In the last two decades, international students have become a topic of increasing interest for researchers. The number of articles published in the field has grown rapidly, in an expansion led mainly by higher education institutions and scholars in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Gümüş et al., 2020; Jing et al., 2020). Two prominent publications provide an overview of the research on international student mobility.


The following is a brief list of five major knowledge areas within the reach on international students and essential reading relevant to all international education practitioners and scholars. This foundational reading provides insight into the existing research and scholarship that informs our practice. This list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive and will be adapted and expanded over time.
1. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The process of internationalization of higher education is impacted by various factors, including recruitment and retention of international students. Both developed and developing countries are eager to attract foreign students for a plethora of reasons, including an increase in financial revenue, contributions to economic growth, betterment of university status, tackling of demographic challenges (European Migration Network, 2019). Thus, recruitment and retention of international students is a cornerstone of internationalization efforts for higher education institutions and systems across the globe, and the competition is increasingly fierce to recruit and enroll foreign students.


2. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY

In the context of prevalent policy discussions around the internationalization of higher education, student mobility has received much attention from international organizations, state governments, and higher education institutions. The research on international student mobility has not only grown, but has diversified in terms of countries of origin, methodologies, and points of view (Gümüş et al., 2020). A broadening of the approaches through which international student mobility is studied and analyzed offers policymakers and scholar-practitioners diverse viewpoints to guide their decision-making processes.

3. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES, SATISFACTION, AND ENGAGEMENT

Beyond the efforts deployed to attract international students, higher education institutions have the responsibility to ensure the sustainable success of foreign enrollees in terms of learning outcomes, satisfaction, engagement, involvement, and retention. International students face specific hurdles that can hinder learning experiences and jeopardize outcomes, including degree completion; providing well-adapted academic and socio-economic support can contribute to academic success as well as personal satisfaction and adaptation. Administrators, faculty members, and staff working alongside international students must be appropriately trained, aware, and given the tools to adequately serve and support international students in their academic, social, cultural, and adaptation-related endeavors.
4. ADJUSTMENT, CHALLENGES, AND STRUGGLES INHERENT TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Over the last few decades, challenges inherent to university and college students enrolled in college or university in a foreign country have been well documented. Since international students face a multitude of hurdles in terms of integration, relationship building, acculturation, language acquisition, and adaptation to a new learning environment, close attention to international students’ needs has to be paid by higher education institutions eager to recruit and enroll them. Faculty members ought to be aware of the needs of international students in terms of support and guidance to provide a fruitful and satisfactory learning experience, while HEI administrators and policy-makers must develop and implement support services that can contribute to the successful adaptation and integration of international students on higher education campuses and in host communities.

5. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND POST-GRADUATION RETENTION AND CAREER PROSPECTS

While the benefits of enrolling international students have been well documented in terms of financial apport, contribution to campus diversity, positive impacts on innovation and research, and building of a school personality (Hegarty, 2014), challenges remain for host countries to retain educated and skilled foreign talent beyond graduation. Initiatives to facilitate social integration of international students throughout their studies can lead to the retention of qualified workers into the local workforce (Scott et al., 2015) which is beneficial to host countries.