were provided separately depending on the degree level of the students in Korean universities. As expressed by an undergraduate student from the Philippines, she found the tailored programs to be supportive:

> "It was great. It started on the same day that I took Korean level test and then in the afternoon, we had this orientation. There was a separate orientation for international exchange students and international degree seeking students. I was for the degree seeking students and they gave us a bag and there was all the stuff we need from your life at [the university] to creating a bank account" (I-6-KO, para. 17).

Differentiated group support programs initiated from the international offices were offered. From this previous quote, a group called mentors was appointed to degree seeking international students and another group called buddies was assigned to non-

degree seeking international students (ref. Chapter 6.2.3). International offices in each university investigated used varying terms for such peer groups that catered to different degree level international students.

Pertaining to the experts' statements, degree seeking international students asserted that motivations of studying abroad differ depending on the degree level and that their participation in international office programs is low because their primary focus is on academics compared to non-degree seeking students.

> "During the exchange time, it was more like, 'You are here to have fun' and having the cultural experiences, going to concerts, or going on a travel. You wouldn't like study that much. But for here, I am here to get a degree which means that I am taking regular classes and really have to work hard and I don't just want a degree but a degree with good grades" (I-1-KO, para. 67).
>
> "Because we don't have that much time like the exchange students, we have to study more and we have a lot of things to do. I think if one wants to experience different Korean culture, we need to take a holiday, but we don't have that many opportunities to do this" (I-5-KO, para. 63).

One undergraduate student in Korea states that diverse opportunities are available at the host university and she has the desire to take part in such programs.

> "Actually even before coming [here], I searched for the clubs that I can join. There were actually a lot that I wanted to take part in; but when I arrived I felt that the pressure of studying is already a lot. And then I am taking five courses which I have to excel in to maintain my scholarship. I think, for the first semester I just plan to live this way – taking Korean and studying nothing else in between" (I-6-KO, para. 65).

In contrast to the experience of the undergraduate students, a Japanese graduate student in Korea mentions that the general atmosphere on campus seems to be more focused on undergraduate students when it comes to providing support services.

> "For graduate students especially, if we don't self-sufficiently look for a student club outside of the university sphere and become self-active, there's not that many opportunities and to meet friends" (I-8-KO, para. 85).

As she was married, when asked if there are any programs for spouses, she mentioned she is not aware of any programs for students with families at the host university. Moreover, none of her fellow graduate students was participating in campus festivals or were receiving information on programs tailored to integration of graduate students aside from taking courses and studying (refer to I-8-KO, paras. 79, 81, and 85).

6.2.3 Peer advising

One consistently mentioned service by the interviewed experts is the peer support groups organized by universities, which is also termed as *peer advising* (ref. Lo, 2006, p. 174). Before going into the details of the role of peer advising revealed by experts' and international students' experiences, it is necessary to first identify the meaning of peer advising in general. Shiner (1999) defines peer advising as "the education of young people by young people" (p. 564, cited in ibid., p. 174) and are widely implemented in varying areas which "emphasize on learning that is both interactive and participative" among those "young people" (ibid.).

In the light of this definition, the role of peer support in the context of the current research is to help "international students' transition and acculturation into" (ibid., p. 175) the host environment. Hence, the working definition of peer advisors are students "whose age is similar to other prospective students and whose role, through advising and outreach activities, is to serve as a resource for [international] students" (ibid., p. 183). In addition, at times, these peer advisors have also study abroad experiences, nevertheless, the requirements of a peer advisor vary depending on each institution and its hiring staff member(s). Implicating from the way peer advising was explained by the experts, peer advisors are either paid by the universities or work on a voluntary basis for their work and this also differs subject to each institution.

With regard to peer advising, two levels of peer advising services were offered by universities investigated. The first strand was peer support organized by international offices and the other type was by individual colleges that offer peer advising programs that assist students primarily for academic purposes. Such academic peer advising provided by each college takes diverse forms and is sometimes offered to both domestic and international students. Therefore, the results from the interviews are limited to identifying patterns of peer advising services offered to newly incoming international students from international offices and one language center in the USA as well as a specific mentoring program designed for international students in Germany. Such limited frame of reference is also pertinent based on the interviews of international students and their experiences with peer advising from international offices. In the following comments of the interviewees, different terms are used to mean peer advising services – orientation leaders, buddies, mentors, cultural assistants, student workers (assistants), student interns, to name a few.

Experts' interviews

Two types of peer advising can be identified across the three countries. One is regular employees who are current students who assist international students study abroad experience and deliver programs organized by international offices, meaning that these students are paid by the university. The other type solely works on a voluntary basis; and students have similar roles to paid peer advisors, but they carry out their responsibilities individually arranging meetings with international students. The ratio between peer advisors and international students varies depending on each research site investigated. Moreover, whether a certain amount of funding is provided from international offices

for the activities that peer advisors and corresponding international students practice varies as well. Furthermore, the training opportunities for peer advisors differ, ranging from a few days to few hours to none. Common threads of finding out the way in which peer advisors are trained to advise and assist international students were difficult to identify systematically against the differing responses to training options concerning diverse forms of peer advising services.

> "If you want to become a buddy, you have to take part in an intercultural training, which is half a day. We'll show them the differences in culture, which you may be not aware of. I mean, the culture of your own country is very known to you. The other part is a briefing, which we do have today, and there they get to know all the formalities they need to know in order to help the new students. These are the two things you have to do before becoming a buddy. But it does not matter whether you are from Germany or another country" (IO-6-DE, para. 61).

When recognizing the role and the tasks of peer advisors, it was noteworthy that peer advisors "share some of the same important responsibilities as those of regular full-time staff advisors" (Lo, 2006, p. 181) and they are the ones who deliver the significant information and the programs directly interacting with international students.

> "I work with the two graduate students and normally they are the ones delivering the programs" (IO-1-US, para. 43).
> "We do and we also do have graduate students that act as a cultural assistant to be a liaison to reach out to the students, say, 'Yes, we recognize that. Yes, here are some of the resources that you may need.' Their focus is how to educate students and help them understand that we have the resources here for you. Yes, and may not offered from your previous educational system but not we have something here, take advantage of it. It's free for you" (IO-3-US, para. 26).
>
> "For exchange students, it is not the designated regular staff member for exchange students but peer advisors, called buddies, who take charge of the orientation sessions for all newly incoming exchange students, namely one buddy to many exchange students ratio. If we have 300 to 400 incoming exchange students, we have about 100 buddies to participate in the orientation and deliver all the necessary information" (IO-4-KO, para. 19).

Most staff members clearly stated that they look for study abroad experience and "require certain personal characteristics (ibid., p. 183)" when employing peer advisors to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Eventually the ultimate advantage mentioned by the experts is that "peer advisors are able to reach out to students in a way that adult advisors could not" (ibid., p. 181).

> "[P]art of their job is to be that bridge to connect the students to youth pop-culture to the United States. They will have conversation group where they will talk about all kinds of things, different cultural aspects around the world. Hip-hop music in the United States, their favorite movies. And then also like slangs and why do Americans behave the way they do. I think, it's great for them to have peers where they can actually to them about

that. They feel like they could talk to the student workers about anything they want to. It's different with me. I mean I don't feel like they feel that open where they can talk to me anything but with the student workers they definitely feel that way" (IO-6-US, para. 41).

Unique features of peer advising in Korea are that most international offices devise and guide the framework of peer advising programs for both non-degree and degree-seeking international students. Even though autonomy is provided for arranging meetings individually, there are fixed responsibilities that peer advisors need to carry out with the guidance of regular staff members of the international offices. The following are some examples of semi-guided activities that peer advisors and international students engage in:

"We provide funding for the events that buddies host since it is impossible to take care of the expenses privately. Until last year, we financed 2,000 to 3,000 KRW for the activities and from this year, we are funding up to 6,000 KRW, which is almost a double the amount from the previous years. They are expenses for diverse activities they engage in together with international students such as hosting sports festivals" (IO-4-KO, para. 27).

"The primary peer advising program is for regular-degree seeking students and not for non-degree students. Even before I started in this job, the primary aim of this program was to promote relationship between domestic Korean and regular degree-seeking international students and non-degree seeking students have a separate office taking care of them. Each peer advising group has one peer advisor and four to six international students. This year we integrated academic character that they need to engage in language exchanges as well as individual activities. For example, we have a set missions that they need to achieve and the groups are required to post their final results on our international office's Facebook. During the course of the semester, we meet altogether and participate in cultural programs. For example last year, we had invited an instructor who teaches Korean traditional music and dance. From the orientation session, the groups meet for the first time and their activities can take off within the guiding framework we offer them in between their autonomous meetings. The groups also submit reports on what they plan to do in order to receive funding from the office. And final session takes place where we share all the photos together within the peer groups and publish them. In that way, we want the university to have insight into how international students experience the life of studying and living at our university" (IO-5-KO, para. 84).

Another significant aspect to note is that there are many domestic Korean students who want to work as peer advisors. In most cases, there are more applicants than positions.

A context specific aspect in one project-led mentoring program at one German university is important to be mentioned. The experts who guide and lead the projects pointed out the fact that the main aim of the mentoring program at this university was based on recognizing the condition that the international student dropout rate is very high in German universities. Thus, with the support of such peer advising programs, the main aim is to decrease the level of international students quitting their studies and to enhance the satisfaction level of living and studying in Germany:

"I actually started the buddy program. Well, a part of the program was already running when the big subjects – law and medicine. But we organized it in a way that it encom-

passes the whole university. So, now it's for 16 subjects and we are trying to spread it throughout the whole university. And there are also prep semesters. I started here in the scope of the project in order to make sure that internationals would be more successful in their studies. So, we try to understand where the problems were and what we could do. So, we did the buddy program and prep semesters" (IO-4-DE, para. 58).

"When we first started, this was the first peer advising program at German universities. [. . .] We had the luck that we could receive extra funding and a full-time position for this program. This is a luxury since other universities don't have have such support and that is why we could carry this program so extensively. We are already asked to advise them for such programs and have already presented in the DAAD annual conference in Cologne this March as it is regarded as 'best practice.' I believe a lot of universities are not able to implement such program in this scale. However, we have much experience with regard to, for example, matching the students and recruiting the peer advisors, which runs just very well which others have many difficulties. And in that field we can advise them. Generally speaking, this is not such a very expensive program for the university but has a very strong impact. Demonstrably it decreases the drop-out rate of international students because this program optimizes and improves the study phase. The satisfaction level is higher. But also, domestic German students have a place in which they can engage voluntarily where they can connect and learn soft skills. I believe such kind of program is just simply meaningful" (IO-5-DE, para. 59).

International students' interviews

When cross-referencing the peer advising services from international students' perspectives, in how far peer advising services are considered to be helpful, such feedback can be heard by the individual voicing of the international students interviewed.

There exist peer advisors who work at international offices whom students can approach to ask general inquiries at service desks; and there are peer advisors who are matched to international students to form a group. The findings mentioned below are based on the latter peer advising programs that were catering towards individual support via small groups. The ratio of one peer advisor to the number of international students in these groups ranged from one-to-one to one-to-five:

"I was in a buddy program but the buddy program was also with other international students. There was one American buddy with four international students. I attended the first two or three meetings and just did other things after that. She was really motivated and very ambitious. It was okay" (I-10-US,[81] para. 55).

The matching process varies depending on the institution. Sometimes international students can select their peer advisors or international offices coordinate the matching process between peer advisors and students:

81 Of all the international students interviewed in the USA, two exchange students mentioned the usefulness of the buddy programs; and one German exchange student was active in the program as indicated whereas the other one did not join the buddy program though he was assigned to the group.

> "I really like the fact that we could choose the buddies on the website and choose the buddy that has the same interest. […] You can see their major. You have this […] buddy website; and you have the list of the buddies and you see how many exchange students they have already and how many they want to have. You can see their name, age, major, and when you click on the name, you have a broader view with their interest and why they want to be part of the […] buddy" (I-9-KO, paras. 93, 95).
>
> "[T]he international office contacted us. We applied for a buddy and they sent us a name, a contact. […] Yes. I think, it was more of a random matching" (I-1-DE, para. 91).

Peer advisors' roles and responsibilities are assisting international students with individual needs when adjusting at host universities. A variety of activities was told during the interviews, which range from course registration, searching off-campus accommodations, opening a bank account, and socializing events, e.g., grabbing meals, playing sports, and watching movies. Beyond basic support in settling at host destinations, one of the merits of having peer advisors was the social contacts to domestic students at the host destinations:

> "There was this […] buddy program which was really good. We were split into 10 groups of 4 students each. We got to really know our group very well and we made really good friends inside. I was in group 8; and I knew people in the group well and the Korean buddies" (I-9-KO, para. 133).
>
> "Tons [of excursions were organized]. We went to Incheon, we went to Kangreung, travelled a lot, actually. We took mini-buses everywhere; and it was really well organized" (I-9-KO, para. 135).
>
> "I could sum up my life in Korea, the […] buddy! This buddy idea is the best to make friends" (I-9-KO, para. 181).
>
> "[T]he buddy program is very useful to get to know German people. Maybe I am not very close with my buddy but I know a lot of friends' buddies and we party together, so, that's another way." (I-7-DE, para. 33)

Sometimes, peer advisors bridge gaps between international students and faculty members when it comes to language difficulties in communication (ref. I-5-KO, para. 98) as well as connecting international students with student clubs based on their interests:

> "Yes, she was really nice. She even helped me to find an instrument so, I can play during the stay and she brought me to concerts and events. She helped me to get into to the school orchestra" (I-9-KO, para. 129).

On the whole, the ubiquitous feedback on the experiences from interviewees from Korean universities was that the helpfulness of group-based peer advising services depends both on the engagement of individual peers and group dynamics.

> "It depends on the buddy and also yourself. My buddies were very busy so, we only met three or four times. They actually get credit for helping exchange students. It was just a so-so" (I-1-KO, para 57).

> "I am also in the mentor's program; and actually the day after the official orientation, we had this mentor's buddy event in the afternoon and that was really nice. And I got assigned to my cell and we went to dinner. And somehow I am in this [social networking] group now, I missed / they didn't tell me about the first event and now, it's all very chaotic. I haven't seen my mentor since this first day. I think, it really depends on the cell. You can be lucky and it works out and it is a nice group dynamic. In my case, I haven't seen them but it's okay" (I-10-KO, para. 57).

Along the lines of the given feedback in Korea, international students interviewed in Germany commented that peer advising programs were not only helpful but especially useful for the first few months of the experience at the host universities:

> "They helped with a lot – about the Internet site. She helped a lot when I couldn't find anything and about the documents in German and about life about Germany" (I-1-DE, para. 93).
>
> "[T]here was another program which was introduced, it was a buddy program. And that was quite nice. Every international has somebody who's supposed to help you. And I was contacted by a guy. He got my email and he contacted me and he knew that I was coming to the university, so, we can meet one day" (I-2-DE, para. 37).
>
> "[H]ow is our program? And how the university is? Where is the library? Where is the cafeteria? Actually because we had the buddy program, we can ask detailed questions to our buddies. We had some activities to go out and see a film or to have a drink" (I-9-DE, para. 43).

6.3 Ways of distributing and receiving information

Central themes identified from the interviews were the different access conditions for experts in reaching out to international students with information and students' perception of receiving transparent information of provided services. In relevance to the transparency of information distribution, international students mentioned the need for reliability of receiving information, especially in German context. Above all things, diverse media are employed to distribute information and at the same time, social networking media were essential in communicating and sharing the latest updates with students and the use of social networking platforms were utilized by international offices as well.

Experts' interviews

Various media were used by experts to send out information to international students. Email contact to students was used exclusively with the official websites as the main source of information. When emailing international students, experts in the USA and Korea confirmed that they can send out information via emailing list of international students enrolled at the university.

> "We have our list. We maintain the list. We have the access to every single international student who comes into campus. Only our office has the access on campus. So, we use multiple ways. One is the website, you see, so, we put all the information on the website once it is finalized […]. And then we use Facebook and we do email. We send email to them. Let's say, if we have a coffee hour and it's on Friday and location and then students will receive the email" (IO-1-US, para. 39).

Due to strict privacy regulations, experts in German universities, on the other hand, do not have access to an emailing list of international students. This causes difficulties in reaching out to international students with information. In most cases, international students have to proactively register themselves and provide their contact data on a voluntary basis if they wish to receive information from international offices or institutions on campus.

> "This is the trickiest question, and also the trickiest strategy. Bureaucratically, we are not able to have the mailing list of all the international students, by law. Even [though] the international office has it, they may not use it. The international office has a complete list of these 15% – 15% of 50,000 which is about 8000. They are not allowed to use it. So, we have to collect our own mailing [lists]. At the beginning of each academic year – in September, October – the international office puts out a big event called 'Welcome event for international students' with all the information, and so on. And we also take part in this event with our presentation, and there we have a fair – it is usually two rooms, halls, so, the presentations are usually in one hall and in the other hall there are tables where everybody who is somehow connected to international students puts out whatever they have, flyers, buttons, cookies – where we usually ask questions and try through other strategies to get the students to give us their mail voluntarily, like 'do you want to participate in a tombola? And you can win €30 for a book.' So, we collect lists of emails. Each event is used for collecting mails and to ask people to also tell their friends about us and encouraged their friends to contact us. We have a Facebook group, and so on – different strategies to enlarge our network" (IO-8-US, para. 38).

Besides emails and websites, some experts also communicate with international students and post information via social networking platforms. There exist several national context specific features. In the USA and Korea, few experts interact with Chinese international students by using Chinese specific social networking platforms. In Korea, experts reach out to students by sending text messages with the university account under the premise that regular degree seeking students possess mobile phones. Gaining access to students via mobile phones is regarded as a reliable medium compared to email accounts generated from university, which students tend to not check regularly.

> "Regular degree seeking international students all have cell phones and thus, we send out text messages. This way is more direct and even if the students do not have smartphones, they are able to receive text messages through their mobile phones" (IO-6-KO, para. 67).

Moreover, direct phone calls are made to individual students when necessary and Korean experts mentioned that they have the access to such personal data (ref. IO-5-KO, para. 116).

At the point of the interviews, few experts from German universities employed social media platforms, but most international officers preferred to use emails and websites as their primary means of communication. When asked if there could be a possibility of utilizing social media platforms to experts who have yet used such social media, one officer commented,

> "I wouldn't like to support this phenomenon because there is always this expectation that you need to react immediately and I do not want to have this" (IO-2-DE, para. 66).

In relevance to this given statement of instant responses, another expert in the USA specified the means of communication change and its effect in her position of working with international students due to the development of technology in the past decade. Whether one chooses to employ social networking platforms as media to interact with students or not, extensive transitions are taking place in terms of interacting with students and international officers have diverse ways in which they need to adapt and consider the shortfalls as well as the pressure to respond immediately to inquiries.

> "I think, technology has completely changed. [1] It's completely changed the way students interact – for better or for worse. So, it's really changed the way we deliver information and it's changed students' expectation. A student sent an email in the morning, and they expect a response in the afternoon and sometimes their cases are complicated and it takes a while for us to figure out how to get back to them. So, in some ways, it's great because it has allowed us a much better reach. We can distribute information in a much better way, via social media, via email. We have better sense of who's here, we have better case management, we have better spread sheets and better information on people. So, it has in some ways helped us reach our population in much different ways. [2] It's created a little of immediate gratification which I think, it's something we still struggle with. And that's something that we continue to try to figure out how to prioritize and how to let other students know, how we can help them. You know, websites have, of course, completely changed the landscape in a way that you can communicate, the way students can sort of self-research and self-advise. [3] It's changed the way we deliver orientation programs. We've wanted to incorporate a lot of different types technology, anything from polling to videos, doing online information – so, it's really, really changed the landscape and the way we can communicate. So, I would say that that's been a huge difference" (IO-8-US, para. 90).

International students' interviews

According to international students' interviews about ways in receiving information, all students said that email correspondence is the main means of communication of getting official information. In the USA and Korea, international students received weekly or daily emails and were informed about necessary immigration regulations as well as events taking place. Following are some comments by various international students from the USA and Korea about email correspondence:

> "Oh yeah, they just sent me some emails about F-1 status and stuff like that. International student office, they send all international students emails regularly. Some alumni send opportunities to the career center. We will get emails almost every day with a list of jobs. The career center will have our email automatically at the very first date we attend the [university] and they will send us a list of jobs every day" (I-5-US, para. 15).
>
> "So, usually they send out a weekly email listing what's going on right now, what kind of events they have now and their operation hours, especially during the holidays. And at the beginning of semester we will get some emails saying that we need to check in with our I-20 or immigration status, the visa" (I-7-US, para. 47).
>
> "Absolutely, we had a daily or a weekly newsletter – it was actually daily. We got a daily newsletter from the whole university saying what was going on. And a weekly newsletter from the [college] saying what was going on this weekend. And so, they always had a list of events in [the city]" (I-9-US, para. 85).
>
> "Of course, very, very often almost every day. They are really good at updating us" (I-6-KO, para. 95).
>
> "Because I am getting emails from two different [institutions] – one is from my department and one is from [the international office]. Basically what you get from the [international office] is administrative matters – you should get your insurance, you should make sure you pay your tuition bills, there's a pizza party this weekend, bond with your fellow students – general things that a foreign student has to now. But, I think, right now because I have been [here] for a year, those emails do not apply to me anymore because basically I know everything. I think, maybe these emails [are] for those people who just came this semester. And on the side of the emails I get are from my department where they invite me [to] conferences related to my major or people who are graduating, you have to go to this and so on" (I-6-KO, para. 97).

Besides international offices, academic advisors or different institutions on campus such as the career center or individual colleges send out information via email to the students and interviewees mentioned that they were well aware of the programs happening on campus and find these emails to be very helpful. When questions arose and inquiries were made via email to personnel on campus, interviewed international students both in the USA and in Korea mentioned the replies were speedy and hospitable. A few students mentioned that they were sometimes overwhelmed by the number of emails; and one student discontinued to subscribe the email alerts by the university.

Corresponding to the remarks regarding the usage of social networking platforms from experts, international students from three countries confirmed that social media platforms are vital for obtaining information and networking with other students.

> "Yeah, [the social network] is the biggest asset for international students" (I-5-DE, para. 141).

Moreover, country specific social networking media (e.g., WeChat, WhatsApp, Kakaotalk) was used in the USA and various messenger services on mobile phones are essential and helpful means of communication. In addition, the usage was differentiated depending on the target groups in the USA and Korea.

> "We have WeChat and it's an app that we use for instant messaging. They send out articles and information through that. The Chinese Students and Scholars Association, they have the public account on WeChat and they send us information about 'What do you need to prepare before you come to the US?' 'Where can you buy the car or rent out house?' It was only this year because last year I didn't receive such message but this year I saw it on WeChat" (I-7-US, para. 65).
>
> "I think, right now it's rather more important to be active in WhatsApp. Because we had then four to five WhatsApp groups. Because you are not always hanging out with the same people. We had two or three friend circles. You have each WhatsApp group for each of them" (I-10-US, para. 83).
>
> "Yeah, Facebook is really useful because it is in our blood. Once we meet someone, we just connect on Facebook. Kakao[talk] is also very helpful. Emails not so much except for classes" (I-9-KO, para. 121).

Corresponding with the expert's statement in Korea who mentioned that they sometimes call the students individually, a Jordanian student mentioned that announcements are hung on the corridors of residence halls, he was contacted via mobile text messages, or at times the offices reached him via phone call (ref. I-7-KO, paras. 39–41).

In Germany, similar to the student below, international students were not so much aware of the services taking place on campus:

> "Probably they have programs but we don't know because emails are written in German, first, and impersonal and it is important to know who he or she is who is helping you out so that we know that this person exists" (I-6-DE, para. 103).

Consistent with the aspect of language, it becomes obvious that there is a language issue involved. This also applies to retrieving information from the websites of German universities. In this respect, getting information via website was difficult for this exchange student:

> "It's the same with the university. I don't really like the university website. I think, it is a bit complicated. Sometimes I don't really understand. We can also translated it to English, but not everything is translated" (I-3-DE, para. 99).

Most students in Germany would reach out to fellow students for necessary information when adjusting to the life at the host destinations.

> "I: And if you had questions then, did you have any main contact personnel?
>
> I-1-DE: No, actually, we Brazilians, we did it together. We helped each other.
>
> I: So, how did you meet these students who helped you? Did you go through the social network to find each other?
>
> I-1-DE: Yes, we used Facebook to know each other and have a Brazilian group" (paras. 36–39).

> "Like my seniors were here. My fellow Indians who had come before me, so, those people were my starlight. So, they enlightened us to what we should do, what are the procedures, and things like that" (I-5-DE, para. 23).

Although most Erasmus students received responsive email replies from their coordinators in time, most international students from Germany mentioned during the interview sessions that reliable email correspondence with advisors, mentors, faculty members and international officers is desired.

> "In some cases, they don't [reply], unfortunately (laugh). If I ask a question, I would like to have an answer" (I-3-DE, para. 71).
>
> "One sentence or nothing. (hahaha) And you are thinking 'What was my mistake?' But there is no mistake so, just they answer in a general sentence, or sometimes, they don't have time; and you have to go to the office to ask about it, yeah. I think, she is a kind person, I know. She helped me a lot the first days when I came here. But on other hand, I think, she has a lot of work. That's why she doesn't answer every email. But if this is her job, I think, she should answer or find another person to find answer related with the registrations or with problems. Some guy who knows about solving problems" (I-6-DE, para. 59).

6.4 Student clubs

In the category of student clubs, about extracurricular activity options were asked during the interviews; and experts shared the types of offers that students receive and their thoughts on engagement opportunities for students on campus. Following the statements made by experts, international students' experiences with given opportunities of joining student clubs on campus are reported.

Experts' interviews

Based on the interview data of the experts from three countries, there exist student clubs run by the student body that are recognized by and sometimes rooms as well as fundings are provided by the universities. Student club lists can be found on university websites and are regularly updated. Despite the prevalence of student clubs in three countries, the variety of types of student clubs and the way in which students engage differ among the investigated countries dependent on the context. In this section, varying types of student clubs and descriptive statements by experts on engagement opportunities in each country will be displayed.

Experts interviewed in the USA stated that a wide spectrum of many student clubs exists and both domestic and international students are active in these student clubs. Aside from student clubs catered towards interests such as sports and language exchange, universities investigated have very active nationality clubs, namely, Chinese students' association, Korean American scholars and student groups.

> "We do have a very large presence of international RSOs, we called them Recognized Students Organizations. Especially the CSSA [Chinese Students and Scholars Association] and the KSA [Korean Students Association]. Because those are the two biggest populations, the Chinese and the Korean" (IO-2-US, para. 50).
>
> "Undergraduates are very connected with their nationality clubs, with their student groups on campus. So, I think, they kind of turn to them as the first resource and the first group who will be looking out for them" (IO-4-US, para. 30).

International students receive support from these nationality clubs; and international offices work closely with these student clubs by advertising cultural events, which student clubs host. At times, international offices provide a respectable amount of funding for such events.

> "We offer them support. They don't always want a lot of support from us. We provide funding and sometimes we try to market their events. But they are quite independent for the most part" (I-4-US, para. 34).
>
> "Yes, if they are doing a culture sharing event. And they have to do a big report on what they are doing, all the details what the money is for, how it's going to promote culture sharing on campus. And not all students use all that money. Sometimes, they only need 500 dollars for the whole year because they have just one event. And that's fine; and not every groups asks for our money. They get money from other sources, but we do want to help sponsor these events so, we do support them in that way. And it's a good way to be in touch with what they are doing and help them kind of check them. Is this event just for fun and eating? Or are we really going to invite domestic students and community members; and is it a deeper meaning than just 'We just want to have a hotpot dinner?' No, no, what's the meaning behind it? How are you sharing it, and what are people going to learn from it?" (IO-4-US, para. 38)

Experts noted that student clubs that practice service learning, so-called voluntary activities in local communities, take up a large number of extracurricular activities by domestic students. The staff members interviewed said that they are trying to promote international students to join service learning student clubs with the underlying aim in mind that this service learning helps international students to be connected with the communities and with domestic students while volunteering for the same purpose.

> "[N]ot to say that other people don't help each other because of course, they do. I don't know this idea of VOLUNTEERING as a thing is like necessarily prominent in all countries. That said, I've been reading stuff, one of the BEST ways to integrate US and international students is to do a SERVICE project together, to do volunteer project together. This is something that what I would like to see grow. I think, there's a lot of of potential not only to give back to help the community but also to do something side by side. Because when you are doing something for the greater good, it doesn't matter like where you are from; and, so, that would be a really good way to emerge, to create that integration in a natural way" (IO-2-US, para. 76).

Experts in the USA acknowledged the fact that there are enough possibilities for international students to be a part of in extracurricular activities on campus as such engagement is promoted. Nevertheless, the way in which students engage depends on the individual.

> "I think, the students from across the world pretty equally participate all in these extracurricular activities. Some students say that they feel more active when they come to America and some students say that they feel less active when they come to America. It depends on person by person. It's definitely not because there's lack of opportunities" (IO-6-US, para. 51).
>
> "They are there. It's like a hiking organization, especially if they are in the Arts and Sciences, they are eligible to be part of that. I think, it's like reaching out and joining a club or something would necessarily have. I mean, [if] you have a common interest, [that] would be helpful. 'Please reach out because part of your education is that you will meet people from other countries and you will learn about their country.' It will just broaden you" (IO-7-US, para. 106).

Regarding student clubs in Korea, experts claimed that the presence of student clubs is vast and vigorous, as there exists also a wide variety of student clubs. The student clubs can be divided into two types, ones for domestic students and the other one for international students only. This division, however, does not mean that international students cannot join student clubs run by domestic students. Experts explained that the reason behind such separation is due to the length of the stay and the Korean language proficiency of international students. It was mentioned that some groups do not welcome international students who stay for a short period and as the main language spoken is Korean, international students have difficulty communicating if they do not speak the language. With this said, international officers mediate individually for international students who show interest in joining domestic student run student clubs, as indicated by the expert:

> "We have a list of all the student clubs on campus and provide the lists after translating them into English. Among the student clubs, there are clubs that are open to recruiting international students; and there are some that don't. Because of this, I explicitly tell the students to inform me first, so that I can contact the student clubs to check if they are open to taking in international students into their group. Once the student clubs are willing to do so, I connect the corresponding international students to the clubs. I try to take care of the situation to avoid any negative emotional impact on the side of the international students. I mean, there are student clubs that feel uncomfortable speaking English and I try to offer different options" (IO-2-KO, para. 72).

Against such background, there are student clubs in most universities in Korea, which international offices create mainly for international students. These fixed student clubs are supported and receive funding for events and activities by international offices. Thus, the second type of student clubs is run by international offices and not by students themselves. Though these clubs coexist with clubs created by domestic students, the drawback of student clubs led by international offices is that contact is predominantly limited to international students.

> "This is an example of our office. The communities [. . .] are created by the international office which the student can take charge of as a group in which international students can take part in together with some Korean students" (IO-1-KO, para. 66).

The numbers of represented student clubs in Germany are considerably lower compared to the ones in the USA and Korea and the respective experts mentioned that the student activities on campus via student clubs are not so much widespread. A reason for this could that students mainly do not live on campus and are dispersed around the city as well as in suburbia, as experts pointed out.

> "We are of course not a campus university as it is the often the case in the USA. There are students, who also live on campus. Here we only have one small dormitory in which perhaps 50 students can live. Most students live around and relatively far away from the campus, because the housing is more affordable there than in the city center. This means that campus life takes place somehow regularly here, especially on the yard – as you can see already people lying on the grass when it is 20 degrees outside. However, you can do so many other things in the city, so, everything is diffused. There are so many different quarters in this city and based on that exist a lot of cultural offers. There are so many pubs one must see if you are 25" (IO-1-DE, para. 104).

Similar to the student clubs in the USA and in Korea, German university student clubs listed sometimes receive funding from international offices for their events.

> "Yes, these days it is better than in other years. I mean, now we have a perfect team in the international club. They are so engaged, they work closely together with us, which is really important because we do the administration of their funds. Some years I have students working there who want to be really independent; and they don't think they need to check anything with me. And then at the end of the year you find the bills, finding out that you never applied for these funds, and so on. So, it depends on coincidence whether it works well or not" (IO-2-DE, para. 34).

The collaboration between the international offices and student clubs seemed to fluctuate and the ties are not that strong. The question of whether student clubs are active varied depending on the individual group.

> "We have quite a few international student groups: the Chinese, the Greek, the Turkish and so on. Sometimes when they have cultural events, we work together with them; we can support them financially if it has something to do with the university. But we don't necessarily work with them in our everyday work. We refer people to them or students who have problems, who are homesick, who have their own cultural background, so that they are not totally lost here. But we don't do a lot of events together" (IO-4-DE, para. 100).
> "It has been decreasing in the last years – it used to be three to four a year – we are down to one or two. We are not sure why. People are not as involved anymore – maybe because of the new structure of the bachelor program – so, their schedule is just fuller than before. But we still have those events. Actually, one of those groups just came up to us last week

and said 'we want to do something, we want to do an international week.' So, there is a new project" (IO-4-DE, para. 123).

International students' interviews

Most of the international students interviewed in the USA were taking part in more than one student organization and said that the opportunities are existent to connect with other students with similar interests.

> "Definitely because as much as I am here for education, I am also here – I am definitely going to make some social connections which are going to help me improve my stay here. For instance, since I said I am in the African Student's Union, I think, having people who are also going through the same situations that I am as well as – because many of them from the same region – like the southern region of Africa, some are from the western region, eastern region – it's a great experience to have people who would share the same experiences being here in the United States and helps you to make those social connection. And that helps you as well to make other connections with other international students. And then that helps you to connect with other students who are from the US as well. So, it's a very good experience; and, I think, I definitely suggest everyone should at least be involved with these organizations" (I-2-US, para. 55).

Undergraduate students are widely represented in student clubs but graduate students are definitely welcome to take active part in the club activities.

> "I would speak generally. I find that a lot of grad students don't know about the cultural students' associations for one thing. It has more to do with time. So, a lot of / more grad students, they are academic inclined than they are to social groups. So, if they are joining any groups, having to join groups that are academically inclined than they are socially inclined. A few of them have at least gone for events, associated with cultural, social events. I couldn't attend the Malaysian one because I had something to do, but I was at the Latino one. I actually performed at the African Students Cultural Association show. I know that there are a few events [where] they do that. People from the grad student community attend, but in actual meetings and day to day activities of those groups, not a lot of grad students attend." "[S]o the resources are available, but you also have to make a decision, too. And that was the first thing I was told. I sat on a panel a couple times in my school. I am the vice president of Diversity in my student government in my school. One of the things that I say is the fact that, if you don't make up your mind to enjoy the experience, you will lose out. That's one thing that every international student has to / that's the decision you have to make. Fine if you are going to miss home, but if you don't embrace the fact that you are here and get the best, you can get out of this opportunity and then you lose out" (I-4-US, paras. 21, 93).

One Chinese student shared how she made the best of being involved in such opportunity:

> "In my undergrad I was very active. After I came to the graduate school, I am focusing on my academic studies and education. In my undergrad, I joined different clubs, like dancing clubs, I performed every semester, also in the Chinese Students and Scholars

Association. And I am still in it and performed during the Chinese New Year's celebration. As an undergrad, I joined the business club and sports club" (I-7-US, para. 63).

Besides engagement opportunities for regular degree seeking international students, exchange students in the USA also had opportunities to join the student clubs offered by universities and it is always up to the individual decision to partake in these groups in the limited period of staying at the host destinations.

"The student organization and the friends whom I met. I am still connected. That's the biggest point I will always remember about" (I-9-US, para. 103).

"I know there are some friends who joined the finance club and banking club. I think, you have to be a person who likes such clubs. I was more independent. For me, if I had stayed for one year, I would have tried to get engaged into the university life" (I-10-US, para. 85).

All of the international students in Korea were aware of the variety of student clubs provided on campus. Undergraduate students mostly mentioned that even though they are aware of the engagement options of student clubs, they are constrained to time or pressure to succeed academically that they do not participate in the given offers (ref. Chapter 6.2.2). As for all graduate students interviewed, they mentioned that it was difficult for them to join since the student organizations are mainly comprised of undergraduates.

"Actually, I tried to join because they have had the recruitment for the past two weeks but the clubs that I am interested in and I messaged them. They replied back saying that the clubs are only for undergraduate students because they were like saying that the graduate students are kind of busy. […] I think, the regular clubs do not accept me because of the different degree level, so, it's okay" (I-1-KO, para. 71, 77).

The following two experiences reveal the vital importance of speaking the Korean language to be part of the domestic student clubs on campus.

"Yes, I was amazed really at [this university.] There were so many associations that you could join […]. But they didn't […] recruit exchange students at all. If you wanted to get involved in the associations, you really had to go see them and hope that they speak English and try to get in touch. That's why, in the end, I didn't get into the school orchestra because people didn't speak English and they were so surprised that an international student came and wanted to be part of the orchestra. They were not prepared" (I-9-KO, para. 173).

With reference to language issues mentioned above, the following interview dialogue shows that opportunities to join English-speaking student clubs directly led by international offices exist.

"I: How do you find the club activities […] ?

I-3-KO: I really like it that I can meet a lot of people there; and they have membership trainings and go to the festivals together.

I: I know that you are part of such student clubs as [. . .], are other exchange students who are a part of such kind of clubs?

I-3-KO: There are exchange students; but in [this club] you have to speak in Korean because we only speak Korean. But there are other clubs [. . .]; and it is better for students who are not that good in Korean. [. . .] At the orientation, they introduce us to all the international clubs. The international office sends out emails about tour and stuff like that. But I don't take part in those activities" (paras. 60–63).

Interviewed international students in Germany were not much involved in student clubs on campus except for one Chinese student (I-9-DE) who was a part of a Chinese students' association. It is here to note that only because international students did not take part in student clubs does not necessarily lead to a conclusion that students are not active in extracurricular activities in Germany. Against this underlying notion, while exploring the shared experiences of experts' views on engagement opportunities on and off campus, insight into the context specific university life of each country could be identified (ref. Chapter 6.10). Such context specific university life in each country helps to comprehend the tendencies of international students' experiences during the interviews.

6.5 Support services to integrate domestic and international students

Experts were asked about the support services which are existent to accommodate international and domestic students to interact with each other. Instead of acquiring specific program names and details, the replies by experts were unanimous in mostly expressing the difficulty for such support services to take place effectively. Hence, the interview findings focus primarily on reasons for such struggles and these are explained in this section. In relation to such challenges from experts' perspective, international students shared varying support services that they are making use of in order to overcome the contact barrier to domestic students as well as their concerns regarding the contact with domestic students.

Experts' interviews

To begin with, the quote below from a senior international officer illustrates the underlying core aim of services provided by the international office and the existent parallel communities between domestic and international students at host institutions.

"Well, let me start from the point of view why do we enroll international students at all – and certainly one of the reasons is because diversity should be part of their education; and engaging with each other is part of what we should be as educators. Unfortunately, we have too many times – the Americans are here and the international students are here and they are close to each other; and they are on the same campus; and they are in the same buildings, but they are not engaged. So, the actual change, transformation, isn't happening. You need two structures to help facilitate that interaction, because, otherwise, you are close to difference, but you might as well be thousand miles apart. And then also

> I think, when you are this close and there's a big group, it leads to stereotyping and negatives. All the Chinese are like this, all the Americans are like this. So, I think, international students are an incredible resource to what I work [and] my job is to serve the international students. But what motivates me for programming is to involve international students' resources and, so, to have them know Americans. For the Americans to benefit from their friendship with international students is a very big deal. And that's the starting point of our programming" (IO-5-US, para. 3).

Pertaining to the notion of "two structures to help facilitate that interaction" (IO-5-US, para. 3), effective collaborative structures between offices that work with international students and that work with domestic students on campus are necessary. One expert raised the issue of the difficulty in reaching out to domestic students, as her office only deals with international students:

> "There are so many. So, it is difficult for many reasons. I also think it is difficult for, we hear the feedback on the survey that students want this. Like international students always make American friends, how can I make American friends? But at the same time, it's hard for us as an office to find the American students because we don't deal with American students at all in this office. If we are going plan integration programming, we have to rely on an outside office. We tried to partner with the Study Abroad because that seems logical, because those students would have interest, having studied abroad or planning to study abroad. But we haven't had a lot of tangible connection with them. We have worked a little bit with academic colleges like College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Business, College of Engineering to try to get those students. And I know that each department does things too. But it is hard" (IO-2-US, para. 16).

Moreover, it is important to note that programs such as sports activities, regular meetings (coffee hours) by international offices, international student clubs and peer advisors (in Korea) are helpful but apart from these programs, international students are still outsiders in classrooms, residence halls, and general interaction again:

> "Yes, this is why we point to our huge sports program, because sports are also a very nice opportunity to get to know someone. I sometimes participate in the classes myself. And it is always in a way that, for example, two Spanish girls go there together; and they talk to each other the whole time. I mean, if you stick together all the time, then it is also difficult to get to know people. So, there is no systematic approach. And as you can see from the campus, it is not a campus of student life. They meet during the lessons and seminars, but after classes they go back home" (IO-2-DE, para. 70).

Regardless of the means of collaborative approaches, the quote below is relevant to the previous expert's statement, which reminds us that it is a challenge for international students to acquire "really successful integrated experiences" (IO-5-US, para. 25). Continuous effort of thinking outside the box and dedicated leaders are needed to support this genuine connection between domestic and international students to happen (ref. ibid.).

> "It is something that we are always actively trying to make sure that our students are interacting which is why the university has the combined orientation right from the very

beginning. So, we have combined residence halls, we have combined orientation; because our support services are general support service offices around campus, those are all combined services and combined opportunities. We are trying to do as much as we can to really try to encourage students to interact. And I think, we find that it really varies. We have some floors of dorms that are very, very interactive – they have students from all over the place and everyone really makes friends and gets to know each other really, really well. And I think, your friend base really starts right from freshman year. I think, the people that you live with end up becoming your friends. We have some students from all countries who completely immerse themselves, who hang out with US students all the time and really make that their experience. We have other students who tend to stay a little bit more within their own culture or their own language. They tend to have a parallel experience where they are going to class – they do have friends in classes that are US students. They are interacting with them in group projects, team projects, and perhaps in the forms. But they tend to have a sort of a parallel experience. Which in some cases, some people think that that's not the way to do it. People who have been working with US students and who primarily work with US students seem to think that immersion is the only way to go. But there are many schools of thought that say, "Look there are many different ways to adjust, there are many different ways of successful experience and different people have different priorities". I think that a lot of people believe that success at a US college is that full immersion, social experience, academic success, being able to really contribute, interact and engage, 100%. But what we find is from a lot of our international students, the social piece is not as important to them as the academic piece that's really important to them. And so, we are doing a lot of education around campus to say, to make sure that other support staff offices and faculty understand that not to project our own US values or US perspectives and that for many of our students, academic success is [most important]. Engagement and making the connection is not necessarily their highest priority and so, we are finding as campus people of starting to appreciate and recognize that a little bit more" (IO-8-US, para. 50).

Along the lines of avoiding instilling the idea that immersion is the solution and accepting various approaches to adjust at host institutions, "stereotyping and negatives" (IO-5-US, para. 3) between large groups also hinders the process of integration of domestic and international students. The most often talked about challenge was about the majority of Chinese students remaining among themselves. The following comments share the mentioned point of Chinese students in three countries investigated:

"From my perspective, Korean domestic students are interested but international student are not so much. Especially in Korean universities, there are many Chinese international students; and most Chinese students have a strong tendency to stay among themselves. Also, Korean domestic students are interested in students from English-speaking countries, but the numbers are a lot lower; and most students come from Asian countries" (IO-2-KO, para. 29).

"What is very clear at this university is that Chinese students do not come out of their groups. They are very connected with each other and have almost no contacts to other nationalities, no matter which country it is. They are so much in their groups that it is an improbable phenomenon. It doesn't matter how many offers are made. […] What surprises me – I even discussed about this issue with a staff member from the international

club – what can we do because Chinese students actually complain that they do not get to know German or other students but they still stay in their own groups. Then we offer programs and try but it has never been successful" (IO-3-DE, para. 82, 84).

"They have to experience a dorm for at least a year. And then some will choose to move off campus or some will choose to stay on campus. It's optional for sophomore year. Many of our Chinese students will move off campus [in their] sophomore and they will all live together in shared apartments together. There are a lot of reasons that they want to do that. They want to continually connect with their home culture. In some case, the way they prepare food or want to live, they find it easier to live in groups of Chinese students. So, really we are trying to dispel the myth that that is necessarily a bad thing because if that's what their experience is going to be here, then we need to just make sure that we are supporting that level of experience and that we are appreciating that that's their experience and that we are trying to make sure that they are integrating as much as they can. We have a very very very respected Dean here on campus, who just says, 'Well, they are just not making friends.' And then we said, 'Well, they might not be making as many friends who are US students but they are making a lot of friends'" (IO-8-US, para. 52).

After acknowledging the fact that Chinese students stay within their groups from the quotes above, a step was taken further by the latter expert in which she emphasizes the notion of "trying to dispel the myth that that is necessarily a bad thing" (IO-8-US, para. 52).

As for domestic students in this respect, experts interviewed raised the issue of indifference to international students:

"Korean domestic students are very busy, even busier than office workers. That is why there is no time to care about others. Students have to take care of their grades and connections within the limited time and make use of their time effectively. For this reason, only because there is an international student, Korean domestic students do not react: 'Oh, there's an international student. I am interested and want to become friends.'" (IO-1-KO, para. 62).

"From my personal view, I believe the latter aspect applies to students at this university. I am aware one should not be biased; but the students here study very hard and are extremely busy when observing all the students I know. They are busy focused on their studies and their life that I believe they are not that interested in international students that much. Probably they have no interest" (IO-4-KO, para. 67).

Against such background of reasons for difficulty of providing support services to integrate domestic and international students, the "actual change" (IO-5-US, para. 3) will take time, especially considering the perspective and action transformations from not only staff members "themselves be highly efficient and effective intercultural learners" (Leask, 2009, p. 212) but also domestic students to take that individual effort. On a related note, an expert in Germany notes that it is definitely a challenge:

"This is a tough question. I can answer it in theory because I cannot imagine it being implemented in practice. Your question is actually parallel to the question about the integration into the German society. Should we teach the incoming people? Or should

we teach the Germans to get along with the foreign students? Okay, for strategic reasons you cannot do that – put millions of people into classes. So, usually there are political measures – decided politically and practically – about integration activities and they are absolutely parallel to the measures at the university. Of course, the German students are the ethnic majority. I have this point in the text of my application for the finances in the next time period, in which I say that German students who have advantages are well [integrating] international students because they can more or less by intuition acquire intercultural competence. Otherwise, later on during their jobs, they have to pay for such courses. But this is more something like a vision. It is a very tough thing, I don't think that the university is doing a bad job there – it's a very difficult job and nobody has ever addressed it" (IO-8-DE, para. 52).

International students' interviews

When it comes to contact with domestic students, international students in the USA and Korea said that the engagement depends on one's own personality and effort. In the USA, two students explicitly said that getting a job on or off-campus is a very effective way to get involved with domestic students or even the locals. Cultural workshops, regular meetings by international offices, programs by the residence halls were several provided services that students participated in.

"Yes, actually there is an organization. It's African and domestic students who want to have a relationship, sort of, with international students. So, we have a few meetings – it's quite informal, it's just like talking and getting to know the American culture. So, they always meet on Wednesdays and I have not quite attended (laugh). Wednesdays are a busy day for me" (I-1-US, para. 95).

"Ah! That is true! My first three years, I was / didn't even, I was with Malaysian Students' Association. But this summer, I just started because I figured, it's going to [be] my senior [year], I don't have any American friends and I should do something. And then I applied for a job at summer camp. I would say 90% are Americans; and that's how I met Americans. I made a lot of friends there. That was my first thing. And I also tried for a resident advisor to integrate more with the people; but I didn't get in but still, I have a lot of people from the summer camp. There I was close [with] 16 staff" (I-3-US, para. 57).

"I think, one of the ways I want to get involved is to find a part-time job on campus in my second semester. Because I am a journalism student, I know how to shoot and make video clips; and, so, I just find a position of this kind. Because my boss is American, some of my colleagues who work for in that department are the locals. I think, that is one way to make some friends – and you can find jobs. You need to find some connection. […] I think, work is a good part" (I-5-US, para. 27).

In Korea, students noted that residence halls offer diverse programs and several students joined student clubs as indicated in the example quote below:

"Actually last semester I didn't get that much interaction, because, I still have some / I wasn't so comfortable with Korean people. I got a lot of friends from the dormitory because they provided a lot of activities for Korean and international students who get

along. There are not that many Koreans; but after I joined the Taekwondo club, I got more friends and they talk with me in Korean mostly. I think, it is the way to practice my Korean and another good way to make friends" (I-5-KO, para. 49).

One student talked about the regular get-together program organized by the international office and found such meetings very helpful.

"Oh, yeah. Especially in the program that I have, they prepare [regular get-together] meetings [. . .] to help you socialize, or something, to meet people from other countries" (I-2-KO, para. 37).

Then again, such organized meetings by international offices focus on interacting with other international students as the experts mentioned in the previous section of this category.

Most international students interviewed in Germany have no, or very limited, contact to domestic students in and outside of the lessons in German universities.

"I don't know. I think, there are many international students here. Germans are not interested in talking to us. For me, I would like to much more hang out with Erasmus or my Brazilian friends" (I-1-DE, para. 121).

"In fact I speak to Germans but just in class. We don't really see each other outside the courses" (I-3-DE, para. 61).

One possible way to get in touch with German domestic students is joining sports courses run by the university as related to the expert's comment.

"I think that especially for the fellow students who are in the same major with you, they are kind of like distanced. They would like to have more distance with the students who are in the same department. If you are in a community or group for international students, for other sport clubs, they would like to communicate with you more, because they know that there must be a safe space or room in between. They are more likely to confide more from themselves" (I-4-DE, para. 71).

Despite the fact that international students continuously make individual efforts and even though several provided services are mentioned, contact to domestic students varied according to each individual. Most students felt that not enough opportunities are offered by universities for domestic and international students to engage with each other; and the need for such services is strongly desired.

"I would say the opportunities to meet American friends. It sounds vague but I think that's what we need. I don't like classes that have all international students particularly. It won't help us a lot. And maybe [the international office] has more events" (I-7-US, para. 73).

"But probably I am not very good in English; so, sometimes I stay in the room quietly. I don't feel confidence on me, not general. I need to improve my English. But the other problem is that most of the guys are from Germany. So, they speak and talk in German,

and the others, we are from other countries. Sometimes we are just waiting for them to finish talking. Yeah. That's why I think, I feel more confident to speak with international students than German students. But with this, I am not saying that the Germans are unfriendly. No, they are friendly. They are good people. But I think that the international students need to be included in the group. I don't know how but there are many strategies to do that. They need to be part of the group" (I-6-DE, para. 77).

Furthermore, interestingly during the interviews, many students expressed their perceptions of domestic students towards international students and their reasons for resorting to international communities as well as nationality groups for support.

"Most of my friends here are Chinese students. And I think, before I came to America, I thought I will never make Chinese friends here because I want to learn English. But after I spent one year, I think, I changed my mind. The first reason is that if you are a Chinese you can come here to study here. That's because you are very good in your native country. If so, even though they are Chinese, most of the time, Chinese students perform much better than Asian Americans. Because for many American students, they are very confident, very expressive because they are good at / but they don't know a lot about developing countries and they have no idea about what is happening there. And that is a big majority part of the world. I think, they just don't have the sense or the idea. I think, for many Chinese students they know China and America both very well. Their self-educating ability is a lot better than Americans'. And the second reason is that the people who really help you are Chinese friends. Whenever I want, for example, I moved to another apartment and I can only ask Chinese friends to help me out. Sometimes, I need them to give me a ride before I bought my own car; and some of them would help me. That is great. I think, it is nice and that's why I don't think you need to force yourself to hang out with any American friends. I want to tell you something about one of my classmates, she studied four years for B.A. degree; and she doesn't want to go back to China anymore. She never hangs out with us. She always wants to hang out with Americans. We don't think she is right. Just be natural. Of course it is easy to make Chinese students; but if you met some American classmates who are friendly to you, that's good but if they are not very friendly because they don't know what to talk to you, but that's fine, just make it easy" (I-5-US, para. 31).

"I think, I know the Americans here in class and there are three kinds. The first ones are 'I don't care where you came [from] and I don't want to talk to you, I am cool with my American friends.' The other ones are 'I can talk to you if you talk to me first;' and the last ones are the caring helpful students. I don't think I have tons of American friends here. If I do, it is normally Asian Americans; and I feel comfortable talking to them and they feel comfortable talking to me because I look similar to them" (I-6-US, para. 45).

"I met some who are very friendly; but there are still many who didn't care. But I talk a lot of these things with Thai friends. Actually Korean students don't care, but it depends on the person. Normally compared to Thai students, I think that they have a lot of things to do so that they don't have time to care much about other students, not only international students, but also Korean students themselves. How do I say, I think, they are more individualistic. Because I talked to one of my Korean friends. She says that, she is a senior, 'Don't worry if you have to eat lunch alone because everyone here does this.' It is so different from the university in Thailand, because we have lunch time that are the

same; and we always have lunch together every day. And here it is a lot more individual" (I-5-KO, para. 65).

"I think that this time it is a little difficult, just to get in touch with German people because people here are a little distanced and in Spain we don't have this social barrier in Spain" (I-8-DE, para. 19).

6.6 Language competence and support

A reoccurring aspect that students often mentioned in the previous categories was the proficiency in language used in the country when it comes to excelling in academics, joining student activities as well as interacting with domestic students. When inquiring about language competence and support, the central themes consist of types of language support and role of language competence.

Experts' interviews

According to the experts in three countries, international students need to meet a certain language proficiency level[82] to be accepted at the corresponding universities. What was interesting to discover from the interviews of the experts was that even though international students meet the required language requirements, there are incidences at which they still struggle with language usage. Various types of language support are provided by the host universities to address some of these difficulties.

It is important to clarify, which language is used as language of academic instruction and for main social interaction. The context of having to speak English in both academic and social spheres seems natural in the USA whereas the conditions differ in Korea and Germany depending on the degree and the field of studies. In most cases, Korean and German language proficiencies are not a prerequisite in participating in the non-degree exchange semester(s). In addition, there exist majors that require students to carry out their studies solely in English. In such circumstances, international students do not need to have Korean and German language knowledge to begin their studies at host institutions.

Taking into account the differing language requirements, for those students who need extra support with the language of instruction, there are various programs offered in the USA as indicated by the expert below:

"[S]o there is an office, a department on campus, [the] English Language Institute. They offer English language [courses] to non-native speakers. For example, I applied; and I met all the TOEFL and GRE, but I am a non-native speaker, so, university may say, 'I would suggest that you take some English language courses, so, to help you the transition and improve your English efficiency.' So, university will recommend me; and I will say, 'Oh, I see this English writing courses, it's great! I am going to take a couple of courses.

82 Recognized language certificates and the levels vary depending on the majors and the universities, which are not listed in this research.

I see listening clinic, writing clinic, there will be instructors whom I could work with that take courses for credit'" (IO-1-US, para. 73).

As mentioned there are language courses that are offered within the range of the number of credits that the students can take during one semester, which is covered by the tuition, meaning that the students do not have to pay extra fees on their own. Parallel to such courses, which you can take for credits, there are courses which international students can take at separate language centers that are affiliated with the university.

"[W]e call it the IEI [Intensive English Institute] and is actually quite expensive, I believe, whereas ESL [English as a Second Language] courses that you need HERE are FREE because the state [...] does not allow you to charge for ESL courses, if they are required, I think, maybe not at all. But like the ESL courses that are offered that students can take at the [university] and not at the IEI, they are free" (IO-2-US, para. 72).

As of Korea, interviewed experts mentioned that internal language departments on campus provide Korean language support and the fees for these language courses are also included in the tuition.

"Normally, degree seeking students can take the Korean writing courses in the first semester. Aside from the regular Korean language courses that we offer [as an international office], students can individually register for Korean language lessons at the language department. We offer extra Korean language courses to exchange students for only those who want to learn" (IO-6-KO, para. 79).

Similar to the USA and Korea, experts in Germany also explained that there is a variety of language support programs when degree and non-degree seeking international students come across the need to improve their German.

"Well, we do offer pre-semester-courses for everyone who thinks that their language maybe needs some improvement, which they have to pay fees for – but it is a very small fee, not an expensive language course. Other than that, I think that language is the big issue. During the semester, they can take the language courses" (IO-2-DE, para. 64).

"As for now, there are new guidelines for the cou. The students have to be on a B1 level in German and a B2[83] in English. If they are not, they can still come [...], for example, some students only have English courses, and then they are not required to speak German on a B1 level. However, we, of course, recommend learning German in order to get around and their daily lives. They can also take an intensive German course here [...]. That is a five to six week intensive course in German. And if they just have a B1, they can get a B2 certificate in that course" (IO-6-DE, para. 28).

83 Different language levels indicated based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Another type of language support beyond course offerings is mediating information in different languages for international students. On example is seeking help to translate when faced with trouble of expressing or comprehending conversations.

> "We do our best. If it's really, really difficult, we could try to find a student worker or someone we know who does speak their language. That could help the conversation. If it's just English they are struggling with, we can help them get some tutoring or get connected with the English Language Center; so, we do see that sometimes. And we have different avenues we can kind of lead them there" (IO-4-US, para. 48).

In the USA and Korea, due to a large number of Chinese students, there exist staff members who can speak Chinese and are cognizant of students'cultural background to support them once language and cultural understandings become an issue in delivering information.

> "I think, language and culture, even with the certain types of words, may mean certain different things, right? There are subtleties that they try to hint, high context, low context. At the counseling center, we do have a graduate student I believe that speaks Mandarin [. . .]. The housing office is very cognizant of having students from similar backgrounds. If the offices do not have certain capacities of the language or the cultural knowledge, our office is the usually the one that can help and assist. The entire campus knows that the majority of international students are Chinese, Chinese undergraduate students. As you may already know, we have about 7,000 international students; and out of that over 4,000 are Chinese students. Within 4,000, we have about 3,400 [who] are Chinese undergraduate students. Within that 80% that are in majoring in business. So, by knowing those statistics, we know how to tailor our assistance to students" (IO-3-US, para. 57).

In Germany, similar language support services are offered only in special cases, as one expert claims:

> "Of course here, within our services, everyone would also try to speak English, but that is a problem. I mean, I know that sometimes in the study counseling unit they work with translators. For example, the Syrian refugees who are here, they sometimes get translators from the [immigration office], because many of them have university degrees. So, now that they are here, they need to find out how can I study, how can I continue, and so, they try to sort things out with translators. But this is not a very general service offered to everyone" (IO-2-DE, para. 64).

Besides having staff members on campus to cater to the needs of language mediation, experts in Korean universities investigated, all noted that most of the information on websites, in handbooks, and brochures, is available in different languages, namely in English and Chinese, and at times, in Japanese.

> "For now we have the handbook in English and a Chinese version will be soon published. In addition, a brochure containing guidelines of using the library in English, Chinese and

> Korean is evident. So, the most visited places by students, such as libraries and health care centers, are in three different languages" (IO-6-KO, para. 73).

Among various types of language support, experts mentioned language exchanges and language courses for technical terminologies for schools in engineering, medicine and law. These support services take place sporadically depending on the institutions; and the experts' role is to try to connect international students to provided offers when necessary. Moreover, individual faculty member offers opportunities to international students to take submit exams, papers, or theses in alternative languages in Korea and Germany. This prospect of being able to use alternative languages other than Korean and German is explained further when cross-referencing international students' experiences.

When explaining the types of language support, experts emphasizes the role of language in academics and daily life at the host destinations in question. A staff member working at the university affiliated language center especially raises his concern with regard to international students who possess "intermediate and beginner level" English proficiency.

> "In my opinion, when we are talking about the whole range of people with different English abilities, the number-one-challenge for students of intermediate and beginner level is language. Culture is a big deal, etiquette is a big deal, food, all that stuff, is important. But, in my opinion, when you are dealing with the lower level students, language is going to be the biggest agitator and the biggest challenge. When the students can't just communicate with people or can't fully understand what people are saying, it is very frustrating for them" (IO-6-US, para. 53).

An American staff member from an international office raises another issue. She points out that especially graduate students who instruct students in regular courses as teaching assistants in English have troubles; and there could be different reasons behind such troubles, as indicated in the quote below. In the end, these international graduate students need to overcome their hurdles and have the ability to speak English and teach well simultaneously.

> "Students in general know that, in the hard sciences, that could be. But sometimes, in the hard sciences, you have people who are more introverted, or something; and so, they are less chatty in their native tongue. So, you can see that their speaking skills are a challenge. But there's an issue, though, with graduate students who have to become teaching fellows. They have to teach. And students complain that they can't understand them. And there's the [. . .] [c]enter for teaching on campus; and one of things they work on is helping those teaching fellows to try and communicate in such a way that it is easier for the students. But one of the challenges is / they are working hard and studying hard and their downtime, whoever they socialize with it may be very many people but it's people may from their own group or so, they are not using the English language enough. And also art of teaching is an art. You may understand how to do something but how you explain it becomes another story" (IO-7-US, para. 95).

Experts from both Korea and Germany expressed concerns about international students who do not speak Korean and German upon their arrival at host institutions. One cause for such phenomenon could be due to the presence of English-mediated instruction being a vital strategy to attract international students to Korean and German universities.

> "There are several majors, namely International Studies or Applied Electronic Engineering, which are English track and English is used for the studies. The rest of the undergraduate studies are taught in Korean. Thus, international students need to have Level 4 in TOPIK [Test of Proficiency in Korean] or higher to be admitted at this university. However, even though the language level is not met, students are accepted conditionally after taking cognitive essay exams. […] International student with Level 3 are admitted once they pass the cognitive exams and are required to take six months of language courses before taking regular studies" (IO-1-KO, para. 48).

> "In English. The master programs – there are not many, I think, about fifteen – have most international students. The Germans are a complete minority there. So, German is not the language there. And they usually don't know German, the international students usually don't speak German there. Most of them are mainly connected with the medical faculty, biology, physiology, and so on. I don't have the list of the workshops that we offered. Now, we have new workshops for them in this semester. They are people coming for two years from anywhere and they are absolutely international, and they don't care about German, in general" (IO-8-DE, para. 44).

Both experts above mention the English-mediated instruction incorporated in certain studies. The Korean expert notes that there even exists conditional admission to the university regarding the Korean language proficiency for international students. Other Korean experts interviewed also added that even though language proficiency level is prescribed as a prerequisite for admission, it is in most cases left to each university's discretion.

Nevertheless, the German international officer above emphasizes the vital significance of speaking German in general:

> "In the regular programs – outside of those master programs? Yes, of course, it is very important. But this is outside of the scope of our work. Although, the code of conduct says 'the university will support in acquiring and improving [inc.].' The university doesn't do it. That is the point. We are not in language studies, we are not linguistics. So, we don't relate to this topic at all" (IO-8-DE, para. 46).

Particularly for regular degree students that are not taught in English, language is the principle challenge that they need to overcome.

> "Language is probably … even though they are able to speak Korean, taking up studies in Korean is very difficult; and that has been the main struggle that international students express during the advising sessions" (IO-2-KO, para. 31).

A Korean expert pointed out that international students sometimes feel that they do not need Korean language knowledge when studying at host institutions and criticized such kind of mindset.

> "In fact there are international students who are full-time degree students who suffer extremely because of the Korean language. One reason for choosing this university is probably that it is within the top 30 in the world ranking of higher institutions; and they probably think the university is very globalized. Also, they are perhaps a little interested in Korea. But I really have nothing to say to those who suffer because they don't know the Korean language. I mean it is so natural to speak English when we go to universities in the USA and speak Japanese when we study in Japan. Why do they come to Korea and think that they don't need to learn Korean? But there are international students with such attitude" (IO-4-KO, para. 101).

Finally, when addressing the services offered in English, German international officers eventually emphasize the crucial role the German language plays in order to successfully finish and adjust to daily lives.

> "Most of the bachelor programs and master programs are taught in German. So, actually, we say for the admission here you need to be on a B1, B2 level in German, which in many programs we cannot check in beforehand since we don't do a language test. Except for the few students who really study master programs in English and do not have any language requirements in Germany, one should actually be able to speak enough German to follow administrative procedures. The fact is that they don't. In the orientation, we do it bilingually. There we don't have the time to do everything. We would just speak in German and the slides would be in English, or someone would repeat it in English – it's quite a mixture. So, I cannot make sure that everybody really understands everything, but we tell students, 'Look, it doesn't really make sense to come here without the knowledge of German.' And students still do it. Well, legitimate for students studying in a program, which is taught in English. […] I guess – it's not the German culture, it is not like in the Netherlands or maybe Scandinavia where also the administration is used to speaking English. In the information services we, of course, do speak English. But if you need anything else – I mean, [this city] is also not that international as a city. Actually, we do have a problem with the regular students in the master courses, which are taught in English, because our language center doesn't offer language courses for absolute beginners. So, they would have to go to private language center. For everyday life in Germany, you cannot get by without German – well, you can but then you will be quite lonely or only in the international community" (IO-2-DE, para. 40).
>
> "I think, it is very important. The first aspect is that some programs are just in German. The second aspect is that even if some master programs are in English, if you want to connect with the people to get integrated, especially with [domestic] students – not with other international ones –, if you want to work here during your studies, if you want to work here after you finished – which is also a new topic – then I think, it is really important to know the language. And we also experienced that if you go to the foreigners' office and speak German, they are more open than if you don't" (IO-7-DE, para. 82).

International students' interviews

In reference to experts' description of the types of language support services and their views on the vital role of having the language proficiency of the given countries, international students' experiences mirrored the features and opinions mentioned by the experts.

To begin with, international students mentioned in the interviews the types of language support services they have made use of. In the USA, several students attended affiliated language centers for which these students had to pay the expenses by themselves. Few students were accepted by the university to pursue their graduate degrees but were asked to take a mandatory language course before beginning with their actual studies; and this language course had to be paid by students.

> "That was actually a conditional acceptance letter. They asked me to go to the language program before I can be officially admitted here. Yes, and it was very expensive. 20,000 dollars including all the dorm which was offered for six weeks. It was 20,000 or 15,000 dollars not including the flight or anything. It's something like that" (I-6-US, para. 19, 21).

A German exchange student chose rather not to take extra English lessons offered by an internal language center on campus since he had fulfilled his credit limit:

> "No, it was not possible because it would have exceeded my credit; and would have paid more" (I-10-US, para. 89).

All degree seeking international students in Korea participated in Korean language courses and found them to be supportive but demanding at times, as most courses were intensive courses, which took place parallel to their regular studies.

> "For me it has been kind of difficult because it requires a lot of practice. Sometimes, you don't have time because it is mandatory to learn the language but they don't give you credits. So, it is very hard. You have around four or five classes per day. Korean classes are from Monday through Thursday for three hours, 8:00-10:45 am" (I-2-KO, para. 55).

As for regular degree seeking international students in Korea, not all courses were taught in English unless it is specified in the major before admission. This meant that these international students had to pass the courses conducted in Korean in order to successfully finish their studies.

> "Yes, most of the courses are in English but at the end of the major, there's going to be four courses in Korean, so, I have to get ready for them" (I-2-KO, para. 7).
>
> "Because I don't know how other departments work – but basically for us engineering – more towards a science streams – we take a general first year course on basically anything [that] is scientific. Basically there are some English courses; but when it comes to majors in the sophomore years and above, it depends on the situation whether they offer English

courses or not. [During] freshmen, they did give us some English classes for us to take" (I-13-KO, para. 29).

In contrast to regular degree seeking students who all have to learn Korean during their studies, non-degree seeking international students mostly did not take the courses and mainly had English-mediated courses during their study abroad.

> "I started an intensive Korean course; and I dropped it yesterday because it was too intensive. But the course is good; and I would have continued if I had enough time, but the problem is that my home university will not give me the credits anyways. So, I was taking the three other courses plus this language course, so, it was just too much. It was every day for two hours in the afternoon" (I-10-KO, para. 47).

Other types of language support services that international students took advantage of were websites in several languages and submitting the exams, papers, thesis in a different language especially when they were not so confident in the language of the country.

> "They have the main website is in Chinese as well, but the engineering department is only in Korean and English. One good thing is that I can write my reports in English, but my friends in other majors have to write it in Korean because the professors can't read English" (I-12-KO, para. 131).

Both regular degree and non-degree seeking international students in Germany took part in internal language courses either for free or by paying a small fee, as the experts mentioned and this depends on each institution whereas most of the internal language courses are included in the tuition fee in the USA and Germany. The following regular degree seeking Ecuadorian student found such language programs to be very beneficial.

> "I: Do you study mostly in English or in German?
> I-6-DE: In English. Hopefully, I can write my thesis and the exams in English. It's comic because it is an international program, but the whole information that is available is in German. So, we have to learn German. I am learning German because otherwise it is impossible to live here.
> I: Do you learn German at the university for free?
> I-6-DE: Yes, for free.
> I: Is it helpful?
> I-6-DE: Of course, a lot. The courses are very good" (paras. 48–53).

However, international students interviewed criticized that the website (e.g., course registration or e-learning platforms) information is given mostly in German and this is regarded as difficult for international students arriving at host institutions with a low level of German proficiency. In addition, in relevance to the wish mentioned above by the Ecuadorian student, a Chinese graduate student stated that she is able to hand in assignments and write exams in English.

"I: Okay. You talked about writing exams. Do you have to write the exams in German or in English?

I-4-DE: In my major, both of the languages are okay" (paras. 24–25).

Furthermore, she added that submitting work in English has its own merit for the given reason below:

"I: Do you feel difficulties in terms of using English or German in classes, exams, and reports?

I-4-DE: For grammatical context, there's no feedback because it's not an official language here. But I think that some of the students tell me, if you write it in German, they will correct it more strictly. They know for sure whether you wrote it correctly or not. So, most of the time, I wrote it in English.

I: But if you write it in German or in English, is there anywhere you can go and ask for help at the university? Or do you think the university should offer this kind of support program?

I-4-DE: There's none. Most of my friends, they like to choose a major with more mathematics and calculations to avoid it" (paras. 60–63).

Along the lines, non-degree seeking international students with low level German proficiency are allowed to take both English and German mediated courses; and in the latter courses, they could write the exams in English as well. One Spanish Erasmus student shares his experience:

"In my case, it was half in English and half in German. I did 30 credits – 15 were in English and 15 were in German. But I have to say that in most of the subjects I had in German, they offered me the possibility to write the exam in English. Because if not with this low level A2, is not good enough to write the exam in the Master's course. I only know how to order a coffee" (I-8-DE, para. 53).

Although such options are provided to take the courses and write the exams in English, having the language proficiency of the host destinations is inevitable and this is mentioned by the identical Spanish Erasmus student:

"[Y]ou can talk in English but they prefer to speak in German. If you speak German, you are going to make more German friends than you speak in English" (I-8-DE, para. 27).

Together with the comment by the Ecuadorian student and the previous comment from the Spanish exchange student, both perspectives on language proficiency also apply to the international students in Korea. In this light, they expressed the essential role of having to speak the Korean language and being part of the life of the host destinations during their studies.

"I think, just communicating with the language. I would say with the students because the international office and most of the professors speak good English or even Chinese. For

the domestic students, it's limited; and I meet international students who speak English and Chinese students who speak Mandarin, but it is still very limited" (I-1-KO, para. 79).

"Of course. Before I thought I think, I can go along with just by knowing English. But then I realized that I have to level up my Korean because aside from taking classes in Korean, I am in Korea; and there will always be a point where you have to communicate in Korean. I don't know for me, because for other exchange students I meet, they hate studying the language, especially the American male exchange students. They are too lazy and they are caught up in level 1 and they hate it. I am on the other side. I go to the library. I read the Korean newspaper and I fell in love with the language; and it's really really good" (I-6-KO, para. 137).

"VEERRY DIFFICULT [without the Korean language], interacting with students, professors, and taking classes as well, because although I've seen people who can get to university with learning a bit of Korean but even right now, after they finish, they try to learn Korean. Because you don't fully get / there is no point of actually studying here if you can't even grasp the language itself. Because you won't get to understand why and how the whole country works if you don't even learn Korean, to be honest" (I-13-KO, para. 109).

6.7 Institution-wide service units

One of the deductive categories from Knight's (2004; 2012) theoretical framework is the institution-wide service units offered to international students by universities. Based on the interview findings on this category, three main themes were identified which involve 1) types of institution-wide service units, 2) degree of collaborative work between institution-wide service units and international offices, and 3) measures of promotion of institution-wide service unit information by international officers interviewed (ref. Chapter 5.3.2).

As stated in the research purpose, the descriptive results identified are not limited to presenting factual differences when the given features are under comparative perspectives from the USA, Korea and Germany (ref. Chapter 4.2). In view of such reflective standpoint, subsequent discoveries of the institution-wide services for international students are to be comprehended in the context of university environments unique to each country and oversimplifications are to be avoided.

Experts' interviews

Under this premise, in this section it is justifiable to report the distinct features of institution-wide unit services for international students.

Before looking at the types of institution-wide services in the USA imvestigated, one expert shared her views on why private universities especially have such collaborative services with diverse institutions on campus in the first place; and the importance of seeking support early enough to receive the appropriate assistance.

"Well, one difference in the US here is that these state universities – at least my understanding is that they accept you but there are very few supports. It can be like a revolving

door. It's easy to get in but it's easy to drop out. Now, private universities, basically say, we looked at your papers and we think you can make it through our system. And once they accept you, they kind of made a commitment to make sure that you do finish it. Hence they provide all these support offices. […] But always the key thing about getting help is asking for help in a timely fashion. And not when you are up to here – you are barely above water breathing and, you know. I don't blame the person. We are all guilty of that. 'I can do it, I can do it' as opposed to being honest early enough and saying, 'You know what maybe I could do it but there's a chance I might not, so, I'd better go and get the help now.'" (IO-7-US, para. 98).

In this regard, types of institution-wide services mentioned by all experts in the USA are listed with a corresponding quote as an example that describes the services of each institution. It is to note that the terms used for the offices differ depending on the universities. In this light, the terms selected entail the main functions; and these include: 1) housing center, 2) learning resources center, 3) career center, 4) health center, and 5) counseling center.

The support by housing centers is described as follows:

"With housing, 'intercultural aid' and that's for the undergraduate students that would help international students or domestic students in terms of their academic or cultural transitions. We also have residential assistants. They would be living in the dormitory kind of together and see if there's any problem that they can help with. So, with that we collaborate with them. If there's any programs that come up, any opportunity that we can collaborate with programs, we will be with them" (IO-3-US, para. 55).

Most experts said in the interviews that such active support services are provided by the housing offices at their universities. Another frequently reported institution is the learning resources center, which is labeled as 'Educational Resource Center':

"We have an Educational Resource Center that does a lot of tutoring, a lot of / there's language labs and language learning, they have a mentor program, they offer workshops throughout the year to help students succeed in test taking, becoming used to the US classroom, they help them plan their schedule, break down the syllabus, they help with a lot of academic resources" (IO-8-US, para. 26).

Another prominent institution, which was repeatedly reported about by the experts, is the career center.

"I collaborate with the career center offer[ing] a workshop […]. So, it's a-two-hour workshop. The first hour the colleague from that office would be talking about the uniqueness of job search in the United States, [the] resume might be different from a country that you come from. The interview and applying for jobs, and cover letter, how do you make a connection with the people you are interested. And then we will come and talk from the immigration and US visa aspects" (IO-1-US, para. 83).

The universities have health centers and counseling centers that cater to the needs of students and when international students would come to the interviewed experts for help. Dependent on the issue, experts connect them with professional support on campus.

> "We have a very active Health Services office, essentially it's a hospital on campus. Whenever a student who is not well in anyway whether it's a mental illness or a physical illness, they are encouraged to go to Health Services. We have a 24-hour clinic, we have doctors and nurses on staff all the time for them, we have a number of different offices and support services for mental illness, behavioral health support. So, we have an Anxiety Disorder Center, we have a Mental Health Center, we have a Crisis Response Center, so we have a lot of – and that's all within Student Health Services. So, when we have a student in crisis, if language seems to be an issue, then we see what we can do to find a translator. In some cases, they have some people on staff and in some cases, they might refer them out to experts around the [. . .] area" (IO-8-US, para. 82).

Other occasionally mentioned institutions-wide services include legal services (e.g., property owner issues when living off-campus) and student conflict services (e.g., roommate problems).

With regard to the degree of collaboration between the dedicated institution-wide services and international offices, based on the experts' interviews in the USA, there exist a wide array of dynamic institution-wide support services; and the collaboration is eminent with international offices. All experts interviewed were well informed of the service units and their programs offered. Most of all, staff in international offices was not only publicizing but also promoting such offers regularly to international students via email.

Related to the measures taken by the experts to connect the students to provided offers, one expert said that she phones the corresponding institutions or personally assists students to make the contact.

> "We connect them with the counseling center, with writing center, with learning resources. We just do our best to get them to the person who can really help them. I can be a person to talk to, if the student really needs help mentally, physically, or whatever, I want to make sure they get to the professional person who can help them. So, we refer them a lot to the health center or counseling center. Often we will even walk over with them or call for them and make sure that they know that we are with them. We do a lot of referrals to whether it is something very serious or even just simple, 'You need to talk to the financial aid, let me call them. They should know you will be coming'" (IO-4-US, para. 44).

In such matter of connecting designated offices with international students, one expert mentioned that it is difficult every now and then to draw a clear line in how far he needs to assist international students when matters emerge as shown in the example below:

> "[I]t is a tough judgement call though to determine whether or not we are teaching them to be independent or teaching them to be dependent on us. There are things that clearly the students are not going to easily figure out on their own, for example, how to pay a

traffic ticket or why they got a traffic ticket. So, we are there when necessary to advise them why they receive them and how to go about paying them. Some of the / many of the documents that they get in [this state] are not internationally friendly. Many of the tickets that they receive from the police seem to indicate that they must go to courts. It's actually not necessarily for them to go to court. They could just pay the fine and not go to courts. But many of our students when they look at the documents, it seems like they have to go. So, that's just one of many examples of how we help the students. One thing in my personal opinion, I do probably go above and beyond sometimes because I advise students with all kinds of random things" (IO-6-US, para. 19).

In Korea, three types of institution-wide support services, which were primarily mentioned by the experts, are 1) residence hall services, 2) career centers, and 3) counseling centers.

All Korean universities investigated in this research offer housing options on campus for primarily international students, even though the number of the dormitories is always limited. International students mostly have the options to live in a dormitory with Korean students or reside in a dormitory only established to take in international students. As the housing situation is very limited for students in general, international offices examined work collaboratively with the housing offices in distributing the rooms for the students.

An expert explained that there are active student councils that supervise lending out domestic equipment (such as cleaning devices) as well as mediating conflicts (e.g., roommate issues). Dependent on the constellation of the students, either Korean or international students become part of the student councils. Sometimes, these student council members are exempted for their housing fee; and based on the amount of responsibilities, scholarships are offered (ref. IO-5-KO, para. 27).

One international officer pointed out that the actual collaboration between the housing offices and the international office is to secure the number of dormitory rooms for international students and intervene with the staff members once issues occur.

"There is a house master who supervises dorm matters and international students can talk to him or her first but if they feel more comfortable with us [the international office], then they approach us. Then we try to solve the problems by talking to the corresponding staff member of the housing office" (IO-6-KO, para. 47).
"For international students, getting a room is always not that easy and if they want to live in residence halls, we try procure the spots in dormitories for international students" (IO-6-KO, para. 49).

Besides, housing office support services, both career centers and counseling centers are open to both domestic and international students, meaning that the main language that is used is Korean at both institutions. Thus, the services (e.g., help with resumes, cover letters, and preparation for interviews) are generally offered in Korean. Essentially international officers collaborate with career centers in posting specific job offers that are applicable for international students on the websites of international offices.

> "First, companies contact us directly or via Career Development Center for job announcements. But generally we receive all the postings since we are the center of distributing information to international students. Our primary role is publicizing internship or job advertisements and related programs, for example, the support programs for application for jobs are done by the Career Development Center" (IO-7-KO, para. 83).

Whether support services in career centers are offered in different languages besides Korean was not mentioned in the given interview findings but experts confirmed that international students need to have the Korean proficiency to make use of the programs offered by career centers. However, all international officers interviewed in Korea claimed that counseling center services are provided in different languages, mainly in English and Chinese.

> "The majority of international students is Chinese; and thus, a Chinese native speaker was recruited. The psychology counselor is a Chinese native speaker" (IO-1-KO, para. 40).
>
> "We have foreign counselors. At the counseling center, on Fridays from 1 to 6 pm, there is a Chinese counselor and on Mondays from 1 to 6 pm, there is a counselor who speaks English" (IO-6-KO, para. 65).

All in all, it seemed that services targeting international students were carried out mainly by international offices, except if professional help was necessary, namely, psychological or medical support. Then the experts would forward international students to other offices on campus for corresponding matters. In addition, international officers interviewed were aware of the general institution-wide support services but the concrete details of how services were organized and carried out were not fully known, as most international students are taken care of by international offices in general.

As for Germany, according to the experts, the institution-wide services primarily work independently and two experts briefly stated the two main organizations which support students :1) The General Students' Committee (in German: Allgemeiner Studierendenausschuss [AStA]) and 2) German National Association for Student Affairs (in German: Studierendenwerk [DSW]).[84]

> "Studierendenwerk also carries out support services in the first weeks. The offers by them are sent with the acceptance letters. However, in general, the Studierendenwerk is initially responsible for dining and residence services. [Here] the Studierendenwerk established an area for social support services as well. There is for example, a psychotherapeutic counseling office and many other institutions. Yet, it runs separately from the university" (IO-3-DE, para. 30).

84 Specific details about the organizations and responsibilities of AStA and DSW will not be further explained in this research as the joint collaborations work sporadically. These two entities work autonomously and the reporting of interviewed experts are provided.

Based on the interviews, experts were not very much involved in collaborating with previously mentioned entities. But they acknowledged that their functions are to provide services concerning the student life.

> "I: And do they get supported through the Studierendenwerk, for example?
> IO-4-DE: On our semester list, we have those that have to introduce themselves to us. And we give out their contact information for other students. And if they have an offer or query, we offer to send that information to the [person] via email. I don't know [if] the same goes for the Studierendenwerk. But the Studierendenwerk doesn't usually have students' data, so, they can't really forward messages to the students" (paras. 103–104).

International students' interviews

According to the reporting from international students regarding institution-wide service units, the experiences differ in each country as the context of the offerings vary as identified in the experts' interview findings of the previous section.

When crosschecking the experts' and international students' interviews, one-on-one referencing is difficult because the international student interviewees mention different service units that they experienced. Hence, an array of institution-wide services that students reported about are listed below with the corresponding quotes with their impressions and feedback on the services.

When trying to detect general tendencies from the data, it is fair to say that international students took part in services by career centers, housing offices, and recreation centers in three countries. Only in the USA, a few students made use of the health center and alumni networks. In Korea and Germany, institution-wide service units meant making use of various facilities; and international students commented on libraries and cafeterias.

In that respect, this Kenyan student in the USA shares her experiences of using the counseling center as well as the gym:

> "And it's an experience I think, you know, I feel like I will be lying if I said everything here is always okay and that is not necessarily the case. Sometimes, it gets very serious very quickly and you need someone to help you. I always suggest like you know, the [. . .] counseling center is a really great resource for many students, not just international but [domestic] students. At some point in my life, even now, I will still go just to even out my frustration when I can't really talk to anyone else and it really helps with coping. And I always also suggest like keeping active as well, going to the gym. That helps as well because it gets your mind off" (I-2-US, para. 67).

Continuing with the results from the USA, most interviewed students received regular email information on job postings as well as internship opportunities and career centers offered workshops in preparing for interviews, resumes, and cover letters.

> "The culture here is that everything you are learning – the reason why you are studying here is to find a job – that is what our university encourages us to do. I mean, so, we have a career center. We have the resources. Some staff members will help us gather job/intern position whether it is on or off campus, whether it paid or unpaid. Some alumni

sent opportunities to the Career Center. We will get emails almost every day with a list of jobs. Career Center will have our email automatically at the very first date we attend the [university]; and they will send us a list of jobs every day. For each position, we will have the name of the company, the description of the positions and whether it is paid or unpaid and the contact information on the company. That is why I found the job that I have. As I told you, it is not easy. Even though you have this contact information, it does not necessarily guarantee that you will get the job" (I-5-US, para. 29).

"We have daily emails from our Communication School about the job opportunities and the new internship postings. And they will have campus recruitment emails, so, we can get on-campus interviews. And also they have advisors who help you with the resumes and cover letters. So, you just need to make an appointment or just drop by and there will be someone who will review your resume and approve it or give you advice. I use that service" (I-7-US, para. 57).

Alumni networks were very active in supporting job searches in the USA, even back in the home countries.

"That's another huge thing. You hear a lot about [the university] having the largest living alumni network for any university in the world. That's not a pitch, it's real. The alumni network and connection is HUGE. Schools and colleges make use of the networks and the university itself uses that as a very huge resource" (IO-4-US, para. 89).

One student especially found dormitory activities to be very helpful.

"Yes, each floor has an R.A.[Resident Assistant]. [In the] dorm I was in the first year[,] [everybody was close with each other]. The R.A.s were constantly making activities and stuff" (I-8-US, para. 35).

Two students received health services when being sick during their exchange semesters.

"They had a health center. I had a nutritionist, for example, and I had counseling twice a week and also a body check-up once a week" (I-9-US, para. 99).

"I went to the health center when I had an eye infection. They were very kind but had to wait for a long time for the check-up due to many people" (I-11-US, para. 46).

Finally, when asked about the university facilities, an exchange student shared his critical stance on the recreation center including the gym, although, in general, he was impressed with the facilities.

"I-10-US: It's a difficult topic because that is the reason why American universities are also expensive. No university in Germany has an ice arena. That's why I can't really judge whether it is really good or not. You have to accept this when you have to go to the US, because they are much more competitive when it comes to sports in university environment.

I: How about the gym that you could use as a student? Do you find that supportive as a student?

I-10-US: I must say that it was the best gym and biggest gym I've ever seen" (paras. 57–59).

When looking at the experiences of institution-wide support services in Korea, international students regarded residence hall support to be helpful – housing offices offering interactive programs.

"I-1-KO: I used the dormitory sports facilities.

I: How was the life in the dormitory?

I-1-KO: It was good because we didn't have a curfew. The facilities were great, too. Each room has two students and my roommate was not there so often, so, it got a little bit lonely.

I: Was there anybody there at the dormitory who is a senior taking care of the students?

I-1-KO: In the International Dormitory, there were a few graduate students just working in the office.

I: Were there any special events in the dormitory?

I-1-KO: Yeah, they have each month an event where we had a gathering and sometimes when there were national festivals. They made sure to bring everyone together each month to meet and chat and eat something together" (paras. 111–117).

In addition, international students found the campus facilities, gym, library and cafeterias to be practical and pleasant.

"Yes, very and I found them incredibly BIG and modern and well-organized because at my university, it is not like that. The library is much smaller than the one you have in [at this university] and we don't have all the cafeterias like this everywhere. We don't even have a cafeteria. So, to have the choice between all the school restaurants, it was crazy. They even have a vegetarian buffet!" (I-9-KO, para. 157)

"Oh, yeah. The restaurant was really amazing. I wish we had such restaurants in the Netherlands as well. The library was really good as well. I think, it was a very good library. They had a very nicely streamlined digital system where you can reserve the computers when you enter. I was there many times for studying" (1-11-KO, para. 33).

An engineering undergraduate student stated that regular emails are sent and interview sessions take place as a part of career services.

"I-12-KO: They send emails to us saying there is an interview or just other introduction round from corporations for the international students and they want us to take part in it if we want to.

I: How regularly would you get such emails?

I-12-KO: About twice a semester. In the Engineering College lobby, they always have interview desks there. Some corporations come there and they have interviews with students directly if you want to you can get interview with them" (paras. 121–123).

As for Germany, several students found the sports programs on campus to be very helpful.

> "Ah! Yeah. That is amazing for me. I love sports. I took two courses in [the university sports center] and I met some friends. I think, sports is the best way to meet up with German people because in sports, it is not necessary to speak. So, that's why in simple words. I play basketball and I also love running competitions. I took two programs. I think, this could be a good idea but the other guys don't know about these programs. I know because I love sports and searching about that. But my classmates don't know about that. It will be interesting that the university organizes some kind of competitions, for example, Master students against Bachelor students. Because if you are not good in speaking, which is my case, I am very good in sports" (I-6-DE, para. 99).

Few students were aware of the career services – one student used the services and thought the services were supportive but the information was not transparent. She found out about this career center only through a friend.

> "I went to see this / there is a lady for the [practicum office] and she corrected my CV [curriculum vitae] in English and German. She was very helpful. I just went to her office hour" (I-3-DE, para. 139).

When inquired about the institution-wide support, students talked about the supportive facilities such as the libraries and cafeterias.

> "The university has this huge and beautiful library. For me that's wonderful. It depends on the context. For example, the cafeteria is perfect. There are many chairs and desks. I really like the main cafeteria. There are many other cafeterias. The small one next to the church. It's not a place for a study but it's nice to go and get a coffee. They have a library […]. They have a lot of computers, some kind of private working places . That's amazing for me. If you need to study a lot, you can find a private place which you can study. I think, [those] places are good for me" (I-6-DE, para. 79).

A few Erasmus students took advantage of participating in activities organized by the dormitories.

> "For example, this weekend we have the [spring festival]; and this is organized by the administration" (I-7-DE, para. 45).

6.8 Community-based programs

When asked about services offered, both experts and international students talked about community-based programs. Experts pointed out liaisons with organizations in local communities that support international students. And international students shared about some of the support services that they resort to off-campus organizations; and such organizations do not have direct connections to the university. The findings on commu-

nity-based programs from experts and international students' experiences are not very extensive. Hence, only circumstantial cases are described below.

Experts' interviews

Liaisons with community organizations exist in varying types from the information provided by the experts.

First of all, in the USA, two types were revealed 1) a volunteer organization that collaborates with the international office to support spouses of international students and scholars and 2) organized community outreach projects directly initiated by the international office.

> "Right, that's a volunteer organization; that's been around for years. My co-worker [. . .] works with that. And basically that is a group that works with the [university]. [. . .] They work with us, they use our facilities. They offer free English courses, not academic but for like casual, or spouses of students or scholars that don't know as much English, just want to do something like that. They also do some other events. They did, like, a host program, not where you live with the family but where you connect you with the family, like holidays. They are a very good organization that's been around for a long time" (IO-2-US, para. 20).

An expert, who is in charge of the community outreach projects in the international office, shared another type of community-based programs that connects with locals and international students. She is an appointed staff member who actively initiates programs for community outreach, namely, connects locals with international students and provides sessions for intercultural communication for both groups. Discrete explanation of her position is described as the following:

> "We kind of work to be more aware and ready to facilitate these intercultural communication workshops or dialogues. This past year, for example, I worked a lot with police departments, [the local police and the campus police]. And I did many trainings, probably like seven or eight throughout the year working with first their high officers and then moving on through rest of their staff to do, really pretty brief one or two hour sessions, where we talk about 'What is culture?' 'What is culture shock?' 'What are the differences between high and low context communication?' 'Just what are some cultural values that people have and why is that sometimes difficult to communicate across that?' And then we bring the students in for the people to really ask questions, 'Why do international students not stop when I have the lights on my police car on?' Well, then they can say, 'In my country it's different because in our country the police car comes in front instead of behind.' Just discussing those little differences and it's so amazing the community members love hearing from the students. Just getting to meet them and talk to them and then the students also love meeting the police officers and want to take their picture with them. It's so funny to see them all together. So, that's one example some of the trainings that we did. It's often basic, What is culture?, Why are there differences? Just kind of starting at that basic level and then hoping to build, next year we will be doing more trainings and hopefully it can be a little bit more intense or more deeper into some of these differences" (IO-4-US, para. 12).

When asked whether locals contact her for such dialogue sessions to take place, she answered that

> "It's gone both ways. Sometimes we reach out to them and say, 'You know you could use some training.' And sometimes they reach out to us and say, 'We know that we need help. We know that there is disconnection.'" (IO-4-US, para. 14).

Overall, she added that her program has worked with not only the police departments but with property managers, banks in town, art museum staff and others. As stated, intercultural communication and dialogues are facilitated to figure out and comprehend the misunderstandings and dissimilarities in cultural contexts. The sessions aim to reduce the tensions that build up between locals and international students.

In Korea and Germany, a few local organizations work together with international offices to promote their presence in supporting international residences in the communities. The two organizations mentioned by Korean experts are the Global Center in the city of Seoul and one local police department.

> "What we came up with is collaborating with the Seoul Global Center. I believe there are about 10 offices dispersed around Seoul and this center is for all foreigners residing in Seoul. Thus, we invite the director in the beginning of every semester and dedicate about 10 minutes for the director to introduce the center to international students by saying 'There is this Seoul Global Center. If you want to apply for jobs or need help or have issues living in Seoul, we will assist if you visit us.'" (IO-4-KO, para. 45).

The expert added that three staff members come to deliver the information in Korean, English and Chinese. Another expert from a different university pointed out that he forwards international students when they come across legal issues with property managers to receive professional assistance from the Seoul Global Center (ref. IO-5-KO, para. 39).

The other type of liaison with the local police department has been established due to the language difficulty at the given police department. The Korean police officers have trouble understanding inquiries that are made in a different language. An international office mentioned that police officers come to the orientation sessions to inform international students regarding safety and to recruit international students to work as volunteers at the corresponding police station. The main task for international students working as volunteers is to respond and interpret once foreigners come to or call the police department for help (ref. IO-3-KO, para. 9, 37).

In a German university setting, local nationality organizations, such as Chinese Confucius Institute collaborate with international offices for cultural events, which take place on campus (IO-3-DE, para. 62). Another expert briefly mentioned that she had a pilot project working with the career center on campus and a local job agency to explain the immigration regulation and work permits (ref. IO-7-DE, para. 68).

International students' interviews

Most international student interviewees connected with varying communities at the host destinations. Few students mentioned they are active in religious groups at local destinations and resort to their assistance.

> "Church plays a big role for me. [. . .] Having a church family that I can belong to. That's been huge for me as well. Just being able to meet my different needs and an atmosphere that is welcoming has been a huge difference. It's been great!" (I-4-US, para. 51).

Some students sought help from nationality communities either via on- or offline groups at destinations.

> "I can still get a lot of information because there is one Facebook page for the Thai students in Korea and they give us a lot of information – directly from Thai embassy and also other organizations" (I-5-KO, para. 45).

The given example is Thai communities. Jordanian and Chinese groups were also mentioned by corresponding international students in Korea. In the USA, Malaysian, Chinese, Korean communities assisted with searching for accommodations and daily life inquiries when residing at host universities while Brazilian and Indian communities were the largest help when adjusting to the life in Germany for those students.

Finally, some international students joined local groups that they associate based on their interests and hobbies. The following interview excerpt illustrates the enthusiasm the international student possesses and his active social life within the local community.

> "I-13-KO: For school, it's a normal university experience. I prefer to read my experience outside of my school more excellent than in school.
>
> I: In terms of what?
>
> I-13-KO: I have more of a social life outside than inside (laugh).
>
> I: And how did you get into contact with these people from outside?
>
> I-13-KO: It's just through my pure interest.
>
> I: Do you think a lot of outside community-based clubs or activities that you can join as an international student?
>
> I-13-KO: Yeah, there's a lot! I got it through music because I am more interested in independent musicians and all that stuff, so, I got to know a friend of a friend and a friend. Everything basically, everyone knows each other" (paras. 131–137).

6.9 Future prospects of support in the framework of the internationalization of higher education based on the experiences of experts and international students

The previous categories concern social and cultural aspects of support by host institutions and the lived experiences of the two groups of actors involved. First, the experts

shared the managerial and organizational features of primarily international offices and their experiences of providing support for international students. Second, based on the offers provided at sampled research sites, international students expressed their impressions and feedback regarding the institutional support by host universities.

In line with the descriptions of the above categories, the following category of institutional future prospects of support for international students delves into the themes that explore the changing trends and evolving requirements of the experts involved in the framework of the internationalization of higher education.

Before looking at the details, it is crucial to remember that, as indicated in the methodological background (ref. Chapter 4.2), the sampled universities as well as interviewees from the USA, Korea, and Germany are not to be generalized but to identify similar tendencies and to recognize differing external contexts of the provided settings accordingly. Hence, the qualitative findings reveal central themes that experts disclosed in terms of the changing developments concerning international student support services and the future strategic outlook they pursue. International student interviewees express their thoughts on how they felt regarding their academic and social life at host destinations. Given the varying nature of the countries, communities, universities, and personalities involved in this research, the contextual complexity of the settings is only reflected in individual voices that allow a glance into their insights.

6.9.1 Institutional outlook on the developments in supporting international students

6.9.1.1 Changing developments in supporting international students

Based on the interview question of what has changed with regard to international student support services over the years in position, the experts in the USA, Korea and Germany unanimously pointed to the evolving nature of international student enrollment, including the growing number and demographics. As the mobility of students has risen due to effects of globalization (ref. OECD report in Chapter 2.3) on the internationalization of higher education, the numbers of international students pursuing their degrees in undergraduate studies have increased greatly. Amongst others, this means that students have become younger than former graduate students; and the need for corresponding support has risen.

> "I think, first of all, in the past years, and it was already starting when I started because I am still relatively new in the grand scheme of things, the influx of undergraduate students, because even ten years ago, the majority of international students were graduate students all across the board, with the exception of exchange students. But the degree seeking students were mainly graduate because they could get funding, like graduate assistantships. Now, we are seeing a growing upper middle class in China, in South Korea, and India, especially in China with the one-child policy, the parents are willing to pour everything into that child. They will spend whatever it takes to take them to the school in the US. Across the board, one major trend is the growing population of international undergraduate degree seeking students. And with this comes a changing campus climate.

> Your services for grad students and undergrad students are very different. The mentality, the maturity of grad students versus undergrad is very different" (IO-2-US, para. 106).

In general, the countries of origin and rationales for studying abroad have diversified as mobile students increased worldwide. However, at the same time, the influx of large groups of international students originates from selective countries. The following quotes by experts in each country illustrates this:

> "Our demographics of our population have changed quite a bit. The explosion of Chinese students has changed; and I am sure, that [is] very common to all schools and colleges. So, that's certainly a difference in the last fifteen years, or so; and we are trying to figure out differences; and we are trying to continue to figure out best ways to advise, to counsel, and to support diverse populations but with a fairly large number students coming from one country" (IO-8-US, para. 96).
>
> "When you look at the language courses – the reasons for coming to learn the Korean language has become diverse. Chinese students come mostly to study in Korea; and Japanese students come to learn the language as a hobby. The number of Chinese students interested in learning the language has increased dramatically. Summer program and exchange program students have also increased dramatically. In 2008, we started with 200 and by 2010 we have about 800 incoming summer program students. For exchange students, we had about 100 in the beginning and now we have about 400. The image of South Korea has changed and become more attractive. The Korean government wants to increase the number of degree-seeking international students but most students are from China; and so, there is a lack of diversity compared to Australia or the USA. (The population of summer school and exchange program students is diverse in terms of the students' nationality.)" (IO-6-KO, para. 89).
>
> "The countries of origin where students come from have changed a lot. The countries we had influx from before are almost not represented anymore, like, for instance, Poland or the Czech Republic. There are much fewer students now, because these are politically based differences now. After the inclusion of these countries into the European Union, they go to different places now. They go to Great Britain, they go to France, and so on. Before that, obviously, Germany seemed to be loved as the best chance. And now – well, Germany is competing for international students with other countries and wants to enlarge the number, this criteria for excellence. The students are becoming younger. So, this has consequences, for instance, because in many countries, the students have been to German language schools, and they can enroll immediately after coming here. They have documents and diplomas that allow them to enter the university immediately. In previous times, it was that they came because there had been certain changes in 'who may study,' and so on. So, before, they were mostly older because they had to have been to university for four semesters. That means that they are about two or three years older. Now we have a lot of 18-year-olds, 19-year-olds, who start studying" (IO-8-DE, para. 65).

Due to the influence of growing number of international students, support services have broadened to meet the demands, although more effort needs to be invested in the future, as indicated by experts from the investigated countries.

> "Fifteen years ago, because I was in a different capacity as an advisor, at that point, we had orientation. But we did not have many programs beyond orientation, as many as we do now, because the position didn't exist. Remember it was only in late December 2007. It was all immigration; and before then, programming portion was done by [a] colleague who was doing many things. Now there is a specific STAFF member or students worker to help. That really shows the number of the programs [and] the support. The quality probably can't be compared to what we are doing now. So, it is a great accomplishment for the office, be[ing] able to argue to the university, 'We need this position because experts need to support the number of international students on campus.'" (IO-1-US, para. 91).

> "Support programs for regular degree seeking students have increased a lot. When I first started in 2010, there wasn't even an orientation, because there were very few international students; and in the beginning of 2010, the orientation was only in Korean. And departments started to take initiatives to have a staff member taking care of international students" (IO-2-KO, para. 86).

> "We have generally been trying to spread our services further. We used to do something in a lot of detail, and that wasn't always good. Well, it was good, but it wasn't open to everybody. So, right now, we try to do it a little more on the surface but for more people. Of course, it's a problem when you have 5,000 people. You cannot support 5000 people with basically 2 ½ positions. If everybody came, we would have a problem. We try to spread our services and try to tell them that if they need help, they can come. But if everybody with a problem actually came, we would have a problem. And that is just the truth. But still, of course, we try to spread the word and tell them where to come and what to do. And we have been trying to involve the departments more because of that. So, half of those contact persons are in the faculties, in the departments where people can also go. I think, the network with the departmental student advisors has gotten closer. That's a good thing, I think. And people are more aware of us – also university staff – because sometimes they have a question and we would definitely be the person to talk to, but they don't know that we exist, which is really a sad thing. So, we try to do more networking. That has definitely changed. Or, it has developed – of course, it has always been there" (IO-4-DE, para. 174).

As mentioned by the latter German expert, the scarcity of staff members and promotion of services will be dealt further in the subsequent part of this category.

Returning back to the point of the changing developments, with the development of new forms of technology, the way in which students interact and administrative procedures are processed have been altered.

> "Me, personally, I personally have to keep up with the times. I recognized that the older the advisors here cannot connect with the students the way that I am able to. I see the younger advisors here are able to with the students that the ways that I can't. I think, there are not just factors of globalization. I think, we all recognize globalization as reality. But also technological changes, social networking, just for example. We have faculty members who here don't have smartphones. It is difficult for them to understand our students' need[s] to do everything with their smartphones. That's one thing that will continue to be a challenge for some of our older faculty staff members here. They would have difficulty connecting with domestic students [. . .] plus young international

students because of that tremendous change of world view, of [. . .] how important social networking is" (IO-6-US, para. 59).

Aside from the common changes mentioned, distinctive aspects associated with contextual settings include change of work responsibilities of staff members in international offices in the past years in the USA and the expansion of English-mediated instruction in disciplines at universities in Korea and Germany.

First of all, specific to the context in the USA, experts express the critical stance on the shift of work focus which has become mainly on regulatory immigration for most staff members at international offices. Both example quotes demonstrate that such change has taken much concentration away from interactive support for international students by the staff members involved.

"And, I think, the relationship between terrorism and international students is a conversation we need to have. If you look at later the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993, it was a Rutger's University F1 visa student that was guilty of that. And now we have to do all these tracking system and compliances, my profession has changed from one that was helping people from other societies adjust; and be supported, and be empathetic and compassionate to compliance with homeland security that you might be a terrorist, and you might be a threat to my country. And that's been the biggest change in terms of how does the office like mine spend our time – is the issue of terrorism. And I also think right now, the other thing that's changed is the idealism of international understanding was much more prevalent when I started. I think, right now, there's much more of a business model. There's a lot of money – this is a business. We are making hundreds of millions of dollars. In the United States, it's a 24 billion dollar industry; and at [this university], it's a 300 million dollar industry. It's a big market, it's a business. The ideals of international understanding are still there, but you don't have to be that smart to realize, it's a business. So, I think, that's been the biggest change over time. [. . .] I think that it will be interesting to see in the future, how we look ahead, who are universities for and what kind of push-back or resentment will there be by local people when you've got a lot of international students here" (IO-5-US, para. 85).

"You know SEVIS [Student and Exchange Visitor Information System] has changed things whether you like it or not. You can pretend that it hasn't but it has. But it has changed things more so, for the schools and colleges than I think, it has for the students. Because of the regulations have more or less stayed the same. But the reporting requirements and the responsibilities for the schools and colleges and record keeping and the data analysis, and data reconciliation has completely changed for schools. It's the same types of requirements as before but everything is now electronic, it's a media, it's a web-base. The government systems and government databases have started to catch up with it so that consulates can now have a pretty good sense of what's in SEVIS whereas they never knew before. The point of entry when people are coming through for the first time at the airport has a better sense of the students' information. It's made things more complicated. [. . .]

We spend 50% of our time data and systems and reporting. It's really made our jobs very complicated and we have had to focus in on that more so. And some of our day-to-day, face-to-face has decreased because of it. So, we are still trying to figure out the right

balance as our population changes and our staff changes. We continue to try to find the balance" (IO-8-US, para. 92, 94).

Secondly, in connection with the language issues especially in Korea and Germany (ref. Chapters 2.4.3 and 6.6), experts point to the increase in studies and courses that incorporate English-mediated instruction which have grown extensively under the concept of the internationalization of higher education efforts. When indicating such English-mediated-instruction implementation, experts touch upon the critical matters in the course of development.

In Korea, issues arise because not all courses are offered in English even though the information is publicized in English by several universities when recruiting international students. Moreover, not all faculty members have the ability to instruct in English; and there exist counter-reactions from faculty members:

> "There seems to be a problem [...]. For example, in specific schools, such as art majors, faculty members feel uncomfortable using English. When an exchange student, who does not major in art at home university, wants to take courses here, they are told 'you are not allowed.' However, this is not stated in the exchange agreement. There has been such conflict; and one student wrote a very long complaint and sent it to my team leader [...]; and it was reported to staff members. [...] The director of the international office contacted all the deans of every school to allow all international students to take their courses. I can't say we don't have such conflicts because they cannot be prepared 100%. Faculty members in business related schools are all fluent in English but in other majors, in arts or sports, this is not the case" (IO-3-KO, para. 81).

Along similar lines, one German expert is skeptical of the English-mediated instruction as one needs to be proficient in German, not only to adjust and but also, in most cases, to find a job in Germany.

> "At our university, the tendency of the framework of internationalization is to offer more English-mediated instruction studies. I find that not such a positive development because I always observe that the students from such studies have problems getting a job. If you take up such studies, you are not training the students for the local economy. It is something which is generated from political intention to recruit more students to come here; and, if possible, they stay here. For the students [who] stay after the studies it would be better to strengthen the German language and not introduce English-mediated instruction studies. But at the moment, the idea is to first recruit the students to come to Germany and offering English language makes it easier. And whether the students learn German afterwards would be an interesting question. I am interested how this would develop in the next years" (IO-1-DE, para. 116).

Regarding English-mediated instruction, matters previously mentioned need to be re-examined by preparing the faculty members for the change and discussing the overall effect with the actors involved to meet the demands of international students, if such policies are enforced. By and large, two issues with English-mediated instruction seem to stand out in the interview data. When reviewing the data set, firstly, staff members

view it as something that works against learning the language of the host country in favor of recruiting international students. Secondly, it seems to require faculty members to instruct in English, even if their major is primarily addressed to domestic students; or the faculty members feel unconfident about their own English language proficiency. Besides, there is no doubt that other factors appear to be problematic when looking at English-mediated instruction.

Against the backdrop of such progressing nature of the internationalization of higher education, the second part of this category outlines the future perspectives of institutional strategies that experts emphasize in shaping the support for international students.

6.9.1.2 Future perspectives concerning institutional strategies

The interview data about the future perspectives with regard to "managing and steering internationalization at the institutional level" (Bedenlier et al., 2018, p. 127) generated a variety of developmental prospects mentioned by experts can be organized as follows:

1) The importance of campus-wide effort beyond international offices
2) "The importance of centralized management and effective management and effective leadership as well as incentives and reward mechanisms" (Taylor, 2004, p. 168)
3) Improving infrastructures of support services to enhance customer care
   a) Increasing transparency and promotion of information of services
   b) Increasing the number of diverse and competent staff as well as training opportunities
4) Importance of quality and diversity in student recruitment
5) Understanding the given challenge of measuring and implementing the internationalization of higher education as a concept at the institutional level

Above-mentioned themes are stated by experts interviewed from the USA, Korea, and Germany; however, with varying emphasis by individual experts. In respect to such premise, quotes that best reflect the given points are selected against the subjective judgement of the researcher.

1) The importance of campus-wide effort beyond international offices

Experts interviewed stated that the international office cannot stand alone in catering to the needs of integration alone as an array of support is needed for international students to successfully finish their studies and adapt to the new environment. In most cases, international offices connect international students to appropriate offices depending on the issues that arise and facilitate conversations or intervene when cultural misunderstandings should come up. Such significance of interdepartmental cooperation in supporting international students is explained by the expert from the USA below.

> "We need way more staff, we need better computer systems, we need better ways to track. 'Where are students? Are they doing okay?' We need to have systems and places to support them. It can't be just on us. The whole campus has to support international

students. So, that's what has changed and is continuing to change as I am here, it can't be just our office. People can't say, 'Oh, you are an international student, you have an issue, you should go to [the international office].' But, instead the whole university and the whole community has to understand that these students are part of campus, they are part of the community, so, they need to be supported by the whole community. I think, some people are starting to see that. They still often come back to our office, 'Oh, you are [the international office] you should know how to handle this.' We work with them, but say, 'But really, this is your area, and you can support them. We can help facilitate conversations or overcome maybe cultural misunderstandings but it's your responsibility.' And so, […] our goal is moving forward, is to help empower more offices, partners, companies, whoever around the community to be able to help and / […], yes, obviously, we want to be a whole campus effort; and we still want people to come to us, if they have questions and to work with them. But I think, the idea is that we are all working together. It's not decentralized but just a BIGGER GROUP EFFORT of bigger initiative than just [the international office] can handle that. No, we are all part of this and we are all an important part of it, helping everyone realize that" (IO-4-US, para. 64–66).

2) "The importance of centralized management and effective management and effective leadership as well as incentives and reward mechanisms" (Taylor, 2004, p. 168)

When taking a closer look at the aspect of effective leadership in theme 2), a senior international officer states that there is no perfect way to achieve the various directions set in the concept of the internationalization of higher education. In addition, he casts concerns on the difficulty of reaching out to the faculty-oriented disciplines and the low impact as a director of international office can have across the campus.

"It's a huge concept but because it's growing. Everybody knows it but we have leadership problem in terms of really understanding how to really make it work. What does a globally friendly university look like? Is it just hosting large number of international students? Is it sending students on overseas studying programs? Is it the curriculum and the faculty? All these things. And IIE [Institute of International Education] does a lot with – I was the granted administrator for the Fulbright program; but I travelled with IIE. I consult with a lot of other universities and there's not one model that is ideal for how to do this. And so, each university has to do [it] in their own way and fit their own culture whether it's an urban university. […] The faculty needs to own the idea, you know, how do they work with like an office like mine, what do they expect of an office like mine. And I don't grant credits here. I am just a cheer to be a friendly guy, to help international students. [This university] was the first university in the United States to create a position, 'Dean of International Studies and Program.' That is – there are lots of universities that have such a position now – but how much money should you put into it and who should be involved with it and who should provide the philosophical leadership for it" (IO-5-DE, para. 39).

Continued with the further subtopics in theme 2), an expert from a German university acknowledges deferring one's responsibilities in the unstructured organizational system and the necessity of centralized as well as structured management of the services to avoid evasive situations.

> "It is quite separated here. The argument always is that there are different procedures and every person just knows their procedure. I personally think that we could streamline more. […] I have to say, we have completely changed our structure – completely. Some reasons are external factors: the program is growing, we have a new team, we have a new building. So, many things just follow the structure you have. But the things that [have] changed also changed because we wanted them to change, because we felt the need to say that we cannot welcome students like this and we should optimize certain things, especially to offer better services" (IO-2-DE, paras. 20, 74).

Moreover, this expert expresses her critical viewpoint regarding the issue of incentives and reward of the actors involved in supporting international students and how deficiency in the given features results in low customer service for the students.

> "[M]any teachers or assistants feel that they only get rewarded for their research […]. So, we don't have many Erasmus-coordinators who are really willing to deal with all the exchange students. And if one colleague has the responsibility, the others say, 'ah, poor boy, he is dealing with the exchange students. I am the one doing the research.' So, they don't get the reputation through that. They do it because they feel it is important, or they like it. But it is not something that is honored or respected within the community [of scholars]. This is something that – I have learned as an Erasmus coordinator – I feel it cannot change. I have mentioned this many times: if you don't reward the people at departments, they are going to do a bad job. And if they do a bad job, we have unsatisfied students […]. […] In some departments, I know that these people do their job very well and everything works perfectly. In some departments, it is the 'organized irresponsibility' – no one responsible: students are standing in some secretary's office; and the secretary doesn't speak English and doesn't want to have to deal with catastrophe. So, we have everything – from perfect to catastrophe" (IO-2-DE, para. 76).

Relevant to the point mentioned by the prior senior international officer from the USA, the same expert from Germany who mentioned the previous aspects, asserts about the crucial role and the limited effect that the international office has in influencing the departments at the university.

> "As a central administration, we can only try to convince, because in our department the budget is very independent from the budget structure. For example, now there was a professor who said: 'Look, I need an administrative assistant to help. I can do all of these things, but I am overwhelmed with the administration!' And she is right, she is not the right person. So, what he was asking for was an assistant for 10 hours a week. I can't obviously give that to her. I talked to the administrative head of the department and explained to them how important it is. But I don't know what came out of it. I can only talk to and try to convince people that it is important. Their argument is that research is important and environmental measures are important. So, of course, international students are also important but there are also many other things. Of course, this university pushes internationalization, but sometimes they take it for granted" (IO-2-DE, para. 76).

3) Improving infrastructures of support services to enhance customer care

Previously mentioned insufficient features in theme 1) and 2) demand more effort in improving the service infrastructures, which leads to enhanced customer service, as noted in theme 3).

Among the recognized deficits in such service infrastructures, the first matter is improving the transparency of information and the promotion on the services, which were consistently highlighted in the German context.

> "So, here it is a lot about – we have the service, but it is not available for everyone, you have to really ask for it. […] They also help students who come with children and try to get a place in the childcare, and so on. It's more or less like our visa service. The people who know about it use it, but I don't think that everybody in the university knows about the service. If everybody knew about the service, the university wouldn't work anymore because we need four people and we only have one. This is what I actually don't like. We have the name 'welcome services' – and it is actually completely ridiculous, we shouldn't go into detail with this. [A lot of works on the basis of] the services being there – you can use everything – but you have to find out about it. You are not going to be informed about right in the beginning. This is because we simply don't have the capacities. […] For most of the questions, we have very clear procedures. But there are always some things which are not completely organized" (IO-2-DE, para. 80).
>
> "It is also important to implement this on a university level. So, we need to create some structure where everybody's informed, where everybody can get their feedback, where everybody works together with everyone else" (IO-7-DE, para. 88).

In relevance to the topics touched upon in the previous quotes from experts in Germany, an expert in Korea specifies the massive influx of international students in the recent years as a primary reason for possessing a better organized readiness regarding service infrastructures of the institutions involved.

> "South Korea is about 20 years behind in recruiting international students compared to Japan. Japan has already started in the 1980s when Korea has only started in early 2000 with about 10,000 students; and now we have about 80,000 international students. The number of Korean domestic students has been steadily stagnating; and the universities see international students as a source of income, especially the universities in the provinces. They even reduce the tuition to half to recruit many international students" (IO-1-KO, para. 12).

This senior staff member explicitly shares the worrying future perspective that "the universities focus only on the recruitment and not on the maintenance of students" (IO-1-KO, para. 70). This creates issues such as a lack of staff members who cater to the needs of such large number of international students, and a lack of housing to accommodate incoming international students, and finally, a lack of career services.

Among service infrastructures mentioned, there exists an urgent need for more staff, who are competent and engaged. Furthermore, more training options are necessary for staff to meet the needs of international students.

> "From a support service perspective, we continue to try to encourage all of the support services offices to hire staff that is familiar with diversity, familiar with advising international students, familiar with language skills and so, the university is actively continuing to try to diversify the community that supports international students as well. We are looking as a university at more cross-cultural training for staff and faculty. We feel that there's a need there; and that's something what we are actively working on" (IO-8-US, para. 100).

According to the interviewed experts, the third important infrastructure that is to be supported extensively is the housing capacity, as universities alone cannot be responsible for the accommodations for internationals students. Based on the Korean experts, the current demand for dormitories on campus is high, but there are not enough offers available for international students. Also, there are further issues to deal with: the Korean dorm culture is sometimes very difficult for international students to accept, as they tend to run the dormitory with very strict rules, for example, curfews and not allowing visitors. The Korean government is subsidizes financial support so that more rooms can be available. But that is still not enough for the number of incoming international students and the university itself cannot meet all the demands (ref. IO-5-KO, para. 124).

The fourth service infrastructure that could be improved is the career services, especially in Korea, as job opportunities for international students after their studies are limited.

> "After graduating, most students return to their countries because not a lot of companies here in Korea recruit international students. 80% of the graduates go back to their home countries and the rest find a job here or continue with graduate studies" (IO-2-KO, para. 64).

4) Importance of quality and diversity in student population

With regard to the diversifying student population and marketing strategies, one expert from the USA also points to the standards of quality and future perspectives to expand the presence of varying countries of origin in universities.

> "We are looking at trying to diversifying our student population. We are actively recruiting in countries where we don't have a lot of international students [from] right now, Latin America in particular. We are really trying to look at more diversity, which means it's getting harder to be accepted from certain countries, which is difficult to have that kind of standards. We feel that a balanced diverse population is important to us. So, we are looking at a diversifying from a recruiting strategy and admission strategy" (IO-8-US, para. 100).

Furthermore, in Korea, as universities have pursued mostly economic aims when recruiting international students, academic excellence of international students was not considered as international students' language and academic competence are at times below the expected level. This calls for action to shift the recruitment focus based on quality as well as varying country of origins of international students.

> "The number of international students will likely continuously increase; and that is the most difficult aspect to deal with, actually. We can see it from two perspectives. A first measure is to accept excellent international students who can study in the Korean language. At present, we are accepting the students based on quantity. We need to turn the direction in the future to take in students based on quality and provide corresponding support. However, the second option is too early as the national standing and the university's reputation is not so high" (IO-2-KO, para. 94).
>
> "Many aspects need to be supplemented, because [...] what the government is saying is that 'We want to increase the number of degree-seeking international students in Korea.' But most of the students coming for a degree to Korea are mainly from China. For non-degree seeking programs we have a diverse student population. But for the degree-seeking students, the proportion has stayed the same. The reason for this is because the universities are not that well internationalized [...]. Korean universities are not yet prepared enough" (IO-6-KO, paras. 91, 95).

5) Understanding the given challenge of measuring and implementing the internationalization of higher education as a concept at the institutional level

Aforementioned aspects that need to be considered in progressing with the institutional strategies of universities cannot be realized overnight, as experts note the challenges regarding the internationalization of higher education. The first difficulty arises due to the internal governmental disparities that need to be solved together with interdepartmental cooperation as well as technological support as emphasized:

> "We have some administrative procedures which do not work internally. I think, it will take forever to change them because they are very bureaucratic. That is my biggest fear – I mean the whole administration of the teaching, of the lessons, getting transcripts, making sure that these things are administrated electronically. So, our challenge for the future is really to offer more structured services to get more working help of IT-databases. With such masses you are lost if you don't have such a structure. It is impossible to do it on a one-to-one base. We are at a certain point where we cannot advance much; and we cannot do anything against it, which is bad. I think, for everyone else, it is not understandable at all what we do here, in Germany, in terms of these administration procedures, but it's like that. When I started in 2011, I didn't want to believe it, but I came to the point where I had to see that I can only [have] two students to do it – get the certificate, type the transcription, send to Barcelona, type the next transcript, send it to Milano. There is no other way. And this is very depressing. And this takes a lot of work. So, I actually dream about finding a solution for that. It is a very and vicious dream – not very romantic one – but a very down-to-earth request. So, there are many administrative procedures in which we are involved as a part, but the whole university is somehow involved. Here I would wish that the people in the regular administration would take care more of the needs of our target groups. This is a nice last sentence, eh!" (IO-2-DE, para. 84).

The second challenge is the way in which universities and actors involved comprehend the direction of the concept of the internationalization of higher education. A clear vision of how integration of international students should work and be embedded into academic and social-cultural dimensions of university life is to be still questioned. In relevance to

the slow advancement of bureaucratic internal structures, the new concept of how overall strategic management of internationalization can be steered is left to be considered.

> "I hope that things will change [in] German universities. And I will maybe concentrate on my university. It is a huge machine, it is one of the biggest universities, a huge machine of 50,000 students which is moving very slowly and changing even slow[li]er. It was the push of this educational policy of internationalization that was issued 10 years ago [with] these documents. And the fact that this internationalization is that nobody knows how to measure it. Previously, it was measured by the number students, now it says that this is not enough. Integration is a criteria, but nobody knows how to measure integration. Now, there is a notion that this is important, but it is just the idea that it is important. Everything has to be implemented. Institutions have to be created for that, and so on. This is still a very new idea – slowly, slowly things are moving" (IO-8-DE, para. 69).

A third challenge is not only developing a clear vision and structural organization but also designing governmental policies. Questions of enhancing quality as well as modifying immigration regulations of international student work force, namely, setting up an infrastructure for imminent job opportunities after the studies, are challenges that need to be dealt with in the future. Such base is the first stepping stone that is necessary before coming up with effective career services at universities, especially in Korea. This is especially the case for Korean universities which are looking for strategies to recruit larger numbers of international students with future career prospects.

> "The policies of studying overseas need to be linked to immigration policies that allows visa to reside in Korea after their studies here. Only when realistic expectations are met that international students can find jobs after studying hard and graduating from their studies, demands to come to Korea can be created. [. . .] In this respect, Japan is expanding greatly the portion of accepting immigration of the graduates. From that perspective, the government, namely the Ministry of Justice or Education, needs to pay attention to such aspects. If not, it is impossible to host up to 200,000 international students [by 2020]. In the beginning, recruiting high numbers of international students was the primary aim that the standards of international students were ignored and took all who applied. [. . .] Without any prior experiences of the universities, they were busy hosting the international students and such actions had led to many problems. And several major universities have started to distinguish the quality of international students. I feel that things are slowly changing as I am observing such changes of momentum" (IO-1-KO, para. 88).

As for strategic implementation, which is in order to integrate and create supporting environment for international students, "the context of acculturation would include not just the country, but region, academic setting, and 'college culture'" (Williams & Johnson, 2011, p. 42). One senior international officer claims that, from his perspective, the point of departure of providing support services for international students is from the individual level, particularly recognizing the hasty misconception that integration happens naturally upon arrival.

> "And it's hard for international student because there's such a disempowerment. You are an outsider. Almost every day something happens that slaps you down. So, how do we give them access to resources and every once in a while? And every once in a while, we will get somebody who's really mad about something. But I do think we've been successful here in letting people know that we care about them. That is such a big starting point because then they trust us. Then everything can start from there because if you ever get to the point where either you are not competent or they don't respect you, or something else, you've got other kinds of problems" (IO-5-US, para. 73).

Beyond such micro-level approach, the following quote illustrates an example of how this senior international officer tries to reach out to the whole campus to implement the concept of the internationalization of higher education.

> "When I give a speech in front of a thousand people, I can give a great speech and make them feel welcome, but it's still a little distanced and not intimate. And the intimacy happens at much more of a local level. So, we need to set an environment, in which it's a myth, I really believe in the whole power of myth. And we are creating a myth that this is a globally friendly university, this is a globally friendly community; and I talk about this all the time. And so, everybody all of a sudden, you say it so often enough, then they believe it. Then they do it in their own way. And then they do it with the faculty. I send out a letter to everybody at the university, I am going to do it next week. And it's just like, 'Thank you for helping to make [our university] a globally friendly place.' And this letter goes to the president, goes to the Board of Trustees, and it goes to the people in the dormitories who are folding towels and making beds and everybody in the organization, because everybody is somehow involved in making it. And I am creating a myth. Some people will say, 'Ah (negative tone)' but enough of the people will say, 'Oh, yeah, I can embrace that.' So, you are giving them language, in which you are creating this myth and then they can take it in their own way. And that's kind of how I've chosen to do it. That to me is leadership" (IO-5-US, para. 51).

As a final point, as the expert states below, evaluations of measuring the current conditions of supporting international students are being carried out to strengthen the support services for international students with the cooperative interdepartmental network.

> "We've just undergone a pretty substantial analysis of international students' success on campus. […] This is kind of an interesting time at [this university] because we've had international students forever. But we understand that this is a moment in time where we can do some self-analysis and some self-evaluation [and] where we can really get some information from the international students to try to gauge how we are doing and try to figure out where we can go in the future. I know that all of our support services offices pay a great deal of attention to international student support. Our housing office is constantly trying to figure everything from the menus in the dining halls, to matching roommates, to offering programs that are culturally diverse. They are always trying to figure how they can do what we do better. Our education resources staff has just hired ESL [English as a Second Language] professionals just to make sure that we are offering program that's going to help international students as well. Our writing centers that help students with writing and with educational resources are continuing to staff up to figure

out how they can best help international students. So, it's something that every support service's offices is doing and will continue to do in the future" (IO-8-US, para. 100).

The latter two quotes of the experts demonstrate the concrete managerial actions taken to continuously enhance the current support services in the future. The first approach focuses on creating an atmosphere to expand the consciousness of diversity by reaching out to the rest of the campus from a leadership role. The second measure incorporates survey analysis of international students' success on campus and accommodating various institution-wide supports as all experts unanimously claimed such interdepartmental cooperation is a challenge.

6.9.2 Evaluations on support services and the feeling of overall support from the viewpoint of international students

This section at hand presents the meta-level categories and their themes which are possible to be generated from the interview data. Throughout the interviews, experts and students reflected on their feelings of being integrated, or the way experts felt that international students are being integrated at their institutions, respectively. Even though this was not the primary aim of my research, the results led to form categories, which represent these reflections and taking one step further, the evaluations on the offered support as well as their overall stay at host institutions. What is more, these evaluations seem to allow implications on future requests and desires when it comes to experts' and students' views on what should be improved when striving to successfully support and be integrated as international students at host universities in the three countries in question.

6.9.2.1 Feedback concerning the future requests

The common opinion about what should be improved with regard to support services was that more programs and events should be offered in order to help intensify international students' contact with domestic students.

> "I would say the opportunities to meet American friends. It sounds vague; but I think, that's what we need. I don't like classes that have all international students particularly. It won't help us a lot. And maybe [the international office] has more events" (I-7-US, para. 73).
>
> "[International office] do[es] a good [job] but they could do a bit more. Maybe to meet more German students and to be more helped at the beginning" (I-3-DE, para. 115).

Several international students in Korea stated that peer advisors need to be more engaged and motivated. Most of them expected more frequent interactions and better assistance from the peer advisors.

> "Yeah, it would be very helpful, too, to know more about [Korean] culture and to learn the [Korean] language. There are mentors[, but] sometimes they don't take it too seriously" (I-2-KO, para. 77).
>
> "The buddy system was definitely not sufficient. First off, there were not enough Koreans to help out or to truly contact the Korean students. And, of course, there was not so much contact with the international office, almost nothing, only for truly practical reasons. Of course, the [office] helped with the activities and international events, like Turkish dance. I think, what might could have helped a lot was because they only had only three or four student clubs [for international students]; and they are quite specific (like photography was one, the charity was one, cooking was one I believe and something else). But for example, for sports, there was nothing to be found. I wanted to play volleyball really badly. I did find a Korean team with some people who could speak English, but it was just not really doable because, you know, you don't really speak the language together. That was quite a shame. So, maybe they could have helped with sports" (I-11-KO, para. 51).

Aside from the peer advising support, other requests revolved around clubs in which English was spoken (ref. Chapter 6.4).

Specific to the context of German universities investigated, the main inquiry from international students is related to transparency of the information provided. Students also requested better access to information so that they could be aware of the existent support services available to them. The following two quotes mainly illustrate the importance of information transparency concerning exam and course registration procedures. Such feedback can be related to the experts' viewpoints in which possible reasons for the issue described have been disclosed (ref. Chapter 6.9.1).

> "Yes. But I had this one problem. I received emails that I should register for the final exams online, But one day before, I found out that, because I am an exchange student, I have to go to the department to register for the exams. It was [the] evening before the registration was closing. How come I didn't get the information in beforehand? And they said, you can do it online so, you should go and register. So, you should contact your coordinator; and I was okay, 'Who is my coordinator?' I was so upset! I found out that I was not in the emailing list [. . .]" (I-2-DE, para. 71).
>
> "Oh, that was the biggest problem we had. We did not know when the slots for the labs are open and when the registration for the classes are commenced at all. We didn't know when it happened, so, we couldn't register for many of the subjects. Many of the labs. I thought that the instructors would mail us about the openings but it did not happen." (I-5-DE, para. 65)

Some students mentioned the difficulty of understanding the information in emails and university webpages as they are primarily offered in German (ref. Chapter 6.3, 6.6). Moreover, the students note the necessity of receiving reliable replies once inquiries are made to staff and faculty members.

> "I didn't know anyone. I know there's a small department in our major [. . .]. Before I registered, I tried to write them an email but got no replies. So, afterwards, I didn't contact them anymore. [. . .] It depends on with whom, different characters and personalities.

Somebody delays to answer to you. I don't know [if] they mean to do this or without [. . .] intention [. . .]" (I-4-DE, para. 37, 53).

Finally, as reported in the section about the category (ref. Chapter 6.2.1) about difficulties international students are facing in the immigration offices in Germany, more support on processing visa was demanded, as indicated below:

"For example, my sister studies in Australia; and she told me that there is a department within the university; and that department is working with the international students just for registration. It's kind of an [immigration office] but in the university. And it is very helpful for international students. I think, it could be really useful here" (I-6-DE, para. 39).

6.9.2.2 Overall feelings of support during university life

In reference to such feedback on the experiences, international students expressed their overall feelings of support during their university life. The main themes identified in this section were 1) the presence of support systems on campus and 2) existence of the welcoming atmosphere for international students by host universities.

When it comes to being cognizant of the presence of support services on campus, almost all interviewed international students in the USA stated that they were clearly aware whom they can reach out for help – either academic or personal emotional distress. They were self-assured that they can receive the support they need whether the assistance was from international offices, faculty members, counseling centers, students clubs, or national community groups.

"Wow, that's a difficult because I feel like many organizations cater to many things. It would be difficult for me to say I could focus on only one thing. Because again, you know, situations differ. I think, one of the things that ha[s] helped me a lot – because I am an intercultural aide [. . .]. So, that's helped me as well, being an employee at the [international office]. And working with that I think, those two definitely helped me a lot as well as being an African Student Union all those things. I think, every, every place that I have been to has incorporated it into me helping myself and being a better person and understanding where I need to improve. And you know, why I need to do to change certain things if they are difficult for me. I feel like, speaking again on being an intercultural aide, I feel like you have to work with various students on a daily basis from different backgrounds and different walks of life and being able to understand that everyone has their own story, everyone has their own situations and being able to share and you are not alone in this. And I think, for many students in general on campus, this is a huge campus and even though it has such a large population of students, many students feel very much alone. So, being able to share that every student, not every student but as many students as possible, to understand that we go through very similar situations helps you feel much more comfortable with your academic and social experience on campus and helps you become better. As a better student on campus, I definitely feel like without all of these things working together, I don't think I would be in such a happier place. [Maybe] not be equally but every experience I have and every organization that I am in has definitely helped me settle into campus, basically improve my experience" (I-2-US, para. 69).

Moreover, the interviewed students in the USA stated that cities in which the universities are located offer hospitable environments; and they are "proud" to be part of their universities.

> "Other than that I love the atmosphere in [this city]. It started out with my school […]. You get this warmth and welcoming feeling. Initially I thought it was just my school. But no, that's just a general feeling you get from the [university]" (I-4-US, para. 49).
>
> "I think, [the university] is friendly towards international students and wants to be an international school. I think that is maybe the culture of our university. It's all about [the city], it is like a melting pot. Just like my friend told me that the east coast is rather a white people dominant world. People here are used to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean people. There's another Chinese friend who studied in [a different university] her bachelor's degree and she told me that she suffered a lot because it was a different world from [the city]. And she told me how lucky I was to start my studies here. She went into the classroom, there were no colored people and only white people. And when my classmate walked around the campus, they told her to go back to China or would cuss at her. And she wore a T-shirt that said, 'I love Beijing.' And she told me that I am lucky. At that I didn't find myself lucky because this was the first time and I had never travelled abroad, far away from home. And now, I think, she is right. When I go to the real world, I can notice how nice the people are and how they are trying to help me. I will always have grammar errors but they are all willing to help me. They are not mad at me and they always appreciate my hardworking and diligence. They never treat me like a foreigner and a week ago they baked me cookies and gave me a card. I just feel that it's worthwhile" (I-5-US, para. 37).

Most international students interviewed in Korea said that the first contact for emotional support were fellow students and primarily tried to figure out a solution to the issues on their own. Only when academic issues come up, they would consult with the corresponding institutions on campus.

> "I: If you have worries or problems, do you think you have somebody to talk to except for friends but who is a staff member at the university?
>
> I-3-KO: I am not sure.
>
> I: In terms of legal problems, or so, would you know whom to contact?
>
> I-3-KO: No, I wouldn't.
>
> I: If such problem arises, who would you contact first?
>
> I-3-KO: I would ask a friend first who I can contact first because I really don't know" (paras. 66–71).

With regard to cross-referencing the interview data with experts, it is noteworthy that the interviewed international students did not mention counseling services provided by the Korean universities in this research sampling.

Most international students in Germany resorted to personal contacts for both academic and emotional assistance. German university settings lacking collective student involvement and distanced relationship towards domestic students were mentioned.

"I sometimes wrote an email to the [staff from] the major; but I think, it didn't work so well [as] I imagined. You need to make an appointment to meet them and the time for the small talk is also limited. You cannot ask whatever you want, or [if] you have [other] questions. So, I think, it is more effective to communicate with other fellow students after class. But it is not, how to say, a very close community, so, sometimes you also have insecurities about the questions for the examination" (I-4-DE, para. 47).

6.10 Beyond descriptions: insight into the context specific university life affecting international students in host universities

The findings show that the international students' feeling of support at host universities very much "suggest regional forms of internationalization, evolving under different temporal contextual conditions and taking different shapes and meanings accordingly" (Bedenlier et al., 2018, p. 128).

Against such premise, it is possible to identify excitement or positive reactions, which came about especially when talking about engagement opportunities on campus, individual satisfaction towards university life and community spirit, and helpful support from faculty. For most students, it was the peer advisors, especially the buddies, student clubs and the warm atmosphere provided by staff, faculty, students, and communities that defined their study abroad experiences. Such feedback was shared during their personal evaluations of studying and living at host institutions. In the end, more engagement opportunities and more programs to interact with domestic students as well as receiving a feeling of support were requested by the international students.

In this section, the reoccurring features under context specific university life can be divided in three aspects 1) opportunity to build friendship with domestic students, 2) support from faculty, and 3) campus culture. Instead of dividing the interview statements from the experts and international students, as it was the case previously, the quotes will be reported concurrently according to the topic to grasp the meaning from perspectives from both groups of actors interviewed.

6.10.1 Opportunity to build friendships with domestic students

The challenges experts face in initiating contact between domestic and international students on campus from a strategic point of view and the offers that international students took part in to have contact with domestic students have been described in the previous chapter (ref. Chapter 6.9.1). In this section, the subtle contextual background stressed by the experts will be explored to comprehend why such opportunities to build friendship could be difficult in certain settings. Moreover, according to the voicing of international students' opinions on this topic, it is possible to identify the sense of emotions when adapting to the new environment concerning lack of friendship opportunities, namely, contact to domestic students.

Various and differing contextual issues are involved when it comes to making contacts or building friendships between international and domestic students that go beyond superficial get-togethers. There seems to be no doubt that one's own personality and effort are crucial for one's engagement in the host culture. However, in the findings by experts and international students, there exist environmental settings that hinder the process of being in contact and build friendships with domestic students.

First, an expert from the USA points out the fact that there exists a lack of readiness from the domestic students' side to meet international students. The quote below encompasses viewpoints already mentioned by the experts from Korea, indicating that domestic students are preoccupied with their own studies and pressure to find a job during college years. Such state leads to less time and interest in interacting with international students from domestic students (ref. IO-1-KO, para. 62 and IO-4-KO, para. 67 in Chapter 6.5).

> "Oh, I think, getting international students to participate is really, really easy. It's the Americans that / I don't mean to be critical; and, I think, it is natural. I mean you've got a certain kind of ethnocentrism that is inherent; and so, who is it that is going to want to take the extra time/work at this recognizing that it's part of their development as educated people to do this. If we have a friendship program, signing an international student is easy, oh yeah. The limitation is with the American students. Look at who attends our coffee hours, you know / [...] And then we have American students who will go to the door and they will look in the door and then they will feel, 'Oh, it's a bunch of foreigners.' They feel out of their comfort zone; and don't most people want to find their comfort zone? Whom do you feel most comfortable with? You got uniqueness because your language skill will help you be between cultures; and you are unique in that way because most people their language skills aren't as good. So, it's always work. It's always work" (IO-5-US, paras. 27–29).

Aside from the readiness and effort from domestic students to meet international students, one expert from Germany explained similar issues, which came about in her cross-cultural workshops. The expert mentions that Asian and Eastern European students do not get much attention and interest from German domestic students. She further notes that this is an important aspect to consider in the future strategic support, as according to the demographic development 70% of international students are from Asia and Eastern Europe.[85] What is more, the expert particularly stresses the German university context, which can be objectified to some extent based on shared common experiences, which show that friendship building is a challenge for both international and domestic students (who have let their home towns and travelled to a different location for their studies), as students seem to have fixed friendships before entering university life. Thus, the motivation of making friends through university involvement is less eminent at German universities, as reported in the following quote:

85 Such kind of preferences and biases posed from interactions with "faculty, staff, other students, and in the community" (p. 168) is explored and discussed by Shideh Hanassab (2006) in Diversity, international student, and perceived discrimination: Implications for educators and counselors. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 10(2),* 157–172.

> "We know very well – and this is actually close to anybody's mind – that when you have negative experiences in a different culture, first of all, you don't want to talk about it very much, because you are ashamed of yourself. Very often you think 'It's my fault! Okay, I'll keep it for myself!' Or you think, 'It's the German's fault! I don't want to go public with this because this is offensive, maybe people don't like it, so, I better keep it for myself as well.' So, our goal is to actually help students and show them that when you keep these emotions to yourself, these impressions, these experiences, you might begin to feel stressed-out – you might, you don't have to. But you can experience psychological stress and it is better to ventilate it. For this you need an atmosphere of – how to say – security so that you can openly share and nobody will laugh at you, nobody will say 'You are stupid!' And this is the goal, or the person, who leads [guides through] this event – to create this Vertraulichkeit [trustworthiness, my translation], this notion of trust that you may share and everything that you do share will stay in this room, behind this door. And what happens tells you a lot because the things that people experience are not so individual. You discover that this person and that person had the same experience, and you can in a way objectify that a little bit and talk about it, and then try to explain it – just to explain why this has happened. For instance, the topic 'how to make friends with the Germans.' Actually the same things are experienced almost by everyone, by everyone who has been to these activities. This especially concerns the idea when you want to communicate to the other person [German students]: the students come in and get out of class. They come in for the goal of learning. Then the learning is finished, and they go home or go to meet friends, or they go to another class" (IO-8-DE, para. 24).

In connection to the expert's quote above, regarding meeting German domestic students, the subsequent quotes from a Brazilian exchange student and an Ecuadorian graduate student express their thoughts on the given situation:

> "That's something really bad for Germany. Like I said I've lost my desire to meet Germans and to do something and to help. Like I said, that's your country, do what you want. I don't care anymore. That's not the problem with the university, like I said, that's a cultural problem. It's something else" (I-1-DE, para. 185).

> "Recently now I feel more better, because when the classes are over, we walk over to the Mensa [dining hall, my translation] for a cup of coffee, to talk a little more than last semester. So, I feel better now. But I think, for other students, this situation is terrible. I am motivated until now because I consider myself a positive person. But I can't imagine, for example, my sister studying here, because she cries for everything. Probably for other people, this situation is a totally depressing situation" (I-6-DE, para. 83).

6.10.2 Support by faculty members

Several international students praised the way in which faculty members interact with students and expressed their satisfaction towards the academic advising by the faculty.

> "It was amazing. These are people who are at the top of their game worldwide. These are authorities in their fields and you have everyday access to them. That is huge for them. Open door policy. You meet professors on the corridor and you talk, we chat. For

me coming from an education system where professors are demigods, that was really different; and that was huge" (I-4-US, para. 51).

"I can send emails to professors anytime, anywhere; and they will try to help me. They write emails; and some of them call; and they are very responsible. And this is the professor's part. And from the students' part, I think, most of [the] students wherever they come from, they are American, German, Russian, all of them are very competitive and ambitious. I think, they just have their own worlds. They are very talented and it helps me a lot to become determined to get into the media industry and makes me very proud [that] I am studying with them. I just feel it is a good environment for me to develop. Not only the international student office but we have weekly workshop from my school – inviting journalists or professors to give the latest development of the industry – technology side or academic side. Our school has done their best. I am very satisfied with what I've learned here" (I-5-US, para. 21).

In Korea, some students shared very positive experiences, which indicated aspects such as small courses, a good command of English of the faculty, interactive course environment, and informative course content during their studies.

"It's very interactive even in the large classes. The professors are very open to international students as well as Korean students. But then, I think, communication is more open in classes which we have [fewer] students. Especially this one class that I have, I really love that class. It is an urban and regional planning class; and the professor conducted the course with fifteen students. She interacts with each and every one. Actually [. . .], she is inviting all of us for a dinner. So, it is really, really nice" (I-6-KO, para. 47).

"I was very lucky to have an amazing professor. My feeling is that I had to go to Korea and had to be there to meet this professor to get a totally new perspective. I am really glad that I went there. I had two courses with him – one was international security and the other one was crisis management. And it was definitely something I couldn't have done here in Geneva, and totally new, really nice. [. . .] (laugh) It was my last semester; and I didn't expect anything from the courses. I mean, I went to South Korea and just to be in South Korea. But then these two courses, they were a total surprise. But yeah! It is just so funny that I have [the] best professor of my whole university career [in the] last semester [of my] exchange. So, it's so amazing, isn't it!" (I-10-KO, paras. 3, 5)

"The community welfare course, the professor was very busy. But if we sent an email, he would send like maximum three words of an email back. But then just very concise what you have to know, like, very simple, 'Come to my office.' or 'Yes.' He was a very nice person with good intentions. If we asked questions we got good feedback on the presentation contents. The human rights course was the one where I was the only international student and this professor was a very very amazing person. She herself [had] also lived abroad. She was very good in English and very engaged. And because it was a very small course, it was all about discussing and presentations and trying to [get] to answers with all of us. And this was the only professor who took us [out for] dinner at the end of the year to celebrate the end of the semester" (I-11-KO, para. 15).

It is noteworthy to point out the feedback of interesting academic content and interactive communication from the students, however, what was conspicuous was the fact that the faculty member would meet the students outside of the classroom; and such support

was provided. Moreover, several students from varying universities interviewed in the Korean context in this research had similar official social gatherings with the faculty member and the course.

Despite the fact there existed such positive support, there were international student interviewees who still felt that contact to faculty was limited to getting minimal support and that there were only a few he would believe that really value individual inquiries from students, as stated in the quote below:

> "Sometimes the course content was not really challenging. I don't know, it was really, really practical most stuff and not theoretical at all. And the interaction with professor – I am not sure because the courses that I've been in there were a lot of international students in there. Of course, the professor often said, 'If you have questions or something, just stop by after the lessons and talk to me or come to my office hours.' But I always had the impression that they are just saying it but do not really mean it" (I-10-US, para. 35).

Students' experiences with faculty members, by all means, vary depending on each individual and the contextual setting; however, from the above quoted statements from students, it is possible to detect the enthusiastic responses when international students felt the support was existent by the faculty.

6.10.3 Campus culture: a sense of belonging at the university and in the community

Even though the participation of living and studying abroad is up to the individual, various features associated with campus culture helped international students to feel comfortable at their host destinations.

As the following utterances disclose, university as a location and its campus climate have significant impact on the students feeling supported at host institutions.

> "It's been different. I did my undergrad in Nigeria. I grew up in a city and I went to university in a city. So, coming here, one of the first things that struck me was the size. University […] is huge. I like the layout of the campus. I like the fact that the city and the campus are sort of like intertwined, particularly here in central campus. You kind of don't know where the university starts and stops and where the city starts and stops. So, you have a meddling basically of both; and I find that actually that really cool. University experience is different. And I don't know if that has to do with [the city] as a place or the combination of […] a university and [the city]. There's a lot of diversity. There's a lot of different things to do. I was expecting to have a diverse cohort in my school, a pretty diverse community but I have been struck by just how diverse it is in here. That's that's huge. That's why I say 'Different.' 'Different' is the first word that comes to mind. And that's not the bad difference, actually a good difference" (I-4-US, para. 3).

From the findings, reputation and prestige of the university also played role in feeling good about studying at the destinations.

> "I think so, because I love [the city]. On the weekends I go out and I like it. There are more people and more opportunities. I think, the [university] is one of the best universities here; and it helps us when we try to find internships. [. . .] Being a part of [the university] makes me feel proud when I talk to people of our school" (I-7-US, para. 71).

The opportunities to be part of the campus spirit through buying merchandise with university logos and supporting the university sports team during college games were particularly mentioned by international students interviewed in the USA.

> "So, there are so many opportunities for you to be part of / to be integrated. Because, for example, I am a sports person, I like sports, I follow sports, I used to follow American football even when I was back home in Nigeria. But I had never been to a ball game and never been to a football game, and so, like the experience to going to a game, for a lot of people, even if you are not going to the game, you are going to the tailgate, because you get the opportunity to meet people and have fun. Even if you are not going to the game, that opportunity get to actually be in that environment and it's huge. If you are on this campus; and it is game day, it is ridiculous. Unless you are going to stay at home, you are going to be involved with it. It's simply walking on the streets, it's awesome!" (I-4-US, para. 65)

International students in Korea mentioned similar attitudes to university life in terms of identifying themselves with the university spirit and wearing clothes indicating the university. Campus festivals and sports games were positively mentioned experiences by international students interviewed and they talked about well-maintained facilities in which students can *hang out* on campus.

> "Given that everyone is on campus or is part of campus, it is very lively. There's always something to do; and it is a nice place to be. I felt very privileged to be in a beautiful place surrounded by trees and old buildings. And many activities were offered to us. I really can't complain. [. . .] [P]eople do not engage at their universities and also do not identify themselves with a university. So, it's a bit same in Geneva and I enjoyed having these different experiences I had, and especially the [sports games between universities] where everyone was wearing [same color] shirts. It's so interesting and in a way more fun if you identify more with it and maybe you enjoy it more than just going to courses and going back home. Also, having all the university buildings and it also doesn't give this feeling to it" (I-10-KO, paras. 53, 55).
>
> "Yes, actually this was part of the buddy program which motivated [me] to go there; and also they taught us all the dances. That was one good thing that they did well with the buddy program. So, with this buddy program I went to the games and it was quite an experience to be in an Olympic Stadium and to see those sports. And I actually wrote a paper about this as well for my Korean History course. Because what really struck me was that in Europe, it's all about the game, all of us supporting your team and really feel the team and be like you have to win this. But the [. . .] university derby was all about just dancing and supporting the team / also supporting the team but then it was more about the support than about the team. Because even though the team was completely getting obliterated, [my university] lost 0–5 against [the other] university. But still, we were just dancing and having a good time and just keep on cheering and also after the [games].

> [W]e would have contact with [the other university] students and they would teach us their dances and we would teach them our dances and there was this brotherhood of just enjoyment and not this competition which you would definitely see in Europe" (I-11-KO, para. 29).

Interviewed students commented on the diverse opportunities offered by the city in which the university is located and enjoyed the interconnectedness between universities, which allowed students to easily meet and interact with students from other universities.

> "[This city] has been very kind to us. Everywhere you go, you discover something new; and there are many free events and festivals going on. So, on the weekends, it's always easy to find something very nice to get into" (I-10-KO, para. 59).

In the case of German contextual setting, experts mention that university life depends on students' individual responsibility to acquire information. And personalized guidance by faculty members at undergraduate or graduate levels were not mentioned during the interviews. This fact also relates to the statement that students need to be proactive in asking for assistance around campus.

> "So, sometimes, for example, something which we really noticed by talking to the students, and found out through the written evaluation, is that in Germany you have the tendency to be proactive. You have to get [all] information [on your own]. And even in schools now, you don't have a timetable – it is starting now – so, they have to [create] the timetable themselves whereas in other universities and maybe in other countries – I don't know how it is in the US or in South Korea – it is more like a school system. The students expect the professor to tell them 'You have to be there on this day,' or even in the housing office some students don't clean up, because there is nobody who checks whether you cleaned are not. So, it is your own responsibility. And this is also always a big problem. Some students expect that somebody tells them 'Tomorrow you are moving out, think about what you have to do.' And we expect them to proactively go and say 'I'm moving out tomorrow, what is expected of me?' So, this is really something at which the German system different from systems and a lot of other countries" (IO-7-DE, para. 32).

In such a college culture context mentioned by the expert above, the feedback on the satisfaction level in academic studies in Germany is comprehensible as shared by the Indian graduate student:

> "If there is a scale from 0 to 10, I would say 2. I am not fully satisfied. I feel that I am here because I should gain more knowledge and develop my skills, but I don't feel that happening here. I don't blame the university for this because not only in [this university] or something, even my friends in the other parts of Germany, they feel the same thing. Like, they don't have any assignments or any course work after the class. Also, it is not mandatory for you to attend the class because you get everything on Moodle. So, with this we have a lot of freedom; and so, we didn't know what we can do meaningfully. So, more assignments will give us more knowledge. So, more knowledge means more satisfaction for us" (I-5-DE, para. 91).

Along these lines, experts point out to the crucial fact that campus life does not exist in Germany.[86]

> "So, there is no systematic approach. And as you can see from the campus, it is not a campus of student life. They meet during the lessons and seminars, but after classes go back home" (IO-2-DE, para. 70).

From the international student's perspective, when asked about support opportunities on campus, a lack of campus culture can be represented by the viewpoints of the international students below:

> "Outside, yes but at the university, NO. Outside is my home" (I-6-DE, para. 85).
>
> "I feel like that they don't go to the university to meet people. If you meet them in another place, it can be easy to become friends but not at university" (I-7-DE, para. 21).

Most students commute from different cities nearby the city in which the university is located; and only few live in on-campus housing while students are dispersed around the city and the suburbs. Most experts indicated that the city in which the university is located has much to offer and thus, students do not reside on campus for university generated involvement opportunities.

> "[T]he city has so much to offer that also the German students would find their initiatives, they would volunteer, they have friends from school. I mean, there are a lot of active groups around here – political student groups, and so on. So, if you want you can become active but it is not in a way that life circles around university. It is a part of life. I mean, of course you can join the international club; and they can work in the international club and other initiatives. But I have no idea how many actually do [so]. Many universities, for example, organize voluntary work of students. This is what we don't do. Many students do voluntary services but they organize it themselves and they don't get credit points. Then again, most of the German students work part-time. This also takes a lot of their time. So, I agree that it is quite difficult for international students to have Germans as friends" (IO-2-DE, para. 66).

This is a noteworthy fact under comparative perspective as international students in the USA and Korea stressed that the combination of both locations – campus and the community –provided welcoming support and opportunities and that these students appreciated such mutual support from both campus and community settings. This final point will be discussed in subsequent chapters which implications for further strategic plans concerning supporting international students.

86 Missing campus culture in German universities as an impeding factor of integration and engagement opportunities for international students is dealt with in Ingeson, Jennifer. (2021) Internationalization efforts at a German university: A case study on how international students are engaged in a meaningful way as cultural resources. pp. 40–61.

7 Support for international students under comparative perspective: issues and implications

When looking back at the results, the analysis of experts' interviews offers a basis for a critical interpretation of the four strategic issues of supporting international students while two main topics related to context specific *university life* stood out when it comes to analyzing international students' feelings. The following chapter discusses the above-mentioned indications against the relevance of existing literature. The discussions lead to the conclusion that social as well as emotional support and the importance of university culture lie at the heart of supporting international students. The subsequent chapter involves a summary and the contribution of this study to the research field and identifies potential suggestions for future relevant studies.

7.1 Managing the internationalization of higher education from experts' stance

Speaking mostly with (senior) international officers as well as several staff members employed in a language center, from a faculty, and from a project-based peer-advising program, the analysis of the interviews shows four aspects that require further attention when it comes to supporting international students at an institutional level.

7.1.1 Effective institution-wide campus effort

Common issues international officers at universities in three countries all raised were that international offices cannot take on the sole responsibility of supporting international students at their host institutions. As previous related research demonstrates, "[a]ll too often, student affairs administrators refer international students to on-campus international affairs offices, which tend to already be overloaded with SEVIS and visa issues and handling the most difficult cases" (Lee, 2008, p. 318). Such circumstance can be evidenced as it is revealed that international offices are the main contact for international students for administrative as well as university life adjustment support. As illustrated in Korean cases, due to the language barrier of international students who cannot converse in Korean with staff on campus, these students are sent back to international offices by individual departments for mediation. Such a condition leads international offices to take the main responsibility to support international students;

and this condition overloads the staff with dealing with not only administrative but also taking care of daily life matters of international students.

Referring to supporting international students as an entire campus effort, it was also possible to discover from the experts' from German institutions in which staff members tend to shift responsibilities to other employees at different institutions on campus. First of all, this hinders effective centralized organization of services in promoting transparency of information among employees when tackling the matters at hand that international students inquire. Secondly, it creates an impression of 'low customer service' in the end towards the international students involved in that cycle (ref. Chapter 6.9.1), as concrete solutions are not provided in the end. One senior international officer mentioned that the crucial reasons behind such shifting of responsibilities could be the absence of transparency of who is in charge of the issues, which emerge, particularly those that had never been previously dealt with at the administrative level. In addition, there exists a lack of reward from faculty members' perspective when taking up an "extra task" of supporting international students, as main acknowledgment at German universities lie in acquiring recognition through academic research.

Along the lines of the above-mentioned aspects of effective management as a whole campus, it was noteworthy that all experts interviewed desire more personnel in the offices they work in as this is discussed further in the next section.

7.1.2 Increase in the human resources with the rising number of international students

International officers who take on administrative as well as programming tasks have repetitively expressed the lack of human capacity when it comes to supporting the rising number of international students. From the collected data, the findings indicate that there exist only few cases in which positions are created for mainly supporting international students; and such positions involve a team consisting of one full-time employee and several student assistants who are hired by the institutions.

With regard to managing the high influx of international students (in this research, experts mentioned enrollment numbers between 3,000-9,000), experts expressed a lack of resources and staff. This becomes especially apparent when looking at the results gathered from international offices of all three countries investigated. In this sense, Ingeson (2021), who points "lack of resources in terms of funding, faculty, and staff was referenced frequently during the interviews" as a reason for internationalization efforts "not working" (Ingeson, 2021, p. 51) in her case study of one German university, does not stand alone with such results. In that sense, my findings reinforce the results presented by Ingeson (2021). Furthermore, there might be an implication that this lack of support seems to be the impression at several universities, rather than an individual case. In addition, Ingeson's (2021) research supports that the results from my research data from the years 2014/15 is still relevant as her recent study.

The contextual circumstances, especially prevalent in Korean universities, showed that international officers highly resort to voluntary peer advisors (ref. Chapter 6.2.3)

in supporting international students, at most times termed as *buddies.* It was interesting to see that recruited peer advisors in Korean universities possess the "same important responsibilities as that of the regular full-time staff advisors" (Lo, 2006, p. 181), guiding and helping students with the adjustment processes of a large number of non-degree seeking international students. In the interviews, international students from all three countries expressed that peer advisor programs were helpful, especially in the beginning phase of their settlement at host institutions. Nevertheless, more engagement from the peer advisors was desired as commitment of the peer advisors "is left up to chance" (Ingeson, 2021, p. 48) contingent on individual group dynamics between the peer advisors and international students. A similar type of peer advisors as well as varying types associated with different institutions on campus existed in the institutions in the USA and Germany. The intriguing aspects that could be looked at further are detecting concrete definitions of the role and responsibilities of such diverse peer advisors.

7.1.3 Establishment and understanding of customer service mentality in higher education

Delving further into the idea of deficit in staff capacity, one can understand why it is difficult for international officers to promote the services and make the offers known to international students. This issue of transparency of the services was especially the case in German universities examined (ref. Chapter 6.3), not disregarding the fact that private data protection regulation hinders reaching out to international students with information in the German national context. Nevertheless, the analysis of international students' request for more reliable responses of email inquiries from and approachable access to staff or faculty members during and after office hours in Germany leave a room to consider for additional explanations in further research as lack of staff capacity cannot be the only reason for such occurrences expressed by international students. In this regard, experts in Germany pinpointed the fact that the idea of customer service has been continuously finding its way into German university settings although German higher institutions do not require tuitions in contrast to those in the USA and Korea.

Within the Korean national context, it is interesting to discuss and witness that Korean experts did not specifically voice the term customer service, whereas experts interviewed in the USA and Germany did so very openly. There is no doubt that support services in Korea similar to the USA exist for students; and such resemblances of university infrastructure are mirrored as one can determine based on the theoretical categories of Knight (2004; 2012) reflected by the experts and international students' reporting in the research process. Discovering client based support service structures in Korean universities is not surprising such as the one-stop service posts at entrances of international offices, as previous research of the internationalization of higher education in Korea has frequently dealt with issues concerning Korean higher education taking on western models, especially American higher education structures and even academic curriculum (ref. Chapter 3.2). Nonetheless, with regard to the topic of "adopting customer-orientation" (Wong & Wu, 2011, p. 199), the former research findings show that

such values are still in contention in the Korean university context. "[I]n the case of South Korea, some professors resist such Western education practices as treating students as clients" (ibid., p. 200) as Western values and practices "are often implemented without thoughtful consideration of the local context" (ibid., p. 199). In the light of such local context in Korean higher education, it can be inferred that this resistance could be the reason why none of the experts from Korean international offices overtly articulated the term, customer service, during the interviews compared to the experts from the USA and Germany.

7.1.4 Future recruitment strategy concerning quality and diversity

Of the findings reported in the results section, a point of discussion which experts' perceived highly important for the future strategy is for the institutions to focus on quality as well as diversity of nations and not only on the quantity of recruiting international students.[87] All three countries shared the fact that few nations represent most of the international students taking up studies at their host universities (ref. Chapter 6.9.1).

In addition, with regard to the quality of international students, the language issue – of having the Korean or the German language knowledge was discussed with much critical outlook. Experts from Korea and Germany shared the opinion that the international students need to meet the requirements to have a good command of the local language proficiency even though degree and non-degree programs in English-mediated instruction are existent at host universities. Nevertheless, without Korean and German language competence, it is difficult for international students to come to terms of fully adjusting in daily life of the destinations. And having the local language knowledge is even helpful to find a job during and after the studies.

Moreover, the issue of English-mediated instruction leaves room for discussion in the *glocalized host universities* due to its advantages of making the universities attractive to international students as non-English speaking host nations (ref. Jon & Kim, 2011).[88]

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87 The literature review shows the Korean experts' concern on the qualifications of international students that the level of academic achievement is not as high compared to the domestic students in Korea as the Korean government and universities have mainly targeted to meet the demands in order to cope with the high number of international students (Jon & Kim, 2011, p. 159).

88 In their comparative study between Korea and Japan, Jon and Kim (2011) interviewed faculty, administrators, and Korean students on campus and examined their thoughts on the internationalization of universities in Korea. The findings of their data collection lead to the viewpoints concerning the English-mediated courses (as all Korean student interview participants took a short-term summer program taught in English by the international faculty). The opinions of the interviewees were rather critical, indicating that there aren't enough faculty members who can teach in English, English language receives "predominant status" (ibid., p. 154) in the academics compared to Korean, and mostly, not all Korean students can follow the academic content in English. Korean students especially criticized the unequal conditions in their studies compared to the students with good English proficiency who tend to be "economically and socially privileged" (ibid., p. 155). Although Korean students expressed rather skeptical worries, the advantages of English-mediated instruction against the internationalization of universities were also mentioned. The usefulness and

Nonetheless, it also has certain shortfalls of affecting the local faculty members and domestic students as well as the traditional values of host universities in Korea and Germany because most of the academic studies are still carried out in Korean and German in each corresponding country.

Moreover, even when international students can partake in courses only taught in English as both degree-seeking or non-degree seeking study abroad conditions, most experts and international students interviewed in this study note the importance of having the language competence of the study destination (ref. Chapter 6.6) in order to interact with locals or fully integrate into the life of the host country. Experts and international students taken as interview samples in Korean universities also shared their experiences of difficulty in joining student clubs to interact with domestic students. Among varying factors, lacking Korean proficiency was the essential reason why international students could not be part of the student clubs (ref. Chapter 6.4). This aspect of language ability of a host nation has been evidenced by Launay (2021)'s research, which mainly looks at the factors influencing integration vs. exclusion of exchange students at French elite universities (Grandes Ecoles). Interviews based on this author's study reinforces the similar findings that absence of French language competence hinders exchange students contributing to clubs (ref. Launay, 2021, pp. 117–118). In addition, besides the participation of student clubs, French language competence plays a crucial role in opening opportunities to engage with domestic students (ref. ibid., p. 126). Similar results are also underlined by Jon and Kim's (2011) study in which "[f]oreign students remained isolated with other foreign students as long as they did not learn/study Korean language" (p. 141). Based on their empirical study, these two authors take a step further by "suggest[ing] that Korean language proficiency becomes a requirement, not necessarily for admission, but for graduation" (ibid.) to amend the deficiencies regarding the recruitment strategy and improving quality of international students in Korea.

Along the lines of recruitment and language issues, creating infrastructures to support international students[89] with "vocational decisions and on immigration rules and regulations" (Hanassab & Tidwell, 2002) have been expressed as a concern by the government and higher education institutions. Improvement in this area was requested by experts especially in Korea, which has primarily focused on increasing the number of international students and not much thought has been put into what happens to international after their studies. This can lead to insecurity for international students and staff members not having a clear outlook on supporting international students. Tracking of the graduates after the studies to observe what effect the studies in Korea has could be structured and developed with active alumni associations, which is not yet well

helpfulness of getting in contact with English usage at the university not only has been the driving force to strengthen the individual English proficiency but to widen the academic perspective to the international level (ref. ibid., p. 158) when working with international faculty and the corresponding content and literature.

89 The demand and recognition of the necessity for strengthening the infrastructure in maintenance of international student support are due to the fact that not much thought on "what happens afterward on campus" has been taking place as "the emphasis of the government and many universities [was mainly] on increasing the number of international students" (Jon & Kim, 2011, p. 159).

established in most universities investigated. Forming such vocational opportunities and support during the studies for international students require close cooperation with the government offices handling immigration regulations. Together with providing information about on and off-campus job opportunities via pre-existing campus, career centers can help experts at institutions to come up with effective strategies and perspectives in developing support services to guide international students for vocational opportunities after the studies at host institutions. This discussion of underlying groundwork for future occupational outlook particularly for international students leaves implications to look further into how this could be developed and be implemented.

7.2 Recognizing the contextual factors of university life related to the feeling of support

Above-mentioned topics of discussion mainly deal with the academic and economic outlook of effectively managing internationalization efforts with strategic approaches by the experts. Together with such efforts, the analysis of international students' insights revealed that social and cultural perspectives are at the core of their feeling of support during their stay at their host institutions. Their reported experiences hinted at the fact that the aspects of university specific life influence students' sense of support and adjustment. Especially, features, such as the opportunity to build friendships with domestic students, faculty support, and hospitable campus culture, were explored while interpreting the data beyond description (ref. Chapter 6.10).

Such given features allow *me,* as a researcher, to reflect on the locally voiced insights and determine central discussion points which contribute to the previously established literature about the internationalization of higher education concerning support services for international students. These issues concern 1) shifting of perceived roles of international students, domestic students and staff whilst recognizing higher education institutions as the vital facilitating actors in supporting international students and 2) establishing campus culture and beyond starting from the micro-level actors involved regarding emotional and social connectedness when supporting international students to adjust to university life at host destinations.

7.2.1 Change in perception and university as the fundamental facilitator of support services

Upon reviewing the results, it becomes obvious that academic success and occupational development are the prime aims and the main reasons for choosing to study abroad; and the corresponding utterances of the international students prove these points. Nevertheless, when international students were asked about the support services by the host universities and their participation, rather than sharing their frequent partaking in the provided services, the the students directed their attention to which features of campus life were helpful and useful in terms of feeling supported at host their institutions.

The attention-grabbing fact is that most international students interviewed seldom participated in the offered programs by international offices or other university institutions as anticipated upon taking up on the investigation. Nevertheless, the contextual difference shown in each country is worth analyzing in more detail. The conspicuous fact is that in the USA, international students were aware of the support services and knew well which institution and which corresponding personnel to directly approach once issues arise, whereas international students in Korea and Germany primarily relied on personal contacts; and only as a last resort, would they contact university staff. Most of all, in many of the cases, international students in Korea and Germany did not know whom to reach out to at the universities. When they resorted to personal contacts, these contacts were co-national peers or seniors from the same faculty, (national) student clubs, or, less frequently, peer advisors. Yet, what was especially noteworthy was that the experts from the USA and Korea highly stressed the information on counseling centers and their various options (ref. Chapter 6.7) for international students. Especially in Korea, the counseling services were even offered by native speakers in different languages (e.g., English and Chinese). Of the interview samples of international students of the given field site universities, none of the international students have made use of the counseling services; and thus, the research findings were limited to identifying the type of counseling offers for international students when provided. Hence, the effects and feedback on the counseling services by international students are not mentioned.

Coming back to the point of seeking support from co-nationals, according to Volet and Ang (2012), a network of co-nationals "provides psychological emotional support (Pedersen, 1991); helps develop and maintain a sense of identity (Tan, 1997); makes communication easier (Ward & Kennedy, 1993); enables group members to use well-rehearsed, common-study strategies (Hofstede, 1986; Argyle, Henderson, Bond & Contarello, 1986)" (pp. 33–34). In addition, their study proved that "the sense of belonging, bonding and familiarity provided by the co-national peer group is enhanced by common language" (Volet & Ang, 2012, p. 34).

In reference to the given points indicated in literature above, the findings of the present study confirm that international students feel comfortable relying on the co-national groups[90] at host destinations and the interaction to domestic students are limited. With regard to the strong network of co-national groups, of the interview results of experts, there were several comments "describ[ing] international students' tendency to stay with their own people" (Volet & Ang, 2012, p. 35). Some experts specified that it is difficult to evoke certain nationality groups, especially Chinese students, to participate in the provided programs and African and Asian students face discrimination or prejudice compared to international students from North America and Europe (ref. Chapter 6.5). Aside from noting such conditions, these experts' statements entailed helplessness not knowing and how to engage these students in the provided services

90 As from short-term non-degree seeking students' perspective, aside from the co-national groups, "co-international groups" are the main contact in which these students rely on for emotional support and social get-togethers. Nonetheless, based on the results, even short-term non-degree seeking students connect with co-national groups at host universities and communities.

they offered. However, such notion was contested by most experts interviewed in this study, recognizing the fact that

> "[a] major inhibiting factor to interaction between domestic and international students can be a perception amongst academic staff that international students do not want to mix or do not have adequate language skills to do so easily. Biggs (1997) argued, for example, that 'it's not that Chinese students won't talk inside the classroom, but things have to be structured so that they see it as appropriate that they do' (p. 9)" (Leask, 2009, p. 212).

Latter experts stressed the fact that it is not international students but domestic students and faculty members who retreat from making the effort in creating an interactive atmosphere for international students (ref. Chapter 6.10.1). Furthermore, emphasis was on breaking the myth that integration is essential for international students to adapt to the new environment and that international students are missing out if they do not engage in university activities or have friendships with domestic students, especially when it is about superficial relationships (ref. IO-8-US).

In this respect, when taking such stance further, Montgomery and McDowell (2009) note that "in relation to the development of this global perspective, [namely, the network of international students of co-nationals in this research], *integration could be irrelevant and unnecessary*" (p. 465; emphasis added).

All things considered, this study questions the predestined perception "that it is the international students who must make the adjustment is evident in the practice in universities around the world who host international students" (Leask, 2009, p. 218). Whilst moving away from the "deficit models of engagement, which position international students as interculturally deficient and home students as interculturally efficient" (ibid.), this study shows that "there is little attention for a systematic preparation for intercultural settings for domestic students and faculty" (Otten, 2003, p. 20). When regarding the fact that the sampled results date back to the year 2014/15, the latest published research confirms that such state still continues to be a current issue and leaves implications for strategic and conceptual framework to be initiated from the host destinations by activating domestic students and faculty (ref. Ingeson, 2021).

In Wissenschaft Weltoffen (DAAD & DZHW, 2019), the special focus was on investigating the motives and experiences of international students. According to the given survey, international students had "thirteen potential difficulties" studying and living in Germany, which "can be grouped into three consistent problem categories" (p. 156):

These are study-related difficulties:

- Recognition of previous school/study performance
- Admission to degree programs
- Orientation in the higher education system
- Contact with university teachers
- Performance requirements during academic studies

The second category is integration difficulties:

- Communication in German
- Contact with German students
- Contact with the population

The third category deals with difficulties outside of the university setting:

- Visa/residence permit
- Work permit
- Health insurance
- Accommodation
- Financing

It is possible to note that in 2019, the same categories surfaced indicated above and this reveals that my study are still relevant today and expands these topics based on qualitative research. The research concerning efforts in support services reported in the last three decades of internationalizing of higher education remains to stay circumstantial via case studies. Such incidental characteristics of emotional and social support for international students at host universities seems to be to some degree inevitable, due to the varying contextual settings and personal motivations from both international students and staff. In addition, it is evidenced by the results of the present study that the provided services are created sporadically depending on the staff members involved.

Against such reality of the situation, in spite of everything, international students interviewed ardently desired for more services that initiate cultural sharing and bring domestic and international students together (ref. Chapter 6.9.2). Such request applies even though the international students had eclectic or low participation in the provided services from host universities and relied mostly on co-national groups for emotional and social support.[91] The implication based on such result strengthens the previous research that host universities need to be "proactive in fostering social cohesion and intercultural learning" (Volet, 2004, p. 5) "to provide an environment in which domestic and international students can benefit from their confrontation with diversity" (Brown, 2009, p. 439).

7.2.2 Campus culture and beyond

In the recent research on internationalizing universities, Ingeson (2021) suggests that in order "to provide an environment for international student engagement [, t]he university needs to take active measures to engage these students inside and outside of

91 This aspect becomes apparent in one of the investigated category; and it is important to note that the aim of this study is not to measure the participation level.

the classroom" (p. 54) which is in line with the previously mentioned implications. Her claim draws attention to the underlying conditions as follows: missing campus culture in German context, "[p]rograms or classes for international student that separate them from German students, class sizes that are too big to allow for interaction, classroom interaction that does not extend past the superficial aspect, or the professor not having the time or energy to creating an environment for international interactions," which "all pose a threat to the success of meaningful engagement in the classroom" (p. 54). Moreover, the interview data by Ingeson (2021) identifies the *role of the global city* (p. 50), in which the sample *research university* (p. 41) is located and mentions the following "contextual barriers" (p. 40):

> "The vastness of the city allows for group separateness and unless it is sought out, people are not forced to interact with different outgroups. Another point shared was that the city offers so many opportunities that it doesn't make sense for the university to plan anything. The university cannot compete with the city's multitude of opportunities for entertainment and cultural activities and yet the chance that different groups of students will attend these and interact with one another in a meaningful way [is] highly unlikely" (Ingeson, 2021, p. 50).

My research outcomes of the interview data from the years 2014/15 mirror these contextual barriers mentioned in Ingeson's (2021) latest research on "internationalization efforts through opportunities to integrate with German students in a meaningful way" (ibid., p. 41). Relatively, this research especially focuses on international students identifying with campus spirit through organized events and programs from universities.

Against the relevant research suggestions and background, what we can take most from the present study's comparative perspective of three countries is the positive anecdotes that international students shared in various contexts. These experiences of international students demonstrate how dynamic interaction in a host culture involving *authentic* connections with domestic students, faculty and staff on campus gave them a helpful feeling of emotional and social support and influenced the total student experience when expressing feedback on their stay at host universities. Such enthusiastic narrations of genuine associations with the host culture cannot be explained without mentioning the significance of campus culture and the local environment, which influenced the overall experience of studying abroad (ref. Chapter 6.10.3).

Whilst Ingeson (2021) notes that "[m]eaningful contact in a university that does not have a campus culture is difficult outside of the classroom and therefore interaction needs to mainly occur in the classroom" (p. 54) and strongly emphasizes that "change needs to start in the classroom and it will require faculty buy-in" (ibid.), there is no doubt that the transformation of the current situation needs to take place at the micro-level in the midst of the political and institutional scheme of the internationalization of higher education. Nonetheless, as one can infer from the findings of the present study, "various extracurricular activities that take place on campus" which Leask (2009) terms as the *informal curriculum* has its significance as much as the *formal curriculum* (p. 207; ref. Chapter 2.1).

When considering the contextual campus culture, it was possible to witness the following examples of informal curriculum, which takes place outside of the formal curriculum, just to name a few:

a) voluntary peer advisors in Germany; and also in Korea especially taking up the responsibility to support more than 700 to 900 international short-term exchange students' adjustment phase through individual orientations;
b) the comfortable feeling of conversing with faculty members in the USA and quick feedback from university faculty and staff when inquiries were made;
c) students' positive experiences with classmates and faculty members outside of classroom environment in Korea;
d) a sense of being a part of the university spirit through sports games and associating with the university reputation; and
e) taking the opportunities to combine both campus and the city offerings with network of domestic and international students by several universities in Korea.

Such incidental experiences comprised of positive feeling of emotional and social support stayed with international students when looking back at their lives of studying and living in a different country. Hence, an informal curriculum, which values emotional and social support for international students, underpins the essence of the present study. Such a stance allows identifying the direction in examining effects of internationalizing universities at the micro-level of the actors involved, namely experts and international students at host institutions within the contextual environment.

The interpretation of the analysis offered insights into the experts and international students' experiences, which go beyond the number and variety of services institutions offer. In addition, it disclosed experts' thoughts and needs for strategic improvement and students' requests with regard to support services at host institutions. The modification that needs to be taken from the given results is unavoidable, yet the procedures on how to accomplish the previously mentioned outlook needs time with appropriate measures which are equitable in each local context. The slow process of change in this field surfaced numerous times and can be summarized by this German expert:

> "It was the push of this educational policy of internationalization that was issued 10 years ago these documents. And the fact that this internationalization is that nobody knows how to measure it. Previously, it was measured by the number students, now it says that this is not enough. Integration is a criteria, but nobody knows how to measure integration. Now, there is a notion that this is important, but it is just the idea that it is important. Everything has to be implemented. Institutions have to be created for that, and so on. This is still a very new idea – slowly, slowly things are moving" (IO-8-DE, para. 69).

This final discussion focused on changing the perception of international students as deficient, structuring the ways in which caters to the needs of international students, and showing of care for emotional and social connectedness. These all require administrative, academic and domestic students' engagement in hosting international students. Such effort, by all means, can transform the overall campus culture with corresponding

effective leadership against efficient strategic infrastructures to sustain the process. Oftentimes, it was clearly articulated by experts interviewed that seeking for effective management to reach out to the whole university encompassing faculty-oriented disciplines and changing the campus culture to meet the emotional and social needs of international students mentioned will take a considerable amount of time.

8 Conclusion

This chapter concludes with a summary of the study procedures and the key findings based on the research question and design in connection with the discussion of the significance and the contribution thereof. Against the impact and limitations of this study, implications for future investigation are stated to strengthen related research of the subject matter.

Underlying aims

This study aimed to find the answers to the research question (ref. Chapter 1) and the corresponding research design (ref. Chapter 4.5) was constructed in a way to explicitly focus on capturing the impressions of support offered at host universities for international students in the USA, Korea, and Germany. This was ensured by listening to international students' and experts' voices.

As disclosed from the past decades of development in the research discipline of the internationalization of higher education, universities denote the given process as a vital agenda (ref. Kehm & Teichler, 2007) by implementing institutional approaches together with national as well as regional level policies, which are affected by globalization and the discourse about knowledge society (ref. Chapter 2.1; 2.4). Due to the varying dynamics of the global stage, e.g., the "interest in promoting academic, cultural, social and political ties between countries (especially as the European Union was taking shape); [...] substantial increase in global access to tertiary education; [...] reduced transportation cost" (OECD, 2012), the number of mobile international students pursuing their studies has intensely increased (ref. Chapter 2.3.1). This trend is not an exception in the three countries selected for this study as the USA and Germany are at the forefront of internationalizing higher education as most attractive host countries and as Korean higher institutions take various initiatives to compete academically in the world and to enlarge the number of international students (ref. Chapter 2.3.2). The different contextual developments of the internationalization of higher education in each country were examined to find out the key features, rationales, as well as drivers that sped the process (ref. Chapter 3). By all means, the background literature review confirms the influence that the governmental level policies have on the institutional level strategies. These governmental policies steer the institutional strategies which are also influenced by a larger scheme of regulations and effect related to globalization affecting the national as well as the regional level policies (ref. Chapter 2.4; 3.4).

The subsequent chapter demonstrates the theoretical background of the comparative study of the internationalization of higher education taken (ref. Chapter 4) to investigate the micro-level of the participants of internationalization processes at the everyday

institutional level in the USA, Korea, and Germany. In this process, my own researcher's background (ref. Chapter 4.1) played a significant role in the discussion as micro-level is relevant and at the center of the attention. With reflective stance on the researcher's role, the chosen comparative perspectives were important in investigating discrete individual cases and contextual environments. In addition, this helped in disclosing and understanding diverse types of support for international students at host universities. As to avoid the shortfall of decontextualization (Freitag, 2014, p. 75) when undergoing a comparative study, the essence of the comparative methodology was to examine the similarities that are displayed through subjective perspectives and simultaneously to recognize the fact that differences remain due to individual, regional, national context (ref. Chapter 4.2). Moreover, such comparative perspectives are crucial in order not to retreat to national containers or characteristics and to avoid "searching for the better" (ibid., my translation).

Underlying contributions

Looking at national contexts of three countries in the sector of higher education results in a large scope of data, especially when delving into individual experiences. In this light, the attempt to cover this ample data set and to apply a qualitative research approach is considered particularly meaningful in this study. In order to have individual voices heard, a qualitative research method of applying semi-structured interviews was employed (ref. Chapter 4.4). Such openness goes beyond prescriptive description and reveals interpretation of individual experiences by experts and international students affected by internationalizing universities at the regional as well as the individual level. The experts chosen were mostly staff members of international offices (or similar staff supporting international students) as they have gained responsibilities in internationalizing universities in the last three decades (ref. Chapter 2.1); and the reason was to maintain a coherent source for the institutional level support during the investigation. Sampled experts and international students were selected randomly from the fifteen universities with the highest number of international students in each country (ref. Chapter 4.5). The selected universities are all research institutions that have equivalent degrees of bachelor, master, and advanced research programs. Based on systematical and transparent procedures, the collected interviews were analyzed via qualitative content analysis by Schreier (2012); and the meanings were extracted to generate the main categories and central themes concerning the support at host institutions by experts and international students (ref. Chapter 5.3). The results of the data analysis were taken further by placing the main categories under the central thematic aspects in descriptive matrices to illustrate the comparative perspectives explaining the contexts within (ref. Chapter 5.4).

The main finding was to witness through the insight of international students the importance of social and emotional support related to college culture, which takes place at the local level. By working with the framework of the internationalization of higher education by Jane Knight (2004; 2012, ref. Chapter 2.2) to examine the two areas of institutional support for international students (services and extracurricular activities) by host universities in the USA, Korea, and Germany, the discoveries reveal that the

theory-driven categories of support services are reflected in the interviews of experts and international students of the institutions of the three countries investigated (ref. Chapter 5.3.2). The application of Knight's (2004; 2012) concept bears significance in the light of comparative perspectives to explore the way in which established theory is mirrored in the USA, Korea and Germany regarding the national context (ref. Chapter 2.4). Such stance of "apply[ing], contest[ing], and constructing[ing] educational theories" (Wong & Wu, 2011, p. 197) such as Knight's (2004; 2012) contributes to the knowledge of the current research field of the internationalization of higher education. That is to say, it opens up further awareness in discovering "how local ways of internationalization are emerging, which provide more contextualized, less ['Anglo-American core' (Hsiung, 2012, para. 1) and 'Western European driven' (Bedenlier et al., 2018, p. 128)] understandings of the process of internationalization in East Asia" (Wong & Wu, 2011, p. 197), namely, Korea of this study (ref. Chapter 2.1). Most of all, placing the results side-by-side in matrices allowed not only cross-referencing of the investigated features but also identify contextual national tendencies on the local level that affect the experience of international students. This cross-referencing of the analysis revealed that experiences can be related to each other even though they go beyond national borders and are individual experiences.

Followed by the descriptive results mirrored through authentic voices of the participants (ref. Chapter 6), issues and related implication for practice and knowledge in the field of supporting international students at host universities are highlighted (ref. Chapter 7). The interpretations on the basis of discussions from the interview findings are relevant to numerous topics in the existing research field of the internationalization of higher education (ref. Chapter 7.1; 7.2). It has come to light that the categories and themes, chosen still remain as current as at the time of the present study's data collection. Hence, this study complements a large interview data set of related studies by broadening their spectrum to an international comparative perspective.

The relevance is also provided through the fact that supporting international students means emotional and social support. This emerged based on meta-level inquiries (ref. Chapter 6.9, 6.10). Together with emotional and social support, the features of university life gained a profound attention from experts' and international students' point of view. The experts indicate that strategic approaches need to continue with the leveling of policies affecting the process (ref. Chapter 7.1) as supporting international students is an institution-wide effort with many participants included. As stressed by Otten (2003), "in the end, it is the teacher, the program coordinator, and the student who have to put theory and strategy into daily intercultural practice" (p. 22). Against this perspective, the findings based on the micro-level insights of the actors involved in each institution display the context specific matters which are relevant to the feeling of being supported at host universities for international students that cannot be overlooked. Feelings of emotional and social connectedness emphasize the role of the participants at the university as facilitators of college culture (ref. Chapter 7.2).

Underlying future perspectives

With the aim of progressing and expanding the latter point of discussion of feeling of support related to campus culture, the potential research inquiry involves the question, 'what unique contribution does campus culture have in supporting international students when internationalizing higher education at home in seeking local approaches?' The results from this study entail aspects about opportunities for friendship with domestic students, faculty support, and a welcoming campus culture. Defining what campus culture is and what criteria it possesses considering the historical development of higher education in each national context would be necessary for further investigation. This means extending comparative studies to other contextual forms in varying nations involving the central focus on internationalization at home. In addition, when it comes to local approaches, campus culture could take different forms depending on diverse variables such as different higher education institutions themselves. The features (a city, a suburb) of the location at which the institutions are situated as well as "higher education institutions that are large and small, private and public, secular and faith based, [single-sex and both sex], national and international, for example, would do much to help [. . .] understand how context affects internationalization efforts" (Wong & Wu, 2011, p. 211).

Other methodological decisions that can be included for future research should take account of the voices of actors which could not be covered in this study, namely, the perspectives of the domestic students and faculty members (as well as staff members who are not directly involved in mobility programs), as they are the main vehicles of fostering the environment of university life before international students even arrive. Examining their positions and thoughts on institutions internationalizing and their feeling of contact to international students can provide a broader comprehensive cross-referencing of the issues investigated in this study.

Besides implications made with regard to college culture and methodological approaches, issues also arise in terms of specific issues, which have surfaced in this study. A further aspect to inquire is to what extent reward and incentives affect staff members involved in the process in supporting international students, which was mainly discussed by German experts (ref. Chapter 6.9.1). Another issue to investigate is the role of the peer advisors and their overall impact on supporting international students, especially revealed by Korean universities investigated (ref. Chapter 6.2.3; 7.1.2).

An underlying limitation of the study is that the interviews were carried out during the academic year 2014/15. Nonetheless, the voiced opinions of the future perspectives can be reflected in the latest literature and such expressed perspectives can be an insight when developing institutional approaches and practices. Considering the present day transition of internationalizing universities, the issues stated are still current and pressing matters. As for potential future inquiries in practice, after reflecting upon the findings and interpretation, instead of resorting to the predestined frame with the notion that community or the city has a lot to offer and not so much from the campus, agents supporting international students need to redirect their future perspective that the initial support can start from the campus level. By building on top of the college life structure,

the surrounding communities can supplement the feeling of satisfaction of living and studying as a whole community effort to host international students. Further studies, which examine collaborations of universities and communities, would enhance the understanding of contexts, which affect internationalization efforts at host destinations.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview guide[92] for experts

Briefing: "the interviewer defines the situation for the subject, briefly tells about the purpose of the interview, the use of audio recorder […] and interviewer asks if the subject has any questions before starting the interview"[93]

92 The interview scripts were utilized as a general guide based on a semi-structured interview method to examine topics of the selected deductive categories as well as to broaden the categories inductively (ref. Chapter 4.3 and 4.5.3). The aim was to discover the prescribed categories based on the theoretical framework for this study; nevertheless, the interviewees were encouraged to voice lived experiences related to their weight of their situations and feelings. In addition, the way in which the questions asked differed depending on the pre-investigation of documents of homepages of international offices (ref. Chapter 4.3) before the interviews took place. Such approaches apply to both expert and international student interviews.

93 Kvale, 2007, p. 55.

1. Background	1.1 Which institution or department do you work in? 1.2 What is your role in supporting international students? 1.3 How long have you been working in your position? 1.4 How long have you worked in this area of supporting international students (in general)? 1.5 What kinds of contact do you have with international students?
2[94]. Student support services, i.e., orientation programs, counseling, cross-cultural training, visa advice	2.1[95] Is the international office the main "reference point" for international student support? Are the international student support services centralized or decentralized (supported by university departments and faculties), or by a students' union (collaboration with Student Affairs or similar)? If so, how? 2.2 What kinds of student support services are considered important only for the international students? 2.3 Who is responsible for providing international student support services and how are they organized? • How do the staff members come up with the programs? • Are the offered support services influenced by other countries' concepts? 2.4 Do the support services differ depending on • undergraduate and graduate studies • regular and exchange program? • origins of the students? If so, how? 2.5 How do the international students get the information on the support services or programs? • Website • Email alerts • Handbooks • Social network –Facebook • Newsletter 2.6 What kinds of efforts/support services are given/offered to integrate domestic/national and international students? (related to categories 3,4,5,6, and 7) • In how far do domestic/national students take part in international programs? Do they get extra credits or payment? 2.7 Do you think that most students find the support services helpful?
3. Language competence and support	3.1 Do you think that the language competence students possess on arriving at the host university influence integration (academic success)? If so how? 3.2 What opportunities of language support does the university offer during the course of international students' stay?
4. Peer support groups and programs (excursions)	4.1 What kinds of programs are offered and what kinds of students actively take part?

94 Question categories 2–8 from Knight, 2004; 2012.

95 Kelo & Rogers, 2010, p. 17.

5. Student clubs and associations	5.1 Do you think the university life on home campus influence the life and perspectives of international students? If so how? 5.2 Do you think international students are actively taking part in the student clubs and associations? (if distinctive clubs only for international students exist – how many and how effective do you think they are)?
6. International and intercultural campus events	6.1 How are these events organized (centralized or decentralized or collaboration)? 6.2 How many/Do many national and international students take part in these programs?
7. Liaisons with community-based cultural and ethnic groups	7.1 In how far is the community involved in integrating/supporting international students in the area on campus and around the campus?
8. Support from institution-wide service units i.e. student housing, registriat, fund-raising, alumni, information technology, health services, career services, legal support	8.1 What kinds of career services are provided only for international students such as OPT (Optional Practical Training)?
9. Involvement of academic support units, i.e. library, teaching and learning, curriculum development, faculty and staff training	9.1 Are there programs for faculty and staff training in terms of diversity?
10. Future	10.1 Do you have an institutional overall strategy regarding international student support? 10.2 What is different today than what you were doing years ago in terms of supporting international students?

Debriefing: "before ending the interview by asking if the [participant] student had anything more to say […], and also after the interview by asking [him/] her about [him/] her experience of the interview […]. […] An interview may also be rounded off with the interviewer mentioning some of the main points he or she had learned from the interview"[96]

"'I have no further questions. Is there anything else you would like to bring up, or ask about, before we finish the interview?' [..] The debriefing is likely to continue after the tape recorder has been turned off" (ibid.).

96 Kvale, 2007, p. 56.

Appendix B: Interview guide for international students

1. Background[97]	1.1 Student information Age Gender Nationality Marital status (Do you currently live with your family?) Children On/Off campus housing 1.2 What degree are you currently pursuing? • undergraduate or graduate • regular or exchange program 1.3 What main subject(s) are you studying in the 2014 fall/winter semester? 1.4 How many semesters (including the 2014 fall/winter semester) have you studied the above-mentioned subjects? 1.5 How long have you been at the destination as a student? (Did you arrive just before your study started or did you visit any preparatory courses offered from the university or private institutions (e.g. language course)?) 1.6 At which university/college are your matriculated in the 2014 fall/winter semester? 1.7 Had you studied at another university in (name of the country) previously?
2.[98] Student support services i.e. orientation programs, counseling, cross-cultural training, visa advice	Think of a time when you 2.1. first got accepted to the university 2.1.1 Who was your first contact? 2.1.2 How was the visa application processed? 2.1.3 Which information was given before you left your home country? 2.2 arrived at the destination (university) 2.2.1 How was the housing organized? 2.2.2 How did you come to the university from the airport? Was there a pick-up service from the university? 2.2.3 What kinds of information were provided upon your arrival? 2.3 first started studying and living at the university 2.3.1 Orientation programs 2.3.2 Academic advisor, counselor 2.3.3 Cross-cultural training, workshops 2.4 How do you get the information on the support services? • Website • Email alerts • Handbooks • Social network –Facebook • Newsletter 2.5 Do you think that these support services were helpful? If so how?

97 Questions 1.2-1.7 referenced from a questionnaire for "Foreign Students and Their Experience in Germany." in Isserstedt & Kandulla, 2010, pp. 71–80.

98 Question categories 2–8 from Knight, 2004; 2012.

<table>
<tr><td>3. Language competence and support</td><td>3.1 How was your language competency when you first arrived?
3.2 Did you take any language preparatory courses?</td></tr>
<tr><td>4. Peer support groups and programs (excursions)</td><td rowspan="9">What kinds of support services or programs (in this category) do you use/take part in and do you think they are helpful? If so how?

What kinds of support services or programs are/were most important in terms of your social and cultural integration?

University life
Career services
Legal support, etc.</td></tr>
<tr><td>5. Student clubs and associations</td></tr>
<tr><td>6. International and intercultural campus events</td></tr>
<tr><td>7. Liaisons with community-based cultural and ethnic groups</td></tr>
<tr><td>8. Support from institution-wide service units i.e. student housing, registriat, fund-raising, alumni, information technology, health services, career services, legal support</td></tr>
<tr><td>9. Involvement of academic support units, i.e. library, teaching and learning, curriculum development, faculty and staff training</td></tr>
<tr><td>10. Future/Overall feeling of support</td><td>What kinds of support services were important to you in the beginning of your stay?
What kinds of support services or programs do you use/take part in nowadays that are helpful in making your academic and living life at the host university successful?
How do you evaluate your experience abroad with regard to feeling integrated on campus?</td></tr>
</table>