Expanding Our Understanding of Ethical Considerations in North-South Student Mobility Programs: Insights for Improved Institutional Practice

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ABSTRACT: North-South student mobility programs (including internships as part of academic studies, education abroad, cooperative education, and field schools) offer immense opportunities for fostering cross-cultural understanding, mutual learning, and capacity building for students and partners. Drawing on diverse bodies of literature, we examine perspectives of host institutions and organizations in the Global South and the breadth of ethical considerations to be analysed in North-South student mobility programs, offering considerations for improved institutional practice.

Introduction

International student mobility programs and global education for post-secondary students can provide the next generation of leaders with an important set of skills for

working in a rapidly changing world (Study Group on Global Education, 2017). These 21st-century skills identified by educators, governments, employers and researchers include higher-order and complex thinking skills, deeper learning outcomes and communication skills (Scott, 2015). Additionally, universities recognize the importance of learning abroad for preparing the next generation of leaders for working in a global world, and opportunities for students to develop these 21st-century skills are often identified in higher education internationalization goals and guiding documents (Grantham, this collection; Jorgenson & Schultz, 2012). Students and recent graduates of post-secondary institutions also consider opportunities abroad as valuable training for future employment, offering opportunities to develop skills and/or test a career choice (Tiessen, 2014).

Student mobility programs often take many forms, such as study abroad, cooperative education, field school and so on. The focus of this study is on North-South student mobility, with a particular emphasis on practicum/volunteer/internship placements in development organizations or with community groups in the Global South. North-South student mobility is defined here as Northern-based students travelling to the "Global South" for a range of educational opportunities to study and/or learn practical work and leadership skills through volunteering, experiential learning, cooperative education or "field school" courses. We problematize the terminology North-South as an imperfect framework, as the "the South" is generally understood as a region or part of the world often associated with poverty and/or inequality—countries with low overall Gross National Products (GNP) or ranked in the Human Development Index (HDI) as low-income nations where human development indicators are weak, and rates of poverty, inequality and insecurity are high (Tiessen & Grantham, 2016). The Global South communities that host Northern-based students play an important role in this learning-based model, yet "host communities" and their experiences in North-South mobility programs remain poorly evaluated and understood. Scholarship on international student mobility has focused predominantly on the experiences of the students and the potential skills and competencies learned through this model. In this paper, we examine the growing body of scholarship that has focused on the voices of partners in the Global South who have experience with Northern-based students, interns and volunteers who participate in North-South mobility programs, and their views on ethical practices.

As we learn more about the experiences of hosting northern-based students in North-South student mobility programs, it is clear that experiences vary from one individual or organization/institution to the next. However, several themes emerge from the literature reviewed to date and these themes can be divided into positive or problematic practices. We briefly highlight some of these practices below and the corresponding ethical considerations more fully, particularly in relation to the themes of *non-reciprocity, invisible walls, learning as transaction, exclusion in decision-making and the burden of resources and time*. In so doing, this study offers a comprehensive assessment of the literature on ethical considerations in North-South student mobility programs and also a set of considerations for applying these findings to improved institutional practice.

Literature Review

Research and scholarship on ethical issues in international mobility includes numerous empirical studies on the experiences of students who travel abroad to the Global South. Previously, this scholarship focused on the perceived ethical considerations from the perspective, primarily, of Northern scholars' writing on these programs. Less attention, however, has focused on the now growing body of literature from the perspective of the host communities and partner organizations in the Global South. In this section, we review the existing relevant scholarship and highlight core arguments pertaining to the ethical implications of North-South student mobility programs.

An important starting point in the analysis of the possible benefits of North-South student mobility programs is the finding that partner organizations in the Global South generally appreciate the fresh perspectives and energy that students bring to their organizations, as well as skills transfer, capacity building and relationship building. These benefits are not, however, guaranteed, and critical analysis from several studies highlights important issues that may arise when institutional oversight is weak, students are poorly prepared, pre-departure training is insufficient and/or problematic practices undergirds the program, relationship or educational experience.

Perceived Outcomes

When North-South student mobility is instituted well, several outcomes result. These are summarized below as fostering meaningful connections and capacity building between the Northern institution/student and the host organization/community, writ large.

Creating Meaningful Connections

Heron (2011), for example, lists the benefits of new ideas and knowledge, fresh insights, skills (particularly information technology) and capacity building. Other benefits identified by host partners include opportunities for cross-cultural exchange, learning with and from people with different experiences, access to resources, and reputational benefits and credibility that arise from having foreigners working alongside them.

Similarly, Ortiz Loaiza (2018) argues that the benefits of hosting international volunteers, interns and students include the opportunity to challenge and end stereotypes of Western superiority, thereby diminishing "colonial stereotypes about Europeans as superior to Guatemalans" (p. 26), and also increasing opportunities for connecting with people around the world through social media. Davis (2018) highlights how students, interns and volunteers in Peru can forge deep relationships and foster strong emotional connections with partner staff. Viquez (2018) summarizes the experiences of host organization staff in line with fostering deeper connections that can strengthen communities. These elements of relationship building are important to underscore, as the intangible effects brought through cross-cultural connections are difficult to measure and

can be overlooked in impact assessments. These insights also reinforce the collection of papers presented by Butcher and Einolf (2017), who highlight the impact of international volunteers in promoting solidary and collective spirit.

Capacity Building

Capacity building is also an important feature of the perceived benefits accorded to international volunteers and students engaged in practicum placements. Capacity building is most commonly referenced in relation to computer skills, information technology (Ortiz Loaiza, 2018) and financial skills transfer (Thuo, 2018). Volunteers, interns and students can fill important resource gaps in organizations, as Baxter (2018) highlights in Jamaica, providing an example of how volunteers used their knowledge to develop curricula to be used in schools throughout the country. Nyirenda (2018) and Nalungwe (2018) document examples of capacity building experiences in Malawi and Zambia respectively with references to skills transfer by way of communications, technology training and organizational management. The South African case study by Dullisear (2018) suggests that marketing skills transferred are an important component of the capacity building facilitated by international volunteers and students completing practicum placements abroad.

Connections to social media and online presence in general are seen as skills that students bring to their practicum placements. Thuo (2018) notes that the benefits extend beyond facility with social media and computer applications to the benefits afforded when an "increased online presence brings economic benefits to VROs (Volunteer Receiving Organizations) too, by increasing international awareness and exposure for their organization, thereby generating new sources of funding" (p. 77). The exposure that international volunteers and foreign students bring to India, for instance, are perceived as important for contributing to organizations' international recognition that can result in improved funding opportunities (Rajashree, 2018).

These findings resonate with research on International Volunteer Service in southern Africa that found that volunteers brought new ideas, human resources and credibility that shaped new perspectives, allowing host organizations to see their work through new eyes (Graham et al., 2011).

Problematic Practices

The literature on North-South student mobility has also identified a range of ethically problematic practices. There are five prominent themes that span much of the scholarship: *non-reciprocity, invisible walls, learning as transaction, exclusion in decision-making and the burden of resources and time*. We address each of these themes below.

Non-Reciprocity

Important contributions to the broader study of international volunteer impacts frequently refer to the aspirations of reciprocity in North-South volunteer programs (Lough & Oppenheim, 2017). Indeed, there are often mutual benefits arising from the relationships formed between student interns/volunteers and host organizations through some models of North-South student mobility. However, the idea of reciprocity evokes shared privileges, which is rarely the case in North-South student mobility programs where differences in privilege vary considerably. Reciprocity must remain the goal of student mobility programs. To fully explore the ethical limitations and challenges, it is important to begin with the appropriate analytical framing of North-South student mobility programs. The literature documenting the experiences of partners in the Global South highlights non-reciprocity in detailing inequality of opportunity (Graham et al., 2011; Perold et al., 2013; Tiessen, 2018).

In her assessment of international service learning, Larkin raises questions about the way North-South student mobility programs can dehistoricize their political impact on host communities and thereby reproduce unequal relationships (Larkin, 2015). The arrival of a group of students to undertake a community project can reinforce the perception that the recipient communities are needy, have no assets and require assistance from 'abroad', all of which can have a disabling effect on community members and can foster resentment (Epprecht, 2004; Sharpe & Dear, 2013; Tiessen & Heron, 2012a).

Programs that operate on Western ideas of justice can also be problematic in contexts that consider justice through a community lens (Larkin, 2015). Uncritical approaches to one form of North-South student mobility—international service learning—frequently determine assumed needs of communities as service projects, unwittingly reinforcing paternalism as they work to position the Global North as a site of knowledge (Larkin, 2015). As such, education abroad or international experiential learning programs work in a way that often maintains asymmetrical power dynamics, reifying colonial ideas of host communities as "others" in need of saving (Sharpe, 2015). These experiences of inequality can be understood through the lens of power and privilege accorded to those coming from the Global North. Nonetheless, without an explicit focus on solidarity, the power dynamics remain intact.

Northern universities and their partners must therefore find ways to mitigate the most significant barrier between North-South student mobility participation (the learners and the community partners): the one-sided power and privilege experienced by Global North participants (Busher, 2014). If not carefully managed, some placements may also perpetuate harmful stereotypes of host cultures, reinforcing binaries that "other" the host communities (Simpson, 2004; Larkin, 2015; Sharpe, 2015). Unequal relations are harmful to both the volunteer and the host organization/community because they compromise student learning opportunities, educational outcomes, mutual impacts and program effectiveness. We argue that programs should be designed and delivered with reciprocity

and mutuality of benefits between institutions in mind, a point to which we return later in this paper.

Invisible Walls

A second critical insight examined in the review of literature pertains to the invisible walls constructed between students abroad and the communities they observe and/or engage with. This analysis arises from critical scholarship pointing to the way North-South student mobility programs can serve to objectify host communities in the Global South by way of, for example, students who adopt a tourist gaze and who are given spaces of retreat from the reality of the host country (Sharpe, 2015). In Sharpe's analysis of an education abroad class she co-instructed during 2010 in Cuba, she notes that her class was able to experience familiar comforts such as enjoying buffets, televisions, email, a high frequency of showers—all non-Cuban spaces—that were made available to students. These comforts operated to distance Sharpe and the students from Cuba, to study *about* the country, thereby reinforcing Cuba as an object (2015). Ogden (2008) offers a similar assessment of international education from an anthropological perspective. He employed the term "colonial student" to describe one that seldom ventures far from the safe space of the veranda when engaged in education abroad and therefore limits their potential for intercultural learning while abroad. The tourist gaze serves to reinforce unethical relations of inequality in which international students see themselves as apart from the society in which they are meant to integrate. Rather than building cross-cultural skills and learning from and with each other, groups of students that travel abroad together rarely venture outside their bubbles of similarity; instead they experience the host country through the eyes and interpretations of other North-South mobility students in their quest to understand "the other" (Tiessen, 2018).

Furthermore, while students may have good intentions, referred to as "ethical desires," they can become disrupted by culturally specific manifestations of difference (Larkin, 2015) if care is not taken to understand the context. Larkin recounts her observations of international service-learning students in Tanzania who began to withdraw from their host communities upon experiencing discomfort from racialized difference. These students became increasingly stressed by the local community members who referred to them as *mzungus*, an ambiguous term steeped in complex histories of colonialism. This was further compounded when youth from the school where the international service-learning students were placed began to ask for material goods like iPhones and cameras, as well as trips to national parks. Instead of becoming reflexive and approaching these difficulties with honesty, the students became resentful and withdrawn. Students who are under-or-ill-prepared for placements, who lack critical consciousness about their privilege and who disengage when moments of discomfort arise, miss opportunities for personal growth and opportunities to forge more ethical relationships with their host communities (Larkin, 2015).

Learning as Transaction

Education abroad has been criticized as being consumer-driven (Sharpe, 2015) and may function to amplify the student-as-consumer ideology, a theme that is echoed in the volunteer-abroad literature (Georgeou & Engel, 2011). Universities also play a role in this global commerce, especially as institutional leaders are increasingly called upon to internationalize their campuses through study abroad. With the shift to student-as-consumer perspectives of higher education, the benefits of student mobility programs may rest squarely in the interests of the Canadian (or more broadly, Northern) students, contributing to the one-directional benefits accrued through these programs. In order to achieve more ethically based North-South student mobility programs, partnerships between organizations in the North and South should strive to be mutually beneficial (Ouma & Dimaras, 2004). For instance, in the case study of Daisy's Eye Cancer Fund in Kenya examined by Ouma & Dimaras (2004), sustained research connections between several faculty members at the University of Toronto and the NGO allowed for impact and accountability beyond the scope of individual student placements at the organization.

The culture of transaction must also be understood in the context of pre-formed impressions of the kind of experience anticipated by Global North participants and preconceived ideas about other cultures that are often based on an amalgamation of past exposures. Martha Johnson (2009) writes that the search for "authentic" or "real" experiences unintentionally often conflates with ideas of the "indigenous," to problematic effect (p. 184). Such assumptions can be productively addressed through opportunities for structured reflection and dialogue, while failing to reflect could result in isolation or an inability to successfully process the international service learning abroad (Johnson, 2009). It is imperative to help students participating in North-South mobility programs to identify and address their attitude of "student as consumer" because it provides a learning opportunity to interrogate their power, privilege and entitlement (Larkin, 2015) and the institutionalization of such reflective processes is crucial. Direct supervision, ongoing supervisor-student contact and guided reflective learning opportunities are valued options for this form of transformative learning (Lough, 2009).

Furthermore, students can experience cognitive dissonance when the realities on the ground do not match their expectations—i.e. having paid to access a certain type of experience, students can sometimes act more like "clients" and behave like consumers of services (Heron, 2011), perpetuating the neoliberal logic of many North-South student mobility programs. The learning-as-transaction analysis helps us understand the consumption of opportunity, or experience as an exchange, resulting from views of entitlement of students when fees for participation are paid.

Exclusion in Decision Making

The design of programs, length of stay or selection of participants in North-South student mobility programs rarely, if ever, rest with the host communities in the Global

South. Screening and vetting takes place in the Global North, if screening is done at all. Lack of the host community's or partner organization's involvement in participant selection reinforces the inequitable relationship between North and South and raises questions of how to establish the right "fit" between student and host institution. Indeed, finding the right individual is central to North-South student mobility success.

As research on the views of host organizations shows, students may not be adequately screened and/or prepared for their time abroad. Much of the literature on North-South student mobility highlights the importance of careful student selection (Ouma & Dimaras, 2004; Sherraden, Lough, & McBride, 2008; Comhlamh, 2008). The selection and preparation must be carried out by the sending-institutions and the receiving-institutions and organizations (Ouma & Dimaras, 2004). Receiving institutions and organizations may not always have equal power in deciding who their participants will be (Sherraden et al., 2008) and host organizations may have little control over which students are accepted into their programs or practicum placements (Baxter, 2018; Dullisear, 2018; Ortiz Loaiza, 2018; Perold et al., 2013). This has the potential to characterize the student mobility industry as mostly driven by supply (Perold et al., 2013; Waldorf, 2001). The impact for host organizations might include agreeing to facilitate practicum or volunteer placements without considering the cost of human—and in some cases financial—resources necessary to manage the volunteers (Perold et al., 2013). The reality that host communities and partner organizations rarely participate in selection of student candidates exemplifies the failure to enact principles of active engagement, participation and ownership of the process.

Burden of Resources and Time

Hosting students through North-South mobility programs can be resource intensive and time consuming. Often, Southern partners have an unequal responsibility to allocate substantial resources for transportation, accommodation, translation, security and supervision of short-term volunteers (Heron, 2011), which could divert resources away from the organization carrying out their services and negatively impact their reputation with local communities (Sherraden et al., 2008). Longer stays could potentially balance out these negative effects (Heron, 2011) while greater efforts to avoid the inefficiencies of unskilled volunteers (Waldorf, 2001) could improve the experiences of the host communities.

Additionally, the presence of Northern students that need to be supported during their integration into the organization and into the community, and who often need to be protected and entertained, can be a drain on community resources (Heron, 2011). In other words, the responsibilities of the host country partners include finding and placing students in appropriate accommodations, providing in-country orientation sessions for cultural and personal transition and adjustments, identifying the mandate of the interns/volunteers/students and supervising and supporting them (AUCC, 2014). Vande Berg (2009) demonstrates the importance of individual support during the overseas stay to help the students make sense

of their experience. With the responsibility of fulfilling all of those requirements, the arrival of a group of students in a small community can thus require the contribution of several community members and represent a drain on scarce resources (Sharpe & Dear, 2013). The community also has to invest at an emotional level to get to know the students, and there are monetary costs associated with the constant flow of students coming into the community for short-term placements.

The above ethical issues identify specific challenges, particularly relevant when North-South student mobility programs are not effectively executed. Naming the ethical issues in relation to the problematic practices allows the discourse to focus on lived experiences—a necessary first step before engaging in aspirational thinking of what "could be" in terms of goals of reciprocity. These problematic practices aptly demonstrate the need for improved programming, the adequate preparation of participants and the importance of relationship and partnership building.

The ethical challenges that correspond to these problematic practices noted above can be minimized or exacerbated through existing institutional arrangements. The higher education sector needs to gain a deeper understanding of the effects of these unequal power relations between the Northern and Southern partners and the communities that host students. Failure to acknowledge and pay attention to the ways to mitigate potentially harmful impacts can result in negative outcomes for all partners and parties involved (Epprecht, 2004).

If student mobility programs ignore contextual forces, which include unfamiliar worldviews and the tendency to homogenize host communities according to students' understanding of justice, they will become problematic. Students may furthermore remain resistant to difference (Larkin, 2015). Along these lines, Perold et al. (2013) found that volunteers who are ignorant of the complexities of global issues affecting socioeconomic realities in the countries they serve can further reinforce ideas of inequality, concluding that the relationship between volunteers and host partners could be improved through better dialogue between partner institutions, as well as through better pre-departure preparation, a finding that is confirmed by research conducted by other scholars (Drolet, 2014; Desrosiers & Thomson, 2014; Dean & Jendzurski, 2013; MacDonald, 2014; Lough, 2009; Tiessen, 2018; Tiessen, Lough, & Cheung, 2018; Thomas & Chandrasekera, 2014; and Travers, 2014, to name a few). Similar conclusions can be drawn in the examination of North-South student mobility programs where improved institutional partnerships, dialogue, pre-departure and ongoing reflection processes can reduce some of the ethical challenges cited above. The importance of effective and comprehensive ethics-oriented pre-departure training has been addressed in a large and growing body of literature. Intensive pre-departure training is necessary for advanced intercultural communication and deep reflection during the student's international experience.

Building Ethical Partnerships with Host Communities in the Global South: The Role of Global North Post-Secondary Institutions

To build more ethically based North-South student mobility programs and to better prepare students for learning abroad programs in order to mitigate some of the challenges identified above, post-secondary institutions could consider improved partnerships and communications around the learning experience. Developing a process by which both the sending institution and the host community/partner organization work together to develop the pre-departure sessions, the immersive experience and the re-entry debriefing programs can play an important role in addressing ethical issues. Karim-Haji (2016), in her work on The Aga Khan University's International Internship Programme, observes that jointly planning and developing inclusive materials and practices and having a seat at the table around planning of internship opportunities has opened up a channel of communication between receiving communities and sending universities, which has not only helped address many ethical issues up front but has also improved the overall experience of all parties involved. In piloting this new model of partnership, host communities and sending institutions are not only able to better prepare and engage students, but also able to have a better understanding of the realities on the ground including ethical dilemmas, key challenges and potential opportunities, not to mention developing an enabling environment (see Karim-Haji, 2016).

Karim-Haji, Roy, and Gough (2016) in their report *Building Ethical Global Engagement with Host Communities: North-South Collaborations for Mutual Learning and Benefit* summarize the many considerations for improving ethical practice in North-South student mobility. Some of the core strategies identified in this report include improving parameters for the program and sending institution as well as fostering students' awareness and mindfulness so as to facilitate their receptivity and openness to learning in new ways. Other strategies include encouraging students to engage from a position of solidarity and to employ a model of "authentic allies" (Thomas & Chandresekara, 2014), as well as instilling a commitment among students to actively pursue pathways of change when they return home. Through these processes, students begin to understand complicity and the implications of their privilege without speaking on behalf of their counterparts (Kapoor, 2004). Finally, the ongoing self-reflexive process—for both the host community/partner organization and the university, at all stages of the mobility program—is essential (Karim-Haji, Roy, & Gough, 2016; Tiessen, 2018).[1]

Appropriate behaviour—including a range of practical ethical guidelines, such as dressing appropriately for work, acting respectfully and being sensitive to different cultural norms and expectations—are important starting points for improved ethical preparation and excellent entry points for deeper discussions of cultural sensitivity. For example,

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[1] For more information about characteristics of ethical practice see
http://international.uwo.ca/pdf/Ethical Engagement Guide_2016.pdf

discussions about proper attire provide opportunities to consider the significance of organizational reputation and how the reputation of the organization or community is tied to colonial continuities.

Improved pre-departure training, combined with comprehensive supervision and direction throughout the program and comprehensive reflective exercises upon return (see Tiessen & Kumar, 2013), facilitate deeper critical reflection of the student's positionality and privilege as well as more careful scrutiny of impact on the host community.

Post-secondary institutions can also consider the way that North-South student mobility programs are advertised and marketed. Many stereotypes are created and reinforced through specific kinds of imagery and the language used to promote North-South mobility programs. The implications of simplifying Africa through images of wildlife or black children fosters simplistic or paternalistic ideas about the communities where students may be placed, the people they will meet and the work they may do. Such discourse and imagery reduces the Global South to tropes of poverty and helplessness and perpetuates perceptions of a monolithic Africa, wiping away the great diversity of its peoples and cultures. It is important that notions of "general poverty" be repoliticized to the understanding that many problems and failures of the "monolithic" Africa only serves to blame the struggles of colonization on the colonized (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Yet, universities struggle to find images that are appropriate while equally attractive and effective for recruiting participants. At the very least, universities can collaborate with communities to select images that best reflects on the content and context of the educational opportunity, and pre-departure training can begin with the deconstruction of these images as a starting point for creating realistic expectations of programs.

Relatedly, post-secondary institutions might consider the organizations they partner with in North-South student mobility programs. By way of example, if universities are interested in working with service providers to expand their program offerings, they ought to be certain that the service provider does not employ problematic images and messages to recruit participants. Universities should have an obligation to work with these service providers to ensure appropriate pre-departure training, thereby decreasing the burden of orientation on partner organizations and host communities. Several guides can be used to ensure ethical practices in deciding which organizations are considered appropriate partner organizations (see for example Karim-Haji et al., 2016; Duarte, 2015; Hartman, 2016).

A third area of consideration stems from the limited preparation and guidance provided to students engaged in research projects in the Global South. Mindfulness of the potential for exploitation of host communities through the extraction of data adds another dimension to the institutional responsibility of universities to ensure students engage in ethical practices beyond the completion of the research ethics board application. Broader ethical issues of power and inequality also factor into the research process. Post-secondary institutions can foster increasingly reciprocal partnership arrangements with institutions in the Global South to facilitate research opportunities focused on research *with* rather than

research *on* communities in the Global South, facilitating two-way research collaborations that build on the locally based needs of the host communities. Other learning opportunities may include online courses whereby students from the Global South are able to learn and solve problems collaboratively through e-classrooms with their peers in the Global North.

Charting a Course Forward: Improved Institutional Support for North-South Student Mobility Programs

How do these findings inform our analysis of North-South student mobility programs and the potential for harm or unintended consequences by Northern-based institutions? What requires re-consideration and what must be taken more seriously by post-secondary institutions and sending organizations in Canada? The following core recommendations speak to the range of ethical considerations and appropriate strategies required to ensure mutually reciprocal, ethically-based North-South student mobility. Many of these considerations require greater depth and analysis at the institutional level and in pre-departure training, ongoing reflection and debriefing sessions with students. Some of these strategies also require a re-orientation of the nature of the partnership arrangements between institutions in the Global North and organizations and communities in the Global South.

The ethical considerations presented in this paper highlighted the large and growing scholarship on the nature of inequality of opportunity and systemic disequilibrium between the Global North and Global South. Recognizing the (usually) free movement of Global North students is an important starting point. For many international students who may wish to study in Canada or partner organizations that wish to collaborate in Canada, the opportunities to obtain visas and resources for a reciprocal arrangement are scarce (Mau, Gulzau, Laube, & Zaun, 2015). The two-way flow of students and staff through partnership agreements is often limited to the independent resources that individual students and institutions have, favouring those from the Global North, resulting in unidirectional knowledge transfer and the reinforcement of hegemonic ethnocentrism (Andreotti, 2014). Several prominent themes emerged from the review of the literature and we organized these critiques as: *non-reciprocity, invisible walls, learning as transaction, exclusion in decision-making and the burden of resources and time*. These themes offer a necessary backdrop from which to consider alternative approaches and to reflect on the role of post-secondary institutions in charting the course for ethical global engagement by way of institutional partnerships, programmatically and for individual students.

There are many ways to ensure that gains, benefits and positive outcomes are experienced by the students who go abroad *and* by the host organization staff and communities who receive them. A first step in this process is providing opportunities for the host organization(s), and their respective personnel and community members, to express their desires for mutuality of benefits. These benefits, for example, may take the form of collaboration on writing projects and grant applications, English language

mentorship for youth in the community, social media and other technology support, and so on. Other learning outcomes that can contribute to improved cross-cultural understanding, solidarity and social justice can involve working with local communities to fight for justice at home and abroad (see Langdon & Agyeyomah, 2014).

Concentrating explicitly on skills and career-related outcomes puts the focus of student mobility exclusively on the benefits acquired by students from the Global North, with little regard for host community needs and aspirations. Local expertise from the Global South should be leveraged to enhance the educational aspect of international experiential learning to improve mutual benefit and enhance the partnership. Other ways to shift the overemphasis of career development in North-South student mobility programs may include intentionally partnering students from the Global North with students from the Global South for research or project work, requiring students from the Global North to raise funds to contribute to the project without burdening the local community, and ensuring that projects goals are defined by the host organization.

Addressing power relations—along the lines of alternative strategies that involve greater participation of partners and mutuality of benefits—provides all parties with an opportunity to explore the possible asymmetry that may exist in the partnership. In the process of achieving loftier goals, there are also practical strategies that can be implemented in the short term, such as listening deeply to the needs of the community during the development of the mobility program, sharing and co-creating pre-departure training workshops and debriefing sessions, invoking local gatekeepers to serve as cultural informants during the mobility program and compensating them for their time appropriately (see also value-add propositions for host communities in Karim-Haji et al., 2016).

Improved pre-departure training, ongoing direction and support during the program and return orientation debriefing sessions are practical strategies that can address some of the ethical considerations examined in this paper. These opportunities for critical reflection and deep analysis enable students to reflect on practical ethical questions of gift-giving, for instance, as well as deeper ethical issues about privilege and the historical, political, social and economic circumstances that facilitate opportunities for those with privilege. Students require opportunities to reflect on their privilege of resources, access to bursaries, education, time and flexibility, freedom from responsibilities to family, etc. as core to the nature of their opportunity abroad. The reflection process encourages students to think outside of simplistic notions of being "lucky" to be born Canadian (or in the Global North) to understanding how privilege is rooted in—and reproduced through—systemic and structural inequalities, historical processes such as colonization, and neocolonialism.

Students may encounter ethical challenges for which they are inadequately prepared, and they may have limited opportunities for an in-depth learning experience where they can critically reflect on their experiences in light of ethical issues. The purpose of this paper was to synthesize existing scholarship and to bring in the experiences of host

communities and partner organizations from the Global South to more fully explore the ethical considerations central to improving student participation, as well as to enhancing institutional partnerships.

The ethical issues identified in this paper thereby lay the foundation for better preparation of students and could form the basis of pre-departure training, on-site learning and development and re-entry programming, with implications for advertising and promotional materials used in the marketing of North-South student mobility programs. Institutions may negatively perpetuate some of the ethical issues noted above by reinforcing problematic and stereotyped images or language (for example, images may perpetuate tropes of white, Western "saviours" aiding poor, black children, thereby denying agency and capacity of locally-based individuals dedicated to development and social justice in their own communities). Institutions can also invest in stronger collaborative relations with partner institutions to ensure greater mutuality, strengthened research collaborations and shared learning.

Ethical issues arise not only in student interactions with host communities but are also central to reciprocal and mutual relationships between sending institutions and host communities. The recognition of asymmetrical power dynamics, respect for local knowledge and ways of knowing, mutual accountability and the approach that all members of the team are learning, serves to counter the traditional approach of focusing on the Global North and the needs of the students from these respective countries. Strong local leadership addresses unethical representation and exploitation as research participants, and directly engages the views and voice of the host community. Just as hyper self-reflexivity (Langdon & Agyeyomah, 2014) is required of students, sending institutions must also develop ongoing self-reflexive practices to engender more equitable partnerships in the quest for reciprocity and mutual benefit.

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Robert Gough is the Director of International Internships and Development at Western University. In 2002, in response to the AIDS pandemic, Bob was instrumental in creating the Western Heads East program, a collaboration between Western staff, students, faculty and African partners using probiotic yogurt social enterprises to empower women while bringing health to their communities. He rallied the support of the Western community to raise start-up funds for the first community kitchen in Mwanza, Tanzania where the GR-1 bacteria (developed at Western University) builds immune response for people living with HIV/AIDS, reduces diarrhea, improves maternal and child health, removes environmental toxins from the body, and improves nutrition and food security. Today there are more than 200 kitchens in Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Rwanda reaching more than 250,000 people. Learning from his work with student interns and community partners in East Africa sparked Bob's interest to pursue a master's degree in Comparative and International Education at Western University, conducting research into student perspective transformation, and pursuing mutual and reciprocal relationships in Global North and South partnerships.