MOTIVATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

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International collaborations in social work education are increasing without an adequate understanding of what motivates them, and what sorts of outcomes they produce. The existing research on such collaborations has often focused on examining collaborations only from the perspective of those in Europe and North America. This study presents the results of in-depth qualitative interviews with a sample of 25 individuals representing students, faculty, and administrators at two case study pairs of social work institutions. In each case study, one of the institutions is located in the Midwestern United States, and the other in West Africa. The study utilized an integrated theoretical framework including elements of critical theory, social network analysis, and the theory of collaborative advantage. Results show significant differences in motivations for the pursuit of international collaborations between individuals at various levels within institutions and by the type and location of institutions. Institutions use international collaboration in order to compete both locally and globally for students, faculty, and resources. Students are motivated to pursue international collaborations in order to develop themselves and their professional opportunities. The results suggest that more attention needs to potential differences in motivations for collaboration, and to the models social worker use to pursue them.

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

CSWE	Council on Social Work Education
FICSW	First International Conference on Social Work
SICSW	Second International Conference on Social Work
IASSW	International Association of Schools of Social Work
ICSW	International Council on Social Welfare
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers
NASW	National Association of Social Workers
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This study examines institutional motivations for international collaborations in social work education. Much of the literature on international collaborations in social work education has been written in the last few decades, but such collaborations have a long history within social work. In many ways international collaborations formed the bedrock of the profession as we know it today. This chapter offers a brief overview of the role international collaboration has played in social work since the profession began in order to provide background for the study. The history of international social work is sometimes characterized in the literature as having three "waves." The first came at the end of the 19th and early 20th century, the second after WWII, and the third with the rise of globalization (Borrits & Rasmussen, 2006; Trygged, 2010). Each wave will be briefly considered for lessons which might help explain and guide the current expanding wave of international interest (Healy, 2008; Johnson, 2004). The following section examines two of the seminal moments of the first wave, the First and Second International Conferences on Social Work.

The First Wave

Social work as a profession emerged in Europe in the mid to late 1800s. Some authors pinpoint Amsterdam in 1899, with the emergence of the first formalized educational efforts in social work (Estes, 2009). Early on, the profession benefitted from international collaborative activity. For example, Jane Addams' visit to Toynbee Hall in London in June of 1888 resulted in the formation of the Hull House in Chicago in September of the following year, and a later visit to the Russian writer Leo Tolstoy influenced how services were delivered at Hull House for years to come (Addams, 1912).

The literature frames the first wave of international collaborative activity as primarily centered on recognizing social problems and developing professional recognition and education (Borrits & Rasmussen, 2006). Some of this knowledge sharing was done at pioneering international conferences. The First International Conference of Social Work (FICSW) in Paris in 1928 was the culmination of many years of organizing and exchange among social workers from around the globe (FICSW, 1929). It was held as part of the larger International Social Welfare Fortnight in Paris from July 8-13, 1928 (1929, p. 7). The social work conference was the largest draw of the wider Fortnight, bringing together 2,481 delegates from 42 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. The conference received immense support from both governmental and private sectors (FICSW, 1929). In addition, Eilers (2003) notes that "the very list of participants reads like a 'Who is who' of European and international representatives of social work" (p. 120). Conference members, not all of whom were able to attend, included Jane Addams, Mary Richmond, Edith and Grace Abbott, Dr. Richard Cabot, Edward Devine, Homer Folks, John Lapp, Julia Lathrop, Porter Lee and Lillian Wald (1929, p. 130-139).

It is impossible to understand an event like the FICSW apart from its position within the wider scope of world history (Hering & Waaldijk, 2003). The conference came at a time when the Great War, what the United States' President Woodrow Wilson and others referred to as "the war to end all wars" (Knock, 1992), was receding from view but still very much felt. It was perched at the end of the roaring 20s, with the economic catastrophe epitomized by "Black Tuesday" in October of 1929 still more than a year away. The conference proceedings reflect this unique position (FICSW, 1929). There is a sober recognition of the effects of the Great War on the social welfare of millions around the globe, particularly from the German delegation. However, there is also a tremendous optimism for the future of the world, and for the role of the

League of Nations and other international bodies, an emphasis which is echoed in the second wave's emphasis on working collaboratively with the United Nations to expand social work education and services (Trygged, 2010).

At the FICSW there were a number of debates about social work definitions, which foreshadowed debates in recent years about the universal or indigenous nature of the profession (Gray & Allegritti, 2002; Gray & Coates, 2010; Gray, 2005, 2010; Healy, 2007, 2007; Yunong & Xiong, 2008; Rankopo & Osei-Hwedie, 2011; Yan & Cheung, 2006). Indeed, an entire days' plenaries were devoted to defining social work. Social work was defined broadly, but in perhaps universal terms, as including:

> … any effort aiming to relieve any kind of suffering due to poverty, to allow individuals and families to regain normal living conditions, to prevent social hardship, to improve social conditions and living conditions with the help of social services… (FICSW, 1929, p. 174).

The Second International Conference on Social Work (SICSW) was held in Frankfurt from July 10-14, 1932. The growing global economic crisis of the 1930s made the second conference a smaller affair, with 1,200 delegates from 34 nations. Conference proceedings reflect a shift in emphasis, from initiating collaboration and defining the profession to consideration of the more practical theme of social work and the family, focusing on issues such as a minimum wage, broken families, child removal from the home, and "alien families and children" (SICSW, 1933).

Themes from the first conferences

This section identifies five themes drawn from reports and plenaries at both conferences related to the role that international collaborations played in discussions on how to operationalize the broad definition of social work around the globe during this

first wave. The first major theme was cross-disciplinary collaborations. The FICSW brought together a wide range of professions and disciplines. In his opening remarks conference chairman Paul Strauss (1929) was adamant that the future of international efforts in the social work arena necessitated such a broad and interdisciplinary approach, speaking on “the necessity of unity between all our organizations” and “the danger of dissociating our efforts” (p. 143). Similarly, the preface of the SICSW (1933) "stressed the need of developing and coordinating the activities of the medical, public health, and welfare services" (p. XVIII).

A second major theme centered on the necessity of international collaborations that transcended cultures and contexts while still respecting them. At the FICSW, M. Draudt, the Vice President of the League of Red Cross Societies, stressed that, “There is much talk today of internationalism; but there can be no genuine and fruitful international work if the understanding and respect of essentially national values are not retained” (1929, p. 154). The president of the FICSW, Dr. Alice Masarykova, stressed similar themes, warning against “dangerous indecisions which make us ask: Should I be either… national or international, eastern or western?” (1929, p. 155). It is clear that a move to focus on international social work was not intended to replace or usurp the role of work at the national level, and indeed that patriotism and engagement with one’s own nation equipped one for international endeavors. As Dr. Masarykova (1929) stated it, “A nation true to its soil and traditions has the capacity to give to other nations as well as to draw from them” (p. 156).

A third theme centered on increasing professionalism in social work education. Virtually all of the country reports at the FICSW mentioned a lack of properly trained social workers, especially given the post-war need in many European societies (Hering & Waaldijk, 2003). In

particular, representatives mentioned that as social work professionalized, and moved away from models of charity and volunteerism, there was a need for more formalized education. Representing the newly minted nation of Turkey, Dr. Hussameddin and Dr. Ismael (1929) made similar points, stating, "mere goodwill is no longer sufficient to make a good social service worker" (p. 531). These concerns led to the founding of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW). The SICSW met alongside a meeting of the IASSW, headed by founder Alice Salomon.

A fourth theme, and one of the conferences' central purposes, was personal relationships. The FICSW Constitution stated, "The aim of the International Conference is to facilitate personal contacts, to provide for exchange of information and to promote discussion among social workers and social agencies throughout the world" (1929, p. 23). A summary of the closing meeting stated in eloquent terms that "the most tangible result lay in the personal relations which had been established between those taking part in the Congress" (1929, p. 170-171), a theme which was echoed at the SICSW in closing remarks by Dr. Polligkeit,

> The delegates have had the satisfaction of being able to enter into personal contact with colleagues from other lands. Those who read the account of our labours will probably arrive at the conclusion that we talked a great deal but achieved little.... We must consider ourselves fortunate in having thrown light on certain problems and defined our responsibilities. (SICSW, 1933, p. 705)

Finally, both conferences recognized to varying degrees the urgency of the need for international collaboration. Eglantyne Jebb prepared a speech for the conference that she was never able to give, having fallen ill and ultimately dying soon after the conference was over. Her presentation, offered in her absence, is one of the most powerful of the conference. She states

the “problem of international relationship is one of the most urgent confronting us today” (1929, p. 637). The social problems that Jebb saw around the globe were not national problems; they were problems of globalization. She notes that “the very daily bread of the average man depends upon the work and prosperity of his fellows in distant, unknown lands” (p. 638) and goes on to say that “If it is an international social evil, if it springs from international causes, then surely its solution must lie along international lines” (p. 654). The SICSW (1933) noted “The failure of governments and of public and private bodies to recognise the international character of the problems of the alien and the natural tendency of many agencies to treat these problems primarily from a national point of view” (p. 657).

Social work at the time of the FICSW was a profession in ascendency, being built up from scratch through international collaborations. Paul Strauss (1929) proclaimed that, “There is room everywhere for social work” (p. 596). There were debates about the scope of social work, what amount of services was too much, or might create dependency, but the predominant position seemed to be that social work would “accept no doctrine of a saturation point in giving so long as the distribution of wealth is so largely determined by those into whose hands the great gains come” (1929, p. 591). It was assumed that the conference would naturally lead to cooperation and collaboration around the globe to end a wide variety of social problems. As Homer Folks put it, the only question was how long it would take for the “leaven to permeate the lump” (1929, p. 636).

At the SICSW, the American delegation noted that at the FICSW "We were conscious of participating in a movement which had momentum that seemed to assure steady advance," but that they came "to Frankfurt from a background of acute economic depression" (SICSW, 1933, p. 21). Global depression dampened hopes for an easy end to a variety of societal ills (SICSW,

1933). A third conference was held in London in 1936 before international collaborative efforts were interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War.

Second Wave

After World War II, a second wave of internationalism in social work emerged (Borrits & Rasmussen, 2006), with a prominent, but also problematic, role for the United States. The post-war position of the United States as a global super-power and the development of the United Nations contributed to the exportation of U.S. social work perspectives, practices, and curricula around the world (Razack, 2002; Trygged, 2010, p. 253). The professional literature presents this period as the exportation of a largely clinical, individualistic, psycho-pathological approach to countries and cultures like South Africa where some argue the role of community and collective decision-making were more important (Caragata & Sanchez, 2002; Dominelli, 2004; Sewpaul, 2003). The social work profession still has not adequately addressed this "legacy of opportunistic and shameful experiences in the international domain" (Dominelli, 2004, p. 89).

In addition to a focus on what would be later termed academic imperialism (Haug, 2005; Gray, 2005), this second wave lacked some of the enthusiasm for international efforts exhibited in the first. In the United States particularly, interest shifted after World War II from international collaboration to matters at home. Prominent social workers were less likely to be committed internationalists, and more likely to be involved with domestic issues like the Civil Rights movement, urban America, and the War on Poverty (Boyle & Cervantes, 2000).

There were, however, many important contributions from the second wave. Collaborative activity in social work benefitted from a wave of national independences that swept the developing world (Midgley, 2001). For example, the Sixth International Conference in 1952 was the first held outside of Europe, in the city of Madras (now Chennai) in the newly

independent India (Seventh, 1955, p. ii). The 10th Conference, held in 1961, had attendees from Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sudan (Tenth, 1961, p. 312). Partially as a result of these conferences, social work as a profession expanded into some of these new contexts.

The second wave also benefited from the formation of the United Nations. The IASSW, IFSW, and International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW) would all obtain formal consultative status with the UN in the decades following World War II (IASSW, IFSW & ICSW, 2012). One of the major roles for (mostly European and North American) social workers internationally during this time was consulting with newly independent nations through various agencies within the UN (Healy, Asamoah & Hokenstad, 2003).

Conferences continued to play important roles in shaping the profession's international collaborative efforts, particularly around education. CSWE sponsored a 1956 task force with the goal of defining international social work and also cosponsored several important curriculum development conferences on international social work in the 1960s (Estes, 2009). The Fifth International Conference on Social Work returned to Paris in July of 1950 in order to reestablish the "tradition of international meetings," after smaller affairs had been held in Brussels in 1946, the Haugue in 1947, and New York in 1948 (Fifth, 1950, p. 21). It paid homage to the FICSW, noting, "It was at this conference that the international significance of social work was first established" (Fifth, 1950, p. 9).

The Fifth Conference focused broadly on social work's "boundaries and content" (1950, p. 11). The proceedings note the participation of members from the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and International Labour Organization (ILO) "proving the esteem in which they hold the International Conference of

Social Work" (1950, p. 20). Proceedings from the Seventh Conference note that the Fifth "emphasized the role of social work as a reconciling and liberating influence in the world" (Seventh, 1955, p. ii). The dominance of clinical models of social work during the second wave was addressed at several of the international conferences during this time period. The proceedings of the 10th conference, held in Rome in 1961, note that "social workers have become experts in helping the individual adjust to society" but questioning whether social workers "have sufficient influence – do they have *any* influence – on the social policies adopted by our governments" (1961, p. 16). The interplay between international collaborations in social work and policy will be examined further in the next chapter.

Third Wave

The first wave of international collaboration focused on recognizing social problems and developing professional education, and the second on cooperating with the work of the United Nations and the potentially inappropriate exportation of clinical models. The current third wave, beginning in the either the 1980s or 1990s depending on how exactly one defines it, focuses on a response to globalization as outlined above in the broader context, and the internationalization of social work education (Borrits & Rasmussen, 2006; Trygged, 2010). This wave has benefitted tremendously from developments in communications, information technology, and transportation (Rautenbach & Black-Hughes, 2012). As borders have opened, most notably in countries like China, Russia and others once separated under the framework of the Cold War (Hokenstad, 2003a), international collaborations have increased. Former Soviet-bloc countries invited another wave of consultation in social work (Constable, Kulys & Harrison, 2003), similar to that which followed World War II and the wave of national independences (Hokenstad, 2003b).

With an increase in interest, several new organizations formed around international social work were founded and historic organizations in the international field experienced new growth.

Currently, in the United States, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) maintains a Commission on Global Education whose charge is "to promote international programs and projects and to develop the international dimension of the social work curricula" as well as, "further the international/global agenda of CSWE" (CSWE, 2013a). In addition, CSWE formed the Katherine A. Kendall Institute for International Social Work Education in 2004 to increase international content and collaborations (CSWE, 2013b). The Institute offers fellowships to international scholars and facilitates partnerships, guided by the idea that "the more social workers around the globe share ideas and different perspectives, the better prepared educators and practitioners will be" (CSWE, 2013b).

Along similar lines to these efforts in the educational sector, the primary professional organization of social workers in the United States, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), has also established an internationally focused project, the acronym scramble Social Workers Across Nations (SWAN). This organization is primarily concerned with developing international options for domestic practitioners and developing "collaborative linkages with other countries around the world" (NASW, 2013).

There was some fear that the events of September 11, 2001, would serve to dampen interest in international collaborations (Healy, 2001), and indeed, the number of foreign students studying in the United States flat-lined in 2002 and 2003 while other nations continued to see increases (Altbach, 2004). However, most evidence suggests that the event served as a wake-up call for the need for even more international engagement (Childress, 2009; Gillespie, 2002). A survey by the Institute for International Education (IIE) of 600 educators with international

interests found 43% considered international education more important post 9/11, 53% reported no change, with only 2% reporting a decrease in importance (IIE, 2001).

Indeed, the past decade has seen greater interest in international collaboration than at perhaps any previous point in social work history (Healy, 2008). In addition to a burst of scholarly writing and textbooks, some of the major historic organizations have renewed their international efforts. The IASSW, originally known as Alice Salomon's International Committee of Schools of Social Work, traces its roots back to the 1928 conference (Healy, 2008). The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), which also had roots in 1928, works to bring practitioners together around the globe, and to work for social justice, development, human rights, and "international cooperation between social workers and their professional organizations" (IFSW, 2008). In the late 1990s, IASSW and IFSW began work together that resulted in a joint definition of social work released in 2001(Dominelli, 2004). More recently, renewed collaboration between these organizations and the ICSW culminated in the 2010 Joint International Conference on Social Work and Social Development in Hong Kong, the first of now two conferences, a second was held in Stockholm in 2012, under a new agreement to work collaboratively (ICSW, 2013). At the 2010 conference, the president of the IFSW, Gary Bailey, stated:

> Social work, both at the local and global level provides a major contribution to solving human problems… yet this is largely unknown. The global Agenda process shows that the profession is committed and determined to work with other interested parties to ensure that the contributions of social work are recognized and that social work has a significant role in responding to the global economic and social crisis affecting people everywhere. (IFSW, 2010)

As an outgrowth of the 2010 conference, on March 26, 2012, at the United Nations, the IASSW, IFSW, and ICSW jointly released a "Global Agenda" for 2012-2016, outlined in further detail in the following section on policy.

In the wider educational community, there has also been an increasing amount of interest in international efforts. The Association of International Education Administrators' (AIEA) 2013 conference focused on "Re-imagining Higher Education in a Global Context." The conference highlighted the growth of interest in branch campuses, joint degree programs, and online programs (Redden, 2013).

A fourth wave?

Alongside the explosion in online activities, there has been a troubling increase in private sector investment in international education. For example, the company INTO University Partnerships, which helps universities in the Global North recruit international students, recently received a $100 million investment from Leeds Equity Partners (Redden, 2013). Such developments may signal the beginning of a 4th wave of collaborative activities, driven by technological advancements and increasingly involving for-profit partners in varying capacities. While it may be too early to identify a 4th wave, it's clear that interest in international collaborations is continuing to increase. The current moment is both enabled by and constrained by the policy environment surrounding international education, which is considered in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2: POLICY AND COLLABORATION

Introduction

Policy plays an outsize role in many areas of social work. International collaborations, despite perhaps perceptions of being mainly interpersonal partnerships, are no exception. The internationalization of higher education is occurring across what social work often defines as micro, mezzo, and macro levels: from individual students, to universities, to governments (Wiers-Jenssen, 2008). The multi-sector nature of this process has contributed to a significant politicization of the field (Kehm & Teichler, 2007), for example the fiscal year 2011 budgetary battle in the U.S. Congress over Fulbright Grants (National Humanities Alliance, 2011). Such national and international policy battles further influence policy making at the institutional level.

The field of international higher education saw a number of significant policy developments in the late 1990s, what Boyle and Cervantes (2000) called "the decade of internationalization in American higher education," (p. 11). These changes resulted in a burst of activity that will be discussed further below. For example, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) released an important report on the *Internationalisation of Higher Education* in 1996, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) held its' first "World Conference on Higher Education" in 1998, and 29 ministers of education in Europe met at the University of Bolonga to create the European Higher Education Area in 1999. In 1998, the *World Declaration on Higher Education* declared that "international cooperation and exchange are major avenues for advancing higher education throughout the world" (UNESCO, 1998). In the section that follows, policy impacts on international collaborations will be examined at the level of international and national policies

and regulatory frameworks, institutions within higher education broadly, and finally specific policies within the field of social work.

International Policies

National and multinational policies have encouraged growth in international collaborations in higher education (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Huang, 2003; Knight, 2002; Luijten-Lub, Wende, & Huisman, 2005). From the standpoint of critical theory, which will be further outlined in Chapter Four, the context of globalization and marketization has positioned higher education as a commodity and a "private good, not a public responsibility" (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 292; Chan, 2004). The influence of global economic policy on international collaborations in higher education, seen to some extent with the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) (Alvarez, 1996; Boyle & Cervantes, 2000) is seen perhaps most clearly through the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), a policy out of the World Trade Organization (WTO) (Altbach, 2004; Knight, 2002).

Education is one of twelve sectors covered by GATS. GATS first came into effect in January of 1995 as a result of the Uruguay round of negotiations on multilateral trade. The same round saw the evolution of the then General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) into the WTO. As with many of the WTO's policies, GATS aims at the economic liberalization of the services sector, introducing more open markets. This move in higher education towards such marketization is positioned by proponents as a response to the twin forces. The first is an increasing demand for higher education in a global economy that is transitioning to a so-called "knowledge economy." The second is the enabling environment of information and communications technologies such as the internet. A critical examination of such policies

emphasizes the disproportionate benefits for powerful Western nations in opening up new markets for the expansion of a commoditized education (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

GATS identifies four "modes of supply" for education as a traded service: cross border supply, consumption abroad, commercial presence, and the presence of natural persons (Knight, 2002). Cross border supply is the realm of distance learning and online education, consumption abroad covers students who travel for study, commercial presence governs branch or satellite campuses, and the presence of natural persons assists with the mobility of professors and other researchers working abroad.

The GATS framework allows each of the 144 member nations of the WTO to decide what level of market access on each of these modes of supply to grant other WTO member states. However, there is an important caveat to this decision making process, known as "most-favored nation treatment." This stipulates that if, for example, the United Arab Emirates allows the United States to establish branch campuses; it must allow all WTO members the same opportunity. Likewise, if it decides to exclude a nation it must exclude everyone (Knight, 2002). As of 2002, only 21 nations had made commitments to higher education (Knight, 2002). Current reporting indicates that 42 nations now have commitments to higher education, ranging from nations such as Australia, New Zealand, Norway, China, Japan, and the European Community to smaller nations like Liechtenstein and nations in the Global South such as Lesotho, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (WTO, 2013).

While some see GATS as a framework to provide higher education in countries where the sector is under-developed, there are legitimate concerns about the substitution of foreign-based private education for public sector education, and about quality and accreditation, particularly in areas of the Global South. The increasing commodification of education should be of particular

concern for social workers. There is a "general feeling that higher education is not a commodity to be traded in international markets like steel or bananas" (Altbach, 2004, p. 10). GATS then becomes a test case for the wider policy framework at the level of nations, which is on the role of government in the provision and regulation of higher education (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Knight, 2002; Wiley & Glew, 2010).

Europe has been particularly aggressive at encouraging students to study outside their home countries (but within the EU), beginning with the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS) model in 1987 (Razack, 2002). ERASMUS was joined by the Socrates program (Healy, Asamoah & Hokenstad, 2003), again named after a philosopher but this time not an acronym, in the mid-90s and the trend continued in 1999 with the Bologna Process making mobility between countries even easier and establishing common standards (Altbach, 2004). Both programs were combined into the European Commission's ongoing Lifelong Learning Programme in 2007 (EC, 2013). A mid-term evaluation of the program, scheduled to run from 2007-2013, found that an investment of €3 billion had resulted in 900,000 "learning mobility periods of European citizens," including 720,000 by students and 180,000 by educators or staff (European Commission, 2011, p. 2).

Interestingly, on the African continent, governments have promoted the internationalization of higher education through religiously affiliated institutions (Karram, 2011). Over the past decade, the most growth in higher education on the African continent has been in such religiously affiliated institutions (Thaver, 2003; Karram, 2011), and in internationally based private, for-profit institutions focused on degrees such as business management (Thaver, 2003). Karram's (2011) content analysis of 80 institutional websites of non-profit religiously affiliated institutions in seven African nations found that many of them were funded in part or entirely by

international organizations like the United Methodist Church or the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Governments have encouraged such development in countries like Ghana and Uganda by donating land to religious educational institutions (Karram, 2011). The increasingly international character of higher education in Africa also raises questions about its quality or applicability to the continent (Oyewole, 2009). In addition, Karram (2011) points out that some of the Christian universities with international ties appeared to be recruiting students "based on the high reputation of Western education rather than official accreditation" (p. 494).

Domestic Policy

In the United States, there have been a variety of policy initiatives targeting international collaboration over the years, perhaps the two most important being Title VI of the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961 (O'Meara, Mehlinger, & Newman, 2001; Wiley & Glew, 2010). The National Defense Education Act (NDEA) was signed into law on September 2, 1958, as a Cold-War response to the Soviet's launch of the satellite Sputnik the year before (Wiley & Glew, 2010). That the American foray into international education was prompted largely by self-interest in maintaining dominance as a global superpower is important from the standpoint of critical theory's emphasis on historical context. Title VI of the act, renamed the Higher Education Act (HEA) as part of President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" agenda, provides funding for language and international studies (O'Meara et al., 2001). At a 40th anniversary conference for the legislation, former Vice President Walter Mondale emphasized the special importance of international education for the United States, saying,

> We are a tongue-tied nation, which is dangerous to our future, to our economic health, to our national security and diplomacy, and to our relationship with other

> peoples in the world… We need to understand, in the deepest sense possible, how other societies work, and this is not simple. (O'Meara et al., 2001, p. 3)

Title VI of the HEA, most recently reauthorized in 2008, establishes nine grant programs covering areas such as Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language and International Research and Studies and provides matching funding at levels from 4:1 to 10:1 for university dollars (O'Meara et al., 2001; Wiley & Glew, 2010).

A second major policy initiative in the United States is the Fulbright-Hays Act, also known as the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act. Building off the earlier Fulbright program, it sought to "promote international cooperation for educational and cultural advancement; and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world" (U.S., 1961, Sec. 2451). Fulbright-Hays responded to the need for advanced level academic partnerships. The program has not been without controversy, as mentioned above, the Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad (DDRA) component fell victim to budgetary cuts in the 2011-2012 funding cycle.

More recently, U.S. policy around international collaboration is being shaped by the findings of the 2005 report of the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, which emphasized global competence and national needs (Tarrant, 2010). The report was an outgrowth of the personal vision of former Senator Paul Simon, who died in 2003, and set a goal of 1 million students studying abroad by the end of the decade. Recommendations included millions of dollars in scholarships to help the country reach a tipping point in study abroad. In 2009, the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act was approved by the House of Representatives as part of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act but was unable to find passage in the Senate. The Act sought to, "significantly enhance the global

competitiveness and international knowledge base of the United States by ensuring that more United States students have the opportunity to acquire foreign language skills and international knowledge through significantly expanded study abroad," and in particular "to ensure that an increasing portion of study abroad by United States students will take place in nontraditional study abroad destinations such as the People's Republic of China, countries of the Middle East region, and developing countries" (U.S., 2009). It is clear that one of the United States primary interests in international collaborations in education remains the preservation of power.

Institutional Policies

In addition to governmental policies, institutional policies within higher education also significantly impact international collaborations (Kehm & Teichler, 2007; McLellan, 2008). Many of the macro concerns about marketization and the effects of capitalist free trade policies are mirrored at the more "mezzo" institutional level. These include issues of both institutional and faculty autonomy, and related issues of faculty tenure (Knight, 2002). Policies that encourage mobility and collaboration can be seen as encouraging the use of more part time faculty and as threats to the traditional systems of academic freedom and full time professors. The literature includes a variety of case studies examining such institutional policies (Edwards, 2007; Taylor, 2004). Some argue that institutional goals and policies are often inadequate or problematic. For example, a goal for student exchange, without further guidance, often results in unilateral exchange where students from the Global North visit the South (Gillespie, 2002).

At schools of social work in particular, there is a recognition in the literature, going back to the early 2000's, that social work education has often been behind the curve in international educational collaborations (Boyle & Cervantes, 2000, p. 12). International activities are increasingly popular, especially for field education, but remain uncommon overall (Razack,

2002). While there have been some efforts to internationalize curriculum via an increase in global content and collaborative activities (Butterfield, 2007; Caragata & Sanchez, 2002; Estes, 1992; Riebschleger & Agbenyiga, 2012), a more common phenomenon has been an increase in short-term trips (Allen, 2010; Barbera, 2006; Mapp, 2013; Nam, 2011; Rotabi et al., 2006; Yoon, 2007), particularly as a response to demand from students/faculty (Hoof & Verbeeten, 2005; Stohl, 2007). While these may be built off of personal networks (Vincent, 2009), institutional support is critical to the success of international collaborative activities (Carrilio & Mathiesen, 2006; Vincent, 2009). As an example of a progressive institutional policy, in order to avoid academic tourism, DePaul University requires that faculty who initiate study abroad courses must plan to return at least three times (Vincent, 2009). As an important note of caution to this phenomenon, schools of social work need to develop more detailed risk management policies around international activity (Engstrom & Mathiesen, 2012).

While policy environments may vary substantially from one social work institution to the next, social work's professional bodies have begun placing more emphasis on the international dimension of practice and education. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), in its 2008 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) states that the social work profession is to be guided by "global perspective" (p. 1) and that social work programs are "further influenced by their historical, political, economic, social, cultural, demographic, and global contexts and by the ways they elect to engage these factors" (p. 2). Similarly, the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics states, "social workers should promote the general welfare of society, from local to global levels" (NASW, 2008, section 6.01) and that "social workers should promote conditions that encourage respect for cultural and social diversity within the United States and globally" (2008, 6.04c). Schools of social work are only

in the last two years being evaluated under the new EPAS, and it is still unclear how the increase in emphasis on global content and context will affect curriculum.

However, it is clear that both social work and the wider world of higher education have shifted to an emphasis on international efforts producing *competencies* and not just *experiences.* This shift is obvious in the 2008 EPAS' emphasis on "the education of competent professionals" but is emblematic of a slower paradigm shift beginning in the early 2000's. Altbach and Teichler (2001) argued at the turn of the century that commitment to exchange as a good in and of itself, with some supposed but untested long term benefits, has been replaced with an emphasis on measurable outcomes that improve marketability. This emphasis on accountability for student learning a natural outgrowth of competition for student enrollment (Sutton & Rubin, 2004, p. 66).

One of the most prominent policy developments for social work is the Global Agenda. The agenda states that "now is our time to work together, at all levels, for change, for social justice, and for the universal implementation of human rights" and calls for a "new world order" (IFSW, IAASW & ICSW, 2012, p. 837). As a policy document, the document's primary concern is to position the profession to have a more active role in the global development agenda after the expiration of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 (IFSW, IAASW & ICSW, 2012, p. 839). With regards to social work education, the Global Agenda seeks to "promote the development, dissemination and exchange of knowledge between all social professionals through established and innovative channels of communication" (p. 841). Although it is unclear exactly what the Global Agenda imagines, it is clear that it sees an important role for international collaboration in social work education.

Conclusion

It is imperative that social work recognize that policymakers at international and national levels often have motivations for encouraging international collaborations in education that are quite different than educators (Dominelli, 2004; Gillespie, 2002). As a final illustration, the United States forwarded a proposal to the World Trade Organization in 2000 to create conditions favorable to *private* and *for-profit* providers who wanted to open facilities or provide education internationally.

While the proposal emphasized that its intention was to "supplement, not displace, public education systems" (p. 1) it did acknowledge that it sought to "help liberalize trade in this important sector in the world economy" (p. 1). To that end, it identified the following obstacles, as well as others not listed here, that might be present in member states:

- "prohibition of higher education… offered by foreign entities, lack of an opportunity for foreign suppliers… to obtain authorization to establish facilities within the territory of the member country;"
- "measures requiring the use of a local partner;"
- "tax treatment that discriminates against foreign suppliers;"
- "franchises are treated less favorably than other forms of business organization;"
- "minimum requirements for local hiring are disproportionately high, causing uneconomic operations" (WTO, 2002, pp. 3-4).

It is difficult for a critical social worker to see this as anything but a power grab concerned mostly with the flow of money to the United States.

At the institutional level, at the beginning of the decade, Altbach & Teichler (2001) declared that, "the 21st century may eventually be called the century of education" as the world

transitions to a knowledge based society (p. 7). Policies need to reflect the global reality that the majority of future post-secondary students will come from the Global South. At the same time, the majority of higher education opportunities, particularly at top-tier institutions, exist in the Global North. This mismatch between supply and demand is only just beginning to receive significant policy attention across all the levels mentioned above, and motivations for addressing it are mixed at best. Additionally, the internationalization projects of both for-profit and some non-profit universities in the Global North are driven to a large degree by money (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 292).

In sum, policies from the international to the institutional are pushing for increased involvement in international collaborations in education. However, social work policies in this area must be seen as in tension with these economic policies if the profession is to offer educational opportunities that help students understand and critique globalization's potential for oppression instead of participating in it. The profession is beginning to explore models to pursue partnership in non-oppressive ways. This study is one effort to do so.

CHAPTER 3: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This study examines institutional motivations for international collaborations in social work education. Specifically, it explores what motivates various actors within pairs of schools of social work currently collaborating with one another, including administrators, professors, and students, to pursue and develop such international partnerships. This study utilizes a theoretical framework composed of elements of critical theory, social network analysis, and the theory of collaborative advantage to examine these motivations. Motivations in this analysis are conceived broadly, including both what provided the initial impetus for engagement internationally and what the perceived benefits or outcomes of ongoing collaboration are for the various parties involved.

This research contributes to the extant literature primarily by addressing a gap in research on motivations for collaborative activities internationally in the social work education literature specifically, which has not kept pace with the wider higher education literature. This is important because social work education is in many ways distinct from the more generalized field of higher education. Social work education is grounded in professional values and ethics. Many of these core values have direct implications for how one might pursue international collaborations. Additionally, especially in North America, social work has embraced pedagogical approaches focused on the development of competencies. This shift has put a heavy emphasis on learning opportunities outside the classroom. This study is also relatively unique in its focus on the perspectives of both partners within a single international collaboration.

Statement of the Problem

In 1928, Eglantyne Jebb, the founder of the international non-governmental organization (NGO) Save the Children, called for "constant contact between social workers on an

international intellectual basis" (FICSW, 1929, p. 651). However, it is only in the last several decades that focused scholarship has begun to produce and evaluate models for doing so (Healy et al., 2003). International collaborations in social work education are increasing without an adequate understanding of the motivations behind such collaborative activities or outcomes that they hope to achieve. Such collaborations are part of an increase in interest in international social work writ large.

Social work has declared itself a global profession (Healy, 2008). The surge in international social work shows no sign of abating, despite disputes over definitions of the term that have yet to be fully resolved (Estes, 2009; Haug; 2005, Hugman, Moosa-Mitha, & Moyo, 2010; Midgley, 2001; Razack, 2009; Trygged, 2010). This growth has been accompanied by, and to an extent fueled by, the exponential growth of schools of social work outside North America and Europe. At the close of the 19th century there were schools of social work in the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Netherlands (Healy & Hall, 2007). When it began in 1929, the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) was composed of 51 mostly European schools. In July of 2015, the organization listed 365 institutions in countries from Australia to Zambia (IASSW, 2015).

Schools of social work have a natural tendency to engage one another. This has happened through both formalized institutional collaborations, and the more informal social network linkages created between individual professors and students around the world (Riebschleger & Agbenyiga, 2012; Scott, 2012). Collaborations between schools of social work in North America and their contemporaries around the world have organically formed around a variety of objectives, including: curriculum, capacity, and faculty development (Bogo & Herington, 1988; Furman, 2007; O'Dell, 2008), student exchanges (Boyle & Cervantes, 2000;

Carter-Anand & Clarke, 2009; Cheng, 2008; Ford & Ericson, 2003; Hyong Suk Yeom & Bae, 2010; Irizarry, Gameau, & Walter, 1993; Mapp, 2013; Rautenbach & Black-Hughes, 2012; Razack, 2002; Yoon, 2007), research partnerships (Bronstein, Mizrahi, Korazim-Kőrösy, & McPhee, 2010; Lalayants, Tripodi, & Jung, 2009), and increasingly and perhaps most controversially given potential linguistic and cultural barriers, international field placements (Barbera, 2006; Barlow, 2005, 2007; Corbin, 2013; Gilin & Young, 2009; Healy, 1986; Lindsey, 2005; Lough, 2009; Panos, Cox, Pettys, & Jones-Hart, 2004; Pettys, Panos, Cox, & Oosthuysen, 2005; Rai, 2004; Razack, 2002; Rotabi, Gammonley, & Gamble, 2006, 2007; Wehbi, 2009).

The literature on collaborative activities in social work education tilts heavily towards considerations of faculty and student exchanges, which are the most prevalent and reflect wider trends in higher education (Healy, Asamoah & Hokenstad, 2003). The wider higher education literature suggests that the number of students studying abroad will rise from over 2 million, including around a half million from the U.S., to around 8 million by 2025 (Altbach, 2004).

Social work thus finds itself at a crossroads (Dominelli, 2004). International collaborative activities in social work education have the potential to advance human rights, social justice, and a sense of global citizenship (Dominelli, 2004; Healy, 2001). They also have the potential to perpetuate oppression, or uncritically ally with market forces (Haug, 2005). A critical approach to both considering motivations for such collaborative activity and engaging in them is necessary to avoid making education simply another commodity in the globalized economy and reinforcing dominant powers structures (Dominelli, 2004, p. 91). Unfortunately, there is a lack of research on why institutions enter into such international educational collaborations, and relatively few empirically based models for how to successfully develop them (Johnson, 2004; Vincent, 2009).

Key Concepts and Context

Before proceeding, it is necessary to clarify the definitions of several key terms and concepts that are used throughout this study. This section begins with some more straightforward definitions of terms, but also includes some broader context within which this study must be placed in order to be understood. Collaborative activities in social work education can only be properly understood within the context of larger, and very contentious, debates in social work about globalization, global citizenship, and the modernist tendency towards universalism compared with the postmodernist emphasis on indigenization. Before reviewing the literature and outlining the specific theoretical framework used in this study, a brief consideration of this broader context is also necessary.

International Social Work

As mentioned above, international social work is a contested term. Some of the confusion comes from debates about what social work itself is. Two of the profession's major international bodies, the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) released a new "global" definition of social work on July 1, 2014. The definition itself is 78 words, but coupled with commentary on core mandates, principles, knowledge, and practice, it runs to more than 1,500 words (IFSW, IASSW, 2014). While it is possible to debate the merits of using "global" instead of "international," and certainly possible to quibble about what should be included in "international social work," for simplicity's sake this consideration uses Healy's (2008) broad definition of international social work as "international professional action and the capacity for international action by the social work profession and its members," with international action including four dimensions: "internationally related domestic practice and advocacy, professional exchange, international

practice, and international policy development and advocacy" (p. 10). The explicit inclusion of professional exchange in this definition makes it ideal for this study.

Collaboration

This study uses "collaboration" to indicate that there are a wide range of possible relationships between institutions, from individual faculty exchanges as a result of a chance meeting at a conference to ongoing student exchanges formalized in a memorandum of understanding. In the social work literature, the concept of what exactly constitutes a "collaboration" remains a bit murky (Cornelius & Greif, 2005), but it is clear that a good collaboration is mutually beneficial and ideally involves a commitment over time (Bogo & Maeda, 1990; Healy, Asamoah, & Hokenstad, 2003) and that there are lessons to be learned from such collaborations (Altbach & Teichler, 2001; Hokenstad & Midgley, 2004; Vincent, 2009). This consideration uses the definition of collaboration used by the Council on Social Work Education's *Models of International Collaboration in Social Work Education* (2003), namely that a collaboration is "a mutually beneficial and well defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals" (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992, p. 39).

Globalization

This paper adopts Midgley's (1997) widely used definition of globalization as "a process of global integration in which diverse peoples, economies, cultures and political processes are increasingly subjected to international influences" (p. xi). The assumption in much of the literature is that the primary driver of international collaborations in social work education is globalization. The social work literature has increasingly emphasized globalization and the global nature of social work education (Estes, 1992; 2009; Johnson, 2004; Midgley, 1990; Roholt & Fisher, 2013; Rotabi et al., 2007; Trygged, 2010; Tesoriero & Rajaratnam, 2001) and

social work practice, even for practitioners who never plan on leaving North America (Caragata & Sanchez, 2002; Dominelli, 2010; Lyons, 2006; Riebschleger & Agbenyiga, 2012; Roholt & Fisher, 2013).

However, globalization is an appropriately contested reality within social work, particularly as tied to its economic dimensions (Barbera, 2006; Midgley, 2001; Sewpaul, 2006). While globalization is often primarily thought of in economic terms, it has a multitude of implications for the social sciences (Barbera, 2006; Stiglitz, 2003). Khan and Dominelli (2000) suggest viewing globalization as a dynamic and complicated set of processes rather than a single movement or static state. A critical examination of globalization highlights several concerns for social work.

First, from early in the history of the profession, social workers have pointed to the global nature of the social and environmental issues facing vulnerable populations around the world. In 1928, Eglantyne Jebb highlighted the international nature of poverty, war, and refugees (FICSW, 1929). Today social workers would add problems like HIV/AIDS, climate change, and child trafficking (Caragata & Sanchez, 2002; Healy, 2008; Midgley, 1997). In addition, problems like poverty are evolving. The economic forces of globalization have contributed to the "ghettoization" of disadvantaged groups such as women, older adults, and minorities within a more competitive global labor market (Khan & Dominelli, 2000, p. 95). Globalization is opening a wider chasm between the rich and the poor (Mohan, 2005). In the last decade of the 20th century the number of people in poverty, defined here using the World Bank's statistics on those who live on less than $2 a day, increased by 100 million even as global income rose 2.5% every year (Stiglitz, 2003).

Second, globalization has impacted the response to the very problems it contributes to. It has been linked to the spread of neo-conservative and neo-liberal political and economic ideologies and the subsequent dismantling of the welfare state (Barbera, 2006; Caragata & Sanchez, 2002; Cwikel, Savaya, Munford, & Desai, 2010; Lyons, 2006; Midgley, 2001; Sewpaul, 2006). The spread of neo-liberal capitalism has been accompanied by an assault on socialist welfare systems in countries where they have been traditionally strong by the "powerful tentacles of economic globalization" (Barbera, 2006, p. 289). Those operating from the standpoint of critical theory are suspicious of the ways that austerity measures imposed on developing nations as the condition of loans from organizations like the World Trade Organization (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, seem to disproportionately benefit wealthier nations by opening additional markets while harming vulnerable populations through the dismantling of social services (Barbera, 2006; Khan & Dominelli, 2000; Stiglitz, 2003). This is seen as a form of domination and exploitation.

While the majority of the social work literature emphasizes the reality and growing significance of globalization for the profession as outlined above, and especially the need for better understandings of globalization in social work education (Butterfield, 2007; Estes, 1992; Gilin & Young, 2009; Healy, 1986; Johnson, 2004; Lyons, 2006; Nagy & Falk, 2000), there are those who reject this narrative entirely (Pugh & Gould, 2000). These authors take exception with the belief that globalization is resulting in the dismantling of the welfare state, and also with the international nature of social work as a profession (Webb, 2003). These authors question the "omnipotence" of globalization as a construct and the consequent necessity of social work education to account for it, arguing instead for reflexivity at the local level (Webb, 2003, p. 192).

Critical theory will be explored more fully below, but with regards to globalization, critical theorists emphasize the increase in inequality and potential for domination and exploitation inherent in globalization as concerns for social workers who are committed to the well-being of all people and social justice as outlined in the International Federation of Social Worker's (IFSW) statement of ethical principles (IFSW, 2012). Globalization is often positioned as immediate and inevitable (Stiglitz, 2003). Critical theorists acknowledge the way globalization is changing the world, but seek to emphasize the possibility of more just and equitable ways to build a global community (Burbules & Torres, 2000, p. 2).

Global Citizenship

In addition to globalization and the economic frameworks included in it, educational collaborations in social work are also motivated by the academic commitments of schools of social work to internationalize curriculum and educate "global citizens" who see themselves as part of a global community, embrace diversity, and strive to make the world a more just and environmentally sustainable place (Gacel-Ávila, 2005; Rotabi, Gammonley, & Gamble, 2006; Tarrant, 2010; Woolf, 2010). Indeed, Caragata and Sanchez have argued that the focus on international social work is *primarily* an academic phenomenon as opposed to a practice reality (2002, p. 217).

As will be outlined further in the literature review, international collaborations in social work education are being motivated by the idea that the best way to prepare students for the new global reality of the profession is through experiential education abroad (Barbera, 2006; Gilin & Young, 2009; Heron, 2005; Lindsey, 2005; Lowe, 2008; Panos et al., 2004; Rai, 2004; Rotabi et al., 2006, 2007; Wehbi, 2009). For a profession that posits practical experience under supervision as its signature pedagogy (CSWE, 2008), the jump from the knowledge that social

work is a global profession (Healy, 2008) to the necessity of exposing social work students to international content and experiences in order to better understand concepts like globalization seems natural.

However, social work education should not get a free pass merely because it positions itself as a potential response to the globalization of economic markets (Barbera, 2006). Critical theorists point out that as universities become more autonomous they also have the potential to become oppressive (Ritzer & Goodman, 2003, p. 143). While the dominant narrative views international experiences and field placements in a positive light, there are important voices of caution from more critical standpoints. Wehbi (2009) cautions that not enough attention is being paid to student motivations for pursuing international placements, a sentiment that has been expressed for some time (Barbera, 2006; Razack, 2002). International placements have the potential to "perpetuate cultural imperialism and voyeurism" (Wehbi, 2009, p. 52), or to be a form of colonialism. The notion of global citizenship has also been criticized as "inflated rhetoric" which posits an achievable end-state which students seek to attain rather than emphasizing the difficult processes of learning and reflection that should characterize international education (Woolf, 2010, p. 47).

Universalism

Alongside globalization and global citizenship are related debates about the universal or indigenous nature of social work theory and practice, including whether the profession itself can properly be considered global, as the IFSW and IASSW have attempted to assert, or is always inherently local. There is a great deal of debate in the literature about universal and indigenous perspectives, sometimes referred to as the global and the local, or the colonial and post-colonial (Butterfield, 2007; Gray & Coates, 2010; Gray, 2005, 2010; Healy, 2007; Ife, 2001; Mohan,

2005; Nagy & Falk, 2000; Sewpaul, 2006; Trygged, 2010; Webb, 2003; Weiss, 2005; Yan & Cheung, 2006). Whether one emphasizes universalistic or indigenous perspectives is in turn often tied to two larger epistemological frameworks, modernity and postmodernity. Perspectives that emphasize the universality of some or all of a given perspective on social work are beholden to the tenets of modernity, whereas those that argue that all social work is inherently local and completely contextualized through culture are heavily influenced by postmodern thought.

Trygged (2010) posits that one of the key differences between international and national social work is a universalist tendency in international social work. Universalism in this regard means that certain values, practices, social problems, or other characteristics are universally present or applicable around the world, no matter the context or culture (Trygged, 2010). This is a philosophically modern notion in that it assumes a stable and unitary truth, what postmodern critics would term a "regime of truth" (Foucault, 1980, p. 131). Gray, Coates and Yellow Bird (2008) argue that social work itself is "essentially a modernist Western invention which has a history of silencing marginal voices and importing, into diverse cultural contexts across the world, Western thinking" (p. 1). In a more positive light, Midgley (2001) argues that historically social work has always been committed to some set of universal values or principles. Eglantyne Jebb, the founder of Save the Children, spoke in 1928 about "iron laws governing human history" (FICSW, 1929, p. 641). Social workers, including Jebb, were at the forefront of efforts that culminated in the 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is, by name, committed to the idea of a degree of universality.

This sort of a universal perspective is often posited as a necessary counter to the current reality of free market economic globalization. For example, Sewpaul's (2006) call for "the development of a counter-hegemonic consciousness to neo-liberal capitalism and a commitment

to redistributive justice as we envision another world order" (p. 419). There is a sense from some authors that in setting up collaborations in education, social work is building the foundation of a future new world order of good (IASSW, IFSW & ICSW, 2012). They suggest social work as the profession of the moment, uniquely positioned to fight the evils of economic globalization. However, history is replete with examples of empires that were set up with beneficent aims only to become agents of terror, from National Socialism in Germany to the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, and universalistic claims this broad should make social workers deeply uncomfortable. As Webb (2003) points out, there is a touch of imperialism in such rhetoric about expanding social work's role in the world.

The danger of universalism becoming imperialism or a form of colonialism is highlighted throughout the literature (Gray, 2005; Plummer & Omwenga Nyang'au, 2009; Sullivan et al., 2010; Trygged, 2010). However, this danger is often highlighted without providing any constructive alternatives for what non-oppressive practices might look like (Sullivan et al., 2010). This is part of a larger issue with the dominant focus in the literature on social work collaborations on *theory*, which will be discussed below following a consideration of the empirical literature. From a critical standpoint, theory must always be intertwined with practice (Horkheimer, 1972).

Indigenization

As an answer to the problems posed by universalism, including the potential for Western theory and practice to dominate, many scholars suggest a form of "indigenization," sometimes also referred to as "localization," or "authentization" (Dominelli, 2004; Ferguson, 2005; Gray & Allegritti, 2002; Gray & Coates, 2010; Gray, 2005, 2010; Huang Yunong & Zhang Xiong, 2008; Nimmagadda & Cowger, 1999; Rankopo & Osei-Hwedie, 2011; Yan & Cheung, 2006). Some

of the core elements of indigenization are integration or adaptation of theories or practices from other contexts through a process of adjustment and creative synthesis, localizing theory and practice, ensuring the appropriateness of ideas, an emphasis on genuineness and authentization, and balancing the local and the foreign (Gray, Coates & Yellow Bird, 2008; Rankopo & Osei-Hwedie, 2011).

As an example, since the late 1980s scholars have been suggesting that social work in Africa requires its own indigenous teaching materials (Asamoah & Beverly, 1988). Others have argued that academic positions in the Global South should be limited to nationals, and that funding for research should only be given to projects that address strictly national concerns (Gray & Coates, 2010). Gray and Coates (2010) have even advocated for an entire new field in social work known as "indigenized social work" (p. 614), arguing for social work knowledge "free from the restrictions and expectations of positivistic western worldviews" (Gray & Coates, 2010, p. 613). While Gray and Coates ironically make their case emphasizing the use of "empirically based knowledge" (p. 616), to those interested in critical approaches their larger point demands attention.

An emphasis on indigenous theory and practice reflects postmodern epistemology. Postmodern thinkers have traditionally valued more local and limited forms of knowledge, and recognized that power can shape what is "true" in a context (Foucault, 1980). As global educational collaborations increase, social workers are becoming more and more aware of the situated nature of their selves and increasingly interested in such perspectives. As an example, Rankopo & Osei-Hwedie (2011), in calling for an indigenous African social work practice, argue for "a locally relevant social work discourse" which "does not seek to privilege one form of knowledge over others," adding that "If the profession of social work, from the beginning, had

adopted such a principle, there would have been no need for the indigenization debate" (p. 145).

The indigenization movement in social work is clearly tied to postmodern perspectives, but Khan and Dominelli (2000) also trace the rise of globalization to postmodernism, viewing "globalization as symptomatic of the crisis in modernity" (p. 98). In a paragraph on ontological and epistemological challenges they cite postmodern philosophers including Foucault, Derrida and Lyotard and discuss a "rethinking of theoretical assumptions around concepts like nationhood, society, and power" (p. 99). While nationalism is an easy target with clearly identified negative implications for social work, some authors are even skeptical of the universality of human rights language. Webb (2003) argues that human rights perspectives in global social work contain back-door liberal notions of unencumbered selves able to make universal judgments, a functional restating of Rawl's theory of justice (Rawls, 1999).

While most would agree that justice and rights must have a degree of universality, one thing that international collaborations in education have made clear is that social work is not the same, and cannot be applied in the same ways, around the globe. Core social work values and practices in a given context may be inappropriate elsewhere, as Healy demonstrates with self-determination, which it is argued stems from the United States' emphasis on absolute individuality (Healy, 2007, p. 18). As another example, in the Japanese language there is no distinction between the words "need" and "want," something that poses challenges when attempting to understand a "needs assessment" (Saito & Johns, 2009, p. 70). Scholarship on social work in African contexts has emphasized social development models, conflict management, and rural practice over clinical and interpersonal practice models situated in urban settings (Bettmann et al., 2009; Mupedziswa, 2001; Mwansa, 2010) and the need for a unique paradigm (Graham, 1999). There is clear diversity in social work around the globe.

Conclusion

Having defined some key terms and outlined the broader context and some of the concerns that have been raised about international collaborations, it must be noted that while such concerns about the motivations and consequences of international exchanges are important, they will not stop schools from pursuing them. The reality is that collaborations are "fashionable in schools of social work" (Razack, 2002, p. 263), even as the literature fails to adequately keep up (Lindsey, 2005, p. 231). Almost one out of five accredited schools of social work in the US was placing students in international field placements as of 2004 (Panos, 2005, p. 834), and many suggest the number has grown in the decade since.

International educational collaborations are where the rubber meets the road in debates about universality and indigenization. Are projects like Sin Fronteras, which brings students from the U.S. to a "shantytown" in Santiago actually allowing undergraduate social work students to understand economic globalization through on the ground experience, as their proponents suggest (Barbera, 2006, p. 291)? Or are they glorified poverty tourism, a form of voyeurism that only reinforces existing stereotypes and power dynamics (Wehbi, 2009; Woolf, 2006)? Student motivations for such experiences will never be completely altruistic. Are social workers abroad simply more "Ugly Americans," arrogant and out of touch (Rotabi et al., 2006, p. 452)?

CHAPTER 4: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

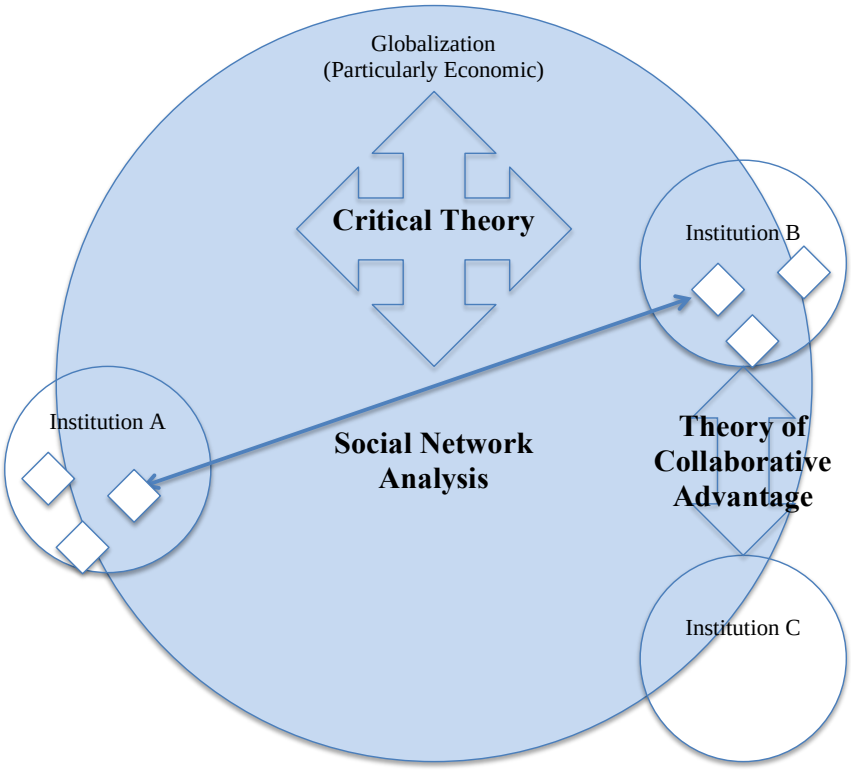
There is not a consensus about what theories should guide international social work (Trygged, 2010, p. 651). As mentioned, this study examines motivations for international collaborations in social work education using elements of critical theory, social network analysis, and the theory of collaborative advantage, the last of which emerged in an emic fashion from some of the early interviews and pilot testing. Much has been written about the possible benefits of international collaborations in social work education, and indeed elements of this integrated theoretical framework speak to those possibilities. At the same time, the lens of critical theory introduces a strong note of skepticism, particularly around the role of capitalist market economics, to motivational claims about such collaborations. Alongside the emic evolution of a theoretical framework based in part on respondent's narratives, this skepticism contributes in an etic fashion to the decision to examine collaborations, in part, using the theory of collaborative advantage, which emerges from the business and management literature. As the third element of this integrated framework, social network analysis provides the tools for how such collaborations often form in the real world, under the twin pressures of free market economics and international educational institutions jockeying for position in this new global arena.

Critical theory here is examined as originally outlined by Max Horkheimer and others of the "Frankfurt School," and later extended by Jürgen Habermas. Critical theory for the purposes of this study is largely in its Habermasian formulation, but also in the more specific formation of a "critical social work" theory and practice (Fook, 2002, Ife, 1997; Rossiter, 1996). It should also be noted that both critical theory and social network analysis find some of their roots in Germany in the early decades of the 20th century. Critical theory has its roots in the work of Karl

Marx as well as Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis (Held, 1980), but as a coherent theory stems from the work of several scholars out of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Frankfurt am Main: including Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and a distinct branch pioneered in the later work of Jürgen Habermas (Habermas, 1972; Held, 1980; Kivisto, 2012; Ritzer & Goodman, 2003). Social network analysis owes some of its ideas to the German Gestalt psychology of individuals like Wolfgang Köhler (Scott, 2012). Both critical theory and social network analysis are interested in communication between individual actors and the way that system forces shape these interactions. The theory of collaborative advantage emerges from the business management literature, and is much more recent, stemming primarily from the work of Chris Huxham (Huxham, 1996), and further extended in collaboration with Siv Vangen (Huxham & Vangen, 2005).

The three elements of this integrated theoretical framework combine to help understand institutional motivations for international collaborations in social work education in the broader context of globalization and debates about social work's identity on the global stage. Critical theory is essential for understanding *why* schools of social work may pursue collaborations; social network analysis helps understand *how* collaborations form, and collaborative advantage provides a powerful tool for not only further understanding why collaborations begin, but also *what* they achieve in terms of outcomes for their institutions. The relationships between the three elements are summarized in the figure below.

Figure 1: Integrated theoretical model



Collaborations tend to form based on weak ties between individual actors at institutions (social network analysis), and in many ways function to provide collaborative advantages for both institutions in relationship to other peer institutions. All of this occurs within the wider context of globalization, and what Habermas would term a steady move towards "the system" and away from the "lifeworld" (Houston, 2013). In the sections that follow, each of these three elements will be explored in greater depth.

Critical Theory

As defined by Horkheimer (1972), critical theory emerged from the meta question of what theory is and to what ends it is oriented (p. 188). This emphasis on the utility or purpose of theory was in part influenced by the original theorists' position in the time between the two world wars; amid disappointment at the way classic Marxist theory had seemingly failed to

deliver on its promises in Stalin's Soviet Union and around Europe (Held, 1980). The proletariat had not risen up in many places one would have expected it to, and when it had, the results were less than what Marx had predicted. Critical theory, at least in part, emerged from efforts to explain what Marx had gotten wrong while preserving a core of what Marx had gotten right. Critical theorists critiqued Marx for focusing too much on objective, materialistic, deterministic and largely economic understandings of the stages of historical development (the base in Marxist terminology) without paying enough attention to the subjective nature with which humans interpreted and influenced their reality (superstructure), especially through language (Habermas, 1985; 1990, Held, 1980).

In the seminal 1937 essay "Traditional and Critical Theory," Horkheimer (1972) pushed back against the prevailing logical positivism of the day, the privileging of sensory knowledge gained through scientific observation as the only valid basis for making generalizations and the privileging of facts over values, lamenting the fact that traditional theory was deductive and mathematical and wanting to differentiate theory in the social sciences from the empirical inquiry of the natural sciences. In opposition to traditional theory thus defined, Horkheimer (1972) wanted theoreticians to take up the cause of oppressed classes, for theory to be not only an explanation of what is, but simultaneously "a force within it to stimulate change" (p. 215). The emphasis on a critique that leads to practical action exemplifies critical theory's commitment to avoiding a dualism of theory and practice, and instead to emphasize the combination of both in praxis (Horkheimer, 1972).

The central focus of critical theory is on identifying and critiquing ideologies and economic systems that oppress. More simply put, in the words of Theodor Adorno, critical theory "seeks to give a name to what secretly holds the machinery together" (1976, p. 68).

Given that its focus is on critiquing both society and the work of other theorists, critical theory is often understood negatively, with many arguing that it is "easier to say what critical theory is not rather than what it is" (Held, 1980, p. 24). However, central tenets of critical theory include an emphasis on the oppressive nature of capitalism, critical self-reflection, a strong focus on the historical, dialectics, identifying systems of domination and oppression, and seeking to advance the causes of liberation and critical consciousness (Adorno, 1976; Habermas, 1972; 1973; 1985; Held, 1980; Horkheimer, 1972; Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002; Marcuse, 1970).

The critical theorists of the Frankfurt School were heavily influenced by Karl Marx's critique of capitalism as inherently irrational and oppressive (Dandaneau & Falcone, 1998; Held, 1980; Horkheimer, 1972). Capitalism is both the leading cause of social problems around the globe and also the source of social and technological advancement (Dandaneau & Falcone, 1998). Capitalism makes society a commodity, where "products are manufactured *primarily* for their realization as value and profit, and not for their capacity to satsify human wants and desires" (Held, 1980, p. 41). Critical theorists seek to point out the actual results, in terms of social and material relations, that capitalism has, as they view these as being hidden from society at large by what is sometimes referred to as the "fetishism of commodities" (Held, 1980, p. 41). They view capitalism as necessarily progressing towards monopoly, and the mass production of standardized goods (Held, 1980).

The inequality capitalism produces makes it inherently unstable, and in order to sustain itself, it will resort to imperialism and other forms of violence (Held, 1980; Horkheimer, 1972). As Horkheimer (1972) puts it "unemployment, economic crises, militarization, terrorist regimes – in a word the whole condition of the masses" is a result of the circumstances of production, a production which is "geared to the power-backed claims of individuals while being hardly

concerned with the life of the community" (p. 213). Thus the critical theorist has serious misgivings with the spread of neo-liberal market forces into the realm of higher education, particularly at the international level. This spread is explored in greater depth in the chapter on policy. While there are many disagreements on the details (Held, 1980), from the beginning critical theory has believed that monopolistic capitalism results in the death of individual thought, and that popular opinion becomes a product of economic and political power structures (Horkheimer, 1972, p. 237) as capitalism seeks to legitimate itself in the face of repeated crises (Habermas, 1973).

In addition to a strong critique of capitalism, critical theory emphasizes self-reflection. In emphasizing self-reflection, critical theory wants to draw attention to the way humans "by their own toil keep in existence a reality which enslaves them in ever greater degree" (Horkheimer, 1972, p. 213). Critical self reflection seeks to judge between competing claims about the nature of reality and in doing so expose what may be based on ideology or economy, and imagine alternatives (Held, 1980). Critical theorists blast positivists as only able to offer an account of what *is*, with no basis for evaluating competing claims about what *ought to be* (Held, 1980).

Critical theorists emphasize the centrality of history to understandings of philosophy and society (Held, 1980). Indeed, critical theory is only to be applied to specific historical contexts, as Horkheimer (1972) outlined in 1937, "There are no general criteria for judging the critical theory as a whole, for it is always based on the recurrence of events and thus on a self-reproducing totality" (p. 242). A related tenet is critical theory's emphasis on dialectics. Dialectics refers to a discourse or form of reasoning that evaluates competing claims within the historical specificity and the social construction of knowledge and context of larger organizational and social changes (Held, 1980). It seeks to reveal truth that has been omitted.

This makes it an ideal approach for examining international collaboration as part of globalization (Alvarez, 1996; Beck, 2003; Giroux, 1983; Hart, 1990; Horkheimer, 1972; Kellner, 2002; Leonardo, 2002; Yang, 2003; Young, 2002). It helps provide a much needed critique of the potential for exploitation and domination within such collaborations (Dominelli, 2004).

The fight against domination, or oppression, is another key area of critical theory. Marcuse (1970) defines domination this way:

> Domination is in effect whenever the individual's goals are purposes and the means for striving for and attaining them are prescribed to him and performed by him as something prescribed. Domination can be exercised by men, by nature, by things – it can also be internal, exercised by the individual on himself, and appear in the form of autonomy. (pp. 1-2)

Social work scholars in Africa, for example, have noted the tendency of peers to privilege Western theories and pedagogies over indigenous ones, a form of self-domination (Dominelli, 2004; Rankopo & Osei-Hwedie, 2011).

Jürgen Habermas

Habermas' understanding of reality is a competition between two largely invisible spheres of social reproduction, the *lifeworld* and the *system* (Habermas, 1987). The lifeworld as a sphere is comprised of the shared meanings that humans create with one another as individuals and groups through language (Habermas, 1987; Houston, 2013). The system, in contrast, spun out from the lifeworld and is the realm of the State and other economic and political actors, primarily focused on the accumulation of money and power (Houston, 2013). To borrow from his mentors, in the system, "everything has value only in so far as it can be exchanged" (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002, p. 128).

Habermas retains earlier critical theoriests understanding of an unstable and often irrational capitalism, prone to crises, and these crises in capitalism result in a creeping tendency for corporate interests and governments, the system, to work together to control increasing amounts of every day life, in what Habermas terms "the colonization of the life-world" (Habermas, 1987). The state runs the risk of becoming completely co-opted by capitalist interests to protect oppressed populations from the impacts of the system just enough that they will not question it (Held, 1980). Social work is certainly not immune to this line of critique, as one of the architects of community organizing in the United States, Saul Alinsky, stated it,

> Social work is largely a middle class activity and guided by a middle class psychology. In the rare instances where it reaches the slum dwellers it seeks to get them adjusted to their environment so they will live in hell and like it. A higher form of social treason would be difficult to conceive. (as quoted in Meyer, 1945, p. 7)

Habermas is deeply concerned with the expansion of adminstrative, technocratic, or bureacratic market forces into every sphere of human activity and culture in defense of the status quo (Held, 1980). This expansion works to further destabalize and devalue the ways in which people naturally care for one another (Houston, 2013). This emphasis on culture, and especially language, and the role it plays it legitimating economic structures represented a departure from classic Marxist theory, which emphasized an economic base with a cultural superstructure informed almost totally by the base (Held, 1980). Habermas focuses heavily on the role of language, which for him represents the "key medium for constructing reality" (Houston, 2013, p. 14). In fact, Habermas sees language as inherently, in fact ontologically, striving for consensus and mutuality (Houston, 2013). Language plays different roles in the system and the lifeworld.

In the lifeworld, language ideally functions as "communicative action" (Habermas, 1985). Communicative action happens when individuals are able to reach a reasoned consensus about mutual goals or collaborative action. As Houston (2013) puts it:

> Quintessentially, communicative action denotes accountability – that is, it invokes my responsibility to you to make claims that are truthful, sincere, and morally appropriate and your responsibility to me to do likewise. Importantly, when institutionalized, communicative action strengthens social integration and solidarity in social networks and society at large. (p. 15)

The emphases in Habermas' theory of communicative action on accountability, mutuality, and the institutionalized strengthening of social networks and society as a whole make it ideal for examining international collaborations in social work education.

In contrast, in the system, the communicative action of the lifeworld is perverted into "strategic action," wherein language is used not for mutual understanding and reasoned consensus but for the strategic pursuit of personal goals (Houston, 2013). Habermas acknowledges the necessity of strategic action in certain situations, but is concerned that strategic action is steadily moving into areas that ought to be governed by communicative action.

As mentioned in the introduction to critical theory, one of its tenets is the desire to fight oppression. Habermas extends this to the proactive desire to advance causes of liberation and critical consciousness (Houston, 2013). This impulse was in part a reaction of Habermas to what he saw as the "social pessimism and political skepticism" of his earlier colleagues at the Frankfurt School (Houston, 2013, p. 13). For Habermas (1972), an emancipatory interest is one of the innate interests of human beings, to be free

from both what he terms “hypostatized forces,” forces which advance a false reality, and from distorted communication. Humans ought to be free from such false realities and be able to, through dialog and reason, move towards consensus through communicative action, what Habermas (1985) terms “the ideal speech situation” and the natural end towards which language must be oriented.

An ideal speech situation is characterized by equality of access, equality of participation (freedom to question all assertions, raise assertions, and express needs and desires), and freedom from coercion (Habermas, 1990, p. 86). In addition to a concern about the techno-bureaucratization of social work already mentioned above, this focus on dismantling systems of domination and enabling authentic human freedom make critical theory a natural fit for social work. Social work on a global level has similar commitments, see for example the recently published Global Agenda (IASSW, IFSW & ICSW, 2012), and as Houston (2013) notes, “There is a growing interest in Habermas’ ideas in Western social work” (p. 19).

Critical Social Work

Critical theory has a long tradition within social work, especially within the profession’s more radical elements (Fook, 1993, 2002; Reisch & Andrews, 2001). However, “critical social work,” as what Fook (2003) labels a “coherent term,” (p. 123), emerged only in the late 1990s. Perhaps not coincidentally, many of the early pioneering authors in the literature on critical social work, Dominelli, Fook, and Ife, have also been involved in writing about international social work. Critical social work combines elements of classical critical theory with post-structuralism, and a heavy emphasis on social justice and social movements, a particular concern for Habermas (Houston, 2013; Rossiter, 1996). Rossiter (1996) identifies an increase in social

movements, and particularly social movements outside of social work, as calling for a critical reexamination of the profession. Dominelli (2004) points to rising global poverty and the inability of international efforts to halt it as evidence that social work internationally must rethink the role of theory and practice (p. 93). Rossiter (1996) calls for the profession to abandon "a century of theoretical preoccupation with what could be wrong with individuals and families" (p. 25) and take a broader and more explicitly social justice driven perspective.

For the sake of clarity, this paper uses Rossiter's (1996) definition of critical social work: "The term critical social work refers to theory and practice which assumes that economic, cultural and social structures privilege some and not others" (p. 23). Recent critical scholarship has particularly highlighted the role played by race (Abrams & Moio, 2009; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, 2012; Leonardo, 2002). Core tenets of critical social work, paraphrased from Fook (2002; 2003) and obviously reliant on Habermas, include: challenging domination in all forms, from the personal to the structural, the awareness that false consciousness can blind social workers to the reality that social relations and structures are produced and can be change, a general critique of positivism, the need for new epistemological frameworks that acknowledge that what can be empirically verified is simultaneously socially constructed, and an emphasis on the transformative or liberating possibility of social action and movements (pp. 124-125).

Such a move to focus on social justice and social movements, however, is open to the temptation of structuralism, as found in classical Marxism, to become overly deterministic (Fook; 2003, Rossiter, 1996). To use social work language, it opens the temptation to focus on the environment exclusively rather than the person-in-environment. In order to avoid this, critical social work relies on post-structuralism, which attempts to maintain focus on both the individual and the social, and again with a debt to Habermas and others who followed him, how

language socially constructs, or produces, identity (Foucault, 1980). From such a view, social workers in international collaborative activity have the potential to reproduce unequal power relationships through the very language of partnership. Put more forcefully, Haug (2005) argues that:

> Without critically questioning its place in the historical and contemporary dynamics of colonization, imperialism, and Western hegemony, international social work seemed to be presented as a friendly, apolitical, ahistorical, cozy conversation in which participants merrily engage in mutual exchange, through conferences, journals, or international work (in which primarily Western 'experts' teach or consult in non-Western countries). (p. 127)

Dominelli (2004) argues that since the beginning of international collaborative activities in 1928, the global hegemony of certain nations has allowed them to misuse education to promote the superiority of their own models and goals (Dominelli, 2004, p. 88). The post-structuralist perspective necessitates that social workers acknowledge that social work is a form of cultural production, and has been used by states to maintain power, as Alinsky did back in the 1940s (Fook, 2003; Meyer, 1945; Rossiter, 1996, p. 310).

Post-structuralism, however, is not a perfect perspective for international collaborations. Fook (2003) identifies one of the core debates in critical social work as "the global applicability of critical social work; the problem of upholding universal ideals simultaneous with incorporating differences" (p. 125). This debate reveals that post-structuralism, and postmodernism more broadly, is insufficient for critical social work, in that in viewing truth as something that is produced through power it is perhaps unable to escape a radical relativism that in the end cannot sustain more universal commitments to justice (Habermas, 1981; Houston,

2013; Padgett, 1998; Rossiter, 1996; Volf, 1996) and necessitates instead a critical modernity project (Trygged, 2010). As Padgett (1998) puts it, "The arid detachment of the postmodern movement appears inappropriate and potentially harmful amid the crises… that beset the poor and vulnerable" (p. 7).

By combining elements of Habermas' critical theory and post-structuralism, critical social work is able to self-reflectively acknowledge social work's role in historic domination as well as the ongoing potential for power differentials in international collaborative activity, while still maintaining a proactive emphasis on social justice and liberation. As a theoretical lens, it helps provide answers to questions of *why* social work education is being pushed towards international education, and critique the empirical literature examining motivations and outcomes as potentially insufficient for understanding the phenomenon. Social network analysis, as a more practical analytical method, helps understand *how* such collaborations are forming and continuing.

Social Network Analysis

Social work has always believed in the positive potential of collaborative activities, particularly in terms of personal relationships (FICSW, 1929). Indeed, many international collaborations in social work education are the result of serendipitous encounters (Healy, 2003). Social network analysis is a multidisciplinary method for examining the networks of social relationships that influence how parties relate to one another at levels from the interpersonal, to the communal, to international systems (Knoke & Yang, 2008). The method owes much to psychology, including Gestalt psychology (Scott, 2012) and the "small world problem" of social psychologist Stanley Milgram (Knoke & Yang, 2008; Milgram, 1967), but also incorporates additional elements from anthropology and sociology (Knoke & Yang, 2008).

The Gestalt psychologists, including Wolfgang Köhler, Kurt Lewin, Jacob Moreno and Fritz Heider, emphasized how systems, "gestalt" can be translated from the German as "shape" or "whole form," structure thoughts and perceptions (Scott, 2012). Social network analysis applies this emphasis on the whole, and the way the whole influences perception, to social relationships. Gestalt psychology also helped begin the related and broader field of social psychology (Scott, 2012), influencing individuals such as Stanley Milgram. As Milgram (1967) famously pointed out, an average of five intermediaries will suffice to connect two random individuals in the United States, demonstrating that "we are all bound together in a tightly knit social fabric" (p. 67). What was true in 1967 for the United States is increasingly true for the world as a whole.

Vincent (2009) points out that whenever two social work institutions collaborate, there is at the core a relationship between distinct individuals. Social network analysis is built around the idea of analyzing networks of these "structural relations" between individual actors to understand how they form and what outcomes result from their activities (Knoke & Yang, 2008, p. 4). A social network is made up of *actors*, sometimes referred to as *nodes*, which can be individuals, groups, or institutions, and the *relations* between *dyads* or *triads* of actors (Kadushin, 2011; Knoke & Yang, 2008). Knoke and Yang (2008) outline three key assumptions, particularly when applied to networks of human relations. The first is that human behavior is often more often guided by structured relations than by demographic characteristics such as age, ethnicity, or ideology. The second is that social networks influence members through socially constructed mechanisms, with direct contact resulting in more potent influence. The third is that networks and the structural relationships that comprise them are dynamic, and always changing.

In social network analysis, the relations that form the network are analyzed through several

key lenses. Relational content refers to the type of relationship between the dyad in the network, ranging from highly formal to intimate (Knoke & Yang, 2008). In examining relational content, social network analysis emphasizes homophily, a term originally coined by Lazarsfeld and Merton (1954) from the Greek for love of or attraction to the same. Homophily refers to the tendency for humans and institutions to form connections with those who are similar, as a "basic organizing principle" (McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook, 2001, p. 416). Homophily, in turn is often assessed at the level of *status homophily*, meaning demographic similarity, and *value homophily*, sometimes referred to as homogeneity of beliefs (Kadushin, 2011; Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1954; McPherson et al., 2001). A related concept is propinquity, meaning geographic or psychological proximity or closeness (Kadushin, 2011; McPherson et al., 2001). It is worth noting here that technological innovations in communications technologies are beginning to substantially alter considerations of propinquity (McPherson et al., 2001; Christakis & Fowler, 2009), although perhaps less than originally thought (Kadushin, 2011).

Social network analysis is heavily focused on the relations between actors, as outlined above, but also how the networks are structured, and what flows through them (Christakis & Fowler, 2009). The literature highlights three kinds of networks: ego-centric, centered around a single individual, socio-centric, contained within a set environment like a classroom, and open system networks, which are more nebulous (Kadushin, 2011). Within networks, certain actors or nodes will often have more popularity, or *centrality*, meaning they will be connected to more nodes and serve as bridges between clusters (Kadushin, 2011; Scott, 2012). Actors form distinct and non-overlapping cliques or *clusters* with clear organization and hierarchy (Kadushin, 2011). As mentioned, direct connections are more powerful than indirect or "weak ties" and social network analysis uses the term *density* to refer to the number of direct connections in a real

network divided by the number of possible direct connections (Kadushin, 2011). Weak ties, however, are important in that they more often function to bridge between network segments than strong ties, which tend to be intragroup (Putnam, 2001; Kadushin, 2011). The term *contagion* is sometimes used to describe the way content moves along connections, whether it be money or ideas (Christakis & Fowler, 2009, p. 16).

Networks can be threatened or weakened by a variety of factors. As behaviors or ideas are transmitted between nodes they can become distorted, this is referred to as *intrinsic-decay* (Christakis & Fowler, 2009, p. 28). The dynamic nature of networks also means that links beyond three degrees of separation are frequently changing, referred to as *network instability* (Christakis & Fowler, 2009, p. 29).

As a fully-fledged analytical method, advanced social network analysis relies on complex algebraic models originally pioneered at Harvard (Scott, 2012). However, even without such mathematical analysis, it provides insights into how individuals and institutions might build better and more reciprocal relationships through various forms of bonding and bridging social capital (Putnam, 2001). By focusing on the weaker ties at the periphery of networks, actors such as social work educators can help reduce inequality and strengthen the fabric of society (Christakis & Fowler, 2009). This is particularly helpful in thinking about the complicated and challenging nature of institutional affiliations, structured as a combination of ties between faculty, students, and administrators (Vincent, 2009).

Social network analysis also helps identify ways in which social networks are potentially oppressive. The benefits of robust social networks are unequally distributed, and there are reasons to be concerned that "in an increasingly interconnected world, people with many ties may become even better connected while those with few ties may get left farther and farther

behind" (Christakis & Fowler, 2009, p. 301). Rankopo & Osei-Hwedie (2011) contend that professional imperialism continues in academic exchanges between social work educators in the Global North and Global South, even those that are voluntary, and that this domination is only "strengthened by the use of language and concepts such as equality, partnership, and mutuality" (p. 140).

So far, we have examined why international collaborations in social work may form in the context of the continuing colonization of the lifeworld by the capitalist forces of the system, while holding out hope that they may also be part of emancipatory and mutually beneficial communicative action. We have also examined how such collaborations tend to form, and are maintained in complex patterns of relationships between actors. The final element takes a closer look at some of the system logic behind what institutions have to gain from collaboration.

Theory of Collaborative Advantage

The theory of collaborative advantage emerges from the business and management literature, particularly the exploration of what a seminal article labeled the "inter-organizational domain" (Trist, 1983). As noted elsewhere, the theory was constructed in part through action research, and the themes are drawn inductively from practice case studies (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). The theory offers two useful theoretical constructs to help describe collaborative activities. The first, collaborative advantage, describes the potential gains from collaboration. The second, collaborative inertia, describes the frequent failure of collaborative activities to bear this imagined fruit.

Huxham and Vagen (2005) devote considerable thought to describing why organizations choose to collaborate, outlining six reasons. These provide a rich understanding of both motivations for collaboration and potential outcomes, and form the basis of some of the

questions in the interview guides attached in Appendix C and D.

The first motivation, and one which critical theory would predict, is access to resources or markets (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). Institutions collaborate in order to obtain financial or human resources they otherwise would not have, and to open up possibilities to move their product into new markets. On the flip side of this is the second motivation, the desire to share the risk associated with operating institutions. Institutions want to increase their market share while minimizing the potential risks of doing so.

The third motivation Huxham and Vangen (2005) outline is efficiency. Many institutions are able to offer services more easily in collaboration, instead of duplicating efforts. A parallel motivation is coordination and seamlessness. Working together can make the experience of the user more fluid across multiple institutions.

The final two motivations Huxham and Vangen (2005) list are perhaps the most interesting for the rhetoric global social work has often attached to collaborations between schools of social work. The first is learning from the diverse experiences of other institutions. As will be demonstrated in the literature review, learning about diversity, or to use language currently popular in social work education, developing cultural competency, is often one of the core imagined benefits of international collaboration.

Finally, there is what Huxham and Vangen (2005) call "the moral imperative." In describing the moral imperative, they write,

> Some would argue that the most important reason for being concerned with collaboration is a moral one. This rests on the belief that the really important issues facing society – poverty, crime, drug abuse, conflict, health promotion, economic development, and so on – cannot be tackled by any organization acting

alone. (p. 7)

The notion of a moral imperative for international collaborations is firmly rooted in social work history. At the First International Conference of Social Work in 1928, Eglantyne Jebb, the founder of Save the Children, argued that "problem of international relationship is one of the most urgent confronting us today" (1929, p. 637). The social problems that Jebb saw around the globe were not national problems; they were problems of globalization. She notes that "the very daily bread of the average man depends upon the work and prosperity of his fellows in distant, unknown lands" (p. 638) and goes on to say that "If it is an international social evil, if it springs from international causes, then surely its solution must lie along international lines" (p. 654). Modern commitments to global citizenship and human rights echo the moral imperative for international collaborations in social work education.

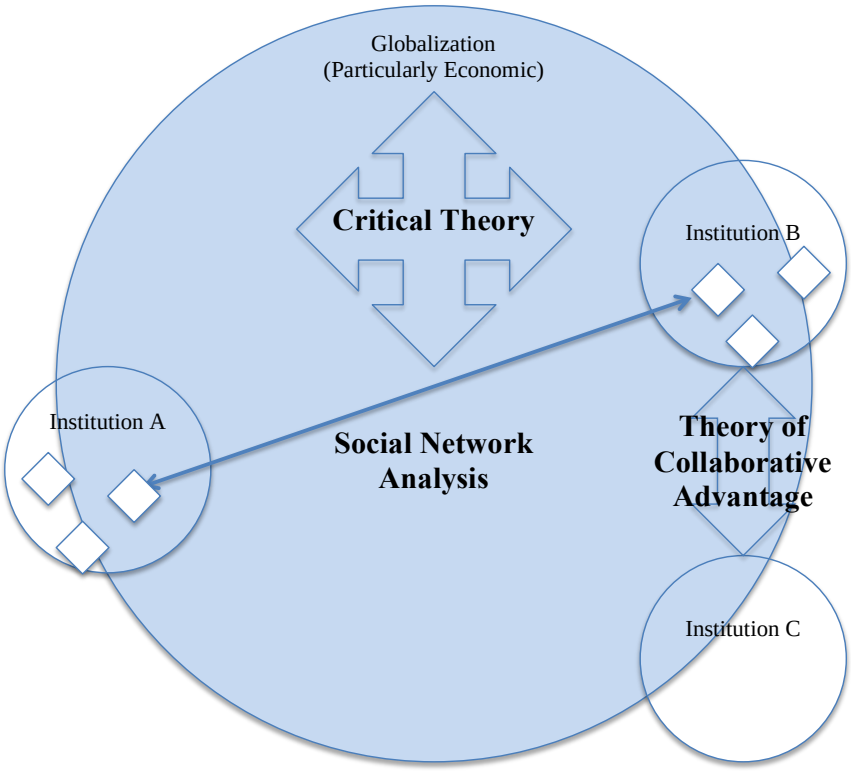
A combined theoretical framework

As outlined in Figure 1 below, a combined theoretical perspective helps understand how the strength of initially weak ties between certain central individual actors can help bridge between clusters on opposite sides of the globe to form institutional collaborations, particularly when driven, as in social work's case, by strong value homophily and a moral imperative. Critical social work theory adds to this understanding of *how* collaborations emerge and function some insights into *why* social work education is being pushed, internally and externally, towards collaborations in international education, and collaborative advantage helps illustrate both why social work moves towards collaboration and *what* such collaborations might be able to achieve in terms of outcomes for participating individuals and institutions.

In this combined theoretical framework, the backdrop is globalization, and particularly economic globalization. Critical theory provides the primary lens for understanding this

background, and interjects a note of skepticism about the way that the language of the system may be misrepresenting the true nature of motivations. Social network analysis helps understand how individuals at institutions, for example an individual at Institution A and one at Institution B come into contact and form collaborations. The theory of collaborative advantage helps understand how institutions position themselves, such as how Institution B may position itself with regards to Institution C based on a collaboration with Institution A.

Figure 2: Integrated theoretical model



Within the theory of collaborative advantage, Huxham and Vangen (2005), outline 17 themes in collaborative practice, categorizing them as emerging from a variety of sources: practitioners, policy, researchers, and so-called "cross cutting themes" (p. 38). For the purposes of this integrated framework, I am predominantly interested in the emic practitioner generated themes. These were the most numerous, and included: common aims, working processes,

resources, communication and language, commitment and determination, culture, power, trust, compromise, accountability, democracy and equality, and risk (p. 38). As the authors note, this theory of collaborative advantage is "essentially descriptive in nature," which "allows the material to be researched and presented in manageable chunks, each of which can be considered in isolation from the others, while taking account of the overlap with issues that the others raise" (2005, p. 38). The research questions outlined in Chapter 6 are structured on a critical understanding of some of these practitioner generated themes, as well as an exploration of the social network out of which the collaboration emerges.

CHAPTER 5: LITERATURE REVIEW

The social work education literature has not kept pace with the broader higher education literature in studying international collaborations. In many ways, it remains under-developed, but what exists is examined below, beginning with the literature on models for collaboration. Following an examination of how social work collaborations might be formed and carried out is a look at the research on the extent of collaborative activities, and finally the current research on what sorts of outcomes collaborations produce.

Practice models for social work collaborations

The social work literature includes some intentional thinking about models of collaboration, most prominently in a single edited volume of case studies assembled by Healy, Asamoah, and Hokenstad (2003) and published by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). However, the body of literature suggesting practice models for collaboration or exchange remains small (Asamoah & Beverly, 1988; Bogo & Maeda, 1990; Ford & Ericson, 2003; Healy et al., 2003). This highlights the largely theoretical and anecdotal nature of the general field of inquiry. There are suggestions for how one ought to proceed, often reinforced with personal experience in some sort of partnership, but fewer studies examining such partnerships with methdological rigor. The following section examines several models, from both the edited volume and other sources, and concludes with some common threads.

Many collaborative models have some sort of faculty component, which is often the beginning of a larger partnership. Collaborations involving only faculty are often built around guest-lecturing or consulting on curriculum development (Healy, Asamoah & Hokenstad, 2003). Models stress a focus on the "subtleties of communication" (Healy, Asamoah & Hokenstad, 2003, p. 4) in such collaborations. Link and Vogrinčič (2003) present a model for a partnership

between Augsburg College in Minnesota and the University of Ljubljana in Slovenia involving faculty exchange that began in 1996 after a meeting between deans at the respective institutions. While involving social work faculty, the model is interdisciplinary, which ensures greater buy in across the institution, greater density in the social network. The faculty exchange involved several components, including discussions of pedagogical approaches in the various disciplines, the exchange of syllabi and curricula, joint research, reciprocal visits, and joint participation in conferences (Link and Vogrinčič, 2003). Echoing sentiments from the FICSW, those involved highlighted personal relationships created as the "intangibles" which represented "lifelong insights and gifts of friendship, professional resilience, and creativity" (Link and Vogrinčič, 2003, p. 31).

Hokenstad (2003) presents another model focused primarily on faculty interaction, between the Eotvos Lorand University in Hungary and Case Western Reserve. The focus was on teaching, consultation, and collaborative research, and the collaboration received external funding from the now defunct United States Information Agency (USIA) (Hokenstad, 2003a), which from 1953-1999 focused on public diplomacy. Hokenstad (2003a) highlights the long term nature of the planning process as a key element, as well as reciprocity and institutionalization.

Lee (2003) presents a model developed as part of a long running partership, beginning in 1981, between Tunghai University in Taiwan and San Jose State as an outgrowth of the first Sino-American Conference on Social Weflare Development, a conference co-sponsored by CSWE. The model includes joint funding for faculty and student exchange, although remuneration of visiting professors remains the responsibility of the home institution. While focusing somewhat on curricula, as with Link and Vogrinčič (2003) above, this model is wider,

with an emphasis on activities outside the classroom such as human service consultation and on developing "effective ways to address social welfare issues releavant to both cultures and societies" (Lee, 2003, p. 37).

Consultation with developing programs in an international context is another common model. Constable, Kulys & Harrison (2003) examined such a consultative collaboration between Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania, and Loyola University Chicago, the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Alabama. Many such consultancy oriented models operate in countries where social work as a formal profession was absent, as was the case in Lithuania up until the early 1990s (Constable et al., 2003). Efforts began with the establishment of a center to study social work, followed by a certificate program and the development of a masters program. In addition to developing new programs, consultation efforts often involve the strengthening of curriculum and faculty in contexts where social work has a longer history, as with a partnership between the University of Toronto and the Sri Lanka School of Social Work funded by the Candian International Development Agency (CIDA) and UNICEF (Shera, 2003). That partnership began in the mid 1980's, but social work education had arrived in Sri Lanka in 1953 (Shera, 2003).

The literature presents a variety of models for intiating collaborations, including those based off of personal connections, conferences, or the work of professional organizations such as the IASSW. Maxwell and Healy (2003) offered a unique prespective on the initiation of a collaboration. The authors' institution, the University of Connecticut, is located in Hartford, home of a large community of immigrants from the West Indies. Rather than an initial relationship, the collaboration began with an identified area of scholarship with a link to the home community (2003). In a section on replication, the authors recommend establishing

collaborations based on the presence of a specific immigrant community. Another less common model was presented by Saunders, Langsted & Staples (2003). Two faculty members at Boston University with a mutual interest in international work sent letters to various institutions in countries "that would be relatively easy to reach" and guided by considerations of "travel costs and the ability to take U.S. students with limited foreign language proficiency" (Saunders et al., 2003, p. 61). The collaboration began after the National Danish School of Social Work responded positively to this unsolicited offer of partnership.

The collaboration between the Danish School of Social Work and Boston University is also interesting in that it presents a model for collaboration between two schools in wealthy, industrialized nations (Saunders et al., 2003). This has enabled a higher degree of reciprocity than many other models examined. Between 1989 and 2000 approximately 150 U.S. students visited Denmark and 100 Danish students the United States, and 13 Danish students were able to complete full, 5-month, field placements in Boston (2003).

Not all models rely on pairings of educational institutions. Guevara & Ylvisaker (2003) present what they refer to as a "home" model of collaboration that involves faculty from the home institution liaisoning directly with NGOs in another country for service learning as opposed to the usual "host" model of working through an academic institution. Vincent (2009) had a similar model linking with an NGO in Nairobi, Kenya. In both cases, the initial collaborationw as an outgrowth of a professor encountering or working with the NGO in question (Guevara& Ylvisaker, 2003; Vincent, 2009).

While most of the literature on international collaborations in social work education focuses on the bachelors and masters level, there are a few models for doctoral education (Butterfield, 2007; Constable et al., 2003; Elliot et al., 2003). The University of Texas at

Arlington and Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon in Monterrey, Mexcio, began offering a joint doctoral program with six Mexican and five U.S. students in 1997 (Elliot et al., 2003). The program is a dual degree with social work and international comparative social policy, and students received degrees from both institutions (2003). The first year is offered in Monterrey, the second in Arlington, with students choosing their own location in subsequent years. All students are fluent in Spanish and English. This is one of the first programs to truly respond to the globalized nature of issues like migration and immigration through the very structure of its program.

One of the most progressive models for collaboration comes from the Institute for International Liberal Education, established at Bard College in 1999. The model focuses specifically on collaborations with countries actively transitioning to more democratic forms of government, and focuses on not only student exchange, but also exchanges of faculty and curriculum (Gillespie, 2002). The Institute's first project was the International Human Rights Exchange, a collaborative efforts between seven liberal arts colleges in the U.S. and seven in Southern Africa (Gillespie, 2002). It involved five students from each institutions, as well as faculty from ten disciplines at ten different institutions participating in an intensive course on human rights, the results of which were published in the South African journal *Human Rights Quarterly*. The efforts' commitment to equal participation was in part enabled by external funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (Gillespie, 2002). Gillespie (2002) noted the potential for both funding from the U.S. and liberal arts perspectives to taint the project, but argued that such a collaboration "is not an imposition of norms on a foreign country but a negotiation of those norms in light of the concrete situations of the countries in which those

norms seek expression" and that this negotiation process "helps students develop values and practices that run counter to hegemonic globalization as represented by the WTO" (p. 267).

Some work has been done on models specifically for religious institutions. One practice model that has generated some controversy is "Reverse Mission" (Abram, 2005; Abram & Cruce, 2007; Abram, Shufeldt, & Rose, 2004). The concept is borrowed from theological and missions studies, and is targeted at Christians in North America, in an effort to sensitize or expose them to injustice globally and heighten their commitment to justice (Abram et al., 2004, p. 139). The model has been championed by faculty at the Saint Louis Unviersity School of Social Work, a Jesuit institution, and seeks to challenge conceptions among students about who is the beneficiary of international collaborations in social work and to increase the impact of such encounters on how a student lives their life on returning home. Unfortunately, the model still seems to have some elements of what some refer to as poverty tourism, or the exoticization of the other (Woolf, 2006), for instance both courses highlighted as using the model were short term, two week endeavors, and one was titled "Experiencing Community among the Poor of Mexico" (Abram et al., 2004, p. 141). In addition, while proponents are clear that "reverse mission as we envision it does not involve or call for religious, social, or intellectual conversion of another" (Abram et al., 2004, p. 151), the utility of utilizing that religiously loaded language is unclear.

There is also a body of literature from social work academics and educators in non-North American contexts (Bettmann et al., 2009) questioning the utility of North American educational models, and appropriately problematizing partnerships, but less about potential benefits. Some have suggested that one of the more beneficial collaborations would be a purely financial one, with one program supporting another (Asamoah & Beverly, 1988).

These models highlight a variety of factors to be considered before engaging in collaboration, from the impacts of a history of colonization in contexts like sub-Saharan Africa (Asamoah & Beverly, 1988), concerns about the universality or indigenous nature of social work which have already been discussed at length, the importance of mutuality or reciprocity in order to avoid dependency (Asamoah & Beverly, 1988; Bogo & Maeda, 1990; Healy, 2003; Hokenstad, 2003b), and the necessity of cooperative relationships between faculty members (Asamoah, 2003). Many models are initiated by, and highly dependent on, the enthusiasm and extra efforts of committed faculty members (Saunders et al., 2003). Consequently, faculty and administration turnover a significant problem (Elliot et al., 2003; Saunders et al., 2003; Shera, 2003). In most cases the collaborations are initiated by North American social work faculty (Hokenstad, 2003b). Conferences and social work organizations such as the IASSW and IFSW play a key connecting role, although they are financially limited and could be even more effective (Hokenstad, 2003b).

Models focused on pedagogy are mostly targeted at comparative efforts between faculty members. While there is a body of literature on including global content in domestic programs (Riebschleger & Agbenyiga, 2011), there is less information on pedagogical models developed through collaborative international activities (Crabtree & Sapp, 2004; Mahrous & Ahmed, 2010; Teekens, 2003).

Models guiding student exchange frequently call for some sort of pre-departure preparation, via assigned readings, meetings, or a full fledged seminar experience (Guevara & Ylvisaker, 2003; Roholt & Fisher, 2013). The content of such pre-departure experiences varies from guest-lectures by nationals of the host country to logistical preparation for travel (Roholt & Fisher, 2013). Once in country, many models utilize a blend of academic lecture experiences,

agency visits, and cultural sites (Roholt & Fisher, 2013). With agency sites, the emphasis is often on critical engagement with a few different agencies rather than attempting to visit as many as possible in the time allowed (Donnelly-Smith, 2009). Students are often encouraged to focus on process, including emotion (Wilson, 2003).

While a variety of models have been developed, few have been systematically evaluated. The following section presents this developing body of research, focusing primarily on motivations and outcomes, but beginning with a consideration of the dominant underlying epistemology.

Research

Underlying Epistemology

While critical theory and critical social work enjoy a degree of acceptance in the wider literature on collaborations in international social work, the empirical literature is dominated by logical positivism or what Habermas sometimes terms "scientism," the idea that "we no longer understand science as one form of possible knowledge, but rather identify knowledge with science" (Habermas, 1972, p. 1). Critical theory highlights this as the great paradox of empirical inquiry grounded in logical positivism, that while claiming objectivity, it rests on the subjectivity of which questions are asked, how they are asked, and why (Adorno, 1976). Thus, there is the potential that much of the empirical literature is irrelevant (Adorno, 1976). Findings based on the self reported scales of opinion do not approximate truth so much as "the socially average illusion" (Adorno, 1976, p. 86).

Within critical social work, Rossiter (1996) also points to this emphasis on the technical or scientific, calling it the controlling metaphor of social work, the idea "that 'real' social work is the establishment of empirically tested theory; generation of practice principles that match the

theory; and teaching those principles as technique to students" (p. 32). The empirically tested is then often viewed as infallible (Rossiter, 1996). Rossiter (1996) and others would prefer to avoid claims about what is true, or what is empirically effective, viewing such claims as "empowered fictions," and instead examine who benefits, what historical trends shape collaborations, and how they relate to the economy (Rossiter, 1996).

In a related concern, Dominelli (2004) highlights social work's tendency to accept the modern frame of the nation state in its theoretical and empirical research. Writing in 2004, before taking over as editor at *International Social Work*, Dominelli criticized the journal for publishing research limited to considerations of how social work was practiced in individual countries without an emphasis on comparative work. Trygged (2010) echoed this desire to see more comparative empirical work that transcended national boundaries.

There is of course variation in the empirical literature between qualitative and quantitative methods, but critical theory laments the limitation of epistemology to the examination of these more methodological concerns, and the frequent loss of self-reflection by the epistemic subject (Held, 1980; Rossiter, 1996). There have been a few critiques of this in the literature, including assertions that the scholarship on international social work inappropriately privileges certain forms of academic knowledge and the voices of men of European descent, (Haug, 2005; Razack, 2009). Haug's (2005) analysis of the literature of international social work "found many examples of uncritical replication of cultural and epistemological imperialism" such as an assertion by Hokenstad, Khinduka and Midgley (1992) that social work around the world shares "the idea that scientific knowledge should guide professional intervention" (p. 7).

Perhaps most importantly, and despite a wide body of theoretical scholarship to the contrary, the empirical research on international collaborations in social work education seems to know, *a priori*, that such collaborations produce positive results for all involved (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002; Roholt & Fisher, 2013). This has been true for assumptions about international experiences' benefits for language acquisition (Sutton & Rubin, 2004), and has been applied across a wide range of other potentially beneficial outcomes, from cultural competence to appreciation for one's role as a global citizen. As another example, collaboration is often assumed, known, to produce cultural competence. The questions all seem to revolve around how much, or over what time period, when it seems equally possible that exchanges might cement superficial understandings of culture that only reinforce unhealthy power dynamics (Wehbi, 2009, p. 51).

As explored in the policy section, what social work knows about the outcomes of collaborations has become strongly limited to the area of competencies. Gillespie (2002) argues that such an emphasis "fails egregiously to address the moral, philosophical, and political issues that are at the heart of the matter today" (p. 263). From a critical standpoint, student reported gains in a variety of supposed competencies may represent little other than the parroting back of questions that suppose such gains, may be the result of social expectations for such experiences, or may even be influenced by the student's desire to see an experience they have spent significant money on be worthwhile.

Current Research

Research on collaborative motivations and models overlaps somewhat with the presentations of models explored above, although the former is more evaluative in nature. The research on international collaborations in social work education is also situated alongside, and

to some extent overlaps with, the broader literature on international collaborations in higher education. This broader literature is extensive but diffuse. There are more and more studies, and studies with increasingly complex and rigorous theoretical perspectives and methodological designs, but there is less of a sense of a "dominant disciplinary, conceptual, or methodological 'home'" for this research (Kehm & Teichler, 2007, p. 260). In addition, the emphasis in writing about the internationalization of higher education has often been on process with practitioners and policy makers as opposed to outcome studies on the phenomenon itself (Kehm & Teichler, 2007). The empirical literature on international collaborations in social work education specifically is developing, but "remains under-researched" (Wilson, 2013, p. 1).

Much of the research focuses on the details of specific collaborations between institutions in the U.S. and those abroad (Barlow, 2007; Boyle & Cervantes, 2000; Bronstein et al., 2010; Butterfield, 2007; Cocks et al., 2009; Healy et al., 2003; Hyong Suk Yeom & Bae, 2010; Kreitzer & Wilson, 2010; Lowe, 2008; McGadney-Douglass, 2007; Olson, 2012) or between those abroad and other locations (Tesoriero & Rajaratnam, 2001). Much of this research is either theoretical, expressing an interest in developing models, or loosely qualitative.

Extent of collaborative activities. While the majority of knowledge in social work educational collaborations has been either theoretical or anecdotal, there have been a limited number of attempts at more systematic reviews. Cornelius & Greif (2005) conducted a 2002 survey of MSW deans and directors, with the primary objective of understanding the impact the events of September 11, 2001, might have had on international collaborations. Of those that responded (60%, n=85), 23% reported at least one form of international collaboration (p. 826). The studies' findings raise several concerns for the critical social worker. For example, 76.9% of respondents indicated their faculty traveled overseas, but only 65.3% reported that faculty from

the collaborative institution traveled to the U.S. (2005). The inequality increased in student travel, with 73.1% indicating that U.S. students traveled abroad, but only 53.8% reporting that students from the collaborative institution traveled to the U.S. (2005). Joint research was also disproportionately conducted in the foreign context (57.6% abroad vs. 23.1% in the U.S.). Despite the theoretical literature's concerns about the appropriateness of pedagogical materials across contexts, and about the potential for imperialism in one-way transfers of resources, 26.9% of North American institutions reported sending "computers, books, and educational materials" to their collaborative partner internationally, with 0% reporting receiving such materials (2005, p. 826).

Caragata and Sanchez (2002) also surveyed MSW programs in North America on their involvement with international schools. They obtained responses from 57 out of the 151 MSW programs accredited at the time, 35 in the US and 22 in Canada (2002, p. 227). They found that 86% of Canadian schools had international linkages, and 66% of schools in the United States, although the authors acknowledged that the programs most likely to respond were those with international programs and did not consider their results generalizable (p. 229). The most common international activity was field placement (45% of Canadian schools, 27% in the US) followed by faculty research. Additional findings are summarized in the table below (2002, p. 228).

In addition to collaborations broadly, there have been examinations of field education specifically. Healy (1986) conducted a survey of accredited MSW programs in 1981-82, and with two rounds of follow up, responses were received from 75 of the then 87 programs (86.2%). Healy (1986) found that about a quarter of institutions (n=19) had placed at least one student abroad, although the majority had placed fewer than three over a two-year period. Rai (2004)

conducted a more recent examination of international field placements. Unfortunately, Rai does not discuss the study's methodology or scope, simply noting that 25 schools "offered international field experience including the international organizations and overseas placements" (Rai, 2004, p. 217). Rai *is* helpful in pointing out that the majority of students placed in international placements are themselves international students, who are completing field education in their home countries (2004). At the time of the study, the author found only 12 schools had placed a total of 26 US students abroad, many of those students (10) in England (Rai, 2004, p. 218).

Also in 2004, four faculty members from Brigham Young University completed a survey (n=446) of all accredited social work programs (Panos et al., 2004, p. 467). This study was methodologically more advanced, and focused exclusively on field education. The authors report obtaining an amazing 100% response rate. The authors found that 94 (21.1%) accredited BSW and MSW programs had placed a total of 665 students internationally for field education in 55 different countries between 1997 and 2002 (Panos et al., 2004, p. 469). The authors compared these results to results obtained in a 1998 survey through the CSWE which had found 29.1% and suggested that a statistically significant drop occurred during the intervening years, which would run contrary to the popularly held belief that international collaborations in social work education had been steadily increasing. However, the study did find that more programs were interested in making long-term commitments to regular and repeated international field placements as opposed to occasional or case-by-case situations (p. 471). Canada, Mexico, and the United Kingdom were the top three locations for international field placements, demonstrating a tendency towards the social network characteristics of propinquity and homophily (Kehm & Teichler, 2007; McLellan, 2008).

What the data make clear is that the rhetoric of international social work and the commitments to educational collaborations may be increasing, but actual practices are potentially lagging behind, and may even have decreased early in the decade (Nagy & Falk, 2000), although many dispute this (Midgley, 2001). In addition, there is little common understanding of what such collaborations entail or the exact nature of their benefit. While certainly not extensive, the above studies present at least some picture of *what* institutions are doing in the area of international collaborations in social work education. The next section examines more qualitative understandings of *why* institutions pursue partnership.

Motivations for institutional and student collaboration. Research on the "why?" question within the wider higher education literature suggests that money is a primary motivation for institutional collaboration (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Chan, 2004; Childress, 2009). Universities in nations like the United States, Canada, or Australia who aggressively recruit international students often profit from the higher tuitions they are charged due to their often limited eligibility for many types of financial aid. For example, foreign students contribute more than $12 billion to the U.S. economy, with more than two thirds of students reporting that they or their family pay their tuition directly (Altbach, 2004). Increasingly, institutional partnerships are often necessary for unlocking major grant funding for research abroad. Chan (2004) and others highlight the "massification and marketization" of higher education (p. 32). From a critical standpoint, collaboration is a tool to gain access to funding, the most prestigious faculty, and the students capable of paying increasingly high tuitions.

The massification and marketization perspective also highlights another motivation for international collaboration, the role of demand. If education is thought of as a consumer good, something to be obtained rather than a process of formation for both work and citizenship, the

student as customer demands certain opportunities. From this perspective, international collaborative activities become a central element of university marketing and public relations efforts (Chan, 2004, p. 35). Joint course offerings, either online courses or at joint campuses, are one of the ways in which institutions are responding to these demands. Michigan State University, for example, has a Masters in Public Health degree that is offered entirely online, but also as part of a suite of degrees with partner Dubai International Academic City (DIAC) in Dubai. DIAC, founded in 2007 with TECOM Investments, a subsidiary of Dubai Holdings, is currently the world's only free market zone dedicated exclusively to higher education (DIAC, 2013). The free zone helps both non-profit and for-profit educational partners of DIAC avoid some of the obstacles outlined by the United States in its 2002 WTO proposal.

The rhetoric of such academic programs, however, is often at odds with the literature when it comes to motivations. For example, the Public Health program in Dubai is described as stemming from "Michigan State University's commitment to global engagement" (MSU, 2013). Global engagement is often paired with an emphasis on making education more broadly available, but not in the language of the massification of markets but instead in the language of democracy. As university President Lou Anna K. Simon (2005) stated in a Founder's Day Address,

> Who would have imagined 150 years ago…that we would be the global prototype of a genuinely American brand of higher education—one that is an engine of the economy, a force for democratization of public learning, the model for engagement with the world beyond the campus, and a catalyst for improving the quality of life in Michigan and around the world.

Unfortunately, the rhetoric of universities has not always been accompanied by a more concrete operationalization (Childress, 2009). The emphasis on capitalism and mass consumption runs antithetical to the true ideals of deliberative democracy (Habermas, 1985).

There are, of course, other motivations for pursuing institutional collaborations across boarders. Traditional liberal arts institutions often position collaborative activities as avenues for increasing understanding of the international dimensions of specific fields and developing a more generalized global worldview and critical consciousness (Childress, 2009; Habermas, 1972, 1985). The broader higher education literature also highlights increases in linguistic and cross-cultural skills, areas of particular interest to the social work profession.

One final aspect of institutional identity that has impacts on institutional motivation is religious affiliation. Chan (2004), for example, examines the role that faith had in the collaborative activities of Hong Kong Baptist University. Early in its life, the institution formed a partnership based on religious identity with Baylor, a Baptist university in the U.S. (Chan, 2004). Karram (2001) examined the international connections of religious higher education in sub-Saharan Africa in particular, pointing out that the largest expansion in higher education in this region has been private, religiously affiliated institutions with international ties, and explicitly calling for "more research into the impacts of religious higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa" (p. 488). Methodologically, Karram relied extensively on content analysis of institutional websites, demonstrating not only a need for more research, but also more direct and meaningful engagement in research.

Research both in the wider higher education literature and the social work specific literature also highlights the importance of examining and interrogating student motivations for participation (Doyle et al., 2010; Stroud, 2010; Wehbi, 2009; Wilkins, Balakrishnan, &

Huisman, 2012). There is the danger for students involved in international collaborations to simply pursue "exotica" or to adopt a consumerist approach to international experiences (Bolen, 2001; Woolf, 2006). Whether students gain the sort of critical consciouness and global identity that advocates of international collaboration want to develop depends not only on the extent to which the institution has carefully designed such experiences, but also on the nature of the students themselves (Woolf, 2010). Intercultural attitudes prior to departure, as measured by scales like the Generalized Ethnocentrism Scale (Neuliep & McCroskey, 1997) have been shown to be some of the strongest predictors of more altruistic and academic outcomes from experiences abroad (Kim & Goldstein, 2005; Kimmel & Volet, 2012).

Altbach (2004) highlights the fact that students from the United States study abroad for different reasons than students from overseas who pursue educational opportunities in the United States or other nations. Students from the U.S. tend to be interested in the sorts of cultural immersion described above, whereas students from other nations tend to be interested in academic knowledge. American students are often going for a semester, increasingly far less, whereas their counterparts, especially from the Global South, are more likely to obtain their entire degree abroad (Altbach, 2004). The vast majority of American students go to Europe (62%), from 2001-2002 only 3% of American students studying abroad went to sub-Saharan Africa (Altbach, 2004). There has not been research systematically comparing how social work compares to these broader trends.

Process evaluations. The literature on collaborative activities involving social work programs in the United States and academic or community-based partners in other parts of the world is limited, and mostly based on case studies or process evaluations (Boyle & Cervantes,

2000; Healy et al., 2003; Vincent, 2009). These process evaluations range from the informal and anecdotal examinations to more rigorous studies.

Vincent (2009) conducted a process evaluation of a collaboration between DePaul University in Chicago and Tangaza College and Koinonia Community in Nairobi, Kenya. DePaul and Tangaza had a pre-existing formalized partnership, but the partnership with Koinonia Community began after a DePaul faculty member stayed at the organization's guesthouse during an initial 2006 planning trip (Vincent, 2009). After two planning meetings, both of which entailed DePaul faculty going to Kenya, faculty brought twenty-three DePaul students from social work, nursing, and public service to Nairobi in 2007 for a three-week study abroad experience (Vincent, 2009).

A critical examination of the process evaluation raised concerns, despite Vincent's (2009) apparent commitment to critical perspectives. The involvement of DePaul students in programs offering services to street children, an extremely vulnerable population, seemed potentially problematic (Vincent, 2009). Additionally, in examining the process, Vincent (2009) offered as an aside that Tangaza college administrators were "initially hesitant to support this study abroad exchange program. DePaul faculty had to sensitively follow protocol and rely on key individuals within Tangaza to advocate for the collaboration" (Vincent, 2009, para. 21), raising questions about initial mutuality. Along similar lines, efforts towards "greater reciprocity" given resource inequities involved bringing a single scholar from Tangaza to Chicago for a two-week visit (Vincent, 2009). In addition to concerns about reciprocity and mutuality, process evaluations have helped further understanding of how collaborations are initiated.

Process evaluations have highlighted the way that social networks originate and shape collaborative activities (Cornelius & Grief, 2005; Rautenbach & Black-Hughes, 2012).

Rautenbach and Black-Hughes (2012) discussed the development of three separate projects between the University of Fort Hare's London and South African campuses, and Minnesota State University, Mankato. As with many such partnerships throughout social work history, the partnership began with a personal connection between the two authors, and only recently became formalized at the level of institutional administration (Rautenbach & Black-Hughes, 2012).

A similar examination by Cornelius and Grief (2005) of a collaboration between the University of Maryland School of Social Work and social work programs in Ghana and India also recommended moving beyond initial personal connections as quickly as possible to formalize partnerships with memorandums of understanding and involve additional faculty members. At the same time, Cornelius and Grief (2005) found that the strength of collaboration was highly dependent on the investment of time and resources at the individual level. Often, a good deal of time is involved in creating success, Rautenbach and Black-Hughes (2012) began their personal partnership in 2007, which was formalized in an agreement between the provost of MSU and the vice chancellor of UFH in 2012 that broadened the partnership to include faculty exchange, joint research and conferences and "other joint ventures that would benefit both institutions" (p. 812).

Rautenbach and Black-Hughes (2012) also discussed how technology creates an environment for increased interaction at minimal economic cost. However, they also highlighted the difficulties inherent in using technology to connect with partners in countries with less developed infrastructure. Their evaluation found that 30% of collaborative classes conducted over video-chat experienced connection problems (Rautenbach & Black-Hughes, 2012). Frequent issues with technology necessitated the involvement of an IT professional in the collaborative group, but students reported that the benefits of the collaboration outweighed such

issues. An evaluation of an email partnership component with social work students with a response rate of 82% indicated 95% of students successfully corresponded, although 60% of students said they would have preferred to connect via Facebook (Rautenbach & Black-Hughes, 2012, p. 810).

Process evaluations of short-term exchanges (Roholt & Fisher, 2013) have highlighted the need to give equal attention to both the content of the experience and the process of navigating it (Wilson, 2013). Experiences that were highly structured, required reflection in a variety of forms, and included pre-departure preparation were most successful (Donnelly-Smith, 2009; Roholt & Fisher, 2013; Vincent, 2009).

Process evaluations have also brought attention to the added potential for "critical incidents" in international collaboration, incidents that demand a rethinking of assumptions and can be jarring to students (Roholt & Fisher, 2013, p. 55). Roholt and Fisher (2013) tell the story of several African American students on a trip to South Africa who were told by a local partner that, "You are all White, because you are from America" (p. 57). The authors highlight such experiences as necessitating faculty involvement and as emblematic of the unpredictable but transformational nature of experiential learning. In order to help buffer against such experiences, mental health assessments for students prior to intensive international experiences may be beneficial (Lager, Mathiesen, Rodgers & Cox, 2010).

In addition to such emotionally jarring experiences, involving students in international collaborations can also be physically dangerous. CSWE's "Guidebook for international field placements and student exchanges" (Lager et al., 2010) urges programs considering involving students in collaborative activity to consider the inherent risks. Process evaluations have highlighted the need for a more comprehensive focus on risk management; Engstrom and

Mathiesen (2012) point out that the "paucity of published research and specific guidelines for social work programs is troubling" (p. 786).

Engstrom and Mathiesen (2012) recount, with the permission of the family of the deceased, the death of one of the author's students during a 2004 internship experience involving 10 MSW students in Bangkok, Thailand. The program followed many best practices, including both instruction by faculty at the host institution and a faculty member from the home institution to facilitate reflection and provide additional structure (Engstrom & Mathiesen, 2012). The student died after wading into fast moving water above a series of rapids while on a weekend trip with several peers to an island park, but the incident highlights the need for established communication protocols for decision-making. This is particularly true given that international experiences are not confined to the limited hours of the 5-day work week, in this case the student's death was complicated by the fact that officials at the home university were out of their offices for the weekend (Engstrom & Mathiesen, 2012). Culture also played a complicating role, a ferry captain refused to transport the body of the deceased to the mainland (for fear of bad luck) until the head of the local social work program had a Buddhist monk conduct a spirit cleansing ceremony (Engstrom & Mathiesen, 2012). The incident "clearly revealed that the university had done little planning regarding emergency study abroad procedures and that implementation of existing procedures was at best haphazard" (Engstrom & Mathiesen, 2012, p. 791).

Outcome evaluations. Unfortunately, formal evaluations are rarely built into models for collaborations in international social work education (Hokenstad, 2003b). Even as the number of U.S. students studying abroad increases, particularly in short term experiences, literature on the effects of such collaborative activity is limited (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Mapp, 2013;

Williams, 2005). Even the most recent literature suggests that, "despite a growing emphasis on international offerings within social work education," there are "few outcomes studies regarding the implications of these courses for students' professional development" (Greenfield, Davis & Fedor, 2013, p. 739). Outcome evaluations are less common than process evaluations, and most tend to focus on more concrete exchange activity, particularly of students (Mapp, 2013).

Many attempts to study the impact of study abroad experiences have also relied heavily on student self-assessment, or analysis of self-reflective activities like journaling (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Sutton & Rubin, 2004). Such qualitative, and sometimes anecdotal, outcome evaluations, often describe the impact as "transformational" or "life-altering" (Abram, Shufeldt, & Rose, 2004; Doyle, 2009). In terms of specific outcomes with implications for social work practice, such experiences are linked to interpersonal growth (Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, & McMillen, 2009; Mapp, 2013; Williams; 2005) increased cultural competency (Fairchild, Pillai, & Noble, 2006; Gray & Allegritti, 2002; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Nimmagadda & Cowger, 1999; Razack, 2002), a sense of global citizenship (Corbin, 2013; Forsey, Broomhall, & Davis, 2012; Gacel-Ávila, 2005; Rotabi et al., 2006; Woolf, 2010) and national identity (Dolby, 2007), and challenging students preconceptions and a variety of other psychological constructs (Heron, 2005; McLeod & Wainwright, 2009).

There is also some evidence in the wider higher education literature that study abroad experiences shape future career paths (Norris & Gillespie, 2009; Wiers-Jenssen, 2008). As one might expect, students who study abroad, and particularly those who graduate abroad, are more likely to be employed abroad, or to work domestically on internationally focused tasks (Wiers-Jenssen, 2008). A study utilizing data from a survey the Institute for the International Education of Students conducted of 17,000 participants in its programs between 1950 and 1999 found 48%

of respondents (n ≈ 3700) had a global dimension to their career (Norris & Gillespie, 2009, p. 386). This correlation was increased when participants in study abroad experiences were enrolled in program taught in a foreign language, these individuals were 62% more likely to go on to global careers than those who participated in a program conducted in English (Norris & Gillespie, 2009, p. 391).

Outcome evaluations have also explored the relationship of time spent abroad to the above gains. There is some evidence that these benefits may be mostly in terms of a "first time effect" of a student's initial international experience (Tarrant, 2010). The length of study abroad has been shown to moderate these positive effects, with longer exposures resulting in more benefits to students (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004), although others have disputed this finding, or found that length is immaterial (Donnelly-Smith, 2009; Paige, Fry, LaBrack, Stallman, Josic & Jon, 2009).

Still, the exact nature of student outcomes is a matter of some debate, with an emerging body of literature questioning the validity of such findings, or at the very least whether they may be over-stating the benefits (Doyle, 2009; Kehl & Morris, 2007; Wehbi, 2009; Woolf, 2007). For instance, on the question of international experiences for students and cultural competency, King and Baxter Magolda (2005), lament that "theory development on multicultural competence has been limited by heavy reliance on the assessment of attitudes as a proxy for competence" (p. 572).

Quantitative outcome evaluations. A study based on pre and post-test surveys of undergraduates who participated in study abroad programs at Michigan State University from 1999-2002 found that, when using paired t-tests, there were statistically significant differences for items such as personal growth, intercultural awareness, professional development, and

academic performance (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004). However, mean pre-test scores were slightly higher than post-test scores (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004). The authors hypothesized this unexpected result to be the result of a "gamma change," wherein the experience caused students to re-evaluate their own levels of competency based on the experience, but also acknowledged that the pre-test had focused on expectations while the post-test focused on outcomes, and that the total number of pairs was quite low (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004).

Williams (2005) conducted a study comparing students studying abroad (n=44) for at least four months in an academic setting in various countries to a control group (n=48) at the author's institution in a variety of majors. The study used a pre-test/post-test methodology with questions based on the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) (Kelley & Meyers, 1995) and the International Sensitivity Index (ISI) (Olson & Kroeger, 2001). In addition to standard demographic questions, the study attempted to control for student's previous exposure to culture by adding items asking about such things as previous travel, language studies, and friends from other cultures (Williams, 2005). Study abroad participants demonstrated significant gains on two of the four dimensions of the CCAI and two of the three dimensions of the ISI. Potential limitations of the study included the fact that the study abroad group contained disproportionate numbers of communications majors and women and the control group disproportionate numbers of business majors and men (Williams, 2005). The author attempted to control for this, and other factors, using multiple regression, and reported intercultural exposure during the semester abroad as the only significant predictor of post-test scores on both scales (CCAI: $r = .41$, $r2 = .17$, $df = 1$, $F = 10.02$, $p = .003$; ISI: $r = .63$, $r2 = .39$, $df = 1$, $F = 31.19$, $p = .001$) (Williams, 2005, p. 368). The study was quasi-experimental in that it did not utilize random assignment. It is also worth

noting that the reliability of the ISI was low in the study, with Chronbach's alphas of .56 on the pre-test and .67 on the post-test (Williams, 2005).

Braskamp, Braskamp & Merril (2009) used a pre-test post-test methodology using their own Global Perspective Inventory (GPI) (Braskamp et al., 2008) to examine outcomes for students from ten different programs at five institutions, including a public Masters-level degree university, a public undergraduate college, two private liberal arts colleges, and a third-party provider of study abroad experiences. The GPI is based off of theories of intercultural communication and human development, and has three domains: cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal; each of which are further split into two scales: knowledge and knowing, identity and affect, and social interactions and social responsibility, respectively (2008). Students demonstrated statistically significant gains on five of six scales. Interestingly the highest gains were in knowledge, defined as "degree of understanding and awareness of various cultures and their impact on our global society and level of proficiency in more than one language," but there were no statistically significant gains in knowing, defined as "degree of complexity of one's view of the importance of cultural context in judging what is important to know and value" (2008, p. 105). From a critical standpoint, this is concerning, the cognitive impact is clearly one of content rather than critical thinking.

Another outcome evaluation, of marketing students, compared a control group of students (n=70) who took a standard slate of junior level courses at their institution to a group (n=87) who completed identical course work at a partner institution in Belgium with instructors from that institution, while also visiting local businesses and cultural sites (Clarke et al., 2009). Students were compared using the Global Mindedness Scale (Hett, 1993), the Openness to Diversity Scale (Pascarella et al., 1996), and the International Sensitivity Index (ISI) (Olson & Kroeger, 2001).

The study found significantly higher levels of global mindedness (t=4.58, p =.034), intercultural communication (t=30.98, p=.000) and openness to diversity (t=19.77, p=.000) among those who studied abroad (Clarke et al., 2009). While one of the better outcome evaluations, this study is still a static-group comparison design, and therefore quasi-experimental; there was no random assignment, and a host of potentially confounding factors may have influenced students experiences (Clarke et al., 2009).

One of the largest quantitative outcome evaluations of study abroad experiences is the University System of Georgia Learning Outcomes of Students Studying Abroad Research Initiative (GLOSSARI) (Sutton and Rubin, 2004). Sutton and Rubin (2004) compared a study abroad group (n=255) comprised of individuals from 16 different institutions within the system with a control group (n=249) from six different institutions. Students who studied abroad demonstrated statistically significant (the authors used p<.0071 as the threshold) gains as compared to the control group in functional knowledge, knowledge of world geography, knowledge of cultural relativism, and knowledge of global interdependence, while not differing significantly in terms of verbal acumen, interpersonal accommodation, and cultural sensitivity (Sutton & Rubin, 2004, p. 73).

Mapp (2013) examined data from 89 social work students who participated in one of five different experiences between 2005 and 2009 using a pre-test, post-test administration of the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI). CCAI includes subscales for emotional resilience, flexibility or openness, perceptual acuity, and personal autonomy (Kelley & Meyers, 1995). Using paired t-tests, Mapp (2013) found significant change on all four sub-scale, with the greatest increase in emotional resilience. The length of the trip, some as short as nine days, or the language of the country (Ireland was one of the countries) had no impact on outcomes, nor

did previous travel (Mapp, 2013). As the author points out, "This study was the first in the social work literature using a standardized instrument and a sample larger than 30" (Mapp, 2013, p. 734).

Another study from the social work literature examined MSW students (n=122) from Rutgers who participated in internationally focused courses on campus as a control group compared to an experimental group of students who participated in two-week guided study courses to China, Israel, and Romania (Greenfield, Davis & Fedor, 2013). The study used a pre-test/post-test methodology, and had an analytic sample of 40 students who studied abroad, 73 students who studied international content on campus, and nine who did both. The response rate for those who studied abroad (87%) was higher than for those who studied on campus (67%). There were no significant differences between the groups in terms of gender, age, race or ethnicity, marital status, parental status, or employment status. Students who studied abroad were responsible for their own travel expenses and were charged up to an additional $500 over the cost of the on-campus experience. The pre-test sought to control for previous experience abroad.

The studied examined seven areas of competency. Students from both groups made gains pre-test to post-test in self- rated skills ($t=6.99$, $p<.001$), understanding of international service ($t=8.32$,$p<.001$), and identification as a global citizen ($t=3.14$, $p<.01$). No statistically significant gains were observed with respect to interest in international service, hopefulness, personal mastery, or empowerment (Greenfield, Davis & Fedor, 2013). Importantly, however, regression analysis to determine whether students who studied abroad gained more than those who studied international content on campus generated no statistically significant differences on any measure other than self-rated skills ($b=.33$, $p<.001$). It is also important to note that students in the study

abroad course were more likely to be White (Chi-Square=4.60, $p<.05$) and have participated in other study abroad experiences (Chi-Square=8.23, $p<.01$), demonstrating possible power differentials.

Qualitative outcome evaluations. In addition to these more quantitative outcome evaluations, there have been qualitative outcome evaluations. Gilin and Young (2009) examined a short-term (10-day) experience in Italy with 16 social work students using qualitative methods. Methodologically, the authors relied on selecting student quotes from two reflective assignments students completed during the experience. The authors read the selected assignments independently, and together identified four key themes: better understanding of connections between social policies and practices, ideas about practices that could be used domestically, increased empathy and respect for members of other cultural groups, and an expansion and consolidation of professional identity (Gilin & Young, 2009, p. 39). Beyond the limitations of qualitative analysis based on written work, there seemed to be a tendency in some of the responses analyzed to elevate the international over the domestic, or to over generalize that the authors did not draw attention to. For example, statements such as "I left with the feeling that Italian social workers really care for their clients" or "The shelter for boys was like none I observed in the US. These boys (most of whom were recent immigrants) were not looked upon as delinquents" (p. 44 & 42).

Qualitative elements in the Greenfield et al. (2013) study add some nuance to the quantitative findings discussed above. The authors found that those in the on-campus course "were far more likely to cite ways in which the course enhanced their understanding, awareness, and knowledge of global issues" whereas students who studied abroad "were far more likely to cite ways in which the course enhanced their sensitivity and confidence in working with people

from diverse sociocultural backgrounds" (Greenfield, Davis & Fedor, 2013, p. 751 & 753). Students in the study abroad group also made several comments indicating interest in, as one student put it, "hands- on experience with vulnerable populations" (2013, p. 753).

Critique of methods

In addition to issues with the underlying epistemology of this body of research, and concerns about the amount of anecdotal or loosely qualitative data (Greenfield, Davis & Fedor, 2013), there are methodological concerns about the quantitative studies in the field, again primarily on student motivations and outcomes.

The gold standard in empirical research is a randomized experimental design (Engel & Schutt, 2009). However, given the often optional nature of collaborative exchanges, and associated expenses, random assignment is difficult if not impossible. Many of the above studies seek to statistically control for non-randomization, but this is difficult to do, and there is always the possibility of sampling error and selection bias. Many samples were disproportionately composed of young, White females (Greenfield, Davis & Fedor, 2013; Mapp, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2004). Such samples may be, to greater and lesser degrees, representative of the typical population who studies abroad, which is approximately two thirds female, and approximately 80% White (falling from 84.3% in 2000/01 to 77.8% in 2010/11) (IEE, 2013). However, if the objective is to understand what competencies collaborative activities produce, and to expand such activities throughout the curriculum, more research will be needed to determine whether effects differ outside of the current core demographics.

There have been some studies built with control groups who participate in internationally focused education at their home campus, such as Greenfield, Davis and Fedor (2013), however, the authors point out that their study is the exception to the norm of "crosssectional data alone

without appropriate comparison groups" (Greenfield, Davis & Fedor, 2013, p. 741). More studies with similar methods will be necessary to answer the question of whether international content offered domestically can provide similar benefits to study abroad (Sutton & Rubin, 2004).

In addition to non-randomized designs and the potential for sampling error, many of the studies relied on self reported quantitative and qualitative data (Greenfield, Davis and Fedor, 2013). While purporting to examine competencies, the research is often only measuring the subjects perception of their own competence, something that Ingraham and Peterson (2004) highlight in their study of MSU undergraduates to explain why study abroad might actually lead to lower levels reported in a post-test. They refer to this as the possibility of "gamma change" (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004, p. 91), the idea that the experience causes students to re-evaluate the ranking system, and thus they may report lower levels on the post-test even though they have gained competence through the experience. Self reporting raises concerns given that it is dependent on the honesty of the subject, although research suggests most college students are honest in the absence of a clearly socially desirable response (Braskamp et al., 2008).

As mentioned, the literature tips overwhelmingly towards methodologies exploring the merits of collaboration without seeking to measure the possible detriment. This introduces several potential concerns; including the way the expectations of the researcher, often the faculty member leading the experience, may create a self-fulfilling prophecy (Engel & Schutt, 2009). It also introduces the possibility of a placebo effect, where students demonstrate improvements in various competencies because they have a bias towards viewing the collaborative activity as useful to them.

Many of the methodologies used are either cross-sectional, or a simple pre-test, post-test. This raises concerns about time, and the duration of positive effects. In many of the studies, post-tests were given immediately after the experience, it is largely unknown how long these effects last, if at all (Mapp, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2004).

Finally, there are some concerns about some of the instruments being used. For example, the Cross- Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) was used in several of the above studies (Kelley & Meyers, 1995; Mapp, 2013; Williams, 2005). The original CCAI included subscales for emotional resilience, flexibility or openness, perceptual acuity, personal autonomy, and positive regard for others, but in 1991 items from positive regard for others were distributed into the other four categories (Kelley & Meyers, 1995).

Davis and Finney (2006) administered the CCAI to 709 predominantly White (83%) college students. Psychometric analysis found that "the fit of the four-factor model was very poor," with a Chi-square of 7182.4, $p \leq .001$, root mean square error of approximation of 0.082 (above the recommended 0.06 or less), comparative fit index of 0.70 (below recommended 0.95 or greater), and Tucker-Lewis index of 0.65 (below recommended 0.95 or greater) (Davis & Finney, 2006, p. 323). Davis and Finney (2006) also found very high factor correlations (.87 to .98), raising serious questions about discriminant validity. While reliability measures for the CCAI have generally been fairly good, the above consideration found Chronbach's alphas of .54 to .80, there are serious concerns about the validity of the instrument with respect to how the items are supposed to relate to the factors (Davis & Finney, 2006), and the CCAI may be an example of the subjective masking as the objective (Adorno, 1976).

A critical social work perspective on the CCAI would also contextualize the authors and their work. Neither of the authors is an academic in the classic sense, Judith Meyers, Psy.D., is a

clinical and forensic psychologist currently in private practice, and Colleen Kelley, PhD, is a human relations consultant (drjudithmeyers.com, 2013). Kelley and Meyers 1995 book, *CCAI Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory manual* is out of print, making it difficult to assess the development of the measure. The original publisher is listed as National Computer Systems in Minnesota, a for-profit company which appears to no longer exist, or has become part of Pearson. The CCAI is sold for $6.85 per test in paper form or $12.10 for online with report (drjudithmeyers.com, 2013). Still, despite questions about its validity and the sense that it is primarily a financial endeavor for both the authors and publisher, the CCIA has been used or cited in hundreds of publications (Google Scholar, 2013).

Gaps in the Literature and Future Directions

As outlined extensively above, most of the research done on collaborative activities in social work education has focused on outcomes for undergraduate students engaged in some form of study abroad or field placement. More research is needed into the impacts of collaborations for faculty members and for institutions.

Again, there is some information on this within the wider higher education literature (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Burnett & Huisman, 2010; Spencer-Oatey, 2012). This literature suggests that higher education institutions pursue collaborative activities for strategic partnerships (Chan, 2004; Olson, 2012), a more comprehensive internationalization (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Knight, 1994; Olson, 2012) and knowledge sharing (Traub-Werner, 2000). However, for the most part, the boom in research on internationalization in higher education has not extended to research on specific institutional motivations. As recently as 2009, Childress argued, “little is known about institutional plans for internationalization” (p. 289).

The research on student outcomes, despite being the dominant type of study in the broader area of inquiry, also needs further development. Particularly, as highlighted above, more rigorous research is needed to explore the relationship between international educational experiences for students and outcomes like values development, cultural competence and a better awareness and understanding of the impacts of globalization (Greenfield, Davis & Fedor, 2013; Lindsey, 2005; Panos et al., 2004; Mapp, 2013). While some instruments, such as the CCAI, may be suspect, there are other tools available to address this gap, including the Global Perspectives Inventory (Braskamp et al., 2008; Braskamp et al., 2009).

There is also a great need for research exploring the perceptions and utility of collaborations for students on the other side of such partnerships, those in contexts outside of North America. The literature expresses appropriate concerns about the negative impacts that poorly conceptualized and executed collaborations might have on students from North American contexts, but is fairly silent when it comes to the actual voices of students in host settings, with a few possible exceptions such as an article examining Japanese students' perceptions of international social work based on informal questionnaires given to two classes of students during a guest lecture (Saito & Johns, 2009). It is also silent, with a few exceptions, on hosting social work students and professionals from other contexts here in North America (Yoon, 2007). The clear focus has been on benefits to North American students with little consideration of the benefits, or possible harm, done to clients in host-countries (Corbin, 2013).

This focus on the positive not only omits the voices of less powerful stakeholders, but also potentially harms North American students. As a consequence of the focus on benefits, Engstrom and Mathiesen state, "little attention has been focused on preparing social work programs and the faculty who lead them to handle the emergencies that can arise during study

abroad" (Engstrom & Mathiesen, 2013, p. 785).

While there is a growing body of literature on international field placements, the literature is still lacking a comprehensive and up to date picture of the sorts of international experiences and collaborations taking place in social work education (Nagy & Falk, 2000; Panos et al., 2004) at both the BSW and MSW level. As mentioned earlier, it is possible that the surge in the literature on this topic is nothing more than academic navel gazing (Cornelius & Greif, 2005).

More research is also needed into the ways that the very nature of institutions of higher education either constrains or promotes international collaboration. Some have suggested that the complex organizational structures of large research universities, and the largely independent nature of the various component schools and colleges, makes it difficult to develop a consensus on collaboration (Childress, 2009). Institutions with more formalized internationalization plans may have a competitive advantage in this regard (Knight, 1994). More research is needed into nature of and the extent to which such plans are being used. At the moment there is a great "lack of knowledge about how universities and colleges develop and monitor internationalization plans" (Childress, 2009, p. 291).

A final key gap in the research, which this study attempts to address, involves information on institutional motivations for schools of social work to pursue such partnerships, especially perspectives from outside Europe and North America. As Healy (2003) points out, "Schools of social work often enter international collaborative relationships due to serendipitous factors" (p. 15). Social network analysis is a perfect lens to examine these linkages. It is clear that faculty contact, from that mediated by international organizations, conferences, or serendipity, plays a key role in the formation of international collaborations in social work

education, but technological advancements in network analysis offer opportunities for a deeper understanding of this phenomenon. As Hokenstad (2003) commented with regard to Case Western's partnership, "the network of social work and social policy educators to which this project has contributed and from which it benefited has heightened its value" (p. 49). Better understanding of the "ripple effect" of networks in social work collaborations (Hokenstad, 2003b, p. 141) might lead to a better understanding of how to promote them.

Social work will also need to wrestle with the emerging field of massive open online courses (MOOCs) and their potential impact on international collaborations in education through the further massification of education. The Coursera, one of the largest MOOC providers, is now linked with 83 colleges and universities from around the globe (Economist, 2013). Coursera is backed by $65 million in venture capital, and is widely expected to begin monetizing its services in the coming years. The non-profit EdX, originally out of MIT, is a collaboration between 28 institutions (2013). One of the largest debates is whether MOOCs will erode traditional higher education, or whether there is enough demand that the market will simply expand (2013). Early data on MOOC users has shown that the majority live outside the United States, and some have argued that MOOCs associated with elite U.S. institutions pose a significant threat to foreign universities (Kolowich, 2012). MOOCs are sold with the same rhetoric of democratized education and the altruistic provision of access to those without (Sharma, 2013), but if social work education chooses to participate in MOOCs, care will have to be taken that it does not become another iteration of the academic colonialism of the last century (Rivard, 2013; Sharma, 2013).

CHAPTER 6: METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Given the under-developed nature of the specific literature on international educational collaborations in social work, particularly the dearth of studies examining both sides of such collaborations, this study was designed to be cross sectional, qualitative, and exploratory; using in-depth or phenomenological interviewing (Seidman, 2006). The decision to use these qualitative methods reflected a number of factors.

At a primary level, the decision to use qualitative methods was driven by the inductive and exploratory nature of the particular set of research questions included in this study (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). As a researcher, I was also drawn to qualitative methods for the ability to utilize what the qualitative literature defines as "thick description," a holistic assessment of a complicated and inherently dynamic reality, and the assumption that the researcher is personally immersed in the process as an instrument of data collection (Engel & Schutt, 2009; Padgett, 1998). This allowed me to bring my own experiences in international collaboration, as well as my experiences in the target locations in West Africa and the Mid-Western United States into the process of developing questions and interviewing respondents on the ground; although I would echo Padgett's (1998) assertion that the researcher as data collection instrument "imposes special burdens as well as opportunities" (p. 19). My own existing connections on the ground in both West African nations expedited the process in a number of ways, from my own record of immunizations, to obtaining visas and finding lodging.

For the purposes of this study, qualitative methods were also attractive because of the way they harmonize with the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 4, especially critical theory (Padgett, 1998), and critical social work in particular. Qualitative methods are emic,

grounded in the lived experience of the respondent as opposed to the explanatory, or etic, perspective of the supposedly neutral, objective, or "scientific" researcher (Padgett, 1998). Qualitative methods also echo critical theory's emphasis on the indivisibility of theory and practice, with a focus on merging activism and research (Padgett, 1998, p. 11).

In addition to considerations about the nature of the research questions and theoretical fit, qualitative methods also harmonized with my interest in the way both outcome and process dimensions of international collaborations impact institutional motivations. Qualitative methods are particularly strong on the process dimensions of research and program evaluation (Padgett, 1998), including elements that are often overlooked like feelings and internal though processes (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and I was deeply interested in learning more about how collaborations form and operate, how participants feel about them, and not just on what they achieve for their institutional members.

Having decided to pursue a qualitative approach, the further decision was made to rely on in depth interviews at multiple levels within collaborative institutional case study pairs. As Engel and Schutt (2009) state, "Case study is not so much a single method as it is a way of thinking about what qualitative data analysis can, or perhaps, should focus on" (p. 313). My interest in thick description, and in interviewing individuals at multiple levels within an institution to achieve some measure of triangulation (Padgett, 1998), made case study a natural choice. Case studies are also particularly appropriate both from the theoretical standpoint of critical theory and the theory of collaborative advantage (which itself emerged from qualitative action-oriented problem solving research). Finally, case studies made sense practically, given the lack of standardization among academic collaborations, and the need to capture unique contextual factors (Patton, 2002).

Independent Variables

Given the exploratory and qualitative nature of this study, it is impossible to produce a complete list of independent variables. Indeed, one of the central purposes of the study is to identify potential motivations for international collaboration. There were, however, variables which shaped the nature of the questions included on the interview protocols. One of independent variables of greatest interest is the impact of institutional identity, which includes location, size, goals and objectives, resources, religious affiliation, and culture. Other variables of interest that emerge from the study's theoretical framework include demand from students, demand from faculty and administrators, financial considerations, and pressure from competitors. Finally, the study pays special attention to whether the nature of social work as a professional identity, its values and principles, may motivate collaboration. These variables are explored in the research questions below.

Dependent Variables

The primary dependent variable in this study is the motivation to pursue international collaborations in social work education. This can be further split into motivations at various levels, or in various roles, within institutions. Motivations for administrators, faculty, and students may be influenced by differing independent variables, but combine to form an integrated institutional motivation.

As outlined below, the study is also attempting to assess how various institutional actors think that international collaborations benefit them. Again, these benefits may vary by institutional actor.

Research Questions

The primary research questions are designed to explore motivations for international collaborative activities, and understandings of how such activities benefit institutions. Other areas of inquiry include the primary decision making factors driving collaboration, specifically organizational and structural factors, and factors related to demographics and values. Each of these three areas of inquiry are further broken down into a variety of other factors, as outlined below.

1. Primary decision making factors
    a. The extent to which common aims exist between institutions.
    b. The extent of collaborative activities between institutions, including the nature, amount, and duration of such activities.
    c. How (and what) resources are exchanged between institutions.
2. Organizational and structural factors
    a. What role organizational culture has played in navigating the collaboration.
    b. What accountability structures exist within the collaboration.
    c. Whether collaborations are perceived differently among subsets within the institution (administrators, professors, students).
    d. External drivers of collaborative activities.
    e. Whether collaborations are perceived differently within institutions by those who have had direct involvement in them and those who have not been involved.
3. Demographic and value based factors
    a. How cultural differences have impacted collaborative activities.

b. How social work values impact collaborative activities, and the extent to which these ethical and value based commitments impact collaboration.
c. How demographic differences may affect collaborative activities.
d. Whether religious affiliation impacts characterizations of motivations and outcomes in international collaborations.

Research Setting

This study was conducted on the campuses of four schools of social work organized in two pairs of collaborating institutions. In each pair, one of the schools was located in the Mid-Western United States, and the other was located in West Africa. This decision was one of both convenience and personal interest on the part of the researcher. It also reflected a desire to contribute to the less developed nature of the literature on collaborations with African, and particularly West African, institutions as compared with other contexts like Europe or East Asia.

The first case study collaboration involves two schools of social work located inside large academic universities, each with more than 35,000 students. While the schools of social work within these institutions differ in size considerably, social work student bodies ranged in the low to mid hundreds, with the domestic school being considerably larger. Each institution offers both BSW and MSW degrees. The first institution is a large, land grant, university in the Mid-Western United States, referred to hereafter as Midwest University. Midwest University has collaborated with a large, national university in West Africa, referred to hereafter as West African University. Such institutions have more access to the funding and connections that make international collaboration possible, and in some respects this first collaboration represents what qualitative scholars would call the typical case (Patton, 2002).

The second case study examines a collaboration between two smaller, religious institutions. The first is a small private religious college in the Mid-Western United States, with approximately 400 students, referred to as Midwest Christian. Midwest Christian collaborates with a small private religious college in West Africa with approximately 300 students, referred to as West African Christian. Both institutions offer social work at exclusively the baccalaureate level, with social work student bodies numbering between 30 and 100. These smaller religious institutions were chosen purposively, as will be discussed further below, to examine the particular impacts of faith orientations on international collaborations in social work education.

Sampling Plan

The decision to use qualitative methods broadly and case studies in particular meant exploring non-probability sampling methods. This study combines elements of purposive sampling and convenience or availability sampling (Engel & Schutt; Padgett, 1998). It is designed to include information on a two significantly different types of collaborations, and to do so in depth, while maintaining enough commonalities to allow some comparison between the case studies.

It was difficult to find pairs of institutions meeting my criteria. Collaborations can be fragile, and can be short-lived. Furthermore, the most established collaborations often involve faculty members who are already conducting some sort of research either through them or on them. The focus on pairs of institutions also presented the difficulty of obtaining institutional cooperation and support and from both partners. I pursued one noteworthy collaboration over the course of almost a year. In that case, the African institution had consented to involvement, but the domestic institution backed out after several months of negotiations when one of the key faculty members decided to write a book project on the partnership, and felt that to continue

would constitute a conflict of interest. As Padgett (1998) notes, "Personal acquaintance with key respondents or with the site of the study can smooth the way considerably" (p. 46). My own familiarity with and/or connections to individuals and institutions on the ground, as well as connections through members of my dissertation committee, proved invaluable in helping negotiate entry at the institutional level.

Recruitment

At all of the institutions, I first sought to contact the gatekeepers in order to obtain their buy-in for the study (Padgett, 1998). In most cases these were administrators or heads of the schools of social work, individuals who I was also interested in interviewing. As mentioned above, in making these initial connections I relied on some of my own professional networks, as well as the networks of members of my dissertation committee. After establishing contact by phone or via email, I met with each of these individuals in person to identify possible respondents at other levels within the institution, in a modified form of snowball sampling (Padget, 1998). This included identifying key faculty members and administrators, who had significant insight into the collaboration, as well as identifying and recruiting students for focus groups or individual interviews.

I had initially proposed interviewing West African respondents via Skype, other voice over internet protocol (VOIP) programs, or telephone. Recognizing that this would be less than ideal for the qualitative methods I was pursuing given that I would be less able to pay attention to critical nonverbal cues and expressions (Padgett, 1998), I pursued and obtained funding to travel to these institutions in person. I was able to spend a full week on the ground at each institution in West Africa. Padgett notes that, "Qualitative research demands immersion and engagement. Research relationships may have to be negotiated and renegotiated as needed" (p. 47). This was

certainly the case for this study, as I will outline further in the section on data collection procedures.

I met with each potential respondent in a private office or conference room, ensured that they fit my eligibility criteria as being involved in an international collaboration in social work education as either a student, faculty member, or relevant administrator at one of the four institutions identified in the case study pairs, and went over the study information sheet with them. This included a description of the study purpose and procedures. Finally, I asked whether they were willing to participate, and obtained their written and verbal consent. Although I used a snowball sampling method to identify potential respondents, those who recommended individuals were not intentionally informed regarding the participation or non-participation of those they recommended, although in some cases this became obvious due to disclosure on the part of the respondent themselves.

Sample

The non-representative sample included a total of 25 individuals. Of these 25 individuals, 17 were interviewed individually; the remaining eight were part of two focus groups of four people each. The sample was relatively evenly split across the four institutions. At each institution, interviews were conducted with individuals classified as administrators, faculty, and students. It should be noted that these categories were not always mutually exclusive. Individuals often served as both administrators and faculty members, and in the case of West African Christian, individuals who had completed the program as students in recent years were now serving as administrators and faculty.

Interviews about the first collaboration, between Midwest University and West African University, were conducted with 12 individuals. At Midwest University I conducted individual

in-depth interviews with one faculty member who had also served in administration within the school of social work, one university wide administrator, and three students who had gone on a study abroad experience as part of the collaboration between Midwest University and West African University. The sub-sample at Midwest University included a variety of racial/ethnic identities: one African American participant, one bi-racial participant, one West African participant, and two White participants. This sub-sample included four males and one female. At West African University, I spoke with one administrator within the school of social work who also was part of the faculty, and six students, two of them individually and four as part of a focus group. The sub-sample at West African University was all West African, and included two females and five males.

Interviews about the second collaboration, between West African Christian and Midwest Christian, were conducted with 13 individuals. At West African Christian I conducted individual in-depth interviews with one administrator (who was also a faculty member and previous student), two faculty members (one a previous students), and three students who had recently graduated. At the time of my data collection, West African Christian was not conducting classes due to the Ebola crisis in the region, which reduced the number of individuals available to interview, as many were spending the crisis in more rural areas. The sub-sample at West African Christian was all West African and included three females and three males. At Midwest Christian I individually interviewed one administrator and two faculty members, and conducted a focus group with four students. The sub-sample at Midwest Christian was racially/ethnically homogenous, all participants were white, and included five females and two males.

Data Collection Procedures

Qualitative data collection is often clustered around three basic modes: observation, interviewing, and the review of documents or other archival materials (content analysis) (Padgett, 1998). The primary mode of data collection in this study was in-depth or intensive interviewing utilizing a combination of closed and open ended questions, but elements of the other two were also used, and the methods are in many ways interrelated and often overlap (Padgett, 1998). The intent was to pursue what Seidman (2006) calls in-depth, phenomenological interviewing, although in several regards it was impractical to fully implement the method, which calls for three separate 90 minute plus interviews.

I had originally proposed in-depth interviews with faculty and administrators, supplemented by a short survey for students. This plan was scrapped for a variety of excellent reasons, including access to appropriate information technology resources at partner institutions, and the mismatch in interview depth that such procedures would produce between the various institutional actors. Instead, I pursued in-depth interviews with faculty and administrators and focus groups with students. Focus groups ideally involve 7 to 10 people, and in some cases I was able to get close to this, but the timing of my data collection in West Africa made this extremely difficult. I traveled in June, for reasons discussed in more depth in my methodological note in Appendix A, and students were on a break from classes. This meant it was often more practical to interview students individually as well.

I made the decision to provide all student respondents, both in West African and the United States, with a $15 research incentive as a token of my appreciation for their time and participation. This was not without some trepidation. Padgett (1998) cautions that,

> The decision about how much to pay respondents is an ethical one. If we pay too little, the incentive is lost and we risk insulting them. But if we pay too much (and especially if our prospective respondents are poor), we risk coercion by 'purchasing' their cooperation. (p. 39-40)

I was acutely aware that the vast discrepancy in average incomes between the nations in West Africa and the United States risked exacerbating this ethical danger in both directions. At the same time, my theoretical bent towards reciprocity and equality seemed to demand it, and in the end that is what I decided to do.

In conducting interviews and focus groups, I attempted to be attuned "to the sociocultural and political context of the study" (Padgett, 1998, p. 53). While the topic of international collaboration is not as sensitive as others social work research examines, it is nonetheless laden with power dynamics and assumptions about past or future opportunities. I explained the potential benefit of the research to the social work profession as a whole, but was always mindful to not suggest that there would be immediate, or certainly any financial, benefits to the specific collaborations or individual institutions involved in the research.

The qualitative interviews explored overlapping but distinct content depending on whether the interviewee was part of the faculty or administration, or a student. While individual questions varied, the interview protocols for faculty and administrators, and for students, were both structured around three areas of inquiry. The first section explored personal perspectives on the collaboration, including the background of the interviewee with the institution and their personal involvement with the collaboration. The second section asked the interviewee to reflect on their perceptions of institutional motivations, including what they see as primary decision making factors around collaborations, organizational and structural factors, and demographic and

value based factors. The final section examined perceptions of student involvement, how students benefit and what might motivate them to participate.

Although all interviews were structured around the same sections, I deliberately chose to follow these protocols loosely, maintaining the freedom to explore topics and responses in a more conversational and natural tone. This included frequent use of standard follow up questions, such as "Can you tell me more about that," and more specific follow up questions such as, "Other sort of motivational roles? You said 'make disciples of all nations.' Spin that out for me." It also included asking questions that were not on the protocol as a result of something a participant said. The purpose of my study was to examine specific sets of partnerships as case studies, but in the course of interviews many participants mentioned other international collaborations, prompting questions like this one, "So you know you mentioned Finland, Mexico, Ghana, what was your strategy for choosing international partners?" I attempted to consciously avoid the tendency to manipulate participants into returning to my guide or responding to questions after they had moved on (Seidman, 2006, p. 92). At the end of each interview, I asked participants if there was anything else that they would like to add, or that they thought I ought to know.

All interviews were digitally recorded and then transcribed into documents in Microsoft Word by a contracted independent third party, the Calvin College Center for Social Research. These transcripts were then checked for accuracy and imported into the qualitative software package NVivo for coding and data analysis.

Data Analysis

Data for this study was organized and analyzed with the assistance of three main software packages. Interviews were transcribed, labeled, and partially processed in Microsoft Word,

version 14.5.9 (2010) before being imported into QSR International's NVivo software, version 11.1.0.411, 64-bit (2015) for coding and analysis of larger themes. The use of different "Style" settings in the Microsoft Word .docx files to label "Interviewer" and "Participant" allowed NVivo to auto-code the imported files around these classifications, enabling easy analysis of only participant responses. Further classifications were imported via a separate Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to enable classification by institution, type of institution, role (administrator, faculty, student), and continent.

Beyond this initial phase of organizational processing, the data analysis proceeded inductively, seeking to identify patterns in the data using open coding. Open coding allows for the potential of new codes within each interview (Emerson, Fretz, & Saw, 1995). It should be noted here that some coding also reflecting the critical theoretical lens developed in Chapter 4, and that not all coding was open in the sense of a purist grounded theory. This was not, therefore, open coding *qua open coding*, but certainly an attempt to "let the interview breathe and speak for itself" (Seidman, 2006, p. 117). After identifying initial codes, such as motivations for participation, institutional factors contributing to participation, and demographic or value based factors, the data was coded axially, and the number of codes significantly reduced, looking for commonalities and overlapping codes that might help begin to explore the data more thematically (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Rigor and Trustworthiness

The nature of the study precludes a discussion of reliability traditionally understood, and I would agree with Seidman's (2006) assertion that "many qualitative researchers disagree with the epistemological assumptions underlying the notion of validity" (p. 23). That said, the process of collecting and analyzing the data in this study included a variety of methods to

strengthen the rigor and trustworthiness of the process. At a basic level, every effort was made to triangulate between data sources (Patton, 2002). I also made extensive efforts to provide an audit trail of data collection and analysis. In transferring the interviews from audio to text, I made the decision to transcribe every interview in its entirety, to avoid the possibility of making premature decisions about what was important and what was not (Seidman, 2006). I also made the decision, in keeping with best practices, to have the data transcribed externally (Gibbs, 2007, Seidman, 2006). Transcriptions of the raw audio files were completed and double checked for fidelity to the audio by an independent third party contractor, Calvin College's Center for Social Research. Those completing the transcription were told to avoid the tendency to "tidy up" the transcripts (Gibbs, 2007). The level of transcription included some conversational features, notably abbreviations, repetition on the part of the speaker, significant pauses (denoted with ellipses) and laughter on the part of interviewer or participant. I was particularly interested in exploring laughter. Laughter is used in a variety of ways, ranging from the self-evidently humorous to the anxious or ironic (Seidman, 2006, p. 90), and I wanted to explore it when it emerged to help determine how it was being used, especially in the absence of a clearly defined reason (such as a joke). Once the cleaned and formatted .docx files were imported into NVivo, the software itself provides a partial record of the process of developing codes, including memos and a project journal within the file.

After the development of preliminary and more open codes it became clear that I had fallen victim to one of the major issues that besets those new to coding; my first attempt at coding was primarily descriptive rather than theoretical or analytic (Gibbs, 2007). In a series of memos I attempted correct this, while retaining some of my initial more descriptive coding, which allowed for easy comparisons on specific questions across participants. I significantly

reduced the numbers of overall codes, and simplified what had become an overly hierarchical structure (Gibbs, 2007).

Taken together, my hope is that these efforts contribute to the rigor and trustworthiness of the information presented here. At the same time, it should be emphasized again that,

> Finally, the goal of the process is to understand how our participants understand and make meaning of their experience. If the interview structure works to allow them to make sense to themselves as well as to the interviewer, then it has gone a long way toward validity. (Seidman, 2006, p. 24)

Reflexivity

Given that the core of my theoretical framework is critical theory, and a critical social work practice, it is important to briefly discuss reflexivity. As Gibbs (2007) defines it, "reflexivity is the recognition that the product of research inevitably reflects some of the background, milieu and predilections of the researcher" (p. 91). The current dominant methodological approach for qualitative research is grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). To some critical theorists, the pseudo-objectivist leanings in grounded theory; the notion that one can discover meaning inherent in raw data, smacks of the logical positivism that the approach was originally designed to provide an alternative to (Breckenridge, Jones, Elliot, & Nicol, 2012). Attempts to develop a more "constructivist grounded theory" seem to fall short (Charmaz, 2003). So while I attempted to allow new codes to emerge from the data, and to see unanticipated patterns, to claim to use grounded theory having already specified a strong theoretical framework would be to take a "'pick and mix' approach," creating "an ambiguous medley… without regard for their inherent incompatibilities" (Breckenridge et al., 2012, p. 64).

Rather than "purport to discover latent patterns of behaviour within the data" as classical grounded theorists do (Breckenridge et al., 2012, p. 65), I admit that I come to the data as a critical theorist, a social worker, and a Christian with a bent towards liberation theology. In contrast to grounded theory approaches, I am neither ontologically nor epistemologically neutral, and have little desire to be so. In approaching the data, I am therefore attuned to the possibilities that the system is actively colonizing the lifeworld, and committed to discovering patterns of international collaboration that will be less oppressive and more liberating for all involved.

This is not to dismiss grounded theory as a legitimate and entirely useful methodology for pursuing qualitative research, it is instead to be honest and reflexive about the strong role that theory played in influencing the process in this study. Indeed, there is some natural overlap between critical theory and grounded theory. Like critical theorists, the pioneers of grounded theory, Glaser and Strauss, were uncomfortable with positivism. They were seeking "a compromise between extreme empiricism and complete relativism" (Suddaby, 2005, p. 634). Classic grounded theory is also attuned to the ways the researcher influences the research, it does not assume they are capable of some sort of pure objectivity (Glaser, 1998).

I also want to briefly acknowledge the difficulty of conducting interviews across cultures, and particularly in West African contexts, as a White American male. These interactions can easily become problematic (Seidman, 2006). While I have lived and worked in West Africa in the past, and done much in the process of my social work education to critically examine my own implicit bias and privilege, an awareness of the problem does not eliminate the problem. Seidman (2006) notes that "a genuine interest in the stories of others can go a long way toward bridging racial and ethnic barriers" (p. 100), and I hope that was the case here. It is also important to note that I had connections to the West African institutions where I conducted

interviews from some of my own previous work in collaboration and the collaborations of my dissertation chair, Dr. DeBrenna Agbenyiga.

Human Subject Protection

The Michigan State University Institutional Review Board reviewed all procedures involved in this study. The Institutional Review Board found that the project met the criteria for an exempt status in accordance with federal regulations. All participation in this study was voluntary, and participation involved minimal risk for participants. As noted in the informed consent documents utilized in data collection, the primary risk to participants was the possibility of identification by someone at their own institution or partner institution. Participants were informed that it was possible that given the specific geographic focus of the research, and the number of social work institutions engaged in international collaborative activities, an informed reader might identify their comments despite efforts to ensure confidentiality. Apart from the risk of identification, and potential censure from colleagues or partners based on comments made, there were no other foreseeable risks with participation in this research.

To protect participant's confidentiality, all information collected from participants has been secured. Participants names were recorded on documents outlining informed consent, but all identifying information such as personal names or names of the institutions has been removed from interview protocols. Instead, interviews were labeled by institutional proxy and number. To ensure privacy, interview protocols are stored in a locked file cabinet, and recordings and transcriptions in a locked filing cabinet and a secure, password protected computer. Transcriptions and audio recordings of interviews will be destroyed after being retained for the minimum of three years following the closure of the project, per the Michigan State University policy.

CHAPTER 7: RESULTS

Introduction

It is difficult to capture the motivations of institutions, or to easily capture or quantify the outcomes of international collaborations. The results outlined below represent tentative themes that will demand further research. It should also be noted that these results, obtained via in-depth interviews and focus group using a purposive sample, are inherently not generalizable. Throughout the section, extended quotes are used to convey themes. Presenting ideas in broad context is part of my wider efforts to ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the results (Seidman, 2006). It would be possible, and indeed entirely logical, to organize these results in a number of ways, given the complexity of the factors involved. One could compare between the two institutional collaborations, between either partner in each collaboration, and at multiple levels (administration, faculty, students) within and between institutions. The theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 4 suggests a certain framing of the analysis, but rather than immediately attempting to fit responses into that schema, this section first proceeds with a more chronological approach. This approach seems to fit more closely with the way respondents discussed their participation in collaborative activities, and provides an opportunity to identify some of the key questions at various stages. A consideration of the results through the theoretical framework outlined earlier is outlined in detail in the following chapter. The structure of the results below matches the initial more descriptive coding. However, within this structure there are several themes that emerged largely from the data itself, which are noted as such.

The motivations for collaborative activities and their perceived outcomes form the core of the results, but these results are framed by a number of factors. As such, the presentation of results begins with a consideration of the origins of the collaborations in question. This section

outlines what participants know, or in some cases do not know, about how the collaboration began, and to what original end it was oriented. After considering the origins of collaborations, motivations for participation at individual and institutional levels are explored. Given what they knew of the collaboration and how it began, why did they choose to participate? This section includes a subset of results related to the characteristics that respondents associated with individuals, both faculty and students, who seem to be drawn to this particular sort of work. Following this consideration of individual motivations is a discussion of institutional frameworks. What is their sense of what motivates their institution to pursue these kinds of partnerships?

The question of motivations is followed by a discussion of outcomes. Who benefits and how? This includes benefits at the level of individuals, the level of institutions, and the additional level of social work education in the broader sense. There is substantial variation between domestic and international students as to what the primary outcomes of participating in international collaborations are.

Having examined the core questions, there are a number of other themes that emerged in the research, some linked to questions and others that came as a surprise. Proceeding chronologically, after examining outcomes is a presentation of results concerning the opportunities and challenges that present themselves to those interested in collaborating internationally in social work education. A significant subset of the challenges participants mentioned concern issues of funding and reciprocity.

Another set of results represents a significant theme that emerged across many of the aspects outline above, the question of faith. Faith presented itself in a variety of ways, from the inception of partnerships to individual and institutional motivations and outcomes. Faith was

presented as an opportunity, and as a challenge. As such, and given the somewhat awkward relationship the social work literature has had with religious faith at times, it seemed appropriate to include these results in a separate section.

Origins of Collaborations

Although several of the participants who were interviewed had a degree of centrality to the collaboration in question, others were more removed. One of the clearest themes that emerged from discussions of one's own personal role in the collaboration (the item on the interview protocol was "Describe your role in the collaboration with (insert partner here).") was a general lack of clarity about the origins of collaborations among both active participants and those around the institution more generally. People did not know what was going on. It was frequently the case that individuals, especially students, did not know how or why their institution had initiated an international collaboration.

While common across both case studies, this lack of understanding presented itself in slightly different ways in each collaboration. The collaboration between West African Christian and Midwest Christian is relatively well-established. It dates back to 2007, is documented in a series of agreements and proposals, and has been written about in a variety of publications, both on the web and in print. Despite this, very few people outside the faculty members directly involved in initiating the collaboration had any precise idea about how it started or what the extent of its activities were. The collaboration was initiated around curriculum development, and went on to include one-way student visits for collaborative classwork, and limited two-way faculty exchanges, as well as some collaborative research.

A participant at West African Christian noted that, "I don't know what happened in the background between them and [West African Christian]. But for me, they were here and they

lecture us." Another, also at West African Christian, noted, "I didn't know anything about this collaboration. In fact, I wanted to go to another school but then someone advised me to come here… because it was better than that school." A third respondent, also at West African Christian, replied "I don't know, but I think the first collaboration… I think the first community development class I had in 2008." In addition to a generalized lack of knowledge, there were frequent misconceptions about who had been involved, when, and for what purpose. This was especially true where institutions had more than one international collaboration. One participant at West African Christian included the work of an unrelated professor from Germany as part of reflections on the collaboration with Midwest Christian.

As mentioned above, only those closest to the collaboration had a clear sense for how it had begun, or what its initial goals were. One of the original faculty and administrators at West African Christian stated,

> "I believe, for me, personally, the project was very educational and very helpful. Because when I came from [West African nation] from school, I was feeling a challenge of developing a curriculum for the program here at [West African Christian]. And I put a draft curriculum together which I was not sure if it was realistic… and luckily for us, [Midwest Christian] had come in to see how to help the school develop the program and you came as a team and then we looked through the curriculum and then we . . . we made some correction to suit the [local] aspect of it. So that was really, really good, that was also a learning process for me."

Even this individual could not recall exactly when the collaboration had begun, or the names of those initially involved.

On the other side of this collaboration, the origins were not much clearer. This was true for both the administration and students. An administrator at Midwest Christian said,

> "[Name] was the one who first informed me. There was… not sure what the name of the group was, but in an essence, it was a consultation… it was taking place with an interested parties from [Other Midwest Institution]. For some reason, I am thinking that [Name] at [Other Midwest Institution] may have been involved because some institutional research that was occurring at that time, mainly to look at needs…how [Midwest Christian] could uniquely contribute to a partnership that we would lend out."

Students at Midwest Christian also displayed relatively little knowledge about the collaboration their institution was involved in.

> "I guess I didn't know that we were in collaboration but I had [Midwest Christian faculty member] talk about it in class a few times, especially international social work… I mean, talk about [West African nation] and just the different things that have been happening down there and how it's affecting the area. But I guess, I didn't realize we are in collaboration, like [Midwest Christian] was I thought it was just [Other institution]. But I didn't know."

Another student added that, "But that guy that came in HBSE II to talk, he was from [West African nation], from that [Misstates name of West African Christian]. He was the one that… he talked about it." On a similar note, a student reflected on having watched a film about the context in West African Christian's country.

> "I wasn't actually sure at all. We watched this movie in HBSE I . . . or was it II? I think it was II… I didn't even really understand it… I knew why we are watching

it, I thought it was kind of informative like this is what's going on in [West African nation]. I really didn't understand that we had a collaboration with anyone. Even coming here and have you talk about it, I am still like, "This is very new information."

Given the complicated nature of institutions and turn over in the student body at colleges and universities, this result is perhaps not surprising, but it was quite robust.

The collaboration between Midwest University and West African University was significantly less established at the time of the study, but had involved some collaborative work on research, as well as interaction with one-way, shorter term student trips. Here as well, individuals not directly involved in initiating collaboration had limited knowledge about it. Here, for example, is an exchange with the head of the social work department,

Interviewer

I can understand that quite well. So there's been this collaboration between Michigan State and [West African University], how involved have you been with that collaboration?

Participant

I am not aware of it.

Interviewer

Okay.

Participant

So I haven't been involved in it.

Interviewer

Okay. So have you heard of [Midwest University faculty member] or students from [Midwest University] coming here in the past?

Participant

I have heard they coming in the past but since I joined the department I haven't seen any student coming from [the Midwest]…

Interviewer

Sure.

Participant

And since I became the head of this department I haven't seen any student either.

None of the students interviewed at West African University were familiar with the collaboration with Midwest University, although they were able to discuss several other international collaborations the institution maintained, with universities in Canada and Europe.

Individual Motivations

If the specifics of the international collaborations in question in some ways eluded the individuals interviewed, there remained universal enthusiasm for participation in such activities, whether the actual collaborations in question, or at a more abstract level. The nature of this motivation, however, varied extensively depending on the role of the individual (student, faculty, administrator), and also within those roles. The presentation below begins with a consideration of some of the themes that emerged in student discussions of motivations, followed by faculty and administrators. Closing this section with administrators provides a bridge into the next section, which considers themes of institutional motivations.

Students

As noted in the literature review, authors have discussed a number of potential motivations for students participating in international collaborations, including a fascination with other cultures, liking or having connections to people from another country, "making a difference" in a context with more "need" than a domestic setting, or the uncritical and consumerist pursuit of the exotic (Bolen, 2001; Wehbi, 2009; Woolf, 2006). Notably, most of these discussions have focused on the motivations of students from the United States or Canada, occassionally from Europe. The following section explores some of these more familiar themes first, and then moves to explore some themes that occurred across interviews on both sides of partnerships, and some potentially newer themes emerging from the interviews with students in West Africa.

Student responses from the Midwest institutions reinforced some of the above themes mentioned in the literature. In interviews with students at both Midwest institutions, some of the more negatively perceived themes, particularly the pursuit of the exotic, were most likely to emerge from lines of questioning that asked the participant to reflect on others, the imagined "average" participant, a variation on what Seidman (2006) would call the "role-playing approach" (p. 87). As an example, this follow up question, "You mentioned maybe some differences between you and some other people on the trip. What do you think, what do you think motivated them to go? Do you have any sense of that?" elicited the following response from a student at Midwest University:

> "Since this is confidential and I'm being asked I would say that not all of them, but some of them wanted to go because they had understood study abroad to be a really fun thing. Where you get to party and drink and have fun in another

> country. Not exactly like spring break but kind of that mentality where I get to be away from home or where I'm used to and party and have a good time. That kind of experience. I really got that. I even got that verbally from some of the students. When I discouraged it. Not as like a party pooper but kind of trying to find out the motivation. It was like a no brainer to them, like duh, you're supposed to do this on study abroad."

I chose to zero in on the statement that "I even got that verbally from some of the students," with the follow up question, "They actually said that outright to you?" to which the student replied:

> "Yeah a couple of them, not all of them. And it could be a minority, not most people. I don't know but that was something I experienced that I was a little surprised about but at the same time you also have to take into account that I'm a nontraditional student. I was in my thirties when I went on the trip. These kids are like 21 and they come from a little different place in life. Maybe when I was 21 I would have had the same attitude. You know? But that should be taken into account. I can't speak too much on my soap box."

As part of a larger discussion about culture shock, another student said the following:

> "To be completely honest. Yeah, I hate to be negative but I really do think that some of my classmates went to say, "Oh, I went to Africa." I think that, I mean, well to be either honest okay so we got there, let's, I don't know what day we got there, but one of my classmates, she even left before a week."

The desire to travel was sometimes articulated in less negative terms, as in the following, also from a student at Midwest University: "I had never been out of the country before and I have

always wanted to go to Africa and I thought it would be a perfect experience. I am very grateful I went." Another student had similar motivations to travel,

> "Well the first thing was that I had never participated in study abroad before and then it was one of the few opportunities in the social work program at MSU that allowed for me to travel and get that international experience so. That's really what attracted me toward it."

In the above response are hints at themes more related to social work as a discipline, some of which will be explored more thoroughly in the consideration of themes that cut across both sides of collaborations.

A second theme that was exclusively found in interviews with individuals at Midwest institutions, and almost exclusively at Midwest Christian, was service, a variation on Wehbi's (2009) discussion of "giving back" in contexts more in need of assistance. One student at Midwest Christian articulated it this way:

> "I think I everyone is hurting. So, even if people do social work here or you are doing social work there, you are helping them. It's not so different than what we think it is. It's probably, be different because of the culture, but I think regardless of all, everyone needs help."

Another student, also at Midwest Christian, reflected on a film that a professor had shown in class about the context in West Africa,

> "I think specifically, in regards to the film that we watched, it opened my eyes to remember the fact that a lot of other people…let me back up. This movie specifically, talks about the war that took place. While I was watching it, I was like 'how are we not getting involved? How is the US not getting involved?' All

these questions in my mind in recognizing that things like this still happen today that needs to be addressed."

For one of the students at Midwest Christian, the ability to be of service in international collaborations was in some ways specific to social work and other helping professions:

> "Definitely, because we are more like… if we are internationally helping them or if we are nursing, or it could be similar: nursing could help with them, like their physically needs. I think we can help more with mental need and their well-being and stuff in other countries that are not well-off. So going in there and helping them with all their personal needs. They need water, food and shelter. We can definitely advocate for everything."

Again, the pursuit of the exotic and the desire to serve were largely limited to responses from individuals at Midwest University and Midwest Christian, and it is indeed possible that the two themes in some ways are related. The literature on Christian short-term missions suggests they employ a unique vocabulary, a mix of service and travel that is sometimes discussed as a pilgrimage (Howell and Dorr, 2007).

If these themes of travel and service were confined largely to the Midwest institutions, many themes cut across the collaborations. These themes included a heavy emphasis on the development of cross-cultural competency, a broader theme of learning from and developing relationships with the other, personal development, and professional development. While these themes expressed themselves at institutions on both sides of the Atlantic, they sometimes did so in noticeably different ways, as will be explored further below.

As noted in the literature review, cross cultural competency has often been posited as one of the primary benefits of international collaborations in social work education (Fairchild, Pillai,

& Noble, 2006; Gray & Allegritti, 2002; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Nimmagadda & Cowger, 1999; Razack, 2002), sometimes extended to the development of a sense of global citizenship (Corbin, 2013; Forsey, Broomhall, & Davis, 2012; Gacel-Ávila, 2005; Rotabi et al., 2006; Woolf, 2010). These themes did indeed emerge in the interviews, in both this section of personal motivations, and also in terms of what participants saw as the outcomes of participation in collaborations, but from a critical theory standpoint it should be noted that in many ways these are so universal in curriculum and the literature that they become the accepted script for talking about such experiences. Furthermore, what is presented below does not contribute to the ongoing problem of relying on "the assessment of attitudes as a proxy for competence" (King and Baxter Magolda, 2005, p. 572).

A student at West African University, while not explicitly using the term, discussed cultural competency in this way:

> "Another thing, we talk about social work practice, we talk about values such as treating people as unique individuals that's not judgment based on stereotypes and stuff. If you get an opportunity to, as students, if you get opportunity to relate and talk to people from different backgrounds and even before you start practicing, at least you get to know how to behave and then that's the tendency of you stereotyping people from different cultures will be reduced because you would have had some experience with them and you know how they relate and you can treat them as individuals."

A student at Midwest Christian related the development of cultural competence to future professional development, a theme explored in more depth below.

> "We live in America, which is a melting pot. Anywhere you go, you are going to deal with different cultures. That's my motivation. I work with many people from different

cultures. By asking questions, I feel like I can better relate to them. I think that will definitely go into my field of work down the road."

Several responses from classmates at Midwest Christian, whether consciously or not, also reflected ongoing debates in social work and other helping professions about whether a concept like cultural competency would not be better off as something like cultural intelligence or cultural humility (Tervalon and Murray-Garcia, 1998). For example: "So, I think it's a humbling experience, but really interesting and you can develop a lot of appreciation for other cultures and be a lot more sensitive in understanding with that exposure." Another student at Midwest Christian was more clearly articulating something discussed in class:

> "I think there is so much that you can learn through cross-cultural experiences. I guess one thing that we have abundant in our classes is the more you learn about different cultures and stuff like that, the more you realize you don't know anything."

On a similar note, a third Midwest Christian student said,

> "And you kind of want to be culturally literate. That's the term. Especially going into social work, you going to be faced to it, whether you go internationally or you stay. Within the United States, you are going to be faced with a bunch of different cultures, so having a broader awareness of what's going on the other side of the world, not only helps you professionally, but also helps you personally so you can relate to people and not be ignorant."

Cultural competency as an explicit theme also emerged in interviews at institutions in West Africa. At West African University one student noted:

> "I think that what motivated me was the fact that I am becoming, or I have become a professional social worker and therefore, hopeful of traveling abroad one day, this will help me to begin to learn more about people from other parts of the world as I work with them one day and learn about their culture, how to relate to them in a way that's, I'll be very sensitive, as we call it being culturally competent and culturally sensitive."

The same student went on to say:

> "So basically I was happy or it motivated me to be part of such programs in order to learn more about what is this in other countries and the cultures that there, the cultures or the values and the norms that they hold on to so that one day if I found myself in such a country that is quite different from mine I would know how to perfectly practice social work and not offend other people, be sensitive, yeah."

Interestingly, while exploring the same general theme, these two responses are different in potentially important ways. While in the responses from Midwest Christian we see students developing cultural competency as part of their preparation for working in the "melting pot" of a pluralistic American society, this response from West African University indicates that developing cultural competency through international collaboration is primarily oriented towards the goal of one day working and living abroad. There were exceptions to this from students at Midwest Christian, but they were primarily in discussions about preparation for working as a missionary. The notion that international collaborations might help develop cultural competency for living abroad was echoed in another statement from a classmate at West African University during a focus group,

> "I mean especially when you're living with them, to be able to know how everybody behaves and, as well as know how, I mean how will I put that, they, you know there are few unique people, the few unique ones, how do you put that? I mean have a whole lot of people that [unclear] and there are few who have different way of behaving, you know, so they're exceptions in their ways and behaviors so, it helps you to familiarize yourself with all of those ones that I'm, to be able to live with them or, I know, I'm not sure perhaps we come back to me."

There were at least two other subtle variations in the ways that students discussed cultural competency. One was a stronger emphasis on personal, one on one interaction, as opposed to exposure more generally through visits or even materials like books, articles, or films. As another student at West African University said,

> "I think one more thing has to do with culture and it's, we all know culture is how people live so again culture cannot effectively be learned from the books. If you really want to have a personal experience of someone's culture than it's important to have a direct interaction with them."

The second, and perhaps most intriguing variation, was that international collaboration might increase a West African's cultural competency not towards clients but towards the profession itself. Namely, that such collaboration might help contextualize what was being taught in social work curriculums in important ways. This idea emerged in the extended dialog below, I have omitted my verbal affirmations that I was tracking what the participant was saying for the sake of greater clarity, italics denote original emphasis on the part of the speaker,

> "Okay, as a student of social work, and also as he said, a professional individual, it is important that you understand the context in which the discipline itself was

> developed, you, you read of, read about theories and things, which emanated from studies that, most of which we're not conducted in African setting, and so the issues that informed... the certain assertions that are made, obviously, at times, *they're weird to us,* because of the culture we are coming from. At times, you get to understand how they appreciate those issues and how they're able to read in between the lines and then understand them better than we do because at times, some of the things we read, the African, they think we can't practice them here. For instance we talk about case studies in counseling where a client has to come alone, one-on-one, and there's supposed to be confidentiality and my professor, he used to say that the person comes with a family, eh, behind the door and once the person walks out, they ask, "What went on in there?" or that person might have left weeping and to be able to console them you have to get some insight of what happened and so you find that the individualistic way of life in the Westernized communities, that's influenced them, I say "preaching" confidentiality, might be difficult to be upheld in, uh, cultural setting and so when you're relating to people from these different backgrounds and cultures it helps you to understand things better than you do on you own."

So while cultural competency was a common theme across individual motivations for student's participation in international collaborations, there were differences in exactly how the concept was understood, what the best way to pursue it might be, and what the exact nature of the benefit might be.

In addition to cultural competency, a related but most likely independent theme in the responses was the broader idea of learning from and developing relationships with the other.

Again, this theme emerged in responses from both those at the Midwest institutions and the West African institutions, but with some differences. All students seemed to agree that getting to know individuals from around the world was something that motivated them, but something unique to the interviews in West Africa was the idea of learning "how to behave" and the differences between how things were "on that side, and on this side." Here is one student from West African University, emphasis added:

> "If you get an opportunity to, as students, if you get opportunity to relate and talk to people from different backgrounds and even before you start practicing, at least you get to know *how to behave* and then that's the tendency of you stereotyping people from different cultures will be reduced because you would have had some experience with them and you know how they relate and you can treat them as individuals…"

Another student, who had participated in a student exchange as part of a university partnership with a school in Canada, stated,

> "So I really wanted to know how people behave elsewhere cause it's one thing to come to someone's country to be, it's another thing to be behaving in your own background, you know, and how people relate to you when you are in their context or their environment so, I think that cultural experience was a great motivation and actually when I go there I experience I realize that of course I was actually learning the new things, everything was, well not everything, but a whole lot of things were quite different and there were a lot of cultural shocks and I'm sure when people come here they experience the same shocks and they learn how

to, perhaps, adjust to certain things, this is something I went through, so I think that was one thing, yeah."

The passage earlier, which was used to discuss how international collaboration might prepare one for living abroad, also included this emphasis on behavior,

> "… so I think this collaboration is very helpful in a way that it helps all of us to be able to know each other very well and, I mean, understand people's background. I mean especially when you're living with them, to be able to know how everybody behaves and, as well as know how, I mean how will I put that, they, you know there are few unique people, the few unique ones, how do you put that? I mean have a whole lot of people that [unclear] and there are few who have different way of behaving, you know, so they're exceptions in their way behaviors so, it helps you to familiarize yourself with all of those ones that I'm, to be able to live with them…"

What was often referred to as experiencing how people behave in interviews at West African University was often expressed as wondering what things were like "on that side" as opposed to "on this side." As one student at West African Christian said, "so we need to go through and experience, experience how it's like on our side. Another, reflecting on the importance of a student exchange component said, "And we've come to have an exchange of students where you have to teach students from America, work with them. Get together new ideas and how they think of social work from that side." Another said,

> "Well, the whole thing is about working as a team, because even if you have resources, you still need other expertise to meet your objective. Alright, and some of us wouldn't have it, I mean, from the [West African nation] side. You have been trained for a long

> time so you had the expertise, you had the experience I wouldn't have, so we had to collaborate so that you empower us to be able to work on our own."

What potentially differentiates the domestic responses from the West African responses in terms of learning from the other and developing relationships is a stronger emphasis on relationships in the West African responses. Even when discussing learning and expanding one's horizons, West African respondents were more likely to be discussing learning from people, whereas domestic respondents were more likely to be discussing learning from the more generalized setting, or the experience as a whole.

The emphasis on relationships, particularly personal relationships, is clear in many of the West African responses. For instance, in response to the open-ended question, "What motivates you personally to be involved with this sort of a partnership?" one of the respondents at West African Christian immediately replied, "I think because of the relationship that I've acquired from the partners." Later in the interview, the same participant clarified that they considered these relationships personal, and not just professional, emphasis original:

> "The working relationship is somehow good so it helps you to like-wanting to do more. If the relationship is not good, one will not want to go for a second time. To want to go to. So I think it is that good working relationship. Most especially *the friendship* that we have established over the years is one thing that is good."

At West African University, a student reflecting back on time spent abroad noted that,

> "And in terms of international recognition, other friends or so, also, we link up, I met a PhD, a doctoral student there that we used to share a lot of information and other – I was on the research option, or the research trip. But I met colleagues

there who are also on the practice trip and they are – we share a lot about program evaluation and all those kinds of things. I still build contacts with them. So not necessarily about academic but in terms of international, social relationship and other stuff, and sharing information. My current friend or one of my friends is working in a youth section, I guess, an organization that deals with youths, the youth who are engaging drug addiction."

Another student at West African University said that, "it is one thing to read what books have said and it's another thing to have a person experience a personal interaction with, I mean, people involved." The student went on to say that,

> "So definitely [the West African University school of social work] will value it because they see it as an opportunity for students to always have a chance at having such relationship with foreign students and also build their professional touch, as social work students and then future social workers…"

A student at West African Christian reflected back on a collaborative class taken in West Africa with students from a partner institution in North America,

> "We then take a day out with our friend with our colleagues in our community. I thought it finish now with our friend from the community, we just see how it looks, what it looks like, what we can eat, and share food with the children. And they're happy about that. Also, the exchange of information from America to the regular student. That was also very, very good. So it was very, very fruitful, I think. It went well."

A colleague noted that one of the things they appreciated about collaborating with faculty from Midwest Christian and other partners in the U.S. was,

> "And then that kind of warmness that they bring. They're friendly, open-minded. They tell you if you are doing something that it's "thumbs up" or encourage you to do it better if you're not doing it better. The working relationship is somehow good so it helps you to like-wanting to do more. If the relationship is not good, one will not want to go for a second time."

When the word relationship was used in interviews with participants in North America, it was more likely to be referring to relationships between programs or institutions than between specific individuals, although interpersonal relationships were hinted at. For example, in this section from an interview with an administrator at Midwest University,

> "So [Midwest University] prides itself on, you know, on having all robust partnerships in this spread context. And if you're talking about Africa especially, it's a very longstanding relationship with African institutions, and the faculty members get one—not just interested in those—you know, in those contexts-- but also, from they've served with Peace Corps. They have this, kind of, deep and broad understanding of the context and some did their PhD projects in those areas, they have very good partners there, and it's only natural that they wish to continue that kind of collaboration, and to formalize it."

While this section is examining student motivations, it is worth noting here that an administrator from Midwest University mentioned friendship, but in the context of a collaboration with a European institution, not the West African institution, saying,

> "There was a student [from European nation] here at [Midwest University] who was phenomenal. My daughter went on to work in [European nation]. For a period of time she worked for the health ministry and this woman from [Midwest

University] became, is one of our great friends. My daughter even… you know there's all these ways in which these things, there is a personal and professional, you got to watch the boundaries a bit but not so much. Going out for coffee not too risky. Pay her on the [Midwest University] payroll would not be good. Which we did not do. But still at the heart of all this is a relationship"

The one exception to this trend was a student at Midwest University who identified as "half black, half white. So I've always really wanted to go to Africa. I've always had an interest in the history and the culture." This student noted that, "I still talk to people that are in [West African nation], friends that I made there and yeah just really, it changed my way of thinking."

Sometimes related to this more personal development, and certainly related to the development of cultural competency, a final theme in student motivations was professional development. Sometimes this was specifically related to social work, and at other points, particularly in some of the West African interviews as will be discussed, it was more abstractly related to one's professional success, having a stable career. First, an examination of how the desire to be a better social worker motivated students to participate in international collaborations in social work education.

In the following passage of dialog with a former student at West African Christian, several of the themes discussed above are linked into a broader theme of professional and personal development:

Interviewer

And what would you say motivates you to be involved with this sort of a collaboration?

Participant

First of all, many opportunity.

Interviewer

That's the most important one for you?

Participant

Most important, yeah, for me. Many opportunity because being in such a collaboration, it opens room for learning.

Interviewer

What kind of learning?

Participant

Development as a whole, developing you as a person.

Interviewer

Is that sort of learning you feel like you wouldn't be able to get just domestically?

Participant

I think it's difficult that way. Because, first of all, I have planned to become a social worker, and then without this collaboration……I wouldn't have. I think that. I would have had another education, not social work.

As a reminder, the collaboration between Midwest Christian and West African Christian included extensive work on curriculum development, moving an associate's degree program to a full baccalaureate program. This seems to be what the participant is discussing here, that without international collaboration, they would not have been able to obtain a four-year social work degree at all.

Opening the door to professional education was a common theme for participants at West African Christian. Another student reflected on the path they had taken to social work:

> "It's like I wanted to do social work as the professional goals. It took me a long time from high school to go to college. Right after high school, I went to work on railroad. People always asked me 'how did you make that transition from railroad to social work?' Everyone asks me that. But for me, I have always liked being with people. In Africa, we have extended relatives and I grew up in a place we had a lot children in a home. My father had people home and for me personally it should bring young boy from outside to even come and live in home. I just went on a railroad by mistake because I didn't have anything to do. But I liked the job there too. I think I liked being with people more than being alone. After the war and the railroad…. [Interruption from external noise]… after the war, there was nothing like railroad, there was no job, no railroad. So I guess I decided to go into another field. In fact, during the war I was in [other West African nation], I tried to do social work in [other West African nation]…. I didn't have money to do the course. So when I came back to [West African nation], I still decided to do it because I saw the kind of work the social worker was doing. They helping people out all the time. There was a group called 'CAUSE Canada' and they were always helping people out; help people to gain some skills. I enjoy what they were doing. So when I came back, I wanted to go to college. I decided that I would do social work."

On a similar note, another classmate at West African Christian noted that,

> "Initially, when I came to [West African Christian], as a student, my whole perception was not social work. Yeah, I was thinking of nursing. And then based on my past experiences and the things that I have did in the past before coming, I

> was encouraged to try the social work program and see and the social work program has changed my life completely. Besides just learning, the effect of me, my own life, personally. Yeah, some behaviors, I had to change [unclear] of my own behaviors before talking to other people about their behaviors . . . so yeah, it affected me positive – yes, has affected my own behavior and my working relationship [unclear] and also as advanced my knowledge, especially when it comes to social work."

So for many of the students at West African Christian, social work collaborations around curriculum development and support had quite literally opened the door to the social work profession. They readily attributed their professional identity to involvement in international collaborative activities. While this outcome is obviously quite situational, it is not one that is possible domestically. Social work here is a well-defined profession, and while it has its roots in international collaboration, very few students in the United States would attribute their professional identity as a social worker to something like Jane Addams' visit to Toynbee Hall in England in the way that the students at West African Christian immediately connected their professional identity with collaboration.

Rather than developing professional identity wholesale, international collaboration for students from the Midwest institutions was more often involved in honing or narrowing professional identity. As one student from Midwest University said, "Initially, upon graduation I want to go into AmeriCorps but I was also thinking about Peace Corps so I was really considering international social work as my focus. So that really led the way for me." For this student, motivation for participation in international collaboration was a way of determining

whether a specific specialty within the profession was a good fit, as opposed to social work as a whole.

Another area of divergence concerned the role of professional social work education, specifically teaching. Almost everyone agreed that it could be used, as has already been discussed, for the development of cultural competency. However, for students at Midwest Christian, many of whom who had not been involved in student exchanges, they also saw international collaboration as a way to improve teaching, to make it more "real." Students at Midwest University mentioned the way it helped understand policy differences, what Healy (2003) would call comparative policy analysis. It should be note that some of these statements about professional development blur the already blurry line between motivations and outcomes, participants frequently switched between the two. On the other side of these collaborations, the view of teaching was that it was also seen as a way to improve teaching, but students often were indicating a dearth of quality educational materials or a perceived disparity between the quality of education they were receiving from their home institution and that available through international collaboration. It should also be noted here that social work scholars in Africa have noted the tendency of peers to privilege Western theories and pedagogies over indigenous ones, sometimes referring to it as a form of self-domination (Dominelli, 2004; Rankopo & Osei-Hwedie, 2011). Given that this wades into controversial waters, the statements included below are intended to accurately present student opinions, not necessarily endorse them.

At Midwest Christian, I asked the following question as a follow up to something a student had said, "So you've had limited interaction. It sounds like it's coming to some classes for you. What would you say the outcomes of that content have been for you? You got these professors involved with this collaboration, how does that impact to you as students?" Several

students reflected on a documentary that they had been showed in a human behavior and the social environment class, about a civil war in [West African nation].

> "It makes not so distant. You can watch documentaries… or I don't know if this is a documentary or not, but you can watch things and be separate from it or passive. And when you know that we have people in our school, especially our professors involved, actively involved, personally involved, you watch it through a different lens. You see it more as it's relevant and not so far away."

Another student added that:

> "Kind of like that. [Professor] said that she knew the main person speaking in there, personally. [Professor]'s like 'I have talked to her few times.' And that made it real. Now it's like 'wow, you know her and this is true.'"

A student at Midwest University, who had been involved in one-way trip, noted that, "I liked the fact that I was being forced to get out of my comfort zone and experience things the way that other people around the world experience them every day." The same student added later that,

> "So the more the school of social work can get students more excited about that prospect by offering opportunities to study abroad more likely that the students who might not otherwise think about or consider something outside of their own understanding of social work just in the United States. They might not look at it. You know without that real world experience to get them excited about that. Different policy ideas and international perspectives."

While it is hard to imagine that students would assert that without interaction with other nations the issues going on there are not "real," it was clear in responses that international collaboration

helped this cognitive knowledge feel or seem more viscerally "real" or authentic in ways that students found helpful, as illustrated in the following quote:

> "It wasn't even academics wise of like what policy did you learn and what do you think should be better about this. It wasn't even that. It was more of just so much more out there in the world than what your little bubble is. You know it was very eye opening. I don't even want to say it was a culture shock because it definitely was but it wasn't in the sense of freaking me out and I wanted to leave. It kind of affected me differently. It taught me a lot of different lessons I guess and then also to just working with a nonprofit and being with the kids. I mean they were in serious, very impoverished areas. Not the same by any means that we don't have poverty here in the states but Lord have mercy they really have it."

As mentioned above, in addition to this element of "realness," students in North America talked about what we might term comparative policy analysis. This is captured most clearly in the following quote:

> "So my personal motivation was because I wanted to experience social work outside of the United States. And I also wanted to have my own experiences outside of the United States especially within a country like [West African nation] which is completely different than the United States, but I guess the most important thing was for me was to try to understand how the services are different in other countries than they are in the United States or if they are the same."

So for students at the North American partners, international collaboration enriched the teaching experience, it made both conceptual material and policies and places more "real."

On the other side of collaborations, it is difficult to ignore the way students talk about wanting to participate in international collaborations, whether travelling abroad or hosting visiting faculty and students, in order to improve the quality of their education at more practical levels: better books, more access to journals, better teaching, etc. One student at West African Christian said, "First of all, most of the books in [West African nation] are ancient books, books years back……Yeah, but this collaborative effort brought – in fact, created opportunity for [West African Christian] students to read recent books." Another student at West African Christian noted that,

> "So I think the collaboration has helped [West African Christian] to build up our standard. And improve upon her curriculum because to what we have some of the courses are in our context but then the curriculum has helped [West African Christian] to prepare students for both international and national level when it comes to working."

A student at West African University discussed having access while abroad to materials and resources unavailable at home:

> "Some libraries were hard-pressed in terms of getting relevant books and other stuff. So, as rest of the students, I felt it was a good opportunity to partner and to go and have access to huge annals and international organizations, the [Canadian University] signed onto. And also to learn more about – there are some books that are not current but are not here in [West African nation]. And in our certain program you have the opportunity to even meet the authors of the books and you feel excited."

Students at both West African institutions discussed higher standards and improved teaching when involved in international collaborations. A former student at West African Christian, now

a faculty member, reflected on having access to curriculum designed in the United States, emphasis original,

> "And I think because you are from [Midwest Christian]… they have the curriculum. Let me say *the right one*. Yeah because it was approved from the west and now that's what you are used to teaching here. So it helped in a way that I'm able to use it. It's not like you're using something on your own."

When asked "So what has been good about it?" they replied, "The lesson is so clear… In a way that is easy for students to understand and apply. Unlike other courses where teachers could just come like a part-time professor would come and bring his course syllabus." Indeed, access to lessons, curriculum, and books from international sources was a major recruiting tool for West African Christian, as will be discussed more later. As an example, the same former student noted that,

> "Yes, most of the books we do have, they're up to standards. So the students can go in the library and do research and all of these books have been given to [West African Christian]. Most of them is on the collaboration. Because I can imagine [West African Christian] would have gone out there to purchase a book… that would cost a whole lot. And imagine getting books for every student to have. Other universities don't give books. You register and you find your own resource materials out there to do your work. So with this collaboration even getting the books, getting the instructors, getting students to have like come and sit with [West African Christian] students, that's one thing that I really admire because students from [other Midwest Christian] will come and sit with [West African Christian] students in class and I've observed that because our students are well trained by good staff, good instructors, they manage to be on par with the students from

> [North America] or from the other colleges. And students have said, having to review the work [unclear] but they say that the teachers that come they do make the lesson very clear and easy for them. That's why most time they score higher grades on like other courses. So I don't want to say if we tend to like, suffer them or pressure them a whole lot, but they say that your learning environment has been made comfortable. So most students hear about it and say we are going to [West African Christian] because [West African Christian] will always send instructors or they have good instructors to work along with them and they have good resource materials that we can use to make learning easier."

Similar statements were made by students at West African University. Without any prompting, the previous questions had been "What do you know about how those collaborations began? What's your sense of how they start?" and "Any other insights?" one student at West African University stated that, "I, uh, I'm of the opinion that, uh, popular consensus about the profession of social work as a discipline also comes to play… we appreciate that the social work profession and education is low in [West African nation] and other African countries and…" I interrupted to clarify that the student had in fact said "low," and the student went on to elaborate that,

> "And as such it needs to grow, and our bid to make things grow we need to learn from the experienced institutions in those countries where they, uh, the discipline or the course started, we talk about the United States and then U.K. and others and so these exchange programs helps give students an opportunity to learn different things, how things were done, that ensured the growth in those countries. I'm sure that's one of the things that inspired, I'm sure that's from different schools to come together, we have the internationalization of, uh, schools of social work, where they meet annually in different parts of the world to talk about the way forward for the profession and they program as a

whole and so I'm sure these things help in people and generally in collaboration and exchange programs that we're talking about."

This exchange was part of a focus group, and this student's statements were immediately seconded by another participant,

> "You know, there's this, there's a general perception that lecturers who are trained outside, I mean, I know first of all we do give them a lot of respect and then, uh, secondly, so we, we perceive them to be of a higher, of having higher intellectual ability as compared to those who are exclusively trained in our setting. So perhaps, I want to believe that... well our professors or administrators would have thought of that and thought of giving all their, I mean, giving their system the benefit to have that interaction, you know, so even one of us are able to interact people from different background. Then we'll also be open, open to new ideas and you know we'll be sensitive and perhaps will develop varied teaching skills or some kind of competence or... I want to think that perhaps that was one of the things that guided them to think about, you know, or to initiate those kind of collaborations or, I think that could be a reason, yeah."

In an independent interview with another student at West African University, when asked, "What motivates that interest for you?" (being involved in collaborative activities) the student responded that,

> "You know, It's when I look at basically the lecturers who are on campus, who have been able to go for those [unclear] program or who have had the opportunity to engage in those collaborative exercise. You can see when they come, their level of thinking, how they teach, and even the example that they are able to give is.. different from those who have been or who have schooled or who have taught throughout in [West African nation]. You

could see, there is a difference. And notwithstanding, when we look at a student who go and come back, they are normally our mates but we can see a slight difference between how they write, how they read, their commitment to activities, and how they are able to respond to issues. You realize that there is difference between those people and us."

Some of these statements about the quality of teaching available inside West Africa and abroad tied into one of the most extreme divergences in motivations between the two continents involved collaboration, what some students at West African University referred to as "bogga." However, in many ways, this is seen as an outcome of involvement, and will thus be discussed in that section.

Faculty

Faculty motivations for participation in international collaborations in social work education had some similarities with students, particularly around improving the quality of their own pedagogy, but also diverged in several ways. While student motivations were often tied to themselves and their future careers, faculty were, understandably, much more likely to adopt a more institutional perspective and voice. This expressed itself both in the substance of statements and in the way faculty members made those statements. For example, in this statement from a faculty member at Midwest Christian, the speaker immediately adopts the plural "we" despite having been asked the question, "What motivates you personally to be involved with this?"

"We've always had an international bent here and I started one of the first whole courses here in international social work so we thought it would lend good experience and research."

A few moments later the faculty member reflected, this time in a more personal voice, on benefits to teaching,

> "Well, it helped me a lot when I taught [the international social work class] – I don't teach it anymore because we had to reassign . . . we developed a new capstone class and we had to move some things around but it immediately helped me in the class to understand African society and the international - You know, it widened my heart, it helped me to collaborate."

This sentiment was echoed by faculty on the other side of that partnership, at West African Christian, one of whom said,

> "Over the time I've worked with instructors from [Midwest Christian] in teaching with especially with the community development class. Yeah and it has helped me over the time to be able to now teach in their absence."

Faculty members also appreciated the chance to engage in comparative work, and one faculty member at Midwest University echoed the sentiment that students had at Midwest Christian, that participation in international collaboration is partly motivated by the desire to make something more "real" or "authentic."

> "Yeah I was just teaching the history class again this semester and we were looking at how many at the turn of the century how many of social work's leaders had an overseas experience. Jane Addams goes to London. Ellen Starr is with her. Edith Abbott went to Zurich. Florence Kelley's in Germany. And they all went to European countries but at that point those were the countries that had social security and unemployment insurance. Which again leads me to think you need to go to these countries that are doing certain things well. But my guess is that even places like [West African nation] and [West

> African nation] are doing certain things well. It's just being attuned to them. So I think that there's some, a comparative policy problem solving process is huge. I think the problems are not all that different sometimes. To find ways to do that. I was in Vietnam two years ago and visiting an orphanage. These are the classic issues. Who is going to care for these kids and what's good care. So no I think the comparisons are wonderful. They stimulate a certain kind of creativity and critical thinking which is essential. Can you do that by watching movies? Sure. Can you I mean there's so many ways again that we're exposed to different cultures and people. Still not the same as even a brief immersion in another place I don't think."

So faculty members in some ways straddled the line between a more personal voice and a more institutional voice. The opposite end of the student perspective was administrators, who often had very different sets of motivations, much more similar to what individuals at multiple levels imagined their own institution's motivations to be. So the section below combines a look at institutional motivations from the perspective of administrators and from those around them.

Institutional Motivations

As noted in the literature review, research on question of why institutions pursue international collaborations within the broader higher education literature suggests that money is a primary motivation for institutional collaboration: money from grants, fees for programs, and tuition from international students (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Chan, 2004; Childress, 2009). This study found similar results for social work institutions specifically. For the purposes of this study, issues of finances were combined with other factors into a broader theme of "institutional development." Consistent with theories of collaborative advantage, many responses indicated that in one way or another, international collaborations were an attempt by the institution to

strengthen itself, and to compete with other peer institutions at home and abroad. Following a consideration of institutional development, this section will also examine other themes within institutional motivations, including those that fit with the mission of the social work profession, such as social justice, cultural competency, or service, as well as themes of sharing knowledge in a globalized world. Themes related to faith are considered in a separate section below, as faith introduces an entirely different vocabulary.

Institutional development

At a basic level, some participants suggested that the very existence of the institution was tied to international collaboration, that the motivation was therefore existential. One administrator at West African Christian put it this way,

> "I think [West African Christian], they have their own goal. They had their own objectives, and then they felt that, meeting those goals and objectives, it did not work alone, rather to – extended out to the international level. To have a social work program running at a local level without involvement of international, I think it would have been difficult for them."

A student at West African Christian felt similarly that,

> "For any institution to be able to grow . . . to be able to develop their capacity needed in order to deliver . . . obviously no man is an island and no institution also is an island because any institution that wants to be an island, obviously you would not be able to grow and you would not be able to develop the capacities that you need in order to be able to really impact knowledge that those who will be able to receive that knowledge will have an impact on society. So, it's a very good thing that [West African Christian] did in order to seek international

> collaborations and partnership, in order to get the type of help or support that she needs in order to be able to help [West Africans] that will be of a help to their country."

The core idea here, that no institution is an island, was expressed in several other interviews at West African Christian as well, although this was sometimes framed as a motivation specifically tied to the new nature of both the program and the relatively recent history of the broader social work profession in the context. If no institution is an island, it is particularly dangerous for newer programs or institutions to be attempting to go it alone. A third participant at West African Christian, a student, stated that, "But what makes a social work standout is that it is a new professional in Liberia. Maybe after five to ten years, we will not need international collaboration." However, after the follow up question of "So when that happens, do you think there is no longer any need for international collaboration? Or is the need different?" they clarified that,

> "The thing is, international collaboration will not stop because new things, new ideas, new research are being done at all levels. Every night then there will be new thing coming out. These things, we will have transfer either from here there or from there here."

Still, it was clear from interviews that the motivations for newer programs were probably different than the motivations of more mature programs, or programs in more developed contexts.

In addition to attributing the development of the social work program at West African Christian to international collaboration, individuals at multiple levels there also placed significant hope for the further development of the program, particularly the development of

graduate level work, on collaborating internationally. Again, this is a phenomenon one does not see in social work education within the United States. In fact, the limited trajectory for social work education was seen as driving some people away from the social work profession altogether, lowering interest in the baccalaureate program.

> "No, so that's what I'm saying. Is it that we are looking a way that we can have an MSW program because now we notice in [West African nation] especially from... Now all of our students who have graduated with bachelor's degree are going into public health. From social work degree here, they're going to do public health. Some of them are going to do, um, management. Some of them are going… policy. That's not too bad I think. But I think the few that they want to further their education and they don't know where to go now because they're kind of caught in the web. There is no MSW program now in [West African nation]. So they're finding a way to just get out and not just have a BS degree but go further. So I don't know, it's like I think we might lost all of our social workers in time to come. We will do a whole lot bringing social work students up but… we will lost them eventually because, where you will work, your agency is not giving you social work… uh, scholarship to do social work. They give you to do political science, they give you to do engineering, they give you to do…So everybody trying to find out, they just think that social work is the first degree like when you want to do law. You must have a first degree. So we're like kind of lost with our students thinking how can we get them not sway away."

This response highlights that in environments were social work is still developing institutionally and societally, international collaborations become all the more important, as ways of establishing legitimacy and also creating opportunities for growth.

One of the themes related to institutional development that did cut across regions and types of schools was collaboration as a way of competing with other schools of social work. As a motivation for international collaboration, at least for the schools in West Africa, this competitive motivation was often specifically tied to ideas about legitimacy or status. This was true of bringing students and teachers to West Africa, but also of sending students out into the world. While West African Christian gained status and legitimacy by bringing in curriculum, faculty, and in some cases students, West African University gained status and legitimacy not only in these ways but also by sending students out to other institutions around the world. As an administrator at West African University said,

> "It's very important for us because it serves as an opportunity for our program to be known globally because once you are there, you send your students there, lectures there, then you get opportunity to be known globally."

Students at West African University were even clearer on this particular institutional motivation. In one of the independent interviews, a student remarked that,

> "I think, you know, there is increasing competition, among schools, and some schools even boast of the international students they have, in order to gain that reputation. So I think [West African University] is trying to build more collaboration in order to, uh, gain… recognition in the first place and also to globally compete with other institutions. [West African University] has tagged itself as a premier university in [West African nation], because it's the first

> university in [West African nation], and I think they want to maintain that status school, less competition locally, but also compete globally. So I think international collaborations come into, first of all give the recognition to the university."

The same student at West African University went on to say in a later portion of the interview that,

> "Basically, social work started as an academic, real academic discipline, here in the [West African University]. So there are, even though the staff, it's not that much. But we have everything to run a program and once you have everything, the structure's out there, I'm sure, other international institutions are also willing because they think everything is there, they just have to come in. And most of the social worker I see in [West African nation], those who have degree, are mostly trained here at the [West African University]. So even if they are in the field of work, those in the ministry of social welfare, they get a lot of visitors from abroad and also link them to where they were trained, so that kind of thing, so I think [West African University] has gained that monopoly and using it to run it."

For this student, international collaboration provided a way for West African University to maintain its near monopoly on social work education in its context, both through its own formal partnerships and the informal social networks created by alumni in social work positions in the workforce.

The status and legitimacy that West African University obtained through international collaboration was a remarkably consistent theme in the focus group with students, but also in the two separate and independent interviews. The quotes above come from one of the independent

interviews, the student in the other independent interview was also very clear on this theme. When asked, "What's your understanding of what motivates [West African University], school of social work or social work department to be involved in international collaborative activities?" the student's initial response was "The first one I would love to talk about has to with fame." The student went on to elaborate later in the interview that:

> "I would finally want to say is that, the collaboration is good and it's helping us grow. Yeah, it's helping us a lot. So quite recently, we're at a time in Africa, [West African University], and I think that internationally we are gaining ground. Yes, we are gaining ground because of the collaboration that exists between our university and other universities. Because the more the collaboration, the more the trust, the more the the, the upliftment, and the more fame that such institution is able to receive. We just hope that it doesn't end there. It keeps going on, so that we can also come there to study more and more. So we can develop more and more. So we can develop our country, [West African nation], and Africa.

Here the desire for fame, for status and legitimacy, is tied to a broader and perhaps more altruistic motivation to develop the nation and the continent. This was also a theme that occurred in interviews at West African Christian, that an improvement in social work education, in institutional development, helped position the profession to move the entire nation forward in important ways.

In the focus group with students at West African University, the theme of status was also explored, and there were hints of a more nakedly utilitarian and less altruistic perspective on achieving status through international collaboration. One of the participants put it this way:

> "I think this international collaboration also paints a positive image, you know, yeah, a positive image of the profession cause, well, generally what we have been saying is that where social work is hardly respected or recognized in that part of the world, but then when people get to know that social work is a dot elsewhere and then we over here are trying to work in the directly with those people out there, they end up, you know, having that positive, that, you know, according us that status and knowing that, okay even if today social work is at a on the floor it will definitely, it will soon became a famous profession, right, and so, it gives the profession some kind of hope in our parts of the, in our parts of the world, because of that, this international collaboration."

This statement was immediately expanded on by a second participant, who added, emphasis in the original:

> "And I think that international collaboration also gives, um, social work education some credibility, yeah and so the fact that you're able to collaborate *no matter how terrible that university is*, once it's out of the shores of [West African nation], people believe that it's good in a way. Whatever we like it or not, that is the truth, so [all participants laugh] yes, so I think it gives the practice some kind of credibility, it gives the social work department some kind of credibility for the fact that we're able to link up to universities outside of your own environment."

In sum, for participants at all levels in the two West African schools, international collaboration was often seen as a way to develop an institutions status, legitimacy, or fame. This status was important for the institutions themselves, but also for students as they entered the workforce, and indeed for the recognition of the social work profession as a whole in contexts where it was more

recently introduced. That said, the two Midwest institutions also saw participation in international collaborations as a way of developing their own institutions, in terms of institutional identity, and in terms of positioning themselves to compete with peer institutions.

In the context of a developing profession of social work in West Africa, international collaboration was seen as a way for institutions to develop and increase their profile. At the Midwest institutions, motivation for participation was often linked, at least initially, not to benefits it might confer on the institution, but to a fit with missional or institutional identity. Institutions collaborate not to improve who they are but because of who they are. This took on particularly religious language at Midwest Christian, but the general impulse was in many ways the same at both schools.

In discussing why Midwest Christian might be motivated to pursue international collaborations, an administrator there said that, "We tend to be more of a praxis oriented institution: that's how we teach." The motivation was tied into the identity of the institution. Later on in the interview, having layered some missional language onto the collaboration (the administrator had personally served in a mission field for many years), the administrator said,

> "It is very much to put your practice where your faith is. It was… a motto of this institution is ora et labora, so Latin for pray and work. I say that is the spirit of this institution and of our students. To develop a rich faith, but that faith is meaningless without applying it directly to the needs of others and it really inspires us to do what we do."

Some of the faith elements in this response will be explored in a separate section, but this framing again highlights the way that international collaborations flow out from a sense of who the institution is.

This was also the case at Midwest University. At the very beginning of the interview with one of the administrators at Midwest University, when asked, "How would you describe your role in the collaboration that Prof. [Name] was developing with [West African University]?", the participant stated that, "There is a really global thing which is a context. Then there things that are more specific. Just talk. So the global thing is the school had to figure out to be more engaged internationally. Partly because that fits with the mission at [Midwest University]." While this may sound like a more altruistic motivation than concerns about status or fame, this was in many ways a multi-layered and complicated motivation, and certainly also had some utilitarian motivations. Later in the same interview, when asked about where this "felt need" to engage in international collaborations was coming from, the administrator said,

> "So part of it was just, being very frank. Political. You got to align the school with the mission of the university. So if [Midwest University] is big time global, then the school of social work better be globally active too or else we are left out and we're not part of what is going on. So part of it is political. I need to be able to talk with my colleagues, make a case to administrators. Get support for the school. Why? Because we have aligned with the mission of the university. So there is that political piece."

To be clear, the same administrator was also deeply committed to international collaboration from the standpoint of its benefits to the profession of social work, as will be discussed in the next section, but at an institutional level, competition for funding and fit with the mission of a large university also played a significant role in motivations for international collaboration.

In an interview with a second administrator at Midwest University, this one housed in the larger university's international office rather than within the school of social work specifically, institutional fit was also a heavy theme. This administrator said that,

> "There's a, obviously there are advantages to partnering with these issues abroad, you could say it's part of the... of the ethos, that underpins who this place is, who we are as an institution. So [Midwest University] prides itself on, you know, on having all these robust partnerships in disparate contexts. And if you're talking about Africa especially, it's a very longstanding relationship with African institutions."

In this passage we also see hints of a similar concern about status or fame, with the idea that Midwest University prides itself on its partnerships, but this is tied more explicitly into the idea that international collaborations are a natural product of the identity and mission of an institution.

Social work specific motivations

Alongside more generalized institutional motivations for pursuing international collaboration were motivations tied directly to social work themes. There was a sense from all four schools that international collaborations were particularly important for schools of social work to pursue. This sentiment was expressed in more formal ways, such as statements about the educational policy and accreditation standards of bodies like CSWE, but also in ways that appealed directly to the core of social work as a helping profession committed to social justice and the empowerment and liberation of oppressed populations. For example, after having been

asked “What’s your understanding of what motivates [West African Christian] as an institution to do this?” one participant answered:

> “Wow. My understanding is, I saw it, besides just understanding it, that there was a need for social services. Because after the war, we saw a lot of people have lot of social issues with drugs, teenage pregnancy, aging population, a lot of social issues that needed to be addressed because there was no social work school at the time so it was necessary that [West African Christian] established an institution. And we shall have a great impact on our society, basically because most of the institutions have gone to [West African Christian] for students, social work students that have graduated from here.”

Students on the opposite side of that collaboration, at Midwest Christian, agreed that international collaborations made particular sense for social work, with its emphasis on cultural competence and service. It is worth noting that this particular quote also includes elements of institutional identity and competition discuss above:

> “People who are looking at that social work program, or just [Midwest Christian] in general, seeing them as a culturally aware school, involved in many different cultures around the world. But also, they see the value in education through cross-cultural experience. We can benefit from it. The people in [West African nation] can benefit.”

An administrator at Midwest University was clear about the role played by bodies like CSWE:

> “I think that over the last decade, two decades, CSWE has been much more visible and vocal and active in promoting global work and that is a good thing. Part of that is responsible for the fact that so many schools are doing global things

and brag about them. It's partly responsive to its membership and capitalizing on that. But it also is a good synergy. They pick on it and provide support and forums as well."

Again, there is a sense that this is partially driven by a sort of self-interest, "so many schools are doing global things and brag about them," but also driven by a really strong fit with the identity of the social work profession. For one professor at Midwest Christian, this particular motivation for participation in international collaborations took on elements of a missionary focus,

> "I think we have to see outside of ourselves. And to achieve true acceptance, I think we have to . . . and to have true caring, we have to see the levels of poverty and oppression, populations at risk that other countries go through. And it does make you appreciate your own situation. But it . . . international social work is . . . which you can look at both micro, mezzo, or macro, from policies to laws and neighborhoods and communities. And a lot of countries do not have social work. I go to the Dominican Republic every other year, I take students, and you know, they're crying for social work but their government has no money or it's corrupt or whatever, and so you have countries without social welfare systems where, if we can help in that situation, a country that has no social safety net struggles a lot with its people and social insurance, social safety net, caring for the elderly, the sick . . . those are things that . . . if anything that we can do to help that, it feels like that's part of the social work mission, not just to stay in a fairly wealthy country like we have here in the U.S."

A student at Midwest University also saw international collaboration as the direction for social work in the future, and the fit between the two as a core motivation for pursuing collaborative activities:

> "I think the school of social work especially has a stake in it because that seems to be the direction that social work is going is international and I think that in my personal experience with other social work students it doesn't tend to be the focus. So the more the school of social work can get students more excited about that prospect by offering opportunities to study abroad more likely that the students who might not otherwise think about or consider something outside of their own understanding of social work just in the United States. They might not look at it. You know without that real world experience to get them excited about that."

Sharing knowledge in a globalized world

Alongside discussions of how social work as a profession was an ideal fit for international collaborations were more generalized themes about sharing knowledge in an increasingly globalized world. Institutions, and to a certain extent individuals, were seen as being motivated by the desire to share and learn from one another in a globalized context. In response to the question "What's your understanding of what motivates [West African University], or even the school of social work here at [West African University], to be involved in those sorts of international collaborations?" an administrator in the school of social work replied, "In my opinion it has to do with the sharing knowledge." When asked to clarify, they explained that,

> "Knowledge in terms of different things that have been done different places. Of course we have the core social work principles that we all abide by, but then you realize that, depending on where you find yourself, you're adapted to that situation, so different things happen at different places though we have the same theories and the principles and depending on the areas, so you learn new things from different people and now that we would all realize that we live in a global village, we also want to have some ideas in terms of international social work practice…"

This was a view, perhaps understandably, shared by students in the social work program at West African University. Using very similar language, one said that,

> "for the purpose of – you know, we are in a global village and definitely we do social work here so every university aims to look at the standards abroad or compare even within Africa, to know the programs that are around them, running, and also, if they are to engage in an international collaboration, how students who go on that program or assistant program will bring some diversity or to include certain things that are lacking locally. So basically it is to inform how courses are run, the nature of instructions in the classrooms, and also how social work is being done here, internationally and also locally in the department."

In terms of motivating international collaborations, it was important to students at West African University that this sharing of knowledge be two-way, and not simply an importing of knowledge from North America. As one student put it,

> "First of all, I would love to talk about… contribution. When it comes to the developed world, they always want in one way or the other, support the

> developing world. I think that is one avenue to which they can support the developing countries. And also, when they come, they also learn something. Especially there are some councils here that might not be run in the Western world. So when they come, they are able to also get new ideas, new collaborations, new ideas and new concepts that they can also introduce into the academic studies. And they can be able to understand more about Africans. Because some come, they talk, they come and they walk through places that are tourist centers just to go and have a feel of what is really happening in there. Some can go to the waterfalls, some go to [specific waterfall], some even go to the [other tourist destination], some also goes to the zoos… there are so many places, and so many tourist centers here. By when they come, they also learn a lot from we the Africans, the [West African nation] as a whole."

This theme of sharing knowledge in a globalized world was consistent across partners in the collaborations. Compare, for instance, this statement from a student at Midwest University,

> "I really think that [Midwest University] has the understanding that we have to work globally and they are very mindful of global competency to say the least. The fact that they are even willing to have students go out of the country—[Midwest University] does a lot of the things in the country and [Midwest city] in general which is amazing but I also think that they really do believe that you have to—I mean we all are wanting it though. Globalization, you know everyone effects everyone else and we need to learn about it."

In comparison with this statement from a student at West African University:

> "Yes, I think we are talking about the world becoming a global village. So social work too has become a global profession, if I may say so, almost every country has social work as a profession or a welfare system that has members in a country so I think that, it's just prudent for the social work department to also begin to get, you know, ideas from other countries related to social work and social work training, education, and practice."

An understanding of a new, globalized reality, and the nature of a global profession, was strong motivator for institutions to pursue international collaborations in social work education. As a faculty member at Midwest Christian said,

> "The whole human rights education that we try to teach students, the Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, that we're – your self is not just the area around you, you truly are a person in the environment and that environment is global. We're in a transcontinental, transglobal world now and we have to embrace it."

Outcomes

Having examined a number of motivations at multiple levels for pursuing international collaborations, the next sections examine what sort of outcomes participants associate with such collaborations. As previously mentioned, motivations and imagined outcomes are obviously not mutually exclusive, there is a degree of natural overlap between what an experience tends to accomplish and why someone might pursue it. Nevertheless, there were variations in how participants framed motivations as opposed to outcomes that are worth exploring in a separate section here.

Students

In somewhat parallel structure to the section on motivations, this section begins with an examination of the benefits or outcomes for students who either directly participated in international collaborations via visits or exchanges, or who have been exposed to teaching and content influenced by participation in international collaborations. Before looking at some of the more interesting and unique results here, a brief examination of some of the results that would have been expected or predicted by the existing literature. The literature has discussed a variety of possible outcomes, perhaps most extensively those related to interpersonal growth (Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, & McMillen, 2009; Mapp, 2013; Williams; 2005) increased cultural competency (Fairchild, Pillai, & Noble, 2006; Gray & Allegritti, 2002; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Nimmagadda & Cowger, 1999; Razack, 2002), a sense of global citizenship (Corbin, 2013; Forsey, Broomhall, & Davis, 2012; Gacel-Ávila, 2005; Rotabi et al., 2006; Woolf, 2010) and national identity (Dolby, 2007), and challenging student's preconceptions and a variety of other psychological constructs like a sense of self or personal identity (Heron, 2005; McLeod & Wainwright, 2009).

Many of the students interviewed touched on these outcomes, across all four institutions. However, there was a higher concentration of responses along these lines in interviews at the two Midwest institutions. Many of the discussions of cultural competence have already been touched on in quotations above, as well as a sense of a more globalized world. For some, this was a realization that not only social work but the social problems facing the world are similar and in some ways universal. For example, a student at Midwest University said that,

> "Gosh, well, I guess, for me I think of things in very big picture, very global-esque type way, but everything is related, you know. Everything is connected,

everything is similar, so but when you go internationally and especially when you go to developing countries it's very in your face of how the system isn't working. And so what you learn there you can also hopefully try to apply it back at home even though here in the States and thankfully this has been a little bit more, I mean it is more helpful and it is in place but it still obviously has its flaws. So I guess it just kind of like helps you realize that everyone is the same and they're all kind of going through the same struggles but just on totally different levels, you know what I mean?... it made you realize the corruption that was going on, which was very frustrating, but then… it kind of all just boils down to the fact that politics and money is the answer. I hate that that's the reality of it, but it's kind of what I got from it. And that's how it is everywhere in the world. Which is so frustrating. But, yeah, so that's kind of what I got from it. I don't know."

A student at West African University echoed this sentiment from the other side of the collaboration:

"The first one is… in [West African nation], we lack institutions that support the vulnerable in society. So let's talk about [aged?], talk about persons with mental disabilities, talk about business with all forms of vulnerability, where we lack institutions that assist them. But when you go to the outside of the world to collaboration, [unclear] institutions, so we have homes for the elderly that you can go and study more about how to care for the elderly. We have homes, better ones, for orphans that you can go and learn how to deal with peasants who are orphans. We have people who have mental illnesses that are out there, then we have institution for them psychologists are there, social workers are there, medical

workers are there. So that is a collaborative effort. In order to assist these people who are vulnerable. So when you travel, travel out there, you are able to have a feel of all these things. So when you come back, you can introduce all these concepts into our system. I think that as a social worker in education, this collaborative effort, it helps us a lot. It impact on our education very much."

Students clearly experienced a sense of a broader world, although perhaps not the extent of a "global citizenship." Certainly, as mentioned in the previous section on motivations, one outcome was a great sense of the reality of the larger world and the issues it faces. Reflecting on reading the content of evaluations completed by students who had spent time abroad, an administrator at Midwest University said that,

> "It was pretty much, I don't remember word for word, but pretty much across the board my eyes opened understanding culture in a new way. I think almost always an appreciation for the strengths of other countries. So I think to me this was essential to challenge American exceptionalism. Coming back impressed with the strengths of and the values of different communities. It didn't matter how poor, how stressed out, how remote."

As has been written about extensively in the literature, many students described intense interpersonal growth, life-changing experiences (Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, & McMillen, 2009; Mapp, 2013; Williams; 2005). As one student from Midwest University put it,

> "I feel like a broken record but the experience made, it shifted my paradigm like two-fold like and so I if I, if my mindset didn't change then I would still be kind of this cynical, not like I was cynical but I didn't even realize that I was being like judgmental, do you know what I'm saying? Like before I went there, so if I still

> hand that mindset I feel like I wouldn't be as helpful to others in the fields that I'm in because I would've had this like, not like predisposition but like a mindset of judgment that was already there without realizing it and that experience of being in [West African nation] just completely like shifted how I think, how I perceive things, it just makes you realize that the world is so much bigger than yourself and I feel like here, in the United States especially, I mean I'm about to use generalizations, just making that a precursor, but we are very individualistic, we're very self-centered and I don't mean like self-centered like, "Oh, I'm so pretty," it's just we think our way of life and we don't think about how other people perceive or what their opinions are and we don't get value and so to be on a totally different continent, it's not about you anymore, you know, it's about their culture, this is their life, this is their world. It's not about America, at all. And I think that that was what changed my mind."

While students at the West African institutions shared some of this sense of an expanding sense of self and the world, they were also some unique themes that occurred only in interviews with West African students. As was mentioned in the section on motivations, this included an emphasis on practical outcomes like access to improved books and other learning materials. It also included a personal parallel to the emphasis in the West African interviews on status or legitimacy.

In an interview with a student from West African University this personal dimension of fame, status, or legitimacy, was referred to using a local slang term, "bogge." The question asked was,

> "I guess one final question and then open it . . . Are there any particular characteristics that you associate with students like yourself who are interested in international collaborations? Is there something about you that's different than other students who say, "No, I'm not interested in that?"

The student replied:

> "I can bet you every student here in [West African nation] is interested [laughs]. They're interested because, first of all, because of the *pride* in traveling. Because the ones that travel, there is this word that's called, once you travel from [West African nation] and you come back and it's a status symbol, that is often associated in our local parlance we call that 'bogga.'"

The student went on to explain that,

> "So it became . . . it's that recognition that once you travel, you achieve a status. And people desire also to travel because they think once your CV [curriculum vitae] is enhanced, you get a good job. And people here in [West African nation] respect such gifts from abroad, so once you get that opportunity, it gives. And also there is this sense of, uh, this sense of how do I call it, accomplishment, because you think that once you travel, you are on the path of accomplishing, or actualizing your dreams of getting the best out of your education and basically you're also being taught by most lecturers who had the opportunity to be trained abroad. So once you also get the opportunity you feel you are also *complete*, in a sense."

Later in the interview, the same student linked this sense of accomplishment, of completeness, to familial expectations and hopes:

> "… another motivator would be also . . . family encouragement, uh, well, the families are happy. Once there is opportunity provided like this, if they have a sense of fulfillment, once their children are getting the opportunity to travel. So it pays . . . like I said, their resources pays a lot because they feel like they are not training skills to go with. So my brother currently is in Canada doing his doctoral fellowship, a doctoral program. He is in Saskatchewan. And he earlier went to Norway for his masters. And the kind of support that my family gave him and I also had opportunity, fulfilled, so that's family fulfillment. And *every family in [West African nation]*, if not all – basically dream of having their relatives back, go to abroad. Generate that pride in traveling. That's why there have been – I don't know if you've read about migration in Ghana – a lot of people day-in, day-out travel outside Ghana to gain that recognition. So there's family fulfilment, which I think families also motivate their wards to get opportunity. Study abroad."

While not every West African student articulated this concept as clearly and as thoroughly, it was remarkably consistent at both institutions in two separate nations. A former student at West African Christian who was now a member of the faculty, when asked, "How has it benefited you, or impacted your teaching, impacted your work that you do? I don't know," replied "Okay, first of all, right now – first of all, let me start with the family. It made me a very important person with family, just to have such an education." I responded "In your family?" to which the faculty member said, "In my family. Because I'm more of a provider."

Building on similar themes, another participant at West African Christian spoke about the way that even education obtained domestically, if it had an international collaboration, was seen as more worthwhile and more prestigious.

> "And they also give the institution prestige because, I think we are almost the second institution now, here in [West African nation], is high in tuition… Yeah, but yet it's still… because of the standard of [West African Christian] and our international partners, people are able to see that the money is much but it is worth. We're not just spending the money because we have. It's because we know they can get good quality education. I think mostly because the international partners have really, really stood by [West African Christian] all along to get their feet down."

Rather than being framed as an expense, as it often is in domestic conversations, part of the prestige or draw of studying abroad was that it might open the door to resources, sometimes quite directly. A student at West African University said that,

> "When you travel outside and you come back, there that kind of prestige that they give to you because you now have a feel of what is happening outside and that which is here. Another issue has to with the environment. What motivate them mostly is that we have heard a lot about the outside. So we just want to go and have a feel of that environment: to know what actually happening in there because we have seen them on the internet, on the television, but we don't know what actually happens there. People come and they give many stories about what is happening there. So these set us motivation: to go there and feel what is happening. Sometimes when you go there, in terms of finance, some comes with

> grant and some package, so you are able to save some small money, which you can bring it back to start some enterprises or even invest in for your future education."

In the interest of reflexivity, it should be noted that this was an entirely new concept to me as an interviewer, I followed up this statement with, "Have people that you know have done that? They've come back with extra scholarship money and been able to use that money to… can you tell me little more about that?" The student replied that,

> "Some even come and they're able to purchase their own laptops and phones. They can be able to purchase printers, which even they were in [West African nation], they couldn't have done that. Some can even come and rent their own apartment. Based on their little savings, they are able to establish some enterprises and this indeed helps them very much."

In sum, the nature of the outcomes, or at least the outcomes students chose to discuss, for participation in international collaborations were quite different in the West African interviews than the Midwest interviews. The outcomes for Midwest students tended to be more abstract, related to personal emotional growth or perhaps skill building within social work. While again certainly not mutually exclusive, the outcomes students in West Africa tended to discuss were more professional, and related to status, employment, and economic security.

Opportunities

Many of the opportunities for collaborating in social work education internationally have already been discussed in considerations of motivations for pursuing such collaborations and the outcomes they produce for students. This brief section thus focuses more specifically on institutional opportunities, the role that various participants saw for international collaboration in

the future work of their institution before moving into a larger section examining the challenges that stand in the way.

Several participants mentioned expanding current collaborations in a variety of ways. An administrator at Midwest Christian said, "I do think that in the future, opportunities for our own students to serve in that context for internships, for summer term, might be something that we would love to see happen." Other participants framed international collaborative activities as a way to potentially draw others to the school in the future, as has been discussed. A student at Midwest Christian, a predominantly white institution, said, "We can spread the word of [Midwest Christian] to like individuals and getting involved in coming here and joining more people, diversifying the college."

Several participants at West African institutions mentioned the opportunity of greater reciprocity in the future, something that will be discussed more in a separate section. As an example,

> "I think it'll come to a point when [West African Christian] will have to send some of the students outside. Like the way some of your students who come. And they will have to send some of the instructors outside to a social work institution or to further their education. And it will be equal collaboration with the partners on that side. Because it helps you to see some of your setting and their setting, how social work is and what you can do if you come back to come and help. And then also maybe I don't know but I think it'll come a point in time that [West African Christian] can also exchange. Because most students will love to have that experience. They would love to have it.

The note about staff development, or further professional education was echoed by some of this participant's colleagues at West African Christian as well.

Challenges

While it is fair to say that most of the discussions with participants about international collaborations were generally positive, it is also important to note that a number of challenges to collaborating were identified. In the coding stage, these challenges were loosely grouped into two categories, those which identified logistical challenges that prevented individuals and institutions from ever even getting off the ground or onto the ground internationally, the most prominent being a lack of funding, and those which complicated collaborations on the ground, the most prominent having to do with linguistic and/or cultural barriers. This section first examines some challenges participants identified that can stop collaboration from ever happening, or prematurely cut it off.

People

One potential barrier is institutional size and complexity. This challenge emerged implicitly from a discussion about the benefits of a smaller institutions with the administration at Midwest Christian, an institution with a student body under 400.

> "The size of [Midwest Christian], in so many ways, lends a lot of strength to how we approach new program development. One is because of the immediacy of people that we are available to each other. We have relationships to foster communication and give opportunity for a lot of spontaneous questions to be asked or feel the impossibilities to be offered. So that really helps the process to move along more quickly than it might in larger institution where so many things

> are only run through committee work and overlaying layers of authority or the decisions alike. So, we can expedite all of that. [Laughs]"

Given the way that institutional collaborations tend to form, through weak ties in social networks, an overly bureaucratic hierarchy can make it difficult to collaborate, perhaps particularly in West African settings. As an administrator in Midwest University's office of international programs said,

> "And if you're talking about Africa especially, it's a very longstanding relationship with African institutions, and the faculty members you get, who are not just interested in those — you know, in those contexts -- but also, who are from there, served with Peace Corps. They have this, kind of, deep and broad understanding of the contexts and some did their PhD projects in those areas, they have very good partners there, and it's only natural that they wish to continue that kind of collaboration, and to formalize it."

An overly bureaucratic system might inhibit such individuals from attempts to formalize their collaborations institutionally. Alongside the size of the institution, in the above passage there is the suggestion that certain faculty members, those with ties to the continent, are more likely to be pursuing collaborations there. This, then, is a question of human resources, in order to collaborate it is likely you'll need someone with connections, something an administrator at West African Christian echoed,

> "Well, one challenge is the human resource. Number one challenge. You *need* the right people with the right mind in order to give the message of social work. If you don't have that you can all the resources and never succeed. So the first major challenge, you won't have the human resource on board and that's why I, [Name

> of administrator], sent me to Ghana, to get a degree, higher degree to come initiate the program, which I did for [them], it's working very well. Even though I'm not here but the program's working in my absence. Human resource is very, very important."

This was an opinion shared by at least one of the administrators at Midwest University, who was clear that investing significant resources and attention to a collaboration was predicated on having a faculty "champion" who was willing to take on the responsibility of the collaboration:

> "Yeah so go wherever you want. We are going to encourage it and support it but for us to put in our resources. For me to use school money and faculty time, and plug this in class we're going to choose a few places. Again those had to be places that had a faculty member who was the champion."

Another unique challenge for Midwest institutions, particularly for collaborations with institutions in parts of the world like West Africa, is generating enough faculty and student demand to maintain a collaboration. An examination of the current and updated MOUs on Midwest University's website listed 46 existing agreements, only nine of which were in Africa, and one of which was in West Africa, and did not currently involved student exchange. While the demand from students in West Africa to come to the Midwest is extremely high, that enthusiasm is not always returned. As one Midwest University administrator explained, in a discussion of alternative collaborations in more travelled parts of the world:

> "Again not only is the cost low [on trips to places like Europe or Mexico] but often times these programs [programs to places like West Africa] don't run because there's not enough demand. Especially some of the more remote things or expensive or challenging places. We have no trouble getting thirty people to go to

Mexico but getting a good cohort to go to [Eastern European nation] and even [West African nation]. After the romance wears off a bit and faculty interests get more diverse, then it becomes more of a struggle."

Part of student demand is simply knowledge that a collaboration exists, or about the basics of that collaboration. As a student at Midwest Christian noted,

"We watched this movie in HBSE I . . . or was it II? I think it was II. I didn't even really understand it… I knew why we were watching it, I thought it was kind of informative, like this is what's going on in [West African nation]. I really didn't understand that we had a collaboration with anyone. Even coming here and having you talk about it, I am still like, "This is very new information."

Later in the focus group, the same participant interjected with the following question, "Is [West African nation] in like, the south end? Or where is it even located? In Africa?" to which I replied, "Yes."

Participant

So is it like south Africa?

Interviewer

No. [Laughs] West. West Africa. Here I will draw a really terrible… [Crowd laughs]. It's right there.

If students are unaware that their institution is involved in collaborations, or where those collaborating partners are, it will be more challenging to maintain that collaboration.

Student demand for study abroad experiences is often tied to student perceptions of the host nation, and participants at West African institutions involved in these collaborations are aware of this challenge, both the reality of it and the hyperbole. An administrator at West

African Christian remarked that, "you cannot guarantee their well-being in this country. And about getting sick. So that was what I was talking about." This perception of safety in contexts like West Africa, whether legitimate or not, was also discussed in an interview with an administrator at Midwest University, who said,

> "Exactly, and people kind of, okay, I'm going to be comfortable here and, but the same time there are other places that are much safer but people don't go there and, I mean, the guy was in the risk issue here, the risk and safety issue, he left. So during the Ebola crisis people call and say I want to go to South Africa, is it safe? And the guy would say, "Actually, Europe is closer to Liberia than South Africa is to Liberia" but the point is there's a perception issue, even on the part of parents, and parents will be saying, encourage their kids to go somewhere and not go elsewhere but also I think here we've not done a good job…"

This administrator clearly felt that more could be done to educate students and dispel common myths about West Africa. The social work administrator at Midwest University was also clear that current models of collaboration remain extremely limited in terms of how many students are actually able to participate.

> "Right, so if you decide that and you've got 600 students and counting the numbers. In any given year maybe 40. That means a whole lot of students. And then we had the challenge. What do you do with older students or employed students, students with families? This worked really well for the 20 year old or the 23 year old and probably the majority of our students don't fit that profile. So that was the other piece…"

Collaborations seeking to involve students at any level are competing for a limited number of students who even can participate, largely because of the next challenge: funding.

Funding

By far the most consistent answer to questions about challenges facing international collaborations in social work education was money. This response was immediate, and it was emphatic. It was articulated by a student at Midwest University without any specific prompting. "What are the challenges that I see? Probably the lack of money." Students from the Midwest institutions talked about the challenges of putting together enough funding to participate in study abroad, as did students and administrators from the West African institutions. For instance, one participant, an administrator at West African Christian said,

> "Yeah, it really is money. The air ticket, the lodging, the food, train for when they go to America. So that's a lot. People don't understand, they just feel like it's merrymaking but it's not. It's a lot of work. And when you go too, that's money. And here, [West African nationals] are poor.

In response to follow up questions, this participant added:

> "They don't understand the costs that go into it. They think about they're on the plane, they fly and go to American, but it's not easy thing. So that is also one other issue to consider. Is one thing to say, "I want to go to America," but who pays the cost? Who will pay?

Students at West African Christian were also keenly aware of financial challenges. When one student was asked: "What do you think are the major challenges for international collaboration," their initial response was, "The major challenges would be . . . maybe . . . the funding aspects"

In response to the same open-ended question, another student was more emphatic, “One big challenge would be expense. Two, funding.”

Every student participant at West African University mentioned funding as the most important challenge. Interviewer: “You talked about some opportunities for the University of Ghana in collaborating. What do you think the challenges are that they face?” Participant. “I think the challenge basically is funding.” Interviewer, “What are some of the challenges, so you mentioned a lot of opportunities for the department for international collaboration, what are some of the challenges?” Participant, “Well, for us you can’t talk about, I mean for me, you can’t talk about challenges without making mention of, I mean, financial issues.”

What was true at a personal level was also true at a more institutional level. The social work administrator at Midwest University said,

> “In the early days, especially around the recession and stuff there was or before the recession there was some question to… knowing we needed to be involved internationally, but could we afford to. I think there were two obstacles we had to overcome. One was practicableness, the financial piece because it is expensive. So why not just go to Puerto Rico, Jamaica, or somewhere in the United States. Study away rather than study abroad. The first thing was just around money. Did we have enough money to support faculty exchanges, student travel, knowing that most of our students would find it financially challenging to find both the time and the money to do this. That was the practical one.”

Alongside concerns about student demand, faculty champions, and funding were concerns about time. The literature has been critical of shorter term engagements abroad, and

participants in this study were as well. This was mentioned with regards to student exchanges and faculty visits for teaching or scholarship. As one student at West African Christian, said,

> "Yes, some of these challenges are . . . when the foreign instructors come, they do help us in understanding a lot and presenting the subject matter clearly but it is still low on the time, that is, it's very short. And, yeah. So if they could stay a longer period it would help a lot."

It is worth noting in the context of the above section that this response was followed by the question, "Hmm, any other challenges?" to which the participant replied, "Well, financially I don't know."

Finally, an administrator in the office of international programs at Midwest University articulated the challenge of really institutionalizing collaborations at all.

> "Yeah, in a way it's good because it covers so many different places and institutions but at the same time sometimes I wonder when I see these things, I mean, is there any point given to precisely why this institution, apart from saying I know Joe is a faculty member there, what else does this place bring to the table beyond Joe as a person? So there isn't that kind of, from what I understand, kind of intentional, intentionality behind some of these things. They're just more, "Oh I have this research project, I need an MOU, I want to submit a grant proposal to get this grant and part of that is being able to demonstrate that I have this relationship with this place and an MOU is a natural thing to do and I do it and then I finish my project and then I take that project elsewhere or I retire ultimately and then," so I think the lack of being, lack of intentionality and then failure to be strategic in some ways and be forward thinking. I think saying, what's going to

> happen beyond this theme of mine or beyond this project of mine and what's even going to happen beyond me as a person when I'm gone. So that's, in terms of the, establishing, but keeping them going they kind of overlap in some ways, so again not being, being a bit myopic I think, but I think that in my view the way of the future is more interdisciplinarity [sic] so I mean social work but that doesn't mean I can't bring somebody in from Geography or Social Science or Political Science or even other fields and saying okay, "Can we make this a bit more broad?" Not so broad that it becomes kind of watered down or useless but in some ways are there natural synergies between what I'm interested in and maybe somebody else is and we can think of creative ways of making this a bit more robust than it is. Yeah."

The same administrator was convinced that another major challenge facing international collaboration is a lack of accountability to actually evaluated and measure the outcomes they say they accomplish.

> "Problematic and the other one is, as new faculty members, what to do, what not to do, and the other issue is, how can you say to a faculty member that, 'Well it's wonderful you want to have an agreement with this particular institution but it's not really in our best interest as an institution at the moment," or even as a college or a department. Again, not always easy, but I think there has to be a way of holding people accountable. At the minimum saying, what are we doing? What outcomes do we wish to realize? And precisely, how have we done that in the last five years? And then saying, even if you plan to renew, what lessons can you glean from the last five years that you should incorporate into the MOU to ensure

> that in the next five years, so having a plan of some sort is not just a five-year kind of myopic plan but saying, fifteen, twenty years, is this something that should be continued past your tenure…"

Language

The second major set of challenges participants identified had to do with linguistic and/or cultural barriers. First, a consideration of linguistic barriers. It should be noted that English is widely, but not universally, spoken in both of the West African nations in which these collaborations have taken place. At least one student from Midwest University was aware of the privilege of being able to participate in an international collaboration without having to learn another language,

> "After being there, you know, I kind of felt bad that, gosh, I didn't even know how to say "Bye" and "Hello" like you know, so I felt bad about that. It's kind of one of those, like you know, dopey things where it's like well oh, thank god that English is universal but at the same time, Jesus, like, I need to like learn a language, like this is pretty spoiled, you know? So yeah, language wasn't too big of an issue."

Nevertheless, language was mentioned by many participants as a challenge, or at least as having played a role in how the collaboration proceeded. As one participant at West African Christian stated, "Ah, the language is quite different. Our enunciation, your enunciation, they are quite different. Sometime when we speak, you don't understand us [laughs]," to which I replied, "Yeah, it's true." The participant added, "Yeah, we have to listen very, very carefully. So that is a big barrier, the language." When I replied, "Sure, even though we're both speaking English"

the participant clarified in a formal and more informal tone "Yeah, well, but they are English and English [laughs]."

The general consensus among participants at all levels at West African Christian was that individuals from the United States spoke too fast. One of the participants at West African Christian was asked, "What role, if any, have language differences played in this collaboration?"

Participant

[Laughing].

Interviewer

So you're laughing [laughs]!

Participant

Yes, I'm laughing because I remember in most of the classes I would have with the foreign professors, yeah, those that came from [Midwest Christian], you have students always asking, "Eh, what you say? Can you please repeat yourself?"

Interviewer

So when you think about the classes when there was a foreign instructor for the Liberian students, how much do you think they understood what was being said to them? Most of it, half of it, one quarter? I don't know, what do you think?

Participant

Hmm, like 75%. There are just a few words… and when you ask what you say, you repeat yourself.

In discussions with another participant at West African Christian, it came out that the culture had a word for this Americanized English.

Participant

Yeah because they are not really familiar with the language though it's English but you know we've learned our English in a way that we're so familiar with our local colloquial. So that has been in our ears for years. So now getting hear standard English over and over and over, it takes time. So but it's not that as bad. Because I don't see a student have made F because of English barrier. Maybe – we call it "series" the way you slant your English.

Interviewer

Series?

Participant

Yes that's how we [West African nationals] call it.

Interviewer

Wait how do you spell that?

Participant

I don't know. Is it C-E-R-I-E-S? Or S-E-R-I-S-E or something. Yes it's like an American will speak like how you doing [demonstrating fast mumbling]. Like that or that person is speaking "series."

This participant rated the percentage of what was being said that local students understood closer to 90%, but was clear that it required significant concentration.

At the partnership with West African University, language played a more significant role, and presented a more significant challenge. One student from Midwest University who had participated in a program there said that, "With the collaboration with [West African nation] language was a big deal because if we hadn't had translators with us it was a lot of kids and a lot of people that we wouldn't have been able to understand or communicate with."

Culture

Interestingly, the same participant from West African Christian who had clarified "Yeah, well, but they are English and English" felt that students from the United States were quicker to adapt culturally than would have been the case in reverse, as articulated in the following exchange:

Participant

Yeah, culture also . . . culture can be, uh, adaptable and I see that you people are quick to adapt to the culture when you come. I mean things are quite strange but in short span of time, we see you doing things like other [West Africans].

Interviewer

Ahh [skeptical].

Participant

Yeah! But for us, it is a little bit harder. It will take a longer time to get adapted. But for you people, I saw that – that was, I mean, that span to adapt to a situation was very fast on their side.

Interviewer

Really? OK.

Participant

Yes!

Interviewer

You think faster than a [West African nationals] going the other way?

Participant

Yes, exactly.

Interviewer

Eh! Well what makes you think that?

Participant

OK, I'm sorry [both laugh]!

Interviewer

Alright, so you had a hard time in the U.S. Did you feel like there were cultural differences?

Participant

Yes, uh, you people are more open, you do not keep secrets… but here, we take our time to release information. You know, we hold information back but we're not very open like people do in America. You people are very, very open. Things that I wouldn't talk outside, you sit there and talk about it without any shame. Unconsciously you do that. But we probably wouldn't do it consciously [laughs].

Interviewer

Ah, true. Well I hope none of these questions are too open [both laugh].

Perhaps troublingly, in some cases students from Midwest institutions seemed to confuse the idea of culture with context, or to conflate cultural manifestations like clothing with culture itself. Sometimes this was done with a degree of self-awareness, for example, this extended reflection from one student who had participated in a study abroad,

"I mean yeah. There were some cultural differences as far as just a lot of the sanitation was different. The way that trash was different. I don't know if this is really cultural as political. It was definitely something that affected us living there as students from the United States. Seeing trash everywhere was an impact. Not

> even really being able to play in the Ocean because there is trash coming in with the waves. The smells that come from the way sewage was dealt with. All these things. That's not really cultural I think but kind of. Clothing was a big deal. We were very interested in the colorful clothing and the way the culture creates this atmosphere of selling. Everyone is always selling something, everywhere you go. That was a part of the culture that was fun at first but after a while you get drained by it because you stand out like a sore thumb. Everyone's always assuming or hoping you will buy something and it gets draining to constantly be asked to buy things. Just being treated like a celebrity for being an American was being a cultural thing that was also draining. Their culture tends to view Americans as some kind of, just it's a big deal if they see Americans. Sometimes they wanted to take pictures with us and all these kinds of things. That was an impact."

Perhaps understandably, some students also reflected on aspects of culture, or perceived culture, that made them uncomfortable. One student from Midwest University mentioned, in reference to classmates, that, "I don't think they were used to so many men approaching them, trying to make them their girlfriend."

On the opposite side of collaborations, students at West African University also mentioned discomfort with certain aspects of culture in North America, from issues of culturally appropriate physical distances while talking to a member of the opposite sex to frustrations over study abroad experiences in Europe where classes were conducted entirely in another language and then translated afterwards into English. On a more truly cultural note, one student mentioned that while studying abroad,

"And then the culture, I'd like to talk about, that's what I want to talk about, okay, the culture, see I had this professor, she was too receptive to, too receptive to homosexuality, okay, yeah over there, and I… I was growing up by then and I was now getting used to social work by then, yeah, and then this woman was always talking about how she fought for the right of gays and lesbians in Canada and then, you know, sometimes she would tell some of the students that, if they go home and then their parents, you know, their parents are not loving and caring, like they're not nurturing them very well, they're being very hostile to them, they could come to her…"

Another student at West African University asserted that students at West African University were generally more culturally open and hospitable to students and faculty coming from abroad than the reception they themselves received when going abroad.

Participant

We are more sensitive than the Europeans and the, I mean, the Americans.

Interviewer

More sensitive?

Participant

Yeah, we are. I mean culturally sensitive than they are. Cause when the Europeans and Americans do come here and then they do something that, that contradicts with whatever we do here, we, sometimes we just ignore it and presume that, okay, they're acting out of ignorance or, leave them, and then they see we are most, more, we are also receptive to Europeans and Americans when they come here, want to be of help to them, want to assist them, want to be

hospitable. Our children embrace them, it's not the same when we get there, you know, I mean you meet a European…

Interviewer

Groups of white kids don't come running to you?

Participant

Yeah they see us and they start running away, you don't know how they reacted but then yeah, they meet you and then they, they just start running away from you as if you are, you know, and then, yes, beyond that since I meet adults, you want to talk to them, they won't give you the opportunity. They won't give you that audience, you know. You talk, I mean, sometimes you are fortunate, the person patiently listens to you but if the person knows what you're talking about the person will tell you, "I'm sorry, I have no idea," and just walk away, you know, so, sounds like this part of it is what makes things a bit frustrating and then embarrassing for some of us.

Other Participant

But in [West African nation] here and on campus even when we see white students or I'll say foreign student, in a place that, perhaps you might see him or her thinking that they have, the person needs assistance. You are likely to go to him or her and say, "Are you okay? Do you need help? Are you lost?" you know, you want to be of help, when he or she may not have indicated that he or she needs help but as they say, you may not get it here when they're in trouble.

Participant

> I think in some instances, personal what my friend just mentioned, some of them that, we talk about the issue of racism and all that but it's not about racism it's about the culture and how they view, oriented, socialized. In our part of the world we believe in communalism, working in groups, you are a child of your society or community, not a child of your parents, you know.

One of the issues in this extended piece of dialog is reciprocity, the idea that courtesies are extended that are sometimes not received. In general, there were deep concerns from all concerned about how reciprocal international collaborations are, or should be. These concerns are explored in the next section.

Reciprocity

Reciprocity has been a cornerstone in thinking about healthy and productive international collaborations in social work education (Asamoah & Beverly, 1988; Bogo & Maeda, 1990; Healy, 2003; Hokenstad, 2003a; Saunders et al., 2003; Vincent, 2009). Unfortunately, neither of the case study collaborations met the gold standard of a truly reciprocal relationship.

The following paragraphs examine responses to questions about reciprocity at West African Christian. An administrator at West African Christian, when asked, "So this is sort of a similar question, but from your perspective, how reciprocal is the partnership?" replied that,

> "Well, I don't know really know how that will… because I don't know what [West African Christian] is really *giving back*. I mean think the international people really need to answer that, what they are really gaining from the collaboration. But you come every time, and go back, *we benefit a lot*. But I don't know – maybe cultural ability, they might have knowledge of our culture, the way of life."

This perception that West African Christian was primarily the beneficiary of international collaboration was seconded by another former student and current faculty member, who saw the practicing social work to the best of their ability as the primary means of giving back within the partnership,

> "I think we uh, we are more on a receiving end. [Laughs]. Yes. We are more on the receiving end. What we can give, what we really have to give out is… our expertise to humanity, here. Because, when we learn, have been taught us we go out there and help people who are in need. So that is one big thing that we can give back. Other than that… um… we don't have so much to give out.

An administrator from West African Christian, reflecting on a collaborative classroom experience involved North American students and West African students said,

> "When you combine the classes from America and here, that was very innovative. It was very interesting, and to the point also that, we let them take a day out with their friend, with our colleagues our community. After you finish the one hour with their friend from the community, we just see how it looks, what it looks like, what we can eat, and some of them even share food with the children. And they're happy about that. Also, the exchange of information from America to the [West African] student. That was also very, very good. So it was very, very fruitful, I think. It went well. There may have been some fall-out, but I think overall was good. Because we saw interaction they – again, it also impressed me because when you took them from America into Liberia, they all took the same exam and saw the result. You carried result back into [Midwest Institution] and we kept our result here. So that was also very good. That was also very good."

When asked to expand on this experience, the administrator said,

> "Yes, it was equal, there was equality, yes, because we didn't put any – we didn't separate them and you all put them together, in the same room, you know, they were well-mixed. We didn't say, "Oh, this side is for the [West African], this side is for the American." They were mixed. All over the classroom. So that was good. That was equality, to me. And that was equality, nobody was treated specially, everybody was treated at the same level, the same information was shared, the same exams, so I thought that was equality.

Given some of the power dynamics in play around international collaborations between institutions in North America and West Africa, it is perhaps not surprising that some respondents were hesitant to answer questions about reciprocity, or did so very carefully. This is perhaps most evident in this extended passage from a participant at West African Christian,

> *Interviewer*
>
> Sure. How reciprocal, from your opinion, is the collaboration?
>
> *Participant*
>
> It's very, very good. I want to believe apart from the students of [West African Christian], the administration of [West African Christian] alone, they've been very, very reciprocal by saying, "Oh, [Midwest institution], you are being a very good friend, very good partner. We do appreciate all that you have done and are still doing for us and want to see if you can help us more." And we appreciate it.
>
> *Interviewer*
>
> Sure. Do you think one institution benefits more than the other institution?
>
> *Participant*

Uh, when you say one, you mean if -

Interviewer

So, do you think [West African Christian] benefits more or do you think [Midwest institution] and [Midwest Christian] benefit more?

Participant

Ah, well, I want to believe, um . . . I think it is . . . I don't know . . .. . . mmm . . . I want to believe both [Midwest Chrsitian] and [West African Christian] benefit.

Interviewer

OK, do they benefit differently or the same way?

Participant

No, I think differently. Yeah, I think differently.

Interviewer

OK, in what ways?

Participant

Well, number one is student exchange programs, students coming, you know, and getting more experience from here and also the agents of [Midwest Christian] also coming and also getting some experience and also having . . . there are some benefits, even though [West African Christian] would not be able to reciprocate in providing funds… or because right now [West African Christian] is lacking this, so maybe in the future [West African Christian] could be of help. Also, there's the capacity that has been developed, you know.

While there was wide recognition that the current collaboration was not entirely reciprocal, there was also hope that there might be ways to improve this. There was also a realization that

because of financial limitations this would have to express itself in different ways. This passage, while reflecting a similar assessment of a one-way model, expressed hope for creative means of building reciprocity in the future.

> "I don't think it's really strong. I think it's almost like from there to us. And not from us there. But it would be good in a point that we could have a flowing both ways. We get a whole lot of support, than what we are able to give back. We might not be able to give money or books because our books would not be up to standards but there are other things that we can give when it comes to learning experience, sharing of different cultures in how we do our work whatever. I don't know, I think there are other things that we can share that the partners can also benefit."

The collaboration between Midwest University and West African University was also relatively one-sided, structured around one-way student trips, and some joint research. The social work administrator, in reflecting on the various collaborations the school had engaged in, was quick to point out that, "if you have a relationship you want to be able to give and not just receive." They also mentioned that, "Study abroad happens all the time and you could even argue there is a certain reciprocity in that but for me, for the institution to invest time and money it had to be strategic and intentional." While this often began with an individual faculty champion, "with reciprocity there has got to be more than just the individual faculty member."

The sentiment that real reciprocity is predicated on the involvement of broad swaths of the institution was seconded by the Midwest University administrator in international programs, who said that,

"I think the difficulties there, it depends on the personalities involved on the issues, the contexts, and also I think sometimes when, like okay, Dr. [Name] was involved with this particular agreement, I can't find it but, once that person leaves and goes somewhere else, what happens to that agreement? And that's always an issue, if it's not, maybe not in that case but some of it is, based on personalities or individuals and they know the context, they've been there for many years, they have the relationships and then the relationship ultimately leads to this document that's signed and then there's nobody else in the department or even in that country or the theme or themes been explored. When that individual leaves, sometimes the agreement in many ways leaves with them or dies here. And even if it's resuscitated it's not going to be the same. So if it's contingent on personalities both here and there but also on that person's kind of research interests and if it's that limited in scope than it becomes difficult really to firstly broaden it to encompass others interests, both here and there again, and also to keep it going and to, so it's a bit complicated in some ways, it's not that complicated, but the problem is if it's personality based, and many of these things tend to be, it's like I want to establish a relationship with this place because I have a colleague whom I've known forever and we work well together and on the other side as well the same thing will happen, the person at [West African University] could have left or retired or whatever and then again, what happens to the agreement? So we see a lot of them that kind of die or they're kind of moribund, it's kind of a moribund state so they're technically renewed but nothing's happening as far as we know.

On the other side of the collaboration, an administrator at West African University was fully aware of some of the limitations on reciprocity.

> "To say equal, I don't think would be the right word but then it depends on the contributions that each is making and the contributions comes in different forms. Most of the time, the financial aspect of it is borne by foreign partners that we have, but then they also get opportunities to bring guest students in here and there, I think, in terms of school fees, the amount compared to what is charged abroad, ours is less. So most of the time, realize that when it comes to financial aspect of it, then they will have to give in more but then when their students also come, I think in terms of the courses they can take and in terms of the flexibility of different departments that they can go and take courses there, we also come in handy in that regard so. So, you know, to say equal you have to look at it in terms of the various forms that their opportunities bring."

West African University was also becoming more discerning, at least from the perspective of the school of social work administrator, at deciding who to partner with internationally.

> "Now that I'm the head of the department, that I have also had to champion some of the MOUs, what I've realized is that they are rather restricting it because from what the international programs have said, they said in the past you have a lot of organizations, foreign universities coming to say, "We want an 'MOU'." You go through with them and you don't hear from them anymore, so now before they go ahead and sign the "MOU" they want to see practical steps, actions, what is it that you are going to do to be sure that you are serious about it because we can't continue listing, thousands of schools that we are in collaboration with but then at

> the end of the day we don't get to engage with them so when I was championing "MOU" with Switzerland, they wanted to find out the practical things we have done, how we're going to go about it, and we told them that they're invited as to Switzerland before they came here and we signed the "MOU" so at least we were there to see what they have and then so with that, to prove to them, was easy so it's easier if something is in place to show that they are really serious about the collaboration."

Some students at West African University were less diplomatic in their assessments of the reciprocity of the relationships their institution is engaged in. Reflecting on a more established collaboration with a Canadian institution, the student said,

> "It's imbalanced. Totally it's imbalanced. It's . . . I would say [Canadian Institution] provides everything. The institution, the Department of Social Work here, [West African University], it's really just to facilitate it. Because [Canadian Institution] is providing the funding, [Canadian Institution] is providing its institution and its staff to support that arrangement. Probably [West African University] does basically the life of service, just to facilitate the process. Pretty sure there is a memorandum of understanding in place. And [West African University] is also proud to put on its website that the department of social work is collaborating with the [Canadian Institution]. But much of the work is done – any time [Canadian Institution] tries, says that, I want them to take it off [Canadian Institution]. Department couldn't even afford my air tickets. So it's – their only reciprocity would be that – first of all there's an acceptance by the

> Department of Social Work, [West African University], to accept that collaboration.

At the same time, a student at West African University, similar to what was articulated at West African Christian, noted how much money was being spent by partners to sustain collaborations.

> "Financially I'll say that we benefit more and I'm saying that because it's not as though their universities give us money but what happens is that when their foreign students come and their lecturers come, they fund everything themselves, their accommodations, either the university sponsors it or they sponsor it themselves but when a lecturer from here has to go, usually the person has to fund, get funding from the university, or sometimes they are sponsored by their hosting university again so you realize that if it comes, it happens that way that it means that the university that is home, hosting, is losing twice. They're losing by sponsoring your own students and teachers who are coming and then you are sponsoring the teacher from here who is coming as a guest too."

When asked what these partners seemed to be gaining for their investment, one student replied, "But they also felt that it builds a lot of or gains a lot of international recognition. [Canadian University] boasts of the international – the number of international students that are enrolled there."

Faith

This final section of the results examines a larger theme that cut across multiple dimensions of international collaborations, the role of religious faith. While one of the case study pairs involved a collaboration between two Christian institutions, faith was mentioned by

participants at all four institutions. Faith was a motivator, an outcome, a challenge and an opportunity.

Motivator

Faith served as a primary motivator for many individuals' engagement in international collaborations in social work education. When asked about motivations for international collaborations, an administrator at Midwest Christian began by noting that, "I am very much one in favor of directing engagement in various settings. My wife and I served on the mission field for seven years…" and went on to say that, "So from an early life experience point of view, we saw the benefit of collaborative work. It really espoused us a way to advance the vision of bringing help, for people whom we can serve" and to discuss the "Christian commitment to helping those in need, continuation of shalom."

> A faculty member at Midwest Christian shared similar ideas about motivations, "I think it's really part of our mission to go into all the world, to transform culture, kind of our mandate to . . . for social work, it's to . . . when we help others, you know, we also help ourselves and to give of the money, to give of our time seemed like a worthy ambition to spread the profession, which is really our ministry to others and we take that seriously. We're gatekeepers of the profession and for us to develop quality education somewhere else, really I think is – it doesn't say that directly but, I feel it's part of being a Christian and part of being a professor where we don't hold all these things that we know and just help those around us. We go out, we try to affect help wherever needed. And because of the civil war there, it seemed important for us to do whatever we could there. And we got the support of the administration on that. It seemed like it fit well with a

> reformed perspective of outreach and shalom and restoration, as well as it would build us as practitioners and academics to learn more and help others."

These themes were also reinforced in the student focus group at Midwest Christian. When asked, "What sort of role might religious your spiritual commitments play, motivating [Midwest Christian]? Do you think there are religious motivations for being involved with these in the first place for [Midwest Christian]?" one student replied simply, "Make disciples of all nations, again," which elicited a laughter of recognition from the other students.

Faith as a motivation applied to many of the same areas, such as cultural competency. One student in the Midwest Christian focus group said,

> "Well, God is God of fellowship. In that, we should be fellowshipping but not just for the people we know or we are comfortable with. Jesus himself stepped out of norms of His society and hung with people that were different and really brought a community together and we should be owed to go to different cultures and fellowship with them and establish that community and be like God and fellowship with them."

A third student, also at Midwest Christian, said,

> "I think [Midwest Christian] brings in the dimension of spirituality as everybody is diverse and there is different dimension to every single person. So having almost a holistic impact. I am not saying that it is us doing the work as it is God. He is the one impacting but he is using us as instruments."

A similarly frank level of faith based discourse was evidence in interviews at West African Christian, when asked, "OK, what motivates you personally to be excited or involved with something like [international collaboration]" one respondent immediately replied,

> "Well, you know, being a minister of the gospel, looking at the individual, you know, the spiritual aspects, I look at social work also as a helping profession. That will help me to be able to be very holistic in my approach, looking at the total man, both spiritual and physically, looking at every aspect of the individual and not being partial. So that will actually help me and will enhance my helping, you know, initiatives, my skills, and be able to help mankind as a whole. Not only in [West Africa] but also anywhere I go. And that fulfilled my dream, you know, I discovered God's splendid purpose for my life, not only being here but also being here to accomplish God's plans and God's mission for me as an individual."

When asked about the role of religion or spirituality in the collaboration another student at West African Christian said, on a perhaps more pluralistic note that colleagues at Midwest Christian,

> "A whole lot, because in the collaboration . . . there were believers, Christians that came, students, even instructors that actually imparted, you know, the importance of spirituality in social work, looking at human diversity is very important and we also learned that social work has no boundary, it has no barrier, you know, as far as your intervention's concerned so spirituality should not be any boundary, any barrier, any of your interventions. Yeah, so whether a Muslim instructor or student [unclear] would have no difference for us because social work actually breaks every barrier because you have to be able to accept human diversity."

Outcome

While the role of faith as a motivator often took on a more institutional voice, faith's role as an outcome was frequently more personal. A student at Midwest Christian said that,

> "From personal experience, you get put in uncomfortable situations, so you lean on God more. It makes God more present in your life. You can see him more present where you are but you also see Him in a different way in different cultures. Being able to go to Dominican: we were able to go to a church service and there is dancing and celebration. Just a different way, I don't really even say experience God, but you surrender yourself in a different way than you do here because you are totally out of your comfort zone."

Students from Midwest University had less of an explicit vocabulary of faith. At least one student felt that faith had not significantly impacted the collaboration one way or another.

> "As for religion goes I don't know if it played that much of a part because even if most of us aren't practicing Christians, I think that Christianity is something we are pretty familiar with and that was the major religion that we were exposed to in Ghana. Even the agency we worked directly with, it was a Christian based agency. So it played a role but I don't think it was a different, I don't think it made a difference for us."

That said, other students from Midwest University had radically different perspectives. One recalled that,

> "but to be completely honest, once I left [West African nation] I don't know what it was but I definitely became spiritual so it's very odd, that's also why [West African nation] is very close in my heart because I don't know what it was but it definitely changed me in a positive way so, I think that the religion is the biggest. That was like the most in your face thing. I mean the kids prayed before they ate at the non-profit that we volunteered at. I mean here in the States you can't pray at

> school unless you're at a private institution so that was, it's everywhere, I mean it's all over"

In asserting that religion was "all over," this student was identifying with many of the West African student's perspective. Amongst these students, there was broad agreement that West African institutions are more religious than North American ones.

Challenge

The difference in how pervasive faith was in the various contexts of the collaborations was for some participants a source of tension. A participant at West African Christian said that,

> "In [West African nation], there is a strong tie between spirituality and social work because in [West African nation] we are highly religious, everyone is spiritual, highly religious. So, religion, we are almost… everyone in [West African nation] has some form of spirituality."

A student at West African University, again reflecting on a study abroad experience in Canada, said that,

> "They didn't believe in my faith. Any time – I remember one of the friends, one time I talked about God and – because he asked me, "How are you?" and I said, "by God's grace, I'm fine, I'm OK." And then I realized, it's God, God, and things like that. So it gave me the opportunity to talk about them, on relating, upon my faith, but they were not bound to accept because of where they are coming from. At times you go there, you observe, and you realize that – you could share in their position because they don't think that there is God or that there is no God but because of their living arrangements there. Basically, here, the living arrangement is such that your only hope is in God and without God you are

> empty. But while in Canada, if you're going to tell someone that God is the source of your provision… Everything is there, the structures are in place and things like that. So I didn't begrudge them of their faith but I think it really shaped my identity, it really shaped my relationship with them and how to engage them, especially coming from social work, where you are supposed to be nonjudgmental. You also have to respect human dignity and their worth and other principles. So it really shaped how I should really engage myself with the social work principles."

If discussing religious faith sometimes made situations awkward for West African students in North America, the reverse was also true for students from the United States visiting West Africa. A student from Midwest University who had been a part of the international collaboration said that,

> "Religion is huge there where it's like 98% of [West Africans] believe in a higher power and 84% of them go to church regularly so I, when I went to [West African nation] I was an atheist so I wouldn't say that to them, I wouldn't, you know, cause I didn't want to bring up any conflict but that was something that really just stuck out to me and when I would speak with them about God they would be like, if I said I didn't believe in God they just, it wasn't even like that they didn't like me, they were just, "Well how can you not?" like they were just very confused about it."

A student at West African University explained that this heavy emphasis on faith has impacts on how social work, and international collaborations within social work, are perceived and carried out.

> "I think that the religious part, you know, we, it's not just a belief but I think it's a, it's, Africans, we are very religious, and especially [West African nation] or, yeah we are very religious, so we can't rule out religion even in our professional practice. For example, if you come to me as a client and you are in some kind of distress or emotional discomfort, once I know your background, your religious background, I might be tempted to use that part, you know, something about your religion to console you or comfort you. Okay, but then, because, because I think Europeans or Americans are not so religious or they're able to separate religion from, you know, I mean, separate religion from their religion. Religion's actually not their life. Like how it is for us, yeah. It becomes difficult to, as in, put the religious aspect of people's life into the practice of social work, but then it will be, in our part I think it's very difficult to be able to separate religion and then people's life or religion from the practice so I think that's what…"

In this passage the student wrestles with differing attitudes about the integration of faith and social work practice, and how to practice that in settings with different standards.

Conclusion

While the results of this qualitative study, based on phenomenological in-depth interviews with students, faculty, and administrators at two case study pairs of partner institutions are exploratory, and should not be taken as generalizable, some interesting themes did emerge. The results indicate areas for further exploration. As the section immediately prior to this conclusion highlighted, faith plays important roles in international collaborations, even ones that are being conducted by non-sectarian or public institutions. This seems to be particularly true in West African settings, and that ought to be explored further. There are also

significant variations in the ways that institutions and individuals talk about the motivations and outcomes of participation in international collaborations, which will be outlined further in the discussion. As a final note here, the results seem to indicate that more work should be done to examine partnerships from both sides, and not just through the lenses of participating faculty or administrators. Analysis of collaborations ought to be two-way, and include student voices. As one student at West African University said to me when I asked if anyone had additional comments:

> "Mine is to congratulate you for your efforts, coming here to get the views of [West Africans]. As you said, some people, some of those that have written papers and articles without getting the true views of the people here. I believe that about, about that one, that will reflect the views of both angles."

I hope this is the case.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION

This study explored motivations for international collaborations in social work education, and the outcomes, opportunities, and challenges they present. Using a purposive sample of individuals at multiple levels within two pairs of collaborating institutions, this study sought to provide preliminary and qualitative results that, while not generalizable, should prompt further and more focused research. As mentioned in the introduction, this study was built around the definition of collaboration used by the Council on Social Work Education's *Models of International Collaboration in Social Work Education* (2003), namely that a collaboration is "a mutually beneficial and well defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals" (Mattessich & Monsey, 1992, p. 39). While neither of the case study collaborations achieved the gold standard of reciprocity and broad institutional support, both demonstrated mutually beneficial relationships. There were many similarities in motivations, including the desire to compete with peer institutions, to benefit students, and to pursue specific social work skills like cultural competency. However, the exact nature of the benefits of collaboration, and the specific goals institutions had in entering into them, varied substantially. Perhaps the most important finding presented here is that institutions in West Africa, and the individuals that comprise them, sometimes entered into collaborations for different reasons than their Mid-western partners. If social work education continues to emphasize international collaboration, more will have to be done to understand these differences.

Summary of major findings

Primary decision making factors

In seeking to examine primary decision making factors, one of the first objectives was to understand the origins of collaborations. What brought these two organizations together in the

first place? As outlined in the research questions, what was the extent of collaborative activities between institutions, including the nature, amount, and duration of such activities? How (and what) resources are exchanged between institutions? One of the more surprising findings was that, with the exception of faculty members directly involved with initiating collaboration, very few people knew exactly how the collaboration began, who had initiated it, or for what reasons. As stated in the findings, people did not know what was going on. This made the exploration of origins a less than productive way to gauge the primary motivations for pursuing collaboration, but is an important result in and of itself.

Faculty motivations. Faculty members were the most likely to have initiated the collaborations. In the case of Midwest University this took place in the context of a broader institutional discussion about collaborations that included making sure that opportunities existed in a variety of locations, with a variety of populations, and at a variety of price points, but that was the exception.

In a variety of ways, as mentioned in the results, faculty members straddled the line between a more personal and relational voice and a more institutional voice. Certainly, faculty members appreciated the possibility of professional development, whether through collaborative research, the opportunity to enrich teaching with more "real" or "authentic" examples and experiences, or to open doors to grant funding and professional advancement. At the same time, faculty members, particularly those part of the collaboration between the smaller, faith-based schools, spoke of collaborative relationships as "friendships," and seemed authentically emotionally invested in one another.

The fact that very few people outside of key faculty members were aware of how collaborations initiated also reinforced some of the statements the Midwest University

administrator made about needing a faculty "champion." The social network that established the collaborations in these case studies involved an individual faculty member and a connection made through so-called "weak ties," either a mutual acquaintance, and affiliated non-profit, or extended family ties. While it is possible to view this as a weakness of these case study collaborations, and advocate for a more fully institutionalized and operationalized collaborative model, it seems equally possible that the relational nature of collaborations in social work education is something to be reinforced or even celebrated. As outlined in Chapter 1, the history of the social work profession is replete with examples of relationships between two individuals going on to benefit institutions.

Institutional motivations. As institutions do not speak with a single, unified voice, it is more difficulty to capture the primary decision making factors at play. That said, triangulating voices from all of those interviewed did produce a sense of what was motivating institutions to pursue international collaboration.

As predicted by critical theory, and consistent with what the literature has suggested, funding is a primary motivation for institutional collaboration (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Chan, 2004; Childress, 2009). Students at Midwest Christian, for instance, noted the possibility of recruiting more, and more diverse, student populations through collaboration. Students at West African University frequently mentioned institutional size and prestige, both of which are of course connected to its financial position. Finances were a potential motivator for participation in collaboration, but also constrained it. Administrators at West African University and Midwest University, who have many more requests for collaboration than the smaller schools, both discussed having to be selective, and having to consider what options would be financially feasible for students.

Consistent with the theory of collaborative advantage, many responses indicated that international collaborations were a way to compete with other peer institutions at home and abroad. This theme cut across regions and institutional size. However, it was stronger at the West African institutions, and particularly robust in the interviews with students at West African University, where the student focus group spoke at length about institutional "fame," or as one student put it:

> "I think, you know, there is increasing competition, among schools, and some schools even boast of the international students they have, in order to gain that reputation. So I think [West African University] is trying to build more collaboration in order to, uh, gain… recognition in the first place and also to globally compete with other institutions."

While it is possible to view this desire for prestige as problematic, it was frequently paired with a desire to improve the quality of the social work profession in the context, and indeed at West African Christian explicitly tied to improving the nation as a whole after a period of violence and instability.

It should also be noted that this "fame" was important for the institutions themselves, but also for students. Student motivations will be explored in the next section, but at an institutional level, collaboration was seen as preparing students to enter the workforce, occasionally framed as the global workforce. That said, the two Midwest institutions also saw participation in international collaborations as a way of developing their own institutions, in terms of institutional identity, and in terms of positioning themselves to compete with peer institutions.

At the Midwest institutions, motivation for participation was often linked to the mission or identity of the institution. As stated in the results, in this framing institutions collaborate not

to improve who they are but because of who they are. This was framed in the religious language of "making disciples of all nations" at Midwest Christian, but Midwest University also tied international collaboration to its identity, most prominently as a land grant university.

A final primary decision making factor for institutions was tied directly to the evolution of the social work profession. Globalization was a consistent undercurrent, and the globalized reality of the social work profession was a strong motivator for institutions to pursue international collaborations in social work education. This was mentioned in both "top-down" ways, reflecting on mandates from CSWE for example, and in "bottom up" ways, whether the realities of location migration and refugee populations or increasingly diverse student populations.

Student motivations. For students, the primary considerations for their own participation in international collaboration varied more substantially. As noted, authors have discussed numerous potential motivations for students to participate in international collaborations, including a fascination with other countries or cultures, having emotional connections to people from another country, the ability to "make a difference" in a context with more "need" than a domestic setting, or the pursuit of the exotic (Bolen, 2001; Wehbi, 2009; Woolf, 2006). The literature examining the motivations of students from places like Europe or North America is substantially more developed than the literature examining the motivations of students from places like West Africa. The following section explores some of the themes most commonly identified in the literature, and then explores some potentially newer themes emerging from the interviews with students in West Africa.

Students frequently mentioned ideas about international collaboration and cultural competency. The critical theorist approaches such statements with a degree of suspicion, given

that the idea that collaborating internationally builds cultural competency is so universal in curriculum and the literature that it may become the accepted script for talking about such experiences, the cultural superstructure hiding the economic base, or an example of what Habermas would call strategic rather than communicative action. Nevertheless, it was a prominent theme.

While common across interviews with students, the role cultural competency played in the narrative shifted somewhat depending on location. For domestic students, cultural competency, even if acquired internationally, was thought of mostly in terms of its utility for domestic practice. Students at Midwest Christian, for example, discussed developing cultural competency as part of their preparation for working in the "melting pot" of a pluralistic American society, with refugees or immigrants. In contrast, students in West Africa were more likely to discuss developing cultural competency through international collaboration with the goal of one-day living and working abroad. Students at the Midwest schools occasionally spoke about it in these terms, but in the context of perhaps joining the Peace Corps, or at Midwest Christian, as part of a discussion about preparation for working as a missionary.

Another, and perhaps most intriguing variation, was the idea that international collaboration might increase a West African student's cultural competency not towards clients or peers, but towards the profession of social work itself. This was the idea that collaboration might help frame the content of social work textbooks imported from the United Sates, or the content of lectures by visiting professors. At a student at West African University said, international collaboration helps you "understand the context in which the discipline itself was developed." While certain elements of the profession, students mentioned strict adherence to confidentiality

or the acceptance of LGBTQ individuals, may seem "weird," collaboration can at least help contextualize where those ideas are emerging from.

The extent of the positive outcomes in cultural competency associated with international collaboration for students in social work is probably inflated. This applies to notions of global citizenship (Woolf, 2010, p. 47), but also to ideas about cultural competency with more essentialist overtones (Nadan, 2014). The actual outcomes are most likely more modest, but more importantly for this study, are likely differential depending on context. Students from North America who participate in international collaborations in social work education may deepen their appreciation for the profession, or the global nature of social problems, and may someday reflect on the cross-cultural interactions they had during a job interview, but there was nothing in the results that suggest anywhere near the level of personal enrichment, particularly in terms of professional access and personal status, that accompanied participation in international collaborations for students from West African schools.

In addition to cultural competency, a related but independent theme in the responses was the broader idea of developing relationships with the other in order to learn from them. This learning might be about culture, but was sometimes presented more broadly. In interviews with students at the West African institutions this was presented as learning "how to behave" in different contexts, and the differences between how things were "on that side, and on this side." Students from the Midwestern institutions discussed differences, but were less likely to discuss deliberately changing their own behavior in the context of a collaborative visit or exchange.

Another difference between the Midwestern responses and the West African responses was a stronger emphasis on relationships in the West African responses. When discussing learning from an international collaboration, West African respondents were more likely to be

discussing learning from people, whereas Midwestern respondents were more likely to be discussing learning from the more generalized setting, or the experience in general. For example, West African students often recalled specific conversations with fellow students or experiences in classrooms with professors, whereas Midwestern students related stories about everything from being looked at while in rural areas to plumbing and sanitation.

As outlined in the results section, in interviews with students at both Midwest institutions there were undercurrents of a more consumeristic desire for travel or the pursuit of the exotic. That said, while some students admitted they had always wanted to travel "to Africa," the most problematic motivations were always attributed to other students, not to the respondents themselves. Whether these perceptions are telling or imagined is difficult to say.

A final key motivator for students at West African institutions, and one not anticipated by the research questions the study posed, was a higher quality education. This was presented as either a motivator in and of itself, or as part of a larger discussion about professional development and success.

For many of the students at West African Christian, social work collaborations around curriculum development had introduced them to the social work profession. They would not be social workers without international collaboration. Many of these students had come into social work as a second career, or relatively late in life, after working with NGOs. It should be noted that some students chose to study social work at West African Christian more because of the reputation of West African Christian as a school than the specifics of social work as a profession, having initially applied into nursing or other programs. Rather than developing professional identity, for students from the Midwest institutions international collaboration was more often a

way to specialize their professional identity, for example deciding whether a career in international social work might be a good professional fit.

Students at all four institutions spoke about the impact that international collaborations had on teaching. This was in many ways the key area for those students who had not personally participated in an exchange or field placement. All of the students felt that international collaboration improved teaching, for example by improving cultural competency, but there were also unique themes. For students at the Midwestern institutions, and particularly Midwest Christian, international collaboration was a way make the content of their social work education more "real."

In interviews with students at the West African institutions students often discussed a lack of high quality local educational materials and the disparity between the quality of education they were receiving from their home institution and that available through international collaboration. Again, it should be noted here that social work scholars in Africa have discussed how some African students elevate Western theories and pedagogies over indigenous ones, referring to it as a form of self-domination (Dominelli, 2004; Rankopo & Osei-Hwedie, 2011). Students themselves seemed to acknowledge that this was partly a perception, as one student put it, "You know, there's this, there's a general perception that lecturers who are trained outside, I mean, I know first of all we do give them a lot of respect" and that "we perceive them to be of a higher, of having higher intellectual ability as compared to those who are exclusively trained in our setting." So while this theme was definitely present, it is difficult to say how substantive it is. Students at the West African students also frequently discussed culturally translating or adapting ideas, as in this passage:

> "Knowledge in terms of different things that have been done different places. Of course we have the core social work principles that we all abide by, but then you realize that, depending on where you find yourself, you're adapted to that situation, so different things happen at different places though we have the same theories and the principles…"

So while students appreciated the quality of education influenced by international collaboration, they also critically engaged with and adapted it to their own contexts. From the results here, the preoccupation with whether collaborations run the risk of cultural or academic imperialism is may be over stated. The danger of universalism becoming imperialism or a form of colonialism is highlighted throughout the literature (Gray, 2005; Plummer & Omwenga Nyang'au, 2009; Sullivan et al., 2010; Trygged, 2010). However, by and large the students and faculty at West African institutions understood the work of cultural translating ideas and concepts, and indeed pushing back on certain western ideas like individual confidentiality. This seemed in line with Rankopo & Osei-Hwedie (2011), who have called for an indigenous African social work practice, arguing for "a locally relevant social work discourse" which "does not seek to privilege one form of knowledge over others," adding that "If the profession of social work, from the beginning, had adopted such a principle, there would have been no need for the indigenization debate" (p. 145). There is some truth to this, but it also seems true that there will always been the need to indigenize material, to translate ideas and concepts both ways, "on this side," and "on that side."

Finally, for some students, international collaboration was a mark of personal prestige that opened the door to success. This was referred to by students at West African institutions as "bogge" or "been-to," labels that denoted someone had travelled abroad for education and

returned. The prestige of having travelled opened doors for them, and in some cases helped them serve as providers for extended family networks. Indeed, in contrast to how students in the United States tend to frame international exchange as an expense to be budgeted around, and negotiated around the table with parents at Thanksgiving or Christmas, part of the draw of studying abroad for West African students was that it might open the door to resources and jobs, and opportunities to do so were widely supported by families.

Organizational and structural factors

One of the key findings regarding the two collaborations in question was that they were not as well defined as the definition from the social work literature might desire. Collaborations are not being systematically incorporated into the life of institutions. Instead, they appear to be forming around weak ties, whether familial, cultural, or professional, between individual professors, blossoming for a time, and fading when funding disappears or other opportunities present themselves. If international collaborations in social work education are indeed being motivated by the idea that the best way to prepare students for the new global reality of the profession is through experiential education abroad (Barbera, 2006; Gilin & Young, 2009; Heron, 2005; Lindsey, 2005; Lowe, 2008; Panos et al., 2004; Rai, 2004; Rotabi et al., 2006, 2007; Wehbi, 2009), the profession is reaching far too few students, in an extremely uneven way. While there was some discussion about the opportunities for institutions in collaborating internationally, around adding in additional elements like research or field placements, or increasing reciprocity, much of the conversation around organization and structural factors was focused on the challenges international collaborations face.

As coded in the previous chapter, these challenges were split between more logistical challenges and those related to issues of language and culture. The latter are better considered in

the following section on demographic and value based factors, but the former are certainly the bread and butter of organizational and structural factors.

The key finding here is that funding is a massive barrier to international collaboration. Or as one student at West African Christian put it, "One big challenge would be expense. Two, funding." While there was universal enthusiasm for international collaboration, there was always the concern of "who will pay?" When not discussed directly, funding was frequently the background of the conversation, as with discussions about time, and shorter vs. longer exchanges. As a student at West African Christian noted about students and faculty who visited from the U.S., "So if they could stay a longer period it would help a lot."

While not one of the case study collaborations, the administrator at West African University mentioned another collaboration with a European University which funded all sides of the exchange, paying for its faculty members to come to West Africa, and to bring their West African colleagues to Europe. Given the economic realities, Social work values of equity seem to demand such models be taken seriously.

Funding limits not only the ability to have collaborations, but how many students can participate in them. Again, this is a critical challenge if collaboration continues to be positioned as an ideal way to develop a range of important social work competencies, and if social work education broadly continues to emphasize practical experience as its "signature pedagogy." Administrators, particularly the social work administrator at Midwest University, were clear that current models of collaboration remain extremely limited in terms of how many students are actually able to participate, and this is a significant area of concern. Domestically, this will become even more problematic if student bodies continue to expand to include more non-

traditional students, who for a variety of reasons may be less able to participate in an experience abroad.

A final organizational and structural issue that emerged is institutional size and complexity. Both West African University and Midwest University were in the process of re-evaluating existing memorandums of understanding, and pairing back collaborative activities. While in many ways this is laudable, and being done to strengthen existing collaborations, it is always possible that at a large institution the specific social work collaborations may fall out of favor. If the collaboration succeeds at finding institutional favor, it may still face issues, particularly if it is seeking to attract students. While the demand from students in West Africa to come to the Midwest is extremely high, that enthusiasm is not always returned. If part of the collaboration's appeal rests on exoticism, that exposes it to the possibility that newer and more exotic locales will siphon away support. Faculty are not immune to this either. As a university wide administrator at Midwestern University said, "After the romance wears off a bit and faculty interests get more diverse, then it becomes more of a struggle."

Demographic and value based factors

The research questions in this section focused on the role of culture, language, demographics, religion, and the values and principles of social work as a profession. Culture and language certainly played roles, although much of the findings in these areas were to be expected. While participants at all four institutions spoke English, one student at West African Christian said, "Yeah, well, but they are English and English [laughs]." Students also commented on difficulties around the speed of language, and with understanding linguistic oddities and idioms.

Sometimes social workers worry that students reduce culture to "food, faith, and festivals," and there was certainly evidence of that in these interviews, particularly with students from the Midwestern institutions, who occasionally conflated culture with context. At a deeper level, the most substantive cultural factors had to do with the intersection of culture, faith, and social work values and ethics. As outlined in the previous chapter, multiple students at West African institutions expressed discomfort with the way that the social work literature, or social workers from the United States that they had interacted with, framed issues around the rights of LGBTQ persons.

The findings suggest that not enough attention is being paid to the role of religion in international collaborations in social work education. Importantly, faith plays important roles in international collaborations that are being conducted by non-sectarian or public institutions. This seems to be particularly true in West African settings, and that ought to be explored further. As mentioned in the literature review, Karram (2001) examined the international connections of religious higher education in sub-Saharan Africa in particular, pointing out that the largest expansion in higher education in this region has been private, religiously affiliated institutions with international ties, and explicitly calling for "more research into the impacts of religious higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa" (p. 488). The profession would do well to answer this call. As one student at West African University said, "I think that the religious part, you know… Africans, we are very religious, and especially [West African nation] … we are very religious, so we can't rule out religion even in our professional practice." Or as a student from Midwestern University said, "if I said I didn't believe in God they just, it wasn't even like that they didn't like me, they were just, 'Well how can you not?' like they were just very confused about it."

Finally, much has been written in the social work literature about reciprocity as a value of the profession. At face value, the key finding here was that West African students believed their institutions benefitted more from international collaboration than their peer institutions in the United States. This was the idea that, as one West African Christian student put it, "we don't have so much to give out." Or, as a student at West African University said, "It's imbalanced. Totally it's imbalanced."

However, individuals at other levels within the institution perceived this situation differently. For example, an administrator at West African University, who had studied in the United States, was perhaps more away of how institutions there benefit from international collaboration, and certainly more savvy about navigating them. This individual reflected on decades past when,

> "you have a lot of organizations, foreign universities coming to say, 'We want an MOU.' You go through with them and you don't hear from them anymore. So now before they go ahead and sign the MOU they want to see practical steps, actions, what is it that you are going to do to be sure that you are serious about it because we can't continue listing, thousands of schools that we are in collaboration with, but then at the end of the day we don't get to engage with them"

The finding here is that the "wild west" of MOU proliferation may be drawing to a close, and that institutions that were happy to accept any and all comers may be more strategic moving forward.

Theoretical implications

In choosing critical theory as the core of the theoretical framework for this study, the case was made that the literature on social work collaborations actually focuses too much on *theory*, and that from a critical standpoint, theory must always be intertwined with practice (Horkheimer, 1972). In many ways the process of conducting research internationally on international collaborations is itself a form of international collaboration, and it is hoped that this practical effort will help extend a critical eye on collaborations. As mentioned earlier, critical theorists acknowledge the way globalization is changing the world, but seek to emphasize the possibility of more just and equitable ways to build a global community (Burbules & Torres, 2000, p. 2). In bringing a critical eye to international collaborations in social work education, the intent is not to dissuade institutions from participating, but to peel back some of the "system" layers that have begun to develop on the so-called "life world" of international collaboration.

The lens of critical theory introduces a strong note of skepticism, particularly around the role of capitalist market economics, to motivational claims about international collaborations, and the results find reasons to be skeptical. Many collaborations are functioning to build competitive advantage for institutions in the increasingly marketized and massified realm of higher education. As Chan (2004) and others have highlighted the "massification and marketization" of higher education can turn international collaborative activities into little more than a central element of university marketing and public relations efforts (Chan, 2004, p. 35). This is particularly troubling when the personal relationships of faculty members, the so-called weak ties between individual actors at institutions, is being used to provide collaborative advantages for both institutions in relationship to other peer institutions.

If, as Theodor Adorno said, critical theory "seeks to give a name to what secretly holds the machinery together" (1976, p. 68), it seems clear that the answer here is often (though not always) either money or status. Certainly the wider higher education literature suggests that money is a primary motivation for institutional collaboration (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Chan, 2004; Childress, 2009). Or, to return to Haug, (2005):

> Without critically questioning its place in the historical and contemporary dynamics of colonization, imperialism, and Western hegemony, international social work seemed to be presented as a friendly, apolitical, ahistorical, cozy conversation in which participants merrily engage in mutual exchange, through conferences, journals, or international work (in which primarily Western 'experts' teach or consult in non-Western countries). (p. 127)

Social work has not done enough to actively resist the creeping tendency for corporate interests and governments, the system, to work together to control increasing amounts of every day life, in what Habermas terms "the colonization of the life-world" (Habermas, 1987).

When thinking specifically about critical social work, this study used Rossiter's (1996) definition: "The term critical social work refers to theory and practice which assumes that economic, cultural and social structures privilege some and not others" (p. 23). As was outlined in the key findings, who actually benefits is a more complex question than perhaps initially imagined. Yes, students from North America remain disproportionately more likely to travel, but students in West Africa were clear that they benefited substantially from other forms of collaboration, while also being clear that they desired more reciprocity in exchange.

The study also suggested that further research on the role of social networks in the formation of international collaborations in social work education would be very fruitful.

True to predictions from the literature, the collaborations here were largely the result of serendipitous encounters (Healy, 2003), and at the core of both collaborations there was a relationship between distinct individuals (Vincent, 2009). Understanding these mechanisms further would potentially shed light on ways to smooth the process of initiating collaborations, and the process of making them more institutional and less individual.

The institutions that collaborated with one another did share a relative degree of homophily, the tendency for humans and institutions to form connections with those who are similar, as a "basic organizing principle" (McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook, 2001, p. 416). This was true for *status homophily*, meaning demographic similarity, and *value homophily*, sometimes referred to as homogeneity of beliefs (Kadushin, 2011; Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1954; McPherson et al., 2001). Note the similarities in the results between Midwest Christian and West African Christian when discussing the role of faith and between Midwest University and West African University's desire to be seen as players on the global academic scene.

The collaborations also illustrated many of the elements of the theory of collaborative advantage, particularly the first motivation, also consistent with critical theory would predict, that institutions collaborate in order to access resources or markets (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). There was also a heavy emphasis in the results on two other aspects of the theory of collaborative advantage, the desire to learn from the diverse experiences of other institutions and what Huxham and Vangen (2005) call "the moral imperative." In describing the moral imperative, they write,

> Some would argue that the most important reason for being concerned with

> collaboration is a moral one. This rests on the belief that the really important issues facing society – poverty, crime, drug abuse, conflict, health promotion, economic development, and so on – cannot be tackled by any organization acting alone. (p. 7)

While the theoretical framework used in this study did not perfectly predict all of the nuances that emerged in the interview data, it was in large part confirmed by the findings.

Implications for social work policy

As was outlined in the policy section, institutional, professional, national and multinational policies have encouraged growth in international collaborations in higher education (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Huang, 2003; Knight, 2002; Luijten-Lub, Wende, & Huisman, 2005). As was highlighted in the results here, sometimes institutional policies are lacking entirely, or are incomplete or not consulted. Institutions can do a much better job of working collaborations into their policies, and at making MOUs living and breathing documents rather than "moribund" ideas about past partnerships, as one participant noted.

Institutions, and accrediting bodies like CSWE, can do much more to produce models guiding student exchanges, and to reinforce the necessity of some sort of pre-departure preparation, via assigned readings, meetings, or a full-fledged seminar experience (Guevara & Ylvisaker, 2003; Roholt & Fisher, 2013). Again, the content of such pre-departure experiences varies widely, from guest-lectures by nationals of the host country to logistical preparation for travel, but any amount of preparation is better than none (Roholt & Fisher, 2013). Once in country, many models utilize a blend of academic lecture experiences, agency visits, and cultural sites (Roholt & Fisher, 2013). With agency sites, the emphasis is often on critical engagement with a few different agencies rather than attempting to visit as many as possible in the time

allowed (Donnelly-Smith, 2009). Students are often encouraged to focus on process, including emotion (Wilson, 2003). Traditional liberal arts institutions often position collaborative activities as avenues for increasing understanding of the international dimensions of specific fields and developing a more generalized global worldview and critical consciousness (Childress, 2009; Habermas, 1972, 1985). If this is true, institutions would do well to develop the sort of interdisciplinary international collaborations mentioned by the Midwest University administrator in the results above.

At a national level, the United States should be careful to throw its weight into the policy arena around these issues. Without significant care, it is quite possible that to do so would only perpetuate systems that encourage the involvement of students from the United States in international collaborations to simply pursue "exotica" or to adopt a consumerist approach to international experiences (Bolen, 2001; Woolf, 2006). Policy needs to encourage, whenever possible, meaningful and more long term engagement. At present, American students are often going abroad for at most a semester, increasingly far less, whereas their counterparts, especially from the Global South, are more likely to obtain their entire degree abroad (Altbach, 2004). This merits further reflection.

Implications for practice

If social work is to be a global profession (Healy, 2008) and a driver of global social development and human rights (IAASW, IFSW & ICSW, 2012), and if experiential education is the field's "signature pedagogy" (CSWE, 2008), then social work education must collaborate internationally. In 1928 Eglantyne Jebb called for "constant contact between social workers on an international intellectual basis" (FICSW, 1929, p. 651), but it is only in the last several decades that focused scholarship has begun to produce and evaluate models for doing so (Healy

et al., 2003). Interest in such models, moreover, often remains limited to a subset of committed faculty members, and has not often been institutionalized in meaningful ways.

Some best practices have been forwarded for collaborative activities, such as a focus on mutuality and reciprocity, and on intentionally framing experiences before, during, and after travel. Collaborations must not reproduce power differentials or exacerbate resource inequalities, and should be as noninstrusive as possible (Wilson, 2003, p. 122). As already mentioned, educators need to spend more time evaluating and adapting these models.

Collaborations should also be worked into the life of institutions in meaningful ways. Some of the policy frameworks from the 2008 EPAS will encourage this, but if such collaborative activity is as important for practice in the context of globalization as the literature suggests it is, stronger policy frameworks will be necessary at the level of both bodies such as CSWE and individual institutions. Educators committed to international efforts will play a key advocacy role in this regard.

The voices of collaborative partners in the Global South must be heard more often. There is currently little understanding of what differences may exist in motivations for collaboration between institutions in the Global North and Global South. This is an especially important area of inquiry for critical social work. Short-term experiences are being touted as economically efficient methods for producing some of the desired competencies and other outcomes in students, but how are they viewed by partners? What impacts do such short term experiences have on their hosts?

As a final implication, both the historical and current literature on international efforts suggests that participation in international conferences and other forms of contact is essential for building collaborations. The social networks of individual faculty members play a key role, and

one that should not be dismissed easily. Social network analysis makes it clear that the ties collaborations produce, even or perhaps especially as weak ties, are important for bridging between clusters that would not otherwise interact (Putnam, 2001; Kadushin, 2011). Better understanding of these networks will help make the role of conferences and other seemingly more serendipitous encounters clear.

Study strengths and limitations

The current study attempts to fill a gap in the literature related to motivations at multiple levels on both sides of international collaborations in social work education. In doing so, it is important to highlight a number of limitations based on the design of the study and the nature of the sample it examined. The study was designed to be cross-sectional, qualitative, and exploratory. The cross-sectional design did not allow for a divergence or change in opinion over time, or a measure of how attitudes about motivations and outcomes might change if measured before and after participation in international collaboration. Using in-depth, qualitative interviews means that all data is self-reported, and based off of new and untested interview protocols. The study did not produce necessarily measurable, or quantifiable results. This was, however, consistent with the theoretical perspective of the study, which critiques an empirical literature that remains dominated by logical positivism, the idea that "we no longer understand science as one form of possible knowledge, but rather identify knowledge with science" (Habermas, 1972, p. 1). So while other studies might claim more objectivity, those assertions rest on the subjectivity of which questions are asked, how they are asked, and why (Adorno, 1976). The findings here are self-reported, but findings based on the self-reported scales of opinion are just as apt to be producing representations of "the socially average illusion" (Adorno, 1976, p. 86).

While the choice of institutions was purposive, it was in no way representative. Indeed, the number of individuals interviewed at each institution and the nature of their recruitment via a modified snowball method means that respondents are not representative of their institutions either. Given the lack of a random sample, the results here are not generalizable in any way.

It should be also be noted that there is a certain social desirability or political correctness involved in affirming international collaboration as an inherent good. This is true for participants at multiple levels in different ways. At Midwestern institutions, administrators may have been hesitant to criticize work being done by faculty peers, or to acknowledge institutional miss steps, faculty may view their own collaborative work through rose colored lenses, and students may overinflate the impact of experiences they may have spent significant amounts of money on as a sort of justification bias. In identifying gaps in the literature earlier in Chapter 5, the assertion was made that the empirical research on international collaborations in social work education seems to know, a priori, that such collaborations produce positive results for all involved (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002; Roholt & Fisher, 2013). Rather than assume this, the present study attempted to enter this area of scholarship with as open a mind as possible.

Conducting research in West Africa as a white male also presents certain limitations. This is true of cultural and linguistic issues, but also the persistent possibility of role confusion. While both on the protocols and in interviews every effort was made to separate the study from any opportunity for participation in future collaboration, it is quite possible that respondents nevertheless believed that in participating they might be opening doors for themselves in the future.

Conclusion

Social work began as part of an international collaboration (Estes, 2009). From Jane Addams first visit to Toynbee Hall in London in 1888, to the Paris conference of 1928, to current efforts to combat global problems like HIV/AIDS and human trafficking, social work has relied on cooperation through networks of personal relationships and a common sense of working towards social justice and human well-being, dignity and worth. Estes (2009) points out that efforts to respond to technological advances in communication and globalization and the desire to reconnect across borders brings social work back to its roots in the early 1900s (Estes, 2009, p. 6). Across the three waves of social work history, themes from the early conferences remain relevant. The conferences emphasized cross disciplinary collaborations, international activity that respects national identities, increasing professionalism in social work education, personal relationships, and a sense of both urgency and optimism. Each of these has something to say to international efforts today. As Katherine Kendall (2005), a pioneer herself, has stated, "Mining the rich heritage of social work internationally could produce an unanticipated wealth of insights as we struggle to find a significant role and essential place for the profession in a globally interdependent world" (p. 499).

If social work is to regain some of the influence it once wielded at the international level it will have to continue to collaborate, both within the profession and more closely with other professions, to not isolate within a "water-tight" compartment of professional identity. For social work education to remain relevant, it must increasingly incorporate international content and perspectives into every course (CSWE, 2008). It is clear that exchanges, even short term ones, are not possibilities for all students, or even most students. While these sorts of exchanges may currently dominate the literature on international collaboration, there is room for inquiry

into other models for building engagement and reciprocity. Social work at the international level must also be both an area for academic inquiry and a real network of human relationships, where social workers as human beings with dignity and worth collaborate in meaningful and reciprocal ways.

Debates about how collaborations fit into narratives of universalism and indigenization will continue, and scholars have, rightly, pointed out that there are dangers at both polarities. A middle ground of critical modernity is most likely the best option (Healy, 2007; Trygged, 2010). Collaborations should not abandon the idea that we share some universal truths and rights as human beings. They should also not assume that all the ideas and practices of either member in the partnership are automatically superior or even appropriate in the other partner's context. What remains are attempts at reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationships between situated selves (Butterfield, 2007, p. 238). To do so is not to ignore the realities of either party, or that there are inescapable power differentials built into such networks. It is to attempt to find helpful and appropriate ways of conceptualizing collaborations which in reality will continue whether academics would like them to or not.

Most importantly, perhaps, social work must regain a sense of urgency about international matters. Internationally focused higher education broadly is moving, and being moved, in directions that may not be consistent with the core values of the profession. Social work will have to wrestle with how to pursue collaborations in this context. Unfortunately, social work institutions have fallen behind higher education in general with regards to collaborations, and have often failed to live up to value commitments towards egalitarianism and reciprocity. More research is needed to understand how institutional motivations shape social networks of collaborative activities, especially from the perspective of partners outside North

America. This will enable social work to build models that are able to critically challenge dominant narratives and truly respect the specificity of context, history, and culture, while also advocating for what Eglantyne Jebb called the "iron laws" that bind us all.

Finally, both the historical and current literature on international efforts suggests that participation in international conferences and other forms of social contact is essential for building collaborations. The social networks of individual faculty members play a key role, and one that should not be dismissed easily. In one of the opening addresses at the FICSW, the speaker acknowledged that,

> The general public is not always convinced of the importance of a congress such as that which we are inaugurating today. When taking leave of one's compatriots, if one informs them that one is going to take part in a congress, it is not unusual to see a faint smile on their lips. (1929, p. 149)

While some will continue to see international collaborations as thinly veiled vacations, social network analysis makes it clear that the ties they produce, perhaps especially as weak ties, are important for bridging between clusters that would not otherwise interact (Putnam, 2001; Kadushin, 2011). As international collaborations are increasingly driven by market forces and competition, social work may have a unique role in emphasizing that at the heart of collaborations are relationships between people.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: A Methodological note on Ebola

Liberia reported its first two cases of Ebola on March 30, 2014. Later epidemiological investigation traced the outbreak to a remote area in Guinea, near the Liberian border. The people of the Mano River Basin (which includes Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone) share tribal identities across international borders, and travel between them is very common. Throughout the West African region, the epidemic resulted in more than 10,000 confirmed cases in Liberia, and 5,000 deaths. Many think that actual figures are higher than these official estimates. The peak number of cases came in October and November of 2014, with cases falling into the spring of 2015.

I was in the region in January of 2014, after the outbreak had begun but before it had become known. I was originally scheduled to conduct research for my dissertation in January of 2015, but this was all but impossible given travel restrictions and costs. Beyond that, however, it seemed inappropriate to conduct research on collaborations in social work education during such an acute moment of crisis, especially one like Ebola.

The epidemic was exacerbated by a variety of issues: most prominently the severe poverty and under-development that the three most affected nations share, but also a lack of health care and sanitation infrastructure, political corruption, and traditional cultural caretaker and burial practices.

The WHO declared Liberia Ebola free on May 9, 2015, after a period of 42 days had passed without a new case of the disease. I immediately scheduled travel to the region, and arrived in late June. Unfortunately, Liberia reported a new fatality from Ebola on June 28, a 17-year-old boy who was confirmed to have died of the disease. For many of the individuals interviewed in this study, I was the first non-health care related outside individual they had

spoken with in a significant amount of time. Whether this impacted my results in any way is difficult to determine.

The region remains on high alert, and is struggling to deal simultaneously with the threat of future outbreaks of the disease and the fallout from the recent epidemic. This includes learning how to diagnose and treat "Post Ebola Syndrome," a condition that manifests itself in joint pain, problems with vision, and memory loss. Many survivors and families of victims lost their homes, as they were frequently burned to the ground by community members in an effort to stem the spread of the disease. It also includes attempting to care for the many orphans the epidemic created. Finally, it involves attempts to provide psychosocial support for survivors and those who lost family members, and efforts to reduce the stigma that Ebola survivors now encounter in their own communities. West Africa is unfortunately a region acquainted with trauma, but as Sister Barbara, a Catholic nun living in Liberia, wrote in a Huffington Post piece "During the war, you could at least hear the bullets, and you knew when to duck. Ebola different. It's a silent killer that can spread without people even knowing."

Appendix B: Institutional Review Board Exemption

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Initial IRB Application Determination *Exempt*

December 19, 2014

To: DeBrenna Agbenyiga
254 Baker Hall
School of Social Work

Re: **IRB# x14-1275e** Category: Exempt 1
Approval Date: December 12, 2014

Title: Motivations for International Collaborations in Social Work Education

The Institutional Review Board has completed their review of your project. I am pleased to advise you that **your project has been deemed as exempt** in accordance with federal regulations.

The IRB has found that your research project meets the criteria for exempt status and the criteria for the protection of human subjects in exempt research. **Under our exempt policy the Principal Investigator assumes the responsibilities for the protection of human subjects** in this project as outlined in the assurance letter and exempt educational material. The IRB office has received your signed assurance for exempt research. A copy of this signed agreement is appended for your information and records.

Renewals: Exempt protocols do not need to be renewed. If the project is completed, please submit an ***Application for Permanent Closure***.

Revisions: Exempt protocols do not require revisions. However, if changes are made to a protocol that may no longer meet the exempt criteria, a new initial application will be required.

Problems: If issues should arise during the conduct of the research, such as unanticipated problems, adverse events, or any problem that may increase the risk to the human subjects and change the category of review, notify the IRB office promptly. Any complaints from participants regarding the risk and benefits of the project must be reported to the IRB.

Follow-up: If your exempt project is not completed and closed after three years, the IRB office will contact you regarding the status of the project and to verify that no changes have occurred that may affect exempt status.

Please use the IRB number listed above on any forms submitted which relate to this project, or on any correspondence with the IRB office.

Good luck in your research. If we can be of further assistance, please contact us at 517-355-2180 or via email at IRB@msu.edu. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

H. McGee

Harry McGee, MPH
SIRB Chair

c: Joseph Kuilema

Office of Regulatory Affairs
Human Research Protection Programs

Biomedical & Health Institutional Review Board (BIRB)

Community Research Institutional Review Board (CRIRB)

Social Science Behavioral/Education Institutional Review Board (SIRB)

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Appendix C: Faculty and Administrator Consent and Protocol

Consent Form for the Research Project:
Motivations for International Collaborations in Social Work Education
Interview Protocol

A research project conducted by:
Joseph Kuilema, MSW
School of Social Work, Michigan State University

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of this research is to identify institutional motivations for international collaborations in social work education and the outcomes they achieve. Other areas of inquiry include the primary decision making factors driving collaboration, specifically organizational and structural factors, impacts on students, and factors related to demographics and values. The study helps address a gap in the literature on international collaborations in social work education, particularly those between institutions in North America and Africa. The study will present the experience of two collaborative institutional pairs in this field and discuss potential recommendations for implementing collaborative activities in social work education in the future. I have planned this interview to last no longer than 90 minutes.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL
Participation is in this research is voluntary; you may choose not to participate, or you may choose to withdraw from the study at a later date, even if you agree to participate now. You may also agree to participate but refuse to answer particular questions.

CONFIDENTIALITY
Any information collected from you in connection with this research will be confidential and kept private. Your privacy and confidentiality will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. However, I cannot ensure that your information will be kept confidential by the other participants at your institution, or a partner institution. All identifying information such as your personal name or name of the institution you represent will not be placed on any interviews or reports. Instead, you will be assigned an ID number that will be used to mark your interview and the interview recording. To ensure your privacy, I will keep interviews in a locked file cabinet, and only I will have access to them. If you are comfortable being recorded for this interview, I will also keep recordings and transcriptions in a locked filing cabinet and a secure, password protected computer. When the results of the research are published or discussed at conferences, neither your identity, nor the identity of your institution, will be revealed. Transcriptions and audio recordings of interviews will be destroyed after the study is completed, approximately in 2018 or sooner. Data will be retained for a minimum of three years following the closure of the project, per the Michigan State University policy.

POTENTIAL RISKS/BENEFITS
In addition to the possibility of identification by someone at your own institution or partner institution, it is possible that given the specific geographic focus of the research, and the number of social work institutions engaged in international collaborative activities, an informed reader might identify comments as your own despite the above efforts to ensure confidentiality. Apart

from this risk, there are no foreseeable risks anticipated with participation in this research. Also, there are no direct benefits guaranteed to you because of your participation in this research study. However, your participation will help understand the institutional motivations for collaboration and the outcomes they achieve, and in doing so contribute to the understanding of such collaborative activities within social work education.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

If you have concerns or questions about this research, such as scientific issues, how to complete any part of it, or to report an injury, please contact the researcher: Joseph Kuilema, MSW, by phone: +1 (616) 526-6489, or email: kuilemaj@msu.edu. If you have questions or concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Michigan State University's Human Research Protection Program at 517-355-2180, Fax 517-432-4503, or e-mail irb@msu.edu or regular mail at 408 W. Circle Drive, Room 207 Olds Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Please sign below to indicate that you are aware of the purpose of this research study and are agreeing to participant even though there is no direct benefit involved in your participation.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this research.

_____ _____

Participant Signature Date

_____ _____

Researcher/Interviewer Signature Date

I agree to let this interview be recorded for accuracy purposes. The researcher has informed me that the information collected will be kept confidential.

Yes ____

No ____

Interview Protocol for Faculty and Administrators

Institution: _____

Interviewee Position: _____

Introductory Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to talk with me. This research is being done is to better understand institutional motivations for international collaborations in social work education.

To facilitate my note-taking, I would like your permission to record this interview, so I may accurately document the information you convey. I will be the only one with access to this recording, and it will be eventually destroyed after transcription. At this time I would like to remind you of your written consent to participate in this study. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) there are limited potential risks for your participation, although there may be questions that you are uncomfortable answering or to which you would simply prefer not to respond. Thank you for your agreeing to participate.

Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Then with your permission we will begin the interview.

Introduction

You have been selected to speak with us today because of your institution's partnership with (insert partner here). This research project as a whole focuses on improving understanding of institutional motivations for pursuing international collaborations in social work education, including both what provided the initial impetus for engagement and what the perceived benefits or outcomes of ongoing collaboration are.

Personal Perspective

Interviewee Background

How long have you been in your present position?

How long have you been at this institution?

What is your field of study?

What is your highest degree?

From which institution did you obtain this degree?

Personal Interviewee Involvement with the Collaboration

How many years have you been involved in the collaboration?

Probes: How early in the process were you involved?

Describe your role in the collaboration with (insert partner here).

Probes: How did you get involved? What joint activities have you participated in?

How has your role in the collaboration changed since you became involved, if at all?

Probes: Has your involvement increased or decreased at various times?

What motivates you personally to be involved in the collaboration?

Probes: What interested you in collaborating? What do you value about the collaboration?

What have been the outcomes for you of involvement in the collaboration?

Probes: How has the collaboration impacted your teaching, if at all? How has the collaboration impacted your scholarship? How has it impacted your understanding of the need for international social work education?

Institutional Perspective

Primary decision making factors

Who initiated the collaboration?

Probes: How long ago? Who was involved at the beginning?

How did the collaboration begin?

Probes: What were the initial steps? What did it look like then as compared to how it looks now?

What is your understanding of what motivates your institution to be involved in international collaboration?

What is the strategy at (insert institution) for choosing international partners for collaboration?

Probes: Is it working – why or why not? How has it changed over time?

How has the collaboration been funded?

Probes: What resources are available to faculty for international collaboration? How are they allocated? Is there a financial reciprocal model for engagement?

What role, if any, have materials (books, computers, or other educational materials) played in the collaboration?

What role, if any, have conferences played in the collaboration?

What role, if any, has technology played in the collaboration?

What role, if any, have field placements/practicums played in the collaboration?

Organizational and structural factors

What are the major opportunities for your institution in collaborating internationally?

What are some of the major challenges your institution faces in collaborating internationally?

Probes: How can barriers be overcome? How can opportunities be maximized?

Have you or your colleagues encountered resistance to international collaboration from your institution?

How reciprocal is the collaboration from your perspective?

Probes: Are the institutions equally invested in the collaboration?

What role, if any, have professional organizations like the IASSW and IFSW played in the collaboration?

How has the collaboration impacted, or been impacted by, changes and challenges in social work curricula?

Probes (for North American partners): How has CSWE impacted your collaborative activities? How have the 2008 EPAS impacted your collaborative activities?

To what extent has your collaboration been driven by interest from students?

Are there any particular characteristics that you associate with faculty or administrators who are interested in international collaborative activities?

To what extent are international collaborative activities evaluated at your institution?

Demographic and value based factors

To what extent are international collaborative activities valued within your social work program?

How do international collaborations benefit social work education?

What role (if any) have language differences had in your collaboration?

What role (if any) have cultural differences played in your collaboration?

Probes: How have you addressed cultural differences with your partner institution?

What role (if any) have religious or spiritual commitments played in your collaboration?

Student Involvement

How do students benefit from institutional collaboration internationally?

How do you go about assessing whether students benefit from institutional collaboration internationally?

Probe: When is this done? What does this look like? How is this information being used?

Are there any particular characteristics that you associate with students who are interested in international collaborative activities?

Post Interview Notes and/or Observations:

Appendix D: Faculty and Administrator Consent and Protocol

Consent Form for the Research Project:
Motivations for International Collaborations in Social Work Education
Student Survey

A research project conducted by:
Joseph Kuilema, MSW
School of Social Work, Michigan State University

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of this research is to identify institutional motivations for international collaborations in social work education and the outcomes they achieve. Other areas of inquiry include the primary decision making factors driving collaboration, specifically organizational and structural factors, impacts on students, and factors related to demographics and values. The study helps address a gap in the literature on international collaborations in social work education, particularly those between institutions in North America and Africa. The study will present the experience of two collaborative institutional pairs in this field and discuss potential recommendations for implementing collaborative activities in social work education in the future. I have planned this focus group to last no longer than 90 minutes.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL
Participation is in this research is voluntary; you may choose not to participate, or you may choose to withdraw from the study at a later date, even if you agree to participate now. You may also agree to participate but refuse to answer particular questions.

CONFIDENTIALITY
Any information collected from you in connection with this research will be confidential and kept private. Your privacy and confidentiality will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. However, I cannot ensure that your information will be kept confidential by the other participants at your institution, or a partner institution. All identifying information such as your personal name or name of the institution you attend will not be placed on any survey or report. Instead, you will be assigned an ID number that will be used to mark your survey. To ensure your privacy, I will keep surveys in a locked file cabinet or on a secure, password protected computer, and only I will have access to them. When the results of the research are published or discussed at conferences, neither your identity, nor the identity of your institution, will be revealed. Surveys will be destroyed after the study is completed, approximately in 2018 or sooner. Data will be retained for a minimum of three years following the closure of the project, per the Michigan State University policy.

POTENTIAL RISKS/BENEFITS
As mentioned above, there is the possibility of identification by someone at your own institution or partner institution. Apart from this risk, there are no foreseeable risks anticipated with participation in this research. Also, there are no direct benefits guaranteed to you because of your participation in this research study. However, your participation will help understand the institutional motivations for collaboration and the outcomes they achieve, and in doing so contribute to the understanding of such collaborative activities within social work education.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

If you have concerns or questions about this research, such as scientific issues, how to complete any part of it, or to report an injury, please contact the researcher: Joseph Kuilema, MSW, by phone: +1 (616) 526-6489, or email: kuilemaj@msu.edu. If you have questions or concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Michigan State University's Human Research Protection Program at 517-355-2180, Fax 517-432-4503, or e-mail irb@msu.edu or regular mail at 408 W. Circle Drive, Room 207 Olds Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Please sign below to indicate that you are aware of the purpose of this research study and are agreeing to participant even though there is no direct benefit involved in your participation.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this research.

_____ _____

Participant Signature Date

_____ _____

Researcher/Interviewer Signature Date

I agree to let this interview be recorded for accuracy purposes. The researcher has informed me that the information collected will be kept confidential.

Yes ____

No ____

Student Focus Group Protocol

Thank you for agreeing to talk with me. This research study is being done is to better understand institutional motivations for international collaborations in social work education.

To facilitate my note-taking, I would like your permission to record this focus group, so I may accurately document the information you convey. I will be the only one with access to this recording, and it will be eventually destroyed after transcription. At this time I would like to remind you of your written consent to participate in this study. Essentially, this document states that: (1) all information will be held confidential, (2) your participation is voluntary and you may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable, and (3) there are limited potential risks for your participation, although there may be questions that you are uncomfortable answering or to which you would simply prefer not to respond. By participating in this focus group, you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in this research study.

Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Then with your permission we will begin.

Introduction

You have been selected to speak with us today because of your institution's partnership with (insert partner here). This research project as a whole focuses on improving understanding of institutional motivations for pursuing international collaborations in social work education, including both what provided the initial impetus for engagement and what the perceived benefits or outcomes of ongoing collaboration are.

Personal Perspective

How have you been involved in the collaboration?

Probes: How did you get involved? What joint activities have you participated in?

What motivates you personally to be involved in the collaboration?

Probes: If you have not been involved, why not?

What have been the outcomes for you of involvement in the collaboration?

Institutional Perspective

Primary decision making factors

What do you know about how this collaboration began?

What is your understanding of what motivates your institution to be involved in international collaboration?

Organizational and structural factors

What are the major opportunities for your institution in collaborating internationally?

What are some of the major challenges your institution faces in collaborating internationally?

How reciprocal is the collaboration from your perspective?

> Probes: Are the institutions equally invested in the collaboration? Does one institution benefit more than the other?

To what extent has your collaboration been driven by interest from you as students?

Demographic and value based factors

To what extent are international collaborative activities valued within your social work program?

How do international collaborations benefit social work education?

What role (if any) have language differences had in your collaboration?

What role (if any) have cultural differences played in your collaboration?

> Probes: How have you addressed cultural differences with your partner institution?

What role (if any) have religious or spiritual commitments played in your collaboration?

Student Involvement

How do you as students benefit from institutional collaboration internationally?

> Probes: How does participating in collaborative activities impact students? How do international collaborations impact social work goals like cultural competency or global citizenship?

Are there any particular characteristics that you associate with students who are interested in international collaborative activities?

What additional comments do you have?
THANK YOU for participating in this study.

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REFERENCES

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