Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies

Internationalization and Student Mobility: Exploring the Mobility of Higher Education Students in East Africa

By

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Varelian Kataraiha and Peragia Kataraiha, who taught me the value of hard work. To my beautiful wife, Gift Frank Mary, who loves me unconditionally. To my children, Margret, Vianney, Harvey, and Bakhita, who have been affected in various ways by my travels abroad. To all of them, I am grateful.

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ABSTRACT

Internationalization of higher education (IHE), notably through student mobility, has a long history and has been extensively researched. Despite this reality, more research is needed, particularly about intra-African student mobility. IHE has generally been interpreted using evidence from the global North, which does not correspond to the African context, particularly its colonial history and socioeconomic challenges. The present study uses a mixed methods approach to explore some rationales for intra-African student mobility in East Africa. Quantitative data were collected from 195 international students in two Ugandan universities, i.e., Makerere University and Kampala International University, using a self-administered questionnaire sent by email. Qualitative data were collected through 16 interviews with international students, staff from international student offices in the selected universities, staff from the country's higher education regulatory agencies, and a senior immigration officer. Data analysis reveals that intra-African student mobility occurs for reasons that complicate – and sometimes challenge – widely ignored issues about student mobility: 1) the direction of student flows is influenced by colonial legacies and past histories of hosting international students by certain countries, as well as economic imperatives; 2) while international student mobility tends to reproduce social class, it is also used by students from lower social classes to resist social class positioning; 3) although international students are desirable in the host country, they are subjected to restrictive immigration policies. This study contributes to understanding why African people invest in international student mobility. It contributes to the growing body of research on critical internationalization and paves the way for future research on the same topic in other parts of the global South.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Quality of higher education

A general view of what quality in higher education (HE) means can be obtained by considering quality indicators regarding the role of HE in society. The indicators must reflect students' interests, as they are the primary and direct consumers of HE services (Prasad & Jha, 2013). Broadly speaking, quality in HE embraces its "functions and activities, including teaching, academic programs, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment" (UNESCO, 1998, p. 25). Cadena et al. (2018) suggest similar attributes, pointing out that HE quality is assessed based on parameters in an institution such as "research, teaching, management, resources, links with society and students" (p. 10219). Each parameter consists of various indicators[1] for assessing HE quality, further explained by Cadena et al. (2018).

Internationalization of higher education

This present study adopts de Wit et al.'s (2015) definition of IHE, which states that internationalization of higher education (IHE) is

> the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff and to make a meaningful contribution to society (p. 29).

The definition is relevant to this study of intra-African student mobility because it is descriptive and forward-looking. It sheds light on how higher education institutions can be strengthened in the African context, for example, by building and strengthening links between them and national and international societies. Such links are crucial for Africa's growth and for reducing the continued dependence on, and copying of Western education approaches. The adoption of this definition helps in integrating international values into African realities, including challenges, values, needs, and priorities, so as to develop an African approach to internationalization. Notably, the definition suggests that internationalization can make institutions more relevant to society. This is essential for Africa's advancement and development, by addressing education-related challenges,

[1] Appendix 1 gives details of these parameters and indicators and the questionnaire developed from them.

minimizing social class inequalities, and contributing to policy discourses such as those on the mobility of people within and beyond the continent. Further, this definition is comprehensive and addresses all aspects of HE; it shows that IHE aims at serving 'all students and staff,' suggesting that IHE should be inclusive or at least increase the possibilities for disadvantaged students to participate in IHE opportunities.

However, de Wit et al.'s (2015) definition assumes that IHE is always an 'intentional' process, which may not always hold in different contexts. Teferra (2019), for example, explains that IHE in Africa is more of a coercive than an intentional process. Teferra (2019) argues that, as it has the weakest HE systems globally, Africa relies on the discourses, paradigms, and parameters determined by foreigners, which makes it prone to global impulses and practices. In South Africa, for example, activities aimed at IHE are dominated by funders from Europe and North America (Orla & Tasmeera, 2022). A similar situation is witnessed in East Africa, where funding bodies based in Germany have funded several student mobility processes (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). However, funds from the global North to the global South often come with conditions dictating directions for the beneficiaries. As argued by Teferra (2019), in adopting these foreign practices in HE, African universities are not necessarily willing parties, since they are compelled to follow conditions dictated by the global North. The attempts to conform to such conditions explain the imperfections associated with IHE in Africa. Such foreign practices usually lack the necessary infrastructure on the ground, and are at times not clear to the HEIs and governments in Africa. The initiatives therefore lack the support and direction necessary for their effectiveness.

Adopting de Wit et al.'s (2015) definition allows for some discussion about its failure to perfectly suit the context of the global South, as pointed out by Teferra (2020a). Teferra (2020a) disagrees with de Wit et al.'s (2015) assumption that IHE is a purely intentional process. In his view, some HEIs choose to internationalize, while many others – especially in Africa – are forced to do so. He argues that African HEIs produce the least amount of knowledge globally, which makes them consumers of knowledge from the world's major knowledge producers. African HEIs are expected to conform to academic and scholastic norms and values, especially those of the global North. The assertion that the process is intentional makes this definition prescriptive and curative, and thus less applicable to the African context. The definition of IHE could be more holistic, and inclusive

of African realities, if left descriptive. Better still, the global South should come up with approaches to internationalization that relate to its context.

International student mobility

The terms 'mobility' and 'migration' are sometimes used interchangeably, although they can be used to mean different things. For Adu (2020), mobility refers to short-term movements of less than twelve months, while migration refers to longer-term movements of more than twelve months. However, Castles (2010) points out that the motives for participating in international student mobility (ISM) vary over time; students initially classified as 'mobile' may become 'migrants' later. Thus, categorizing students as mobile or migrants is not essential, since migration might be intentional or unintentional, immediate, or may come after some time. Thinking about mobility in terms of the *ability* to migrate, whether for a short or a long time, is more relevant (Jónsson, 2011).

Although ISM has been popular within current research discourses, it has a somewhat inconsistent definitions, even in official documents (Wells et al., 2013). For example, according to the European Parliament and Council (2006), ISM is defined as "a period of learning abroad (formal and non-formal), or mobility undertaken by individual young people or adults, for formal and non-formal learning and their personal and professional development" (p. 8). Similarly, Kelo et al. (2006) define ISM as the "act of crossing national borders for academic study" (p. 5). This study adopts the OECD (2022b) definition of ISM which considers it to be an indicator that shows the number of international HE students as a proportion of the total number of HE students enrolled in the destination (host) country.

Inbound and outbound international student mobility

According to Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck (2015), ISM is about students who have crossed the borders of their home country to reside and study in another country, either on a short-term or long-term basis. As Bridger (2015) explains, ISM can be both inbound (into a country) and outbound (out of a country), i.e., inbound or outbound ISM. Inbound mobility means that the host country or university hosts students from abroad for a certain period. In contrast, outbound mobility means students participate in academic programs offered at a university in another country (Lwin et al., 2021).

Global North

The term *global North* not only refers to a geographical region but also to countries' relative power and wealth (Braff & Nelson, 2022). Specifically, the term refers to "developed countries that are concentrated in the Northern Hemisphere and characterized by high-income levels, technological advancement, well-developed infrastructure, and macroeconomic and political stability" (Kowalski, 2020, p. 1). While this definition indicates what characterizes the global North, it suggests that wealth and power are evenly distributed within countries of the global North. However, as Braff & Nelson (2022) explain, societies within the global North exist in several different strata to the extent that there are also less powerful and less wealthy individuals and nations in the global North. That is why Sheppard & Nagar (2004) claim that the "global North is constituted by a network of political and economic elites that spans privileged places around the world" (p. 558), such that national boundaries cannot accurately separate the rich from the poor or the developed from the underdeveloped. However, the global North is generally wealthy and powerful regardless of internal differences.

Global South

The term 'global South' has different meanings, with Mahler (2017) stating that at least three definitions exist. The term is used to refer to the "de-territorialized geography of capitalism's impacts and means to account for subjugated peoples within the borders of wealthier countries, such that there are Souths in the geographic North, and Norths in the geographic South" (Mahler, 2017, p. 1). Whereas this position may be acceptable, it presents challenges if one intends to take a generalized point of view about a specific area. In the same publication, Mahler's (2017) second definition of the term advances that it refers to "the resistant imaginary of a transnational political subject that results from a shared experience of subjugation under contemporary global capitalism" (p. 1). This definition differs from the previous one, which points out that the construct does not have to be tied to official national or geographic borders.

The present study adopts a third definition of this term (Clarke, 2018), i.e., nations that are classified as being in the low or middle income brackets by the World Bank, and are located in Africa, Asia, Oceania, Latin America, or the Caribbean. While this definition includes different regions as part of the global South, the term is mainly used in this study to refer to Africa's low or middle-income countries.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANIE	African Network for Internationalization of Education
BP	Bologna Process
CVI	Content validity index
CST	Critical Social Theory
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAC	East African Community
EACHEA	East African Common Higher Education Area
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Services
GDP	Gross Domestic product
HE	Higher Education
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IUCEA	Inter-University Council for East Africa
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IHE	Internationalization of higher education
ISM	International student mobility
KIU	Kampala International University
MU	Makerere University
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoESTS	Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (Uganda)
NCHE	National Council for HE (Uganda)
NCST	National Council for Science and Technology (Uganda)
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Policies
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNCST	Uganda National Council for Science and Technology
WTO	World Trade Organization

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Internationalization, primarily through international student mobility (ISM), is a historical issue in the field of higher education (HE) that gained prominence during the early 1980s (de Wit, 2002) to promote the political ideologies of some countries in the global North (Bamberger & Morris, 2023). The process grew to assume a central role in universities and is now a key thematic area of study in HE (Tight, 2022). While the internationalization of higher education (IHE) involves many aspects and activities, the most popular one is ISM (de Wit, 2019). Several factors have contributed to the prominence of ISM. These include the rise in global demand for HE, the perceived value of studying in reputable higher education institutions (HEIs) abroad, the increase in policies promoting regional student mobility, lower transportation and communication costs, and the internationalization of labor markets for highly skilled people (OECD, 2023). Governments and international bodies also promote ISM based on academic, cultural, social, and political ties between countries. Importantly, ISM is a source of revenue for HEIs (Rizvi, 2022) and a strategy for some countries to recruit highly skilled migrants (OECD, 2023).

The present study starts by locating East Africa's ISM initiatives in Africa's broader history of education. Contrary to popular belief, an education system that facilitated the transfer of knowledge, skills, and attitudes between generations existed in Africa long before the continent experienced the slave trade and colonization (Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2019a). Indeed, learning centers existed in Mali, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Morocco as early as 859 AD (Alemu, 2018). Accordingly, education development in Africa can be classified into the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods. During the precolonial period, education in Africa was mainly by word of mouth, without written documentation (Nyangaresi, 2021). This has made proving the existence of education in Africa before colonialism challenging; the idea is often dismissed or deliberately distorted in order to sustain the subjugation of Africans (Mosweunyane, 2013).

This research explores the evolution of HE in Africa, with the main focus being the postcolonial period until the present day, since most of the global and local events that shaped HE in Africa occurred during this time. For example, during the 1970s, the number of students studying in HEIs outside their home countries rose to around 0.8 million by 1975. Between the 1990s and the 2000s,

this number skyrocketed to the point where, by 2006, the global number of internationally mobile students surpassed 2.9 million (OECD, 2008), reaching over 5.3 million in 2017 (OECD, 2019). International students worldwide are expected to reach 8 million by 2025 (Hsu & Huang, 2017). Students from Africa are the most internationally mobile globally, with about 5% of HE students studying in universities outside their home country (Kigotho, 2020; Kritz, 2015; Laakso, 2020).

For a long time, African students have traveled to countries in the global North, such as the US, UK, Australia, and Canada (Alem, 2014; OECD, 2019; Shields, 2013), searching for educational opportunities. However, the mobility trend has recently expanded with the emergence of new study destinations such as China, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, and South Africa (Glass & Cruz, 2023). Consequently, some developing countries in Africa, including South Africa (Southern Africa), Uganda and Kenya (East Africa), and Ghana and Senegal (West Africa), have established themselves as regional educational hubs that attract a sizeable number of internationally mobile students (Sehoole & Lee, 2021). The phenomenon of African internationally mobile students enrolling in universities in other African countries (Madichie & Madichie, 2013) has increased the relevance of the less-explored concept of intra-African ISM (Sehoole & Lee, 2021). In this study, 'intra-African student mobility' refers to the situation in which African students cross the borders of their home countries to pursue all or part of their education in other African countries.

ISM will remain popular in Africa, partly because many African countries have a low capacity to provide quality HE services to the high number of students seeking such services (ICEF Monitor, 2019a; Laakso, 2020; Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015). Additionally, several regional, national, and institutional initiatives, including scholarship programs, student exchanges, and collaborations, facilitate ISM across the continent (Sehoole & Lee, 2021). These factors notwithstanding, Riaño and Piguet (2016) indicate that "studies on mobility within and into countries of the global south are scarce" (p. 3), with most of the available studies focusing primarily on the global North (Lee & Sehoole, 2015; Sehoole & Lee, 2021). However, no internationalization model can be expected to fit all contexts (de Wit, 2019). For example, the contextual differences between the global North and South shape ISM differently. Therefore, relying on studies about South–North ISM to explain intra-African ISM may not suffice since social contexts strongly influence the nature of ISM (Brooks & Waters, 2020).

While most African countries have embraced internationalization in practical ways (Xiu-Lan & Geo-JaJa, 2013), the concept has yet to receive significant scholarly attention from African perspectives (Tight, 2022). Only a few studies (e.g., Kritz, 2015; Mulvey, 2020; Schulmann, 2017) have been conducted about ISM in Africa, but their main focus is on Africa's outbound mobility trends (Sehoole & Lee, 2021). In particular, intra-African student mobility and the contextual dynamics that influence it have yet to be subjected to detailed analysis. This is the knowledge gap regarding ISM that this study intends to narrow. The study delves into how internationalization and other global pressures shape ISM within East Africa.

Western industrialized countries tend to portray internationalization as a transformative process (Alemu et al., 2022), with broadly positive interventions and humanitarian, cosmopolitan associations (Bamberger & Morris, 2023). However, from the developing world's perspective, internationalization can be imbalanced, hegemonic, and challenging (Alemu et al., 2022). Thus, seeking to examine ISM from the perspective of countries in the global South contributes to a more robust and differentiated understanding of IHE. Moreover, recent studies have called for new approaches to studying IHE and for the limitation of the propagation of its neoliberal and commercial orientations (Mulvey, 2022). As de Wit (2014) argues, IHE currently "requires an update, refreshment, and fine-tuning considering the new world and HE order" (p. 97). This calls for a plurality of studies on this topic, i.e., "internationalization should no longer be considered in terms of a Westernized, largely Anglo-Saxon, and predominantly English-speaking paradigm" (Jones & de Wit, 2014, p. 28).

Studies on inbound student mobility trends in non-European parts of the world (such as Africa) enrich global conversations about internationalization (Tamrat, 2018a). The present study contributes to this endeavor by providing ISM perspectives from East Africa. The study uses critical theory to "de-naturalize assumptions and ideas that frame and limit thoughts about internationalization," as suggested by Buckner and Stein (2020, p. 153). This is because dominant discourses have depicted internationalization as a clean-handed good that is necessary and desirable (Stein, 2017). However, according to Mwangi et al. (2018), internationalization is associated with contradictory political and ethical issues. Therefore, the fundamental values that underpin IHE must be rethought (Knight, 2014a). This study contributes to this goal by examining how the fundamental values of international education, i.e., inclusivity, equity, ethics, social

responsibility, accessibility, and accountability (Buckner & Stein, 2020), inform the phenomenon of ISM within the global South, particularly within East Africa.

With more students seeking study positions in HEIs abroad and universities striving to recruit students beyond their geographical locations, ISM has become an essential aspect of the HE sector (OECD, 2022a). In particular, about 20,000 international students, mainly from the East African community, are enrolled in HEIs in Uganda (National Council for Higher Education, NCHE, 2022a). Although some studies (e.g., Beke, 2021; Hodzi, 2020; Kigotho, 2023a) have investigated the mobility of African students, they focus on their outbound mobility. The findings from such studies do not fully reflect the contextual factors that shape ISM into and within transitional economies in Africa. Since intra-African student mobility has not attracted a significant number of studies, ISM in Africa tends to be interpreted using viewpoints mainly from the global North, and as such, does not precisely reflect the African context, which differs from that in the global North (Lee & Sehoole, 2021).

The study examines the rationale for ISM in the global South (in East Africa) by applying the critical social theory (CST) approach to internationalization. It analyzes HE systems in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi, the social class of mobile students, and migration policy regulations for internationally mobile students. Examining the rationale for ISM in this part of the global South is crucial since this issue has yet to be thoroughly addressed empirically. For example, current mobility trends show major shifts – mobile students' demographics and educational systems are no longer the same as they once were (University of Oxford, 2017). The validity of such claims is tested in the present research study. Further, Shields (2013) holds that internationally mobile students are motivated by family, economic, and cultural influences in their selection of study destinations. Such considerations result in a complex, student- and context-dependent mix, constituting a vital aspect explored in this study.

According to Uganda's National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), most international students in Uganda come from the East African region (NCHE, 2022a). While the study mainly analyzed the mobility of African students into Uganda (the focus of this study), emphasis is also on the broader mobility of East African students, primarily from Rwanda and Burundi. In this study, Rwanda and Burundi are conceived as East Africa's sending countries for internationally

mobile students, while Uganda is the receiving country. The research aims to examine the rationale underpinning ISM in East Africa, particularly in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi. The study objectives are to:

(i) Investigate the influence of the quality of HE systems in East African sending and receiving countries regarding ISM;
(ii) Determine how ISM benefits East Africa's privileged social classes;
(iii) Investigate immigration policy provisions for international students in East Africa.
The study addresses and attempts to answer the following three research questions in line with the preceding study objectives:
(i) How do HE systems in the sending and receiving countries of international students affect ISM in East Africa?
(ii) How does social class privilege influence ISM in East Africa?
(iii) How do immigration policies affect international students in East Africa?

Advocates for internationalization suggest that African HEIs should promote ISM since it has several benefits for students, HEIs, and nations (Andoh & Salmi, 2019; Zimmermann et al., 2021). In this way, internationalization is viewed as being entirely beneficial (Shields & Lu, 2023); however, the colonial perspective inherent in ISM (Shahjahan & Edwards, 2022) and how it tends to reproduce social class discrimination – hence deepening inequalities – is seldom examined (Shields & Lu, 2023). This study investigates the education systems in the selected countries (Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi), the social class of international students, and immigration policies and how they shape ISM in the selected East African countries. It contributes towards a better understanding of ISM in the global South by seeking answers to the main research question: "What rationale underpins ISM in the East African countries of Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi?"

Education systems in 'sending' countries are a powerful motivator for outbound ISM (Hovdhaugen & Wiers-Jenssen, 2021), and this is compounded by the limited capacity to deliver HE and historical precursors such as colonialism. 'Receiving' country education policies usually differ from those of the 'sending' countries. Such differences have been used to explain student flows between the global South and the global North (Kritz & Douglas, 2018). The extent of such differences and how they shape intra-African ISM has yet to receive significant attention from researchers. Furthermore, the phenomenon of intra-African ISM requires alternative explanations

(Sehoole & Lee, 2021), which this study aims to uncover. Education systems in the global South have often been characterized by inadequate teaching materials and equipment, high student-to-staff ratios, unsupportive learning environments, and poor working conditions for staff (Aina, 2010). This suggests that within East Africa (part of the global South), the quality of HE may not be the significant driver of ISM, contrary to the typical assumption underpinning south–north mobility. This study investigates some of the drivers of ISM within East Africa as part of the global South.

Until the 20th century, internationally mobile students from countries in the global South tended to come from wealthy families and privileged social groups (Ssekamwa, 2005). However, there have been claims that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are now engaged in mobility programs (World Bank, 2010). Additionally, women are increasingly engaged in ISM, with over 40% of internationally mobile students in sub-Saharan Africa being women (Institute of International Education, 2017). However, quantitative internationalization measures have often been criticized (Curaj et al., 2020). Other important considerations should be how intra-African ISM differs from south-to-north ISM and how internationalization reduces colonial tendencies through cooperation, knowledge, and cultural learning. This study examines ISM in East Africa and highlights contextual aspects such as colonial history and the necessity to avoid reinforcing or reproducing global power inequalities in internationalization (Madge et al., 2015; Stein et al., 2016). This study is informed by the assumption that the topic of IHE is dynamic, and the changes the sector has undergone have, in turn, re-directed ISM.

Many African students, even those from lower-income households, aspire to pursue HE qualifications. As Deuchar (2022) confirms, HE is no longer reserved for society's upper echelons. Therefore, it is likely that East African students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are increasingly participating in ISM. However, there needs to be more focus on the qualitative aspects of the growth in ISM (besides quantitative data) since studies on education have sometimes been misaligned with the social setting and context (Clemens & Biswas, 2019). For example, it is essential to explore whether participation in ISM for students from lower social classes enables them to transcend social class levels.

Furthermore, internationalization strategies must be ethical, equitable, accessible, accountable, and socially responsible (Buckner & Stein, 2020). Pro-ISM arguments must be recast to reflect these values. This study explores how intra-African ISM addresses those values while becoming inclusive of socially disadvantaged students. In particular, it investigates how intra-African ISM attempts to ameliorate some of the unfavorable practices currently exhibited in the south-north ISM.

Raghuram (2013) contends that because of their overlapping intentions, internationally mobile students may not be categorized precisely as students, migrants, or employees. This is a context-dependent issue regarding the status of an international student in a given country. Therefore, this study investigates the migration policies that regulate international students' work and study periods in Uganda. Controlling the factors that might increase unemployment is critical for countries with high unemployment rates. Furthermore, even though international students are coveted by their host countries, they are frequently viewed with disdain in their host countries (King, 2012). This complicates and entangles the benefits and mobility challenges for students, institutions, and the broader society, making it a worthy research subject. A country's perception of ISM is reflected in its laws and policies, and this study investigates some of the associated issues.

The study sheds light on emerging perspectives on ISM in East Africa and addresses the theoretical and contextual issues associated with student mobility. By doing so, the findings contribute significantly to critical discussions on international HE, particularly within the global South. The study's insights will benefit stakeholders, including HEI, international educational organizations, governments, and students. While this study's findings cannot be comprehensively generalized to all East African countries, the ideas presented relate to IHE and ISM, particularly within Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda, revealing the conditions that inform ISM within this region. The determinants of ISM are examined in the light of contextual challenges and opportunities in the three East African countries. National efforts to embrace global trends such as internationalization and globalization are recognized and used to explain current ISM trends and practices.

The dissertation is divided into nine chapters. The first chapter provides a general background on the HE sector in Africa and the three East African countries in particular. The chapter aims to

highlight the changes undergone by the sector over recent years, what factors have influenced its current state, and how such a state informs ISM in the three East African countries.

The second chapter introduces the fundamental concepts in the study, particularly the conceptualization of internationalization of higher education (IHE) and international student mobility (ISM). The chapter also discusses the theoretical framework underpinning this study, i.e., Critical Social Theory and its conceptualization in IHE. It argues for this theory as the most convenient framework to underpin the study. The chapter aims to locate the study conceptually and theoretically within existing knowledge.

The third chapter describes the context of IHE in Africa and East Africa. The chapter presents and discusses IHE in the three countries of interest in this research, i.e., Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi. This chapter aims to identify the current context of IHE and ISM in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi and to set the basis for the data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

Chapter four is devoted to analyzing and discussing studies in the literature (and their findings) relevant to the research topic under investigation. The chapter also reports on existing studies on IHE and ISM in other regions of Africa, including South Africa, North Africa, Central Africa, and West Africa. The first section of the literature review focuses on the quality of HE systems and ISM in Africa, then zeroes on East Africa. The second section of the chapter reviews literature pertinent to ISM as a benefit to privileged students (i.e., the extent to which ISM reproduces social class inequalities). The final section examines the literature on how immigration policies shape ISM. Thus, this chapter sets the tone for comprehending the nature of ISM in East Africa and for positioning the East African region within Africa compared to other regions.

The fifth chapter presents the research methodology used in this study. The research paradigm adopted is justified, and the scope of the investigation is introduced and accounted for. The chapter provides the motivations for the research, its objectives, the research problem, and the research questions. It specifies the research design, the research tools, the population, sampling techniques and the sample selected, units of analysis and respondents, and the data collection and analysis techniques. The chapter also describes the challenges faced during the research activities, as well as the limitations of the study.

As discussed in Chapter Five, respondents in the study included international students from two universities in Uganda (Makerere University and Kampala International University), from whom data were collected using an electronically distributed self-administered questionnaire. In-depth interviews were also conducted with international students, staff in charge of international student affairs, the senior immigration officer in Uganda, and staff from some HE regulatory bodies from Uganda and Burundi.

Chapters six to nine present the empirical findings of this study and provide a complete description of the data analysis and findings. These chapters systematically present results from the relevant analyses and answer the research questions. Since the study used a mixed-methods approach, quantitative and qualitative data are presented simultaneously by embedding one into the other or sequentially, as appropriate. In discussing the study findings, the data is interpreted in the light of previous studies. In doing so, the findings are located in the context of previous investigations.

Chapter Six presents the findings on the influence of HE systems in countries that send students to Uganda. HE systems in the sending countries (such as Rwanda and Burundi are characterized by high costs, universities with a low international reputation, a low number of academic programs on offer, and low-quality teaching, among other issues. These factors drive students into countries with comparatively appealing attributes. This chapter shows how such factors shape ISM in Rwanda and Burundi against the history of these countries and their level of development in HE.

Chapter seven presents perspectives on the HE system in the receiving country (Uganda). Countries that host international students offer better teaching quality, lower educational costs, and comparatively more program options from which international students may choose. Thus, contrary to widespread assertions that Africa offers low-quality HE, this study found that institutions in Uganda, such as Makerere University, provide high-quality education. The high-quality HE attracts internationally mobile students into Uganda, making it mainly a receiver rather than a sender of international students.

Chapter eight explores how ISM in East Africa tends to reproduce social class divisions. Considering the parents' education level, employment status, and household income, the study found that most international students are in the higher social class, followed by middle-class students. Students from the lower social class are the least represented. This shows that ISM mainly

benefits students from the higher social class. Since international education bestows considerable benefits on the recipients compared to the education received from a home country institution, international students can be expected to be destined for excellent employment opportunities and high earnings, which would maintain them in the high social class. Thus, this study found that ISM in East Africa is a classed project that sustains the status quo.

Chapter nine focuses on the immigration policy provisions for international students in Uganda. International students in Uganda must have a student pass, free for East African students but must be paid for by international students from other countries. While the student pass allows students to study in Uganda, it gives the bearer no rights to work in Uganda during or after their studies. Thus, the country's immigration policy is discriminatory concerning employment.

The thesis ends with a general conclusion, which restates the research problem and summarizes the entire study's essential findings. It also refers to the research's limitations and suggests future topics that need further research.

CHAPTER ONE: HIGHER EDUCATION IN EAST AFRICA: A GENERAL BACKGROUND

I.0. Introduction

Education, in its different types and levels is a basic human need and is an essential factor in the production of goods and services (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2021); it is essential for human capital development and contributes to economic and social progress (Almendarez, 2013). Education is critical for developing responsible citizens and the fundamental social institutions that directly impact the economic principles of societal functioning, such as competitiveness, socioeconomic differences, and living standards (Print, 2015). Therefore, all countries endeavor to invest in their education systems in terms of resources, policies, and institutions to provide an education that can improve the quality of life for their citizens (UNESCO, 2017). The present study focuses on higher education (HE) in East Africa, but what affects HE generally affects education more broadly. As needed, references to other levels of education are made. Further, HE in East Africa can be better understood within the broader context of education in Africa, considering how it has evolved over the years and under the influence of different forces (Mosweunyane, 2013). This chapter discusses HE in Africa more broadly, as well as in three particular East African countries – Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi – in order to meet this intention.

I.1. Higher education in Africa: A historical overview

There exists conceptual variation regarding what HE entails and how it is defined. The study adopts Daniel et al. (2019)'s definition that HE is "systematic learning that takes place in the universities and colleges or other equivalent institutions of learning mainly termed tertiary institutions or higher education institutions" (p. 1). This section provides a historical overview of HE in Africa, encompassing HE during colonial, post-colonial, and contemporary times.

I.1.1. Higher education in Africa during the colonial period

Education in its various forms and at different levels existed in Africa before the colonial occupation of the continent, although this view is often dismissed in favor of the Eurocentric view (Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2019a; Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2013). For example, Morocco's Al-Quarawiyyin University was founded in 859 AD, while Egypt's Al-Azhar College was founded in

970 AD (Lulat, 2005). As advanced by Teferra and Altbach (2004), education – and particularly HE in Africa, is "as old as the pyramids of Egypt, the obelisks of Ethiopia, and the Kingdom of Timbuktu" (p. 23). The prevailing view is that colonialists substituted their form of education for African education, a situation which persists to this day (Getahun, 2020). Thus, modern African universities are of European origin and have little in common with ancient African HEIs (Assié-Lumumba, 2020; Mngomezulu, 2012).

The later part of the 19th century, starting with the 1880s, was characterized by a 'scramble for and partition of Africa', whereby European countries raced to occupy Africa, seeking economic and strategic gains (Papaioannou & Michalopoulos, 2012). While Belgium, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Spain were all involved in the colonization of Africa, the British and French were more influential in shaping education in Africa (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2013). Mainly primary and secondary schools were established in some parts of Africa before the First World War in 1914 (Amakievi, 2015). The colonial authorities were suspicious of, and opposed an educated African elite with their nationalist demands for equality and freedom. At the same time, the colonial civil servants feared African competition for jobs (Zeleza, 2006). Nevertheless, a few HEIs were established before the First World War, for example, Fourah Bay College, established by the Church Missionary Society of London in 1827 in Sierra Leone to train African clergy members and teachers (Ridder-Symoens, 1992). The University of Cape Town (1829) and Stellenbosch University (1866) were established in South Africa, as well as the University of Khartoum (1902) in Sudan, Cairo University (1908) in Egypt, and the University of Algeria (1909) in Algeria.

At the time of the Second World War, HE was limited to the British and French empires, and its provision was virtually missing in Belgian and Portuguese Africa (Zeleza, 2006). Clearly, the establishment of HEIs in Africa during the colonial period focused more on some parts of the continent than others. Woldegiorgis and Doevenspeck (2013) illustrate this, stating that only six universities served over 200 million people in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1960s, while only the University of East Africa (established in 1963) (Mngomezulu, 2012) served a collective population of 23 million people from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Zanzibar (Teferra & Altbach, 2004). Northern Africa had many universities, yet countries like Cape Verde, Djibouti, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Seychelles, and Sao Tome and Principe, had no universities at the time (Teferra &

Altbach, 2004). The uneven establishment of HEIs in Africa implied unequal access to HE for students, and set the pace for an unequal HE terrain that has persisted to present-day Africa.

Further, the colonialists had different policies on education. Unlike the United Kingdom, France and Belgium preferred not to establish HEIs in their colonies. Instead, they sent African students from the colonies to study in France and Belgium (Gareth, 2010). Thus, most French and Belgian colonies in Africa inherited weaker educational systems than British colonies (Frankema, 2012). Duarte (1995) explains that the Belgian colonial government perceived the formation of African elites through HE training as a threat to their colonial occupation, which is why they focused on primary and secondary education levels. This is illustrated by the following expression:

> The Belgian Government paid little attention to developing an educated class capable of political or economic leadership. Guided by the paternalistic attitude [….], the government only introduced educational reforms slowly. As a result, the African nations of Rwanda and Burundi were unprepared for the independence won in 1961, with tragic consequences for hundreds of thousands later (Duarte, 1995, p. 276).

The above statement implies that Burundi and Rwanda had no qualified Africans to administer their independent governments and universities, which hampered the growth of HE in those countries. As the dissertation shows in subsequent sections, such a history has carried on to the present day.

The French Assimilation Policy, which aimed at spreading French culture to colonies outside of France, exacerbated the situation (Labouret, 1940). The colonies were regarded as French territories, with French residents who were expected to assimilate the French culture. Educating Africans in France was the most effective way of exposing them to French culture. However, not many students in the French colonies were able to benefit from access to HE, because few institutions had been established there, and only small numbers of students could be sent to France to access HE opportunities. Sanga and Mackie (2022) clarify this issue by citing the case of Morocco, in which the French colonial administration excluded the majority of native Moroccans from accessing education, and equipped only a few of them with the skills needed to train the first generation of independent Moroccans. At independence, only 640 university graduates existed in Morocco and the country's illiteracy rate was 80%, meaning that they had to rely on foreign teachers for many years after independence. The worst part of the French Assimilation Policy was

that it encouraged the 'brain drain,' as most students who had been trained in France felt more at ease overseas and never returned to Africa (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2013).

The French colonial authorities also used a 'direct rule' approach (Conklin, 1997) – as did Belgium and Portugal – in which Africans were never allowed to engage in political administration (Abrokwaa, 2017). In their view, educating Africans was counterproductive to colonial goals and was thus minimized. This explains why the establishment of universities in former Belgian colonies, e.g., Rwanda and Burundi, was delayed; the first university in Rwanda was founded in 1963, two years after the country's independence (Muriisa & Rwabyooma, 2019), while the first university in Burundi was founded in 1964 (Majaliwa et al., 2016). For the same reason, the entire territory, from the Belgian Congo to modern-day Rwanda and Burundi, had only one graduate by 1960 (Obura, 2008). Since this region lacked universities, any of its graduates must have studied in neighboring African countries or the global North at the time, but in either case, international student mobility would have been crucial to their success.

In contrast, Britain used indirect rule by employing Africans as clerks, messengers, teachers, and interpreters in the colonial governments (Abrokwaa, 2017). A few Africans were trained to assist the colonial administration in this way (Abraham, 2020). As a result, HEIs were established in some British colonies to develop the required human resources. Examples of such institutions include the University College of Gold Coast (now the University of Ghana) (established in 1948), the Royal Technical College (now the University of Nairobi, Kenya) established in 1952, and Makerere Technical College (now Makerere University, Uganda) established in 1922 to service Central and East Africa (Tabaire & Okao, 2010). Therefore, the former British colonies inherited comparatively well-established HE systems compared to the Belgian colonies. In particular, this historical advantage for Uganda has contributed to shaping ISM within East Africa.

Furthermore, HE in Africa during the colonial period suffered from several weaknesses, since it served colonial interests at the expense of the colonized (Abraham, 2020). Educational opportunities for Africans were restricted and theoretical, and the educational curriculum was designed to colonize the African mentality rather than to meet the continent's social, economic, or political demands (Pankhurst, 1972). For the same reason, universities were established "inside an imperial culture" (Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2019a, p. 45) – their structure, content, and usefulness focused

on achieving the goals of imperialism. In some cases, the weak education systems forced African students to search for HE services and study opportunities in other African countries (Kritz, 2013; Perkins & Neumayer, 2014; Sehoole & Lee, 2021), especially in response to colonial ties (Zheng, 2014). However, the colonialists' role in Africa's educational development cannot be ignored (Marginson, 2014); they provided a basis for developing Africa's current education systems.

I.1.2. Higher education during the post-independence era in Africa

Liberia and Ethiopia are the only African countries that remained uncolonized (Patterson, 2023). Most former colonies in Africa gained independence between the late 1950s and 1970s (Boddy-Evans, 2021), which is the focus of this subsection. Several researchers have examined challenges in Africa's HE systems since the 1960s (the independence period for most African countries). According to Yakaboski and Noran (2011), such challenges are associated with increased education demand, reduced government support in the face of rising education costs, and mismanagement of resources and HEIs. Some of these challenges have their roots in the weak education systems left on the continent by the colonialists.

The colonial education aimed to equip a few Africans with the knowledge and skills to perform tasks for the colonizer, and left the African majority uneducated and isolated from their indigenous knowledge (Wagner, 2023). For instance, by 1960, the University of East Africa had only produced 99 graduates to serve a total population of 23 million in independent Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania (Teferra & Altbach, 2004). After independence, the independent African governments committed themselves to expanding access to education for Africans (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007). Increasing access to education to those the colonial administration had excluded was the only way to prove to African people that their political independence was absolute and that the new governments could be trusted (Bogonko, 1992).

As colonialists left Africa following independence, many job posts became vacant, but the number of educated Africans that could potentially fill them was very low (Myers, 1972). Therefore, African students were sent abroad for studies to enable them to fill such positions after graduation and address the growing human resource demands (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015). Additionally, most newly-independent nations lacked HEIs, and those that had, could not facilitate graduate training due to a lack of Ph.D. holders (Kritz, 2013). Thus, the weak education systems that characterized the continent by the 1960s meant that outbound student mobility was inevitable

as African countries regained their independence. Many of the challenges inherited by the independent African states have persisted to the present day; and the fact that the number of Ph.D. holders in Africa has remained low (Ndejjo et al., 2022) continues to shape ISM.

It should also be noted that at one point in time, universities in Africa were viewed as instruments of oppression and domination imposed by colonialists (Eicher, 1973); yet by independence, universities were expected to play a central role in the development of the newly independent states (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2013). Thus, after independence, universities had the tremendous task of proving themselves as African, rather than colonial institutions. In effect, universities assumed roles such as agents for nation building (Seepe, 2004), agents of Africanization (Yesufu, 1973), and agents of development (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2013). African nations formulated and adopted HE policies that could address such responsibilities and revert the injustices caused by colonialism (World Bank, 1981). Development partners, including the United Nations, complemented these efforts by adopting the approach of Human Capital Theory. This theory asserts that an individual's productivity is directly proportional to their level of education (Bloom et al., 2005). Its application meant that more support was directed toward the development of the HE sector in African countries during the 1960s and 1970s.

However, Africa does not operate in isolation; it affects and is affected by developments in other parts of the world. Thus, after the independence of many African countries in the 1960s, a policy change that encouraged south-to-north student flows was adopted in the global North to forge cultural and political linkages between the north and the south (Lee & Rice, 2007). Policies that fostered ISM were enacted; African students in these countries were charged the same tuition fees as domestic students, and were viewed as vital agents for advancing international relations and progress (Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014). Thus, interaction between the HE context in Africa and global educational policies shaped the nature of HE development and ISM in Africa.

I.2.3. Higher education in contemporary Africa

The previous sections highlighted some historical issues surrounding the development of HE in Africa, which largely account for the state of Africa's HE systems today. For example, today's patterns of intra-African ISM are rooted in such histories (Sehoole & Lee, 2021). At the same time, education systems in Africa continue to promote Eurocentric knowledge (Tabuti & van Damme,

2012), yet indigenous knowledge equally has an essential role in development. In support of this view, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) argues that there are universities on African soil, but no African universities. As mentioned by Mamdani (2017), the solutions are often in understanding the problem itself, so it makes sense to understand current conditions before searching for solutions.

This section examines Africa's HE systems starting with the early 1980s to the present day. This period was characterized by sociopolitical and economic challenges that introduced a crisis in African universities. The structural adjustment policies (SAPs) of the IMF and World Bank exacerbated the situation by making government borrowing difficult. At the time, development partners believed that the rate of return on investment in primary and secondary education was more credible than in HE, and so they diverted funding from HE to primary and secondary education (World Bank, 1980). Consequently, the HE sector became underfunded, which crippled institutional services in terms of teaching, research, and community service, resulting in more students migrating from Africa in pursuit of quality HE (Schattock, 2010). Later research proved that contrary to the previously held position, returns on investment in HE are higher compared to those in lower levels of education. The World Bank (2009) report indicates that "a one-year increase in average tertiary education levels would raise annual GDP growth in SSA by 0.39 percentage points and increase the long-run steady state level of African GDP per capita by 12 percent" (p. xxi). With this understanding, the World Bank and other development partners renewed their interest in funding HE systems in Africa (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2013).

Further, the structural adjustment policies (SAPs) pushed for increased marketization of HE since the development partners believed it would boost economic growth (Mubai, 2021). With marketization, public institutions in Uganda, for example, embraced a 'cost-sharing' model and neoliberalism (Mamdani, 2007). In this way, the commodification of Africa's HE sector began, exposing it to global free trade (de)regulation, which was supported by the World Trade Organization's (WTO) General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). In the same spirit, many public universities worldwide admitted fee-paying international students as an alternative source of revenue (Shields, 2013). Although these options enabled HEIs to increase their earnings to recover from the 'pains' caused by the SAPs, they reduced access to HE for those unable to pay high tuition fees. More internationalization through establishing international branch campuses,

student and staff exchanges, offshore study models, and international research collaboration (Knight, 2014b) was witnessed, and such characterize liberalized global HE in the late 20th century.

Independence necessitated the adoption of different policies across Africa at different times. One such policy was that of universal primary and secondary education (Avenstrup et al., 2004), which was pushed by international agendas such as Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Oketch & Rolleston, 2007). With the advent of universal primary education, many pupils entered and completed secondary school, and were then in a position to access HE. Thus, the HE sector expanded to accommodate the increased numbers of students. For instance, according to Zeleza (2021), the number of universities in Africa increased from 294 in 1980, to 784 in 2000, and 1,682 in 2018, which explains why the number of HE students in Kenya increased from 218,628 in 2010/11 to 564,507 in 2016/17 (McCowan, 2018). The process involved the emergence of private HEIs, and the setting up of new public ones (Mohamedbhai, 2014).

However, most private HEIs tended to be exact copies of the formerly established public institutions, which created additional challenges. According to Mohamedbhai (2011), this development continues to deplete HE resources – primarily staff, and lowered education quality. Since most of the academic staff in Africa's HEIs are underpaid (Mushemeza, 2016), having institutions (both private and public) with similar attributes enabled these staff to 'moonlight' (Wolhuter et al., 2014). The few who did not moonlight had heavy teaching loads (Swanzy, 2018), leaving them with limited time to conduct research or attend to students' needs – a practice which clearly adversely affects the quality of HE.

Furthermore, most private institutions are profit-making HE service providers, but some have yet to make significant investments in essential HE activities, e.g., they do not invest in research and staff development, but rely on part-time staff (Baban, 2021). This exemplifies aspects of incapacity that negatively influence the quality of education offered by these institutions; hence they cannot be considered to be effective contributors to the development of HE (Swanzy, 2018).

The abovementioned situation reflects not only challenges that Africa's HE sector has endured, but also the strides taken to develop the sector over the years. For example, the growth in the number of institutions indicates that Africa's HE sector differs significantly from that which the colonialists left behind. The HE system and African institutions have become more proactive than other sectors

in the rest of the developing world (Sehoole & de Wit, 2014). South–South cooperation among HEIs has grown, increasing regional research collaboration, partnerships, and student and staff mobility (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). However, the extent of engagement in these possibilities differs at the country level, with some countries playing a more active role than others. The researcher discusses such differences in the following sections of this thesis.

Researchers have doubted the validity of examining Africa as a unit (Hyams-Ssekasi et al., 2014), arguing that examining a continent with 53 countries and people with diverse languages and cultures as a group undermines the diverse cultural heritage of the African people, and further entrenches misconceptions. To avoid such issues, this study considers the mobility of students in three East African countries: Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi.

I.2. Higher education in East Africa

Through regionalization efforts, seven countries in East Africa – Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (admitted recently) – entered into regional partnerships and established the East African Community (EAC) as a regional body in 1999. The establishment of the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA) is associated with the EAC, and has significantly promoted student mobility (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). However, there are significant country differences regarding the level of participation in, and benefits derived from the EACHEA. According to the ICEF Monitor (2017), Uganda and Kenya are the leading countries shaping East Africa's levels of ISM. This can be explained with reference to the state of HE in particular East African countries. In this section, the researcher discusses the state of HE in countries of interest in this study, namely Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi.

I.2.1. Higher education in Uganda

Uganda follows a 7-4-2-3 education system: seven years of primary education, four years of lower secondary, two years of upper secondary, and a minimum of three years at university level (Odebero et al., 2015). While university education is the terminal education level, other types of tertiary institutions exist, for example, national teachers' colleges, colleges of commerce, and polytechnics (Lejune, 1999). These institutions may be owned by the state or be private entities.

Uganda's first HEI (Makerere Technical College) was established by the colonialists in 1922. The college was later upgraded to a university, eventually becoming the current Makerere University (MU) (Muhangi, 2020). MU was first affiliated with the University of London and hosted students from Kenya, Tanzania (then called Tanganyika), and Zanzibar in East Africa, as well as from Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (then called Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia, and Southern Rhodesia respectively) in central and southern Africa (Itaaga et al.; 2013). In 1963, the university was known as the University of East Africa (UEA), with constituent colleges in Kenya and Tanganyika, and admitted students from East Africa's British colonies, i.e., Uganda, Kenya, and Tanganyika. Initially, each of the other countries wished to be the site for the UEA. However, Makerere proved the most favorable location, since it had a more advanced developmental status than competitors in Kenya and Tanzania (Mngomezulu, 2012). Unfortunately, as Mngomezulu (2012) further explains, the decision to establish the UEA at Makerere sustained inequality and tensions between East African member states. For example, UEA was a regional institution meant to benefit the East African countries equally, but it offered excellent additional opportunities for Uganda, such as employment benefits. In 1970, UEA was split into three independent universities – one in each of the three countries with MU becoming Uganda's first university (Musisi, 2003), consequently carrying the inherited advantages into Uganda's HE sector.

MU remained Uganda's only public HE institution until the Mbarara University of Science and Technology was established in 1989 (Bisaso, 2017). As already explained, the SAPs of the 1980s created an enabling policy environment for establishing private HEIs. In Uganda, the first private university, the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU), was established in 1988 (Mamdani, 2007), and many others followed. 227 HEIs, including nine public and 44 private universities, 11 other degree-awarding institutions, and 163 other tertiary institutions existed in Uganda in 2021. Among all HEIs in Uganda, only 65 institutions (28.6%) are state-owned, while the majority, i.e., 162 (71.4%), are owned by private entities (NCHE, 2022a).

An HE system that is dominated by private providers may only partially address the public-good aims of HE. This is because the profit-making intentions of such providers may sometimes override quality service provision. Thus the profit-making intentions of private institutions may test the ethical dimensions of HE. The argument in support of increasing the number of private HE providers is that it increases access (Ferreyra et al., 2017; World Bank, 2000). However, Buckner

and Khoramshahi (2021) found that private HE provision is negatively associated with access levels in sub-Saharan Africa. They argue that private HE is only an effective policy solution for expanding access when there is high unmet demand for HE and a conducive policy context. While the demand for HE in Uganda is high, the policy environment remains questionable (Hyuha, 2017). Uganda's HEIs are underfunded (Ayiorwoth & Kyahairwe, 2019), face poor governance and economic pressures, especially in the private universities, and are driven by high-profit motives (Asiimwe & Steyn, 2013). Further, having exceedingly more private than public HEIs raises quality concern since some private HEIs reportedly provide low-quality education (Swanzy, 2018).

With an increased number of HEIs, student enrollment has also been increasing over the years. According to the NCHE (2018), 220,201 students enrolled in Uganda's HEIs for 2012/2013, up from 198,066 the previous academic year. Students' enrollment in Uganda's HEIs has continued to grow over the years from 257,855 in 2014/15 through 264,908 in 2019/2020 to 268,686 in 2020/2021 (NCHE, 2022b). The NCHE (2018) report clarifies that about 70% of HE students are enrolled in universities. According to Kasozi (2013), this is inappropriate since it denies the country the middle-level education opportunities that are necessary to educate technicians that can facilitate national development. The same author claims that this has been a characteristic feature of Uganda's HE sector since the 1980s, and is partly due to the failure of the NCHE to effectively regulate the operations of Uganda's non-university tertiary institutions. Further, the government weakened this sector by converting some of the technical institutions into universities (Kasozi, 2013). This was in an attempt to increase access to universities (Mohamedbhai, 2014); but doing so at the expense of other institutions is counterproductive, as already indicated.

Although enrollment levels in HE in Uganda have been increasing over the years, Nshemereirwe (2016) explains that the challenge of access to HE is yet to be solved. Many students that should be attending HEIs are still not included. This has been attributed to the unaffordable tuition fees in HEIs yet the HE students' loan and the government scheme can only support a small proportion of the prospective students (Amutuhaire, 2022a).

Uganda hosts a sizeable number of international students (249,132 students in 2020/2021), a proportion that has been increasing yearly, save for the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (NCHE, 2022b). The ICEF Monitor (2017) indicates that 16,000 international students

were enrolled in Uganda's HEIs in 2017, which increased through 20,324 in the 2018/19 academic year (NCHE, 2022a) to 249,132 in 2020/2021(NCHE, 2022b). According to the NCHE (2022b), Uganda hosts students mainly from East Africa, but other regions including West Africa, Europe, and Asia are also represented. Further, Uganda is a major destination for international students in East Africa (Kiiza, 2019) and is mainly a host rather than a source of international students (Rana, 2020). Therefore, as Oanda and Matiang'I (2018) suggested, ISM in East Africa is unequal, with Uganda receiving more international students than it sends. This scenario challenges the ethics of internationalization, with Liu (2021) advising that IHE should be a mindful and ethical practice. Is it impossible for East Africa to attain ISM practice in which all partners are equally receivers and senders rather than net receivers and senders of international students?

While enrollment in Uganda's HEIs has increased, the proportion of women remains low. Out of the 268,686 students enrolled in Uganda's HEIs in 2020/2021, only 122,991 (45.77%) were women (NCHE, 2022b). This clearly seems to be a global historical issue; for example, MU admitted only one woman – Sarah Ntiro – as a student in 1945 – the first woman ever to be admitted to MU since its establishment in 1922 (Kiiza, 2022). Further, all 13 students who graduated from MU in 1954 were men (Mugagga, 2010). Different factors in Uganda's education system have kept the number of women in HEIs low; the most significant being culturally related stereotypes against women. For example, according to Mulera (2003), Sarah excelled in mathematics at high school and intended to pursue this subject for her bachelor's training at MU. She was, however, denied enrollment in the subject because it was considered to exceed the abilities of a woman. The tutor threatened to quit his job if Sarah did not leave the mathematics class, thus forcing her to enroll for a degree in humanities. The NCHE (2022a) report indicates that women are still underrepresented in science, mathematics, and technology courses, but they dominate social development and business-related courses.

Some steps have been taken to address this inequality between men and women in Uganda's HE sector. An example has been affirmative action, which awards a weight of 1.5 to female students being considered for admission to Uganda's public universities (Onsongo, 2009). Although this intervention has had some effect, only specific categories of women from specific regions, districts, and high schools have benefited, since it is founded on competitive grounds (Odaga, 2022). Further, it has not directly helped the historically disadvantaged population in Uganda, nor

has it taken root in private HEIs. Thus, inequalities in Uganda's HE system have persisted, even with the effects of affirmative action. Such inequalities in education negatively impact desired levels of development in a country and need to be continually addressed until marginalized people have the necessary access to education (Nshemereirwe, 2016).

With the increased number of institutions, the number of academic programs also increased, primarily undergraduate ones. According to NCHE (2018), about 36% of the programs accredited for that year were bachelor's degree programs, with postgraduate programs being the least represented. This relates to concerns raised by Kasozi (2019) that Uganda has a low number of doctoral graduates, which limits the country's capacity to produce knowledge, disseminate it, and properly apply it in society, since mainly Ph.D. holders can perform these roles effectively. This has implications for the availability of qualified senior academics in Uganda's HEIs since the essential qualification for such staff is a Ph.D. According to the NCHE (2022) report, there are 135 HE students for every Ph.D. holder in Uganda, a ratio below what the country requires for a progressive society and education sector (Kasozi, 2019).

Although country differences exist, the challenge of poorly qualified academic staff affects many African HEIs (Tan et al., 2021). In Uganda, the NCHE (2022a) report indicates that some staff are employed part-time due to the inadequate supply of qualified academic staff. The proportions are 66.7% full-time and 33.3% part-time academic staff for the country's entire HE sector; for universities, the proportions are 72.5% full-time and 27.5% part-time academic staff, which lie within the limits of Uganda's quality assurance standards (NCHE, 2022a). While we cannot ignore the weaknesses, there are strengths on which we can capitalize to develop a more robust HE system. For example, academic staff exchanges and research collaborations developed in East Africa (Moshtari & Safarpour, 2023) are essential avenues that can be exploited to improve the availability of academic and research staff in HE institutions. Further, to reduce staffing inadequacies, the NCHE (2022b) report points out the importance of staff development programs through which staff with lower academic qualifications may upgrade themselves. The report indicates that 570 HE staff were on the Ph.D. track in 2021, adding to the number of staff in Uganda's universities who already hold minimum qualifications.

There are many academic programs in Uganda, especially at the bachelor's level (NCHE, 2022a); coupled with the high number of HEIs, the two factors should, in theory, increase program availability to students. However, the quality of such programs is equally important. Given this requirement, the NCHE and HEIs follow specified quality assurance standards to ensure that the institutions and academic programs meet required standards. The NCHE oversees the establishment and operation of HEIs in the country, and ensures that HEIs establish academic programs in alignment with the national development program and today's global concerns (Uganda Government, 2006). The academic programs must be updated and resubmitted for re-accreditation before the end of their validity period, i.e., ten years for Ph.D. programs, and five years for diploma, bachelor, and master's programs. Contrary to this requirement, some institutions sometimes administer programs that have never been accredited or have gone beyond their validity period. The NCHE (2022a) report indicates that the operating licenses of such institutions are often revoked to protect the public from bogus academic programs offered by corrupt institutions.

Ordorika (2017) holds that education in East Africa has the same pattern as that left behind by colonialists; its models and concepts remain colonial. Similarly, Mbabali (2020) argues that the structure of formal education in Uganda today resembles that left behind by the colonialists, and little has been done to change the curriculum from being colonial. The relevance of such an education in meeting Uganda's current development needs is not clear. This may explain the high unemployment levels among Ugandan youth (Among & Munavu, 2019), suggesting that Uganda's education does not impart the desired competencies among students. This is because, as advanced by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), "we so far do not have African universities. We have universities in Africa" (p. 11). Such universities may be irrelevant for Africa in general and Uganda in particular. Redressing the situation requires HEIs to become more ethical, accountable and socially responsible (aspects of critical internationalization) to develop academic programs that relate to the country's challenges and how to mitigate them. This will link teaching and research in Uganda's universities to local or at least African realities, not foreign ones.

Kasozi (2019) explains that "research and other forms of knowledge production conducted by highly educated and skilled people are key to transformation into a knowledge economy" (p. 6). This shows that East Africa must invest in HE and research in order to integrate into the knowledge economy. This may entail strengthening processes for increased student and knowledge

exchanges, staff and student exchanges, research partnerships, and other forms of collaboration (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). Hyuha (2017) explains that with the exception of MU, HEIs in Uganda are mainly teaching universities, while Rana (2020) advances that MU has high academic standards and solid research output, thus positioning it as one of the premier HEIs in Africa. The present study examined the influence of such attributes on the nature of ISM in East Africa.

Putting aside some of the challenges mentioned above, Uganda has had a somewhat stable HE system for some time (according to Bisaso, 2017), and is notably home to the oldest HEI in East Africa, MU (Bukuluki et al., 2017). Being a former British colony, Uganda had a more developed HE system than the neighboring former Belgian colonies (Rwanda, Congo, and Burundi) by the time of independence. This is reflected in the university rankings in which Uganda is well represented (Times Higher Education's World University Rankings, 2022). University rankings significantly influence ISM (Gunter & Raghuram, 2018), although the ranking process ignores the historical factors associated with specific universities. In 2020, for example, MU was ranked the top university in East Africa and the fifth best in Africa (Atukunda & Muhakye, 2020). As a result, it is among the top study destinations for international students in East Africa. MU has capitalized on its attribute of being the oldest university in the region, in order to attract international students. This study interrogated current internationalization strategies in East Africa structuring a level of ISM that is not based on the historical inequalities between national education systems.

Further, the quality of HE – that is, what constitutes quality HEI and how it is pursued in the East African context – was investigated. Concerns about the parameters used to construct a quality institution are justified, particularly in order to ensure that institutions relate to development needs in East Africa. According to Muhangi (2020), a HE institution's quality depends on factors such as its type, faculty quality, curriculum, educational programs offered, educational and social facilities offered, global reputation, and financial aid availability, all of which influence students' decisions. Unexamined student flows make the sending countries spectators, usually with more losses than gains from internationalization. This study contributes to a better understanding of how an ethical dimension can be incorporated into IHE to make it more sustainable and more beneficial.

Uganda's HE costs are lower than those in other East African countries (Odebero et al., 2015), which attracts students from neighboring nations. On the other hand, costs are usually a good

indicator of the quality of education delivered (Liu, 2008). It was, therefore, necessary to investigate how the low cost of Uganda's HE opportunities interacts with education quality to bring about the observed trend of incoming ISM. Pursuing HE at a modest cost is of no value if the student does not obtain the required competencies. The education system in the host country should be structured in a way that allows students to maximize their international education experience. Thus, while HE costs in a given country influence students' mobility choices, the opportunities should be interpreted in the light of HE quality and broader development concerns.

According to Muhangi (2020), HE students prefer public universities to private universities, believing that the former institutions are financially more stable and provide higher quality educational services. However, according to Kiiza (2019), while MU still attracts international students, the leading host of international students in Uganda is a private institution, Kampala International University (KIU). This indicates that the type ownership of the university may not fully explain the dynamics of ISM. Students tend to choose a high quality and reputable institution for study and research purposes, even if the costs might be higher (Muhangi, 2020).

Students usually seek university services that supplement their future options and facilitate achieving their academic goals. Such services include security, availability of computers and internet, accommodation, and sports facilities (Cadena et al., 2018). Citing the 2018/19 NCHE report, Woldegiorgis and Amutuhaire (2023) explain that the computer-to-student ratio in Uganda's HE sector is one computer to ten students, which contradicts the global average ratio of one computer to five students (NCHE, 2018). Such features influence the overall quality of Uganda's HE, and were therefore examined in this study.

I.2.2. Higher education in Rwanda

By independence from Belgium in 1962, Rwanda lacked HE infrastructure (Trines, 2019), with the country's first university – the National University of Rwanda – being established in 1963 (Niragire & Nshimyiryo, 2017). The challenges posed by discriminatory and limited access to HE and the prevalence of civil wars after independence further limited the progress of Rwanda's HE sector (Mugisha, 2010). The most significant challenges resulted from the 1994 genocide which claimed many people's lives, while many others fled the country. This created significant human resource shortages and instabilities in the country's education system (Niragire & Nshimyiryo,

2017). However, a few years after the genocide and the establishment of a new government, many exiled Rwandans returned home, bringing experience and information with them (Marie, 2013). On the basis of the lessons they had learned, they set out to reconstruct Rwanda's HE system. Rwanda identified HE as a critical element for its development and transformation into a knowledge-based economy and middle-income status country (Schendel et al, 2013). Irrespective of how this country has progressed, one could argue that none of the neighboring former British colonies experienced such severe challenges. Throughout history, the challenges experienced in Rwanda established an unequal education environment between Rwanda and its neighboring countries. This informs how the country relates with such neighbors today regarding ISM.

The structure of Rwanda's education system is 6-3-3-4, i.e., six years of primary education, three years of lower secondary, three years of upper secondary, and a minimum of four years of study at university (Odebero et al., 2015). Currently, there are 34 HEIs in Rwanda including one public university (University of Rwanda (UR) – the result of a merger – see more details below), two public non-university HEIs (Rwanda Polytechnic and the Institute of Legal Practice and Development), nine private universities, and 22 private non-university HEIs (Rwanda HE Council, 2023). The University of Rwanda (UR) is the leading HEI in the country (Rwanda HE Council, 2015), and is the product of a 2013 merger between the former National University of Rwanda with other national HEIs (Kwizera, 2013). It comprises six colleges, each under the leadership of a college principal, and is distributed on eight campuses around the country (University of Rwanda, 2018). The purpose of merging the different institutions into one was to improve the quality of education by reducing costs (that would have been needed to run independent universities), centralizing resources, and standardizing academic programs to avoid duplication (Sabiiti, 2013). This is a vital approach that was used in the hope of developing HE in Rwanda and East Africa. As Kwibuka (2013) explains, the new university structure was intended to improve the quality of education and make the HE sector responsive to current national and global needs.

Nevertheless, some authors (Kwizera, 2013; Corey, 2019) claim that Rwanda lacks sufficient qualified HE academic staff, and this affects the quality of HE in the country. Condo et al. (2015) cite a situation in which the School of Public Health employed a total of six Ph.D. holders and six master's holders as the only academics. Five research assistants supplemented these, yet the school was tasked with administering several academic programs including five Masters, one MPhil and

one PhD program. This resulted in a high student-to-supervisor ratio (i.e., 15 students to one supervisor at Ph.D. level) which negatively affects the quality of education. Low quality HE in a country encourages outbound ISM as students search for better education abroad (De Angelis et al., 2017); this partly explains Rwanda's high rate of outbound mobility reported by Trines (2019).

In addition, a skills gap has been reported in some sectors (e.g., the energy and mining sectors) of Rwanda's economy, in which there is a mismatch between graduate skills and those required by the labor market (Andersson & Marttila, 2016). On the skills gap in Rwanda, Gahigi (2023) explains that at least 50% of the country's workforce does not have the skills required in the labor market. Some jobs in finance, management, manufacturing, and construction, as well as other sectors of the Rwandan economy, do not match the skills and qualifications of the workforce, Gahigi (2023) further explains. The skills gap in Rwanda results from low education standards – partly due to a lack of qualified staff (Niragire & Nshimyiryo, 2017), as opposed to a brain drain, as experienced by other African countries. According to the London School of Economics and Political Science, LSE (2016), Rwanda is one of the African countries least likely to be affected by brain drain since it has developed mechanisms of holding on to its best graduates.

According to Trines (2019), Rwanda opted to develop its human resource capacity by training people mainly abroad rather than at home, and its educational policies encourage students to be internationally mobile (Ngabonziza, 2015). Since the majority of graduates usually return to Rwanda after completing their studies, they contribute to the development of the country and its HE sector (Kabeera & Nayebare, 2013; Ngabonziza, 2015; LSE, 2016). However, human resource capacitation through this pathway requires much time before the country can boast of a developed HE system that is able to compete globally. This was revealed in a study by Kabeera and Nayebare (2013) in which respondents suggested that Rwanda's HE opportunities are not yet sufficiently competitive, which has motivated them to study in other countries. Further, Kahn and MacGarvie (2011) highlight another challenge associated with this pathway: doctoral graduates trained in foreign countries get used to better research and scientific facilities and fail to adjust to the poor conditions when they return home. They therefore often fail to deliver to expectations.

MacGregor (2014) believes that teaching and research in Rwanda are yet to reach their full potential. This is because some academic programs (e.g., dentistry) are still in their infancy (Trines,

2019) and offer fewer options in which students can specialize. Further, in the view of MacGregor (2014), low-quality teaching in Rwanda results from the country's low number of academic staff with doctorates, which is approximately 20%. However, the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) stipulates that universities should have 60% of their staff qualified to a Ph.D. level (Masaba, 2023). It should be noted that Ph.D. holders enable nations and HEIs to produce knowledge through research and innovation. They also disseminate the produced knowledge through the academic activities of teaching, student supervision and mentoring, publishing, and converting knowledge into goods and services (Kasozi, 2019). Doctoral graduates also help to nurture the next generation of academics and researchers, as explained further by Kasozi (2019). Without these activities, HE systems become weak and ineffective. In particular, Habarurema (2019) holds that the number of Ph.D. programs in Rwanda has remained persistently low, and the quality of education delivered by HEIs in the country needs to be improved.

Despite this expressed need, the University of Rwanda is home to four centers of excellence (two in industry, one in education, and one in statistics) that have been developed by the World Bank in partnership with the IUCEA (World Bank, 2016). It also has partnerships and collaborations with universities and international agencies in the US and Sweden (MacGregor, 2014), and the East African Community through the IUCEA. Further, Corey (2019) claims that HEIs in Rwanda place less emphasis on summative assessments. Instead, they encourage students to blend their pre-existing knowledge of a subject and natural curiosity, to arouse personal learning experiences. In other words, education in Rwanda is approached by developing competencies among students: what a student can do after the course rather than rote learning and memorization. Corey (2019) further clarifies that HE in Rwanda is learner centered. These approaches are points of strength that can be exploited to develop a more robust HE system in the country.

According to (Odebero et al., 2015), the HE admissions process in Rwanda is based on a highly competitive national exam that limits socioeconomic and regional diversity. The national exam selectively limits students with lower-quality secondary education results, who are located mainly in the northern part of the country. The southern part of the country has good secondary schools where students perform excellently in the national exam, and easily qualify for government bursaries and admission to the public HEIs (Corey, 2019). As a result, public institutions are dominated by students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds, and mainly from one region.

Therefore, it is evident that HE in Rwanda is highly accessible to students from the high social class, and less accessible to students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Habarurema, 2019).

Limited access is a recipe for steep competition for the available admission slots to Rwanda's universities, which, according to Waters (2010), is a driver for outbound mobility. In other words, students who fail to gain admission to the desired programs in home institutions usually seek admission by foreign institutions. Conversely, the circumstances also suggest that students from advantaged backgrounds – who generally originate from the same region – are more likely to become internationally mobile, since ISM is positively linked to socioeconomic background (Di Petrio, 2020; Waters, 2006). Whatever the case, investigating how these circumstances lead to intra-African mobility, rather than mobility beyond Africa, was an essential focus for this study.

Rwanda changed its policy regarding the language of instruction in educational institutions from French to English in 2008 (Corey, 2019). The same author explains that the change impacted the admission of students to HE, especially in rural areas, since although proficiency in English is considered necessary, it is often lacking. The policy provides that English is the medium of instruction and is taught formally as a second language. French is taught as an optional language at all levels except in lower primary, where the medium of instruction is Kinyarwanda. Some private schools continue to conduct lessons in French – the former language of education in Rwanda. Corey (2019) found that the level of English language proficiency required to take classes administered in English is satisfactory only among wealthy populations, or people who frequently work with foreigners. In effect, chances for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds to access HE are limited since the family environment does not support them in improving their English language competencies. Even the teachers themselves are less fluent in English than would be desirable (Trines, 2019).

Trines (2019) explains that the change in Rwanda's language policy encourages outbound ISM. As local institutions changed from teaching in French to English, Rwandan HE students can ably study in the East African region's English-speaking countries. Most teachers in Rwanda are yet to fully gain competences of teaching in English Language to effectively deliver lessons in English (Williams, 2021). Moreover, there is scarcity or lack of teaching materials and infrastructure to facilitate teaching and learning in English Language (Mugirase, 2020). However, using English at

the expense of local languages reinforces the West's hegemonic status, as highlighted by Laakso (2020). Although utilizing English, for example, enables students to engage in, and profit from an internationalized HE environment, it should be possible for Rwanda to promote the local, common native language (Kinyarwanda) in education.

Further, one could argue that the change in language policy encourages inbound ISM by allowing students from the neighboring countries to study in Rwanda. This is however less likely since the pattern of Rwanda's education limits such a possibility. According to Kabeera (2013), admitting a university student from a neighboring country (with a 7-4-2-3 education system) implies spending four years at university (in the Rwandan 6-3-3-4 educational system), rather than three. This would make the process more costly in terms of time and money. On the contrary, admitting a Rwandan university student to a country that uses a 7-4-2-3 system reduces the length of time required for university study, thus saving time and money. So in effect, Rwanda is better positioned to encourage outbound ISM, rather than inbound ISM.

Rwanda's privatized HE system treats education as a private product rather than a public good (Williams, 2016). In fact, the cost is higher in public institutions than in private ones (Corey, 2019; Habarurema, 2019; Nuwagaba, 2013). Consequently, HE has become costly and less accessible to many Rwandans due to excessive fees required by HEIs (Nuwagaba, 2013). For this reason, some Rwandan students seek cheaper HE options in foreign countries. Since there is a view that public HEIs offer superior education than private institutions (Muhangi, 2020), students who are not admitted to Rwanda's public HEIs opt for Uganda's public HEIs, which are also more in number than those in Rwanda. Such issues around Rwanda's HE system encourage outbound ISM in this country. Additionally, costs for HE in Uganda are lower than those in Rwanda (Itaaga et al., 2013), but this only seems to be a marketing strategy to attract more international students and maximize economic gains (Odebero et al., 2015). While making profits in education is necessary, we must consider the ethical and social justice issues in this practice. For example, East African countries can cooperate and provide quality HE services without aggravating the past challenges. In other words, countries can cooperate and exchange competences rather than competing for gains from ISM.

I.2.3. Higher education in Burundi

In 2013 Burundi adopted a 9-3-3 education model that replaced the old 6-3-3-4 model. In the new model, learners spend nine years in fundamental (primary schools), three years in secondary (or post-fundamental) schools, and at least three years for a bachelor's program (Ndihokubwayo et al., 2021). Secondary education in Burundi is no longer partitioned into lower and upper levels, as in the education models discussed in other countries. The old model (6-3-3-4) was common between Rwanda and Burundi, but the new one is seen only in Burundi – at least compared to the other countries in the East African Community. Indeed, the new model isolates Burundi from the countries with whom it has partnered in the East African Community.

For a long time, Burundi has been striving for its HE sector to catch up with the rest of the partners in the East African Community, as it has been lagging behind (Nganga, 2014). The lagging was caused by the Belgians' failure to develop HE in the country, and the subsequent civil conflicts in Burundi since its independence (Nganga, 2014). As was the case in most Belgian colonies, Belgium was not interested in establishing HEIs in Burundi (Obura, 2008). The Belgian colonialists believed that the provision of HE would form an elite mass that would threaten their colonial intentions (Duarte, 1995). The Burundians also resisted foreign education since they never trusted foreigners being in charge of their children. They also felt that education would make children 'dodge' work by keeping them in school (Ruzenza, 1992). Therefore, they resisted formal education, which contradicted their 'work hard' work ethic (Obura, 2008).

Chiefs in Burundi (who were always of Tutsi ethnicity) refused to send their sons to formal pre-independence schools. Instead, they compelled the sons of the Hutu (claiming that they were their own) to attend such formal schools (Duarte, 1995)[2]. The first primary schools established thus had few to no learners. The colonialists, as with the missionaries, had no urge to establish HEIs, and the number of students that needed HE was less compelling; hence, HE was neglected. Obura (2008) explains that Burundi–was unprepared for independence since it had no provision or tradition for HE, and in fact, there was no university in Burundi at that time. By 1962, there were only ten graduates in the country (Bitagoye, 1998), who had undoubtedly been trained in foreign

[2] The colonial governments in Africa paid no attention to the education of girl children, see Aboagye (2021).

countries. Filling government and administrative roles left behind by the colonialists was therefore very challenging (Duarte, 1995).

Two years after independence in 1962, the first university (the University of Burundi) was established. This was followed by the establishment of the *École normale supérieure* in 1965 to train secondary school teachers (Obura, 2008). However, before the colonialists and missionaries left Burundi, they had deepened the differences between the Tutsi and Hutu (Duarte, 1995). They overtly favored the Tutsi minority and excluded the Hutu majority from accessing education. The Tutsi therefore had been able to access education programs that prepared them for administration, at the expense of the Hutu (Jackson, 2000; Rutake & Gahama, 1998). This gave them a positional advantage that continued to be reflected in other spheres of life, for example, they also dominated all sectors of the economy. This exclusionary policy was based on ethnicity and influenced Burundi even after independence, serving as the basis of the civil instabilities and massacres that occurred in the country during 1965, 1969, 1972 and 1993 (Obura, 2008). Thus, as Shyaka (2002) points out, "the colonizers did not invent the categories Hutu, Tutsi [….] but they recreated them as confrontational entities" (p. 127).

The Hutu were systematically excluded from accessing employment, property, education, and opportunities for self-improvement (Lemarchand, 2002). They were humiliated and treated as second-class citizens whose human rights were violated, just as during the colonial period (Cochet, 1996). Mariro (1998) records that the Tutsi's access to education created and reproduced social divisions, allowing them to be the beneficiaries at the expense of the Hutu. The Hutu became impoverished, and as people of the lowest social class, their educational opportunities were reduced (Obura, 2008). Therefore, all inequalities in Burundi, starting from the colonial occupation in the 1930s, can be seen to be linked to the lack of equal educational opportunities (Obura, 2008).

After 1972, the situation worsened, and education became the focus of the scramble for social gains (Reychler et al., 1999). Hutu students in HEIs were attacked and killed, while some fled the country. Lemarchand (2002) indicates that 250 of the 350 Hutu students at the University of Burundi disappeared, while 60 of them were killed. At the *École normale supérieure,* 126 students were lost. Although these ethnic conflicts led to the deaths of other people from both ethnic groups, more Hutus than Tutsi were killed, and those who survived fled the country (Obura, 2008). Those

Tutsi who fled were mainly the elites who had served as leaders in education and other sectors of the economy. The death and flight of such individuals led to significant human resource loss in Burundi. At the same time, the deaths of students denied institutions the capacity to sustain themselves in terms of student populations (despite the fact that HEIs had not achieved stability in order to train more of the required academics and researchers effectively). These circumstances certainly explain the country's low level of development, since the progress of development depends on the availability of personnel to perform development activities (Haeruddin et al., 2020). It also explains why the HE sector in Burundi is underdeveloped (Nganga, 2014).

Furthermore, primary and secondary school children were killed during the 1993 conflicts. These were mainly Tutsi children, as the Hutu took revenge on the Tutsi for atrocities committed against them over time. In response, some parents withdrew their children from schools, ending their possibilities of participating in HE. The Tutsi attained education and occupied a privileged social class, while the Hutu, who had no education, occupied a disadvantaged social class. Thus Burundi exhibits social class stratification that is nurtured and reproduced through education; education was therefore a cause and a consequence of social inequalities.

The above discussion shows that HE in Burundi is rooted in historical inequalities and discriminatory practices based on ethnicity, coupled with regional discrimination. According to Jackson (2000), Burundi's northern and central provinces have always been favored and, therefore, have more educational resources than the northwest provinces. Children from the favored parts of the country receive better primary and secondary education and progress into HE. The same regions have 'old boy' links at the University of Burundi that influence how employment opportunities in the army, politics, and business are accessed (Jackson, 2000).

Only one university existed in Burundi until 1995 when the government allowed the establishment of private HEIs to meet the increased demand for HE (Nganga, 2014). Burundi's current HE system consists of 21 HEIs, 17 universities, and four other institutions of higher learning. Only one university (the University of Burundi) is state-owned, the others are private. All four other institutions higher learning are state-owned (UniRank, 2023). While the number of HEIs in Burundi has increased over time, the proportion of students attending HE is low. The situation

worsens when historical disparities between the two primary ethnic groups are factored in. The Tutsi ethnic group continues to constitute the majority of the HE student body (Tuyisenge, 2020).

The University of Burundi, the country's largest HE provider, can accommodate only about 4,000 students due to its limited capacity; that of the other universities is even smaller (Nganga, 2014). UNESCO (2021) indicates that the total number of HE students in Burundi was 37,872 in 2014, which rose to 51,225 in 2015. The number continued to increase reaching 62,378 in 2017. In 2018, however, the number decreased by 33%, to 41,781 students[3]. Thus, student enrolment numbers in HEIs have been rather erratic, even though they have improved over time. However, the proportion of HE students relative to the country's population of about 13 million (Population Stat, 2023) is low. As illustrated by UNESCO (2021), there are about 364 HE students per 100,000 inhabitants in Burundi which is less than the international value of 915 students per 100,000 inhabitants. Jackson (2000) explains the cause of this scenario as low access to education in general (and more so, access to HE) in Burundi. Moreover, access to HE for women has not improved. For the academic year 2017/18, only 21% of women were enrolled in Burundi's HEIs. The predominance of men in HE is again reflected among staff, among which only 13% are women (UNESCO, 2021).

Noticeably, the demand for HE in Burundi remains low. Muhammedbhai (2013) explains that as the demand for HE increased in African countries, most of them expanded the sector by establishing new public and private HEIs. However, the sector's low growth rate in Burundi indicates a correspondingly low demand for HE. It would be advisable for the country to devote greater attention to this sector because of its significant role in development at all levels. HEIs are an essential resource for economic development and the most crucial production factors for the knowledge-based economy of the 21st century (Al-Youbi et al., 2021).

The number of study programs in Burundi is also low. According to Free Apply (2023), there are 65 study programs, including 49 at the bachelor's level, 14 at the master's level, and two at the doctoral level. UNESCO (2021) data indicates that 96% of HE students in Burundi are enrolled in bachelor's programs, 3% in master's programs, and 1% in doctoral programs. This shows that the country's potential to produce doctoral graduates is low. Only fairly recently (in July 2017), the University of Burundi inaugurated the country's first doctoral school (Sawahel, 2017). This implies

[3] This data is quite old, but it is the latest that this researcher could find in the literature that he could access.

that Burundi has long struggled with the training of staff required to undertake teaching, research, and community service duties in universities. Due to the lack of Ph.D. programs nationwide, such credentials had to be obtained from foreign universities. This had its challenges as most of the staff who went abroad for postgraduate training never returned to Burundi, thus leading to significant levels of understaffing (Tuyisenge, 2020). At the University of Burundi, for example, only 500 teaching staff were available for the 2017/18 academic year, and only 36.2% of those were qualified to the doctoral level. The situation is even worse in private institutions (Tuyisenge, 2020).

Even though the country currently offers Ph.D. programs, this is a new development with unknown consequences, especially in the light of difficulties students have historically faced in continuing their education in Burundi. The limited number of study programs attests to the government's limited investment in HE. Burundi supports private HE initiatives, for example, through tax exemptions for private universities (Nganga, 2014), which is not common in other countries. Additionally, the government pays 50% of the fees for students on regular academic programs in private universities, as is the case in public universities. These are commendable strategies that could be developed further in order to strengthen the HE sector in this country, particularly with regard to HE access for historically marginalized students. For example, the government can consider evaluating how such mechanisms might improve HE access and attainment for women, disabled students, and those with refugee backgrounds.

Various studies (Nizigama, 2019; Tuyisenge, 2020; UNESCO, 2021) have expressed concerns about the dwindling quality of HE in Burundi, while the Times Higher Education (2023b) points out that no university in Burundi features in the overall World University Ranking tables. Similarly, Nganga (2014) holds that the quality of HE in Burundi continues to decrease, and advises that the country should adopt quality enhancement initiatives. The suggested changes include modifying the mode of financing HE, since underfunding is one of the main challenges that has reduced the quality of HE in the country (Nizigama, 2019). Involving external funders – especially the country's private companies – to shoulder some expenses of HE provision, would be helpful. Nganga (2014) argues that private companies require skilled graduates, and should therefore be involved in their training. There is also a form of cost sharing in which the state and students pay for the HE costs, although this may have to be expanded further (Nganga 2014). These adjustments and many others can be adopted to strengthen the sector. Edgeman (2008)

argues that an underfunded HE is weak and cannot compete globally. This is particularly important in current times where internationalization and globalization are shaping economies worldwide.

Burundi's underfunding of the HE sector has led to a strong reliance on part-time staff due to the lack of qualified staff to undertake teaching and research responsibilities, and to the deterioration of academic and social infrastructure, irrespective of the demands of the current times (Tuyisenge, 2020). All this is happening at a time when the number of students demanding access to HE has started to increase (Nganga, 2014). Therefore, Burundi needs to improve its capacity regarding teachers and facilities; otherwise, the situation may worsen over time. The existing state of affairs has meant that graduates from Burundi are less competitive in the East African Community and globally (Nganga, 2014), which is a problem that should be addressed.

French is the primary language of instruction in Burundi's HEIs, while English is taught as a foreign language, and many students choose not to study it (Dunlop, 2021). However, this places the country at a disadvantage, since countries bordering Burundi use English for official communication. East Africa's recent integration efforts have pressured Burundi to reassess its use of French as a medium of instruction (Nizonkiza, 2005). Some HEIs, especially private ones, offer courses in both French and English. Some Burundians do now perceive English education as the best option for retaining a job (for those already employed), or gaining future employment. As a result, some in the workforce enroll in intensive English language classes. Confronted with this situation, students are increasingly showing more interest in receiving English instruction, in Burundi and other East African countries.

The importance of English proficiency has induced some government departments, humanitarian organizations, and non-governmental organizations in Burundi to encourage their staff to learn the language. For example, in 2004, the Ministry of Finance required its staff to enroll in English language classes at the University of Burundi's Language Centre (Nizonkiza, 2005). Such innovations indirectly impact the educational decisions that students must make. For example, those considering working for non-governmental organizations or in Burundi's humanitarian sector believe English skills are essential. Because proficiency in English is a determining condition for working with such agencies, Burundians have also contemplated studying in English-speaking countries. The challenge is that the idea encourages the long-held concern about internationalization bringing homogenization (Jones & de Wit, 2021) and 'death' to local languages

and cultures (Alfarhan, 2016). Promoting internationalization without jeopardizing the existence of national cultures remains an issue of concern in many East African countries.

I.3. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a historical and contextual background to the study. It maps out the state of HE in Africa in general and East Africa in particular, emphasizing the HE context in three countries, namely Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi. While the interest is in HE, the different levels of education are linked, and references to other levels of education are made, where appropriate. The chapter illustrates how education in Africa and East Africa has evolved, and clarifies that education existed in Africa before the period of colonization. Colonialists compelled Africans to adopt a foreign education system that was disconnected from the African way of life and limited in scope; it was meant to facilitate the achievement of colonial intentions, not to liberate Africans.

The education policy held by different colonial masters influenced the distribution of education institutions – especially HEIs, which was rather uneven. The scenario led to unequal access to HE and resulted in some of the social inequalities which persist today. The British established HEIs in most of their colonies that educated some Africans to support the colonial administration. On the other hand, the French and Portuguese followed an assimilation policy that encouraged Africans to be educated in Europe; they therefore established few HEIs in their colonies. The Belgians were skeptical about Africans attaining HE qualifications, being of the opinion that this would enable the creation of an African elite mass which could jeopardize colonial intentions. They were therefore reluctant to establish HEIs in their colonies. Thus, depending on the local colonial policy, the development of the HE sector in East Africa took different routes, with some countries having well-developed HE systems by the time of their independence in the 1960s, while others were still struggling to establish the sector. This historical context informed the current state of HE development in Africa, and in particular, observed trends in intra-African ISM.

Further, HE in Africa is associated with neoliberalism, in which education is regarded as a commodity. Neoliberalism in Africa's HE sector can be traced back to the economic crises of the 1980s, and the structural adjustment policies (SAPs) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, which redirected support to primary and secondary education while ignoring HE. The HE sector in East Africa remained underfunded, resulting in miserable institutional

performance and low numbers of graduates. Some students fled to countries where they could obtain a better education, while local institutions opted for marketization, cost-sharing, and the commodification of education. Some universities considered admitting high-fee-paying international students as alternative sources of revenue resulting in observed trend of inbound ISM.

Neoliberalism also led to the emergence of private HEIs, which now outnumber public ones in Uganda and Kenya for example. This raises concerns about the 'public good' aims of HE since private providers primarily aim at profit maximization, with a limited focus on increasing access for disadvantaged students, especially those from less affluent families. As will be argued in chapter three, the present study explores how ISM – which pursues profit-making intentions – deepens social class inequalities. Further, for a long time, the participation of African women in HE has historically remained low, and steps to address the issue have been taken. Nevertheless, even after various interventions, the participation of women in HE remains low. In Rwanda, HE is less inclusive and is characterized by highly competitive selection criteria, meaning that some individuals and regions have unequal access to HE. In Burundi, access to HE remains limited for some ethnic groups, regions, and individuals from certain social backgrounds. Thus, the chapter identifies the various inequalities that continue to characterize HE in East Africa today.

The chapter also illustrates the different levels of growth in the HE sectors in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi, which may influence the role of national HEIs in ISM at a regional level. For example, there are indications to show that the number of academic programs offered is higher in Uganda than in Burundi (NCHE, 2022a; Sawahel, 2017). Further, HEIs produce low numbers of Ph.D. graduates in all three countries, although there are some differences; while this challenge is more pronounced in Rwanda and Burundi, Uganda is on the path to addressing it.

Such issues have implications for the quality of education in these countries, and also inform ISM trends. The chapter underscores the need for enhanced quality in the HE sector in East Africa, rather than merely expanded HE provision. High-quality HE comes at a higher cost, since the high educational charges usually indicate better inputs, and hence better quality. This raises questions about the quality of education provided by HEIs in Uganda, which reportedly charge lower fees than other regional HEIs. HE cost differentials are influenced by country-specific HE funding models, and each country continues to mobilize resources to strengthen its institutions and improve

the quality of HE, but national differences continue to prevail. Such differences, which affect the quality of HE and the differences in the region's ISM patterns are discussed in chapters six and seven of this thesis.

The next chapter, chapter two, provides the conceptual and theoretical framework for the topic of internationalization of higher education. The chapter discusses the study's main concepts and discusses Critical Social Theory, whose theoretical orientations guided the study.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

II.0. Introduction

This chapter locates ISM within the broader context of IHE. It provides a conceptual understanding of IHE and points out how it has been re-conceptualized over time. The various rationales for IHE that exist at the global, national, and institutional levels are highlighted. Notably, the variation of such rationales within different national contexts is emphasized. The chapter justifies the need to explore the rationales for ISM in East Africa, since this region has different contextual factors from those prevalent in the global North. The chapter also theorizes international student mobility (ISM) from the perspectives of the Critical Social Theory. The perspectives raised about IHE and ISM in this chapter are then summarized.

II.1. Conceptualization of internationalization of higher education

Internationalization is as old as the concept of the university itself. Its origins can be traced back to medieval universities (Rusko, 2023). The term became popular in the early 20th century when universities in Europe and the US began to develop academic and exchange programs with universities in other parts of the world. At that time, terms such as 'international education and collaboration' were common in HE (Knight, 2008). As interest grew, scholarship on international education and collaboration expanded to other countries, such as Australia, and the term 'internationalization of higher education' (IHE) was devised (de Wit, 2002).

In Africa, internationalization can be traced back to ancient universities such as the University of Al-Qarawiyyin in Fez, Morocco, Al-Azhar University in Cairo, and the University of Timbuktu (Sall, 2020). Timbuktu was a hub for trade, commerce, and scholarship, attracting scholars from all over the world who came to study and exchange ideas. Internationalization was also evident during the colonial period (Alemu, 2014). However, the present day notion of IHE in Africa is attributed to actions during the 1960s (section III.1), especially the 1962 UNESCO conference in Madagascar (Andoh & Salmi, 2019).

The conceptualization of IHE is diverse and has been evolving over recent years. One of its earlier definitions was provided by Arum and Van de Water (1992), who defined it as "the multiple

activities, programs, and services that fall within international studies, international education exchange and technical cooperation" (p. 202). Elaborating on this definition, de Wit (2002) pointed out that IHE includes the international mobility of scholars and students for education and research, collaborative programs in international curricula, and international support. Later, Knight (1994) proposed another definition, namely that IHE is "the process of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions of the institution" (p. 3). This definition was criticized (de Wit, 2002; Van der Wende, 1997) for the exclusive emphasis on the institution's role in IHE, yet other players – especially national governments – play a significant role in internationalization. That definition also ignores the broader objectives of IHE and regards it as an end in itself (Van der Wende, 1997). However, in this definition, Knight (1994) rightly conceives IHE as a process focused on local and international dimensions, and not an activity as depicted in the definition by Arum & Van de Water (1992).

Knight updated her definition in 2008, stating that IHE is "the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (Knight, 2008, p. 21). This definition was considered general and neutral, and has remained popular for some time (de Wit, 2020). However, IHE is not static; new internationalization trends – such as the unprecedented growth in distance education and e-learning (Mittelmeier et al., 2021) – have made that definition less relevant. As a result, several definitions of the concept exist, and an all-encompassing or universally accepted definition is yet to become available. This, as explained by de Wit (2002), is because the concept is usually used in a way that suits the user's objectives. This study however adopts de Wit et al.'s (2015) definition of IHE, which states that IHE is

> the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff and to make a meaningful contribution to society (p. 29).

Under the influence of globalization, African countries have been coerced to adopt internationalization without the necessary internationalization infrastructure (Teferra, 2020a). This is because globalization strives to incorporate the world into a single-world society (Martin & King (1990); it strengthens social ties globally and connects far-flung locales so that local happenings are shaped by events taking place far away and vice versa (Giddens, 1991). With globalization,

HEIs and many other industries have become global actors (Mitchell & Nielsen, 2012). Some scholars (Barrett, 2017; Strielkowski et al., 2021; Tight, 2021) argue that globalization and internationalization are intertwined. Britez and Peters (2010) clarify this connection and state that internationalization denotes the "specific strategies implemented as an answer or solution to globalization" (p. 39). Similarly, Knight (1999) indicates that "internationalization is the response, albeit a proactive one, to globalization, which can be thought of as the catalyst" (p. 14). Thus, internationalization is frequently seen as a concept under the umbrella of globalization (Britez & Peters, 2010).

Mitchell and Nielsen (2012) argue that internationalization is a powerful force that promotes globalization, rather than merely a response variable that explains how HEIs react to globalization in economics, politics, culture, and social interactions. It is this perception that has sustained the instrumental interpretation that internationalization is synonymous with the search for increased student markets (Stromquist, 2007), rather than putting a university's knowledge at the service of others. Consequently, internationalization has been compared to neoliberalism (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Shields, 2013), with the two being regarded as different manifestations of globalization. This link between internationalization and neoliberalism contributes to the existing dominance of economic rationales for internationalization, suggesting that neoliberalism is a potent and hegemonic frame through which HEIs conceptualize and operationalize internationalization (Bamberger et al., 2019).

Privatization, free-market policies, and deregulation of education services are typical characteristics of neoliberalism (Hursh, 2017). In practice, neoliberalism supports market dominance, competition, logical decision-making, the global knowledge economy, and the instrumentalization of education for personal financial gain (Bamberger et al., 2019). As government funding for HE decreased globally, this emphasis led to the emergence of private HEIs and tuition-paying students. HEIs turned to accepting high-fee-paying international students as a cost-recovery strategy, but this option poses a challenge to the ethics of internationalization. Due to the increasing effects of neoliberalism, the justifications for internationalization have shifted from being humanistic to being business oriented (Bamberger et al., 2019). Thus, neoliberalism is linked to unethical IHE practices like the desire for reputation, excessive advertising and branding of universities (Lomer et al., 2018; Stein, 2018); a competitive, rather than cooperative approach

to IHE (Teichler, 2017); predaceous international student recruitment (Huang et al., 2016); using international students as 'cash cows' (Lomer, 2014; Yang, 2020); and the conversion of universities into global businesses (Wu & Naidoo, 2016).

Fakunle (2021), citing Lomer (2018), asserts that existing frameworks for ISM emphasize the role of the marketization of HE in the form of internationalization. In other words, according to these authors, internationalization promotes marketization and associated economic gains, at the expense of overall student gains from IHE. Consequently, the benefits of internationalization, such as developing intercultural competencies among students, tend to become marginalized. As Africa pursues intra-African ISM, it is essential to emphasize its qualitative rather than quantitative aspects.

II.1.1. Dimensions of internationalization of higher education

Several dimensions of IHE exist, including cross-border research and knowledge exchange, staff and student mobility, internationalization of the curriculum, and cross-border education (Fakunule, 2021; Ilieva et al., 2017). Following such dimensions, nations and institutions worldwide are promoting mobility, short and long-term economic gains, recruitment and training of talented students and scholars, and international reputation and visibility (de Wit et al., 2015). Alemu (2014) also identifies cross-border educational exchange and collaborative projects as strategies for IHE. He states that such strategies contribute to advancing individuals, institutions, nations, and the world in general. Hudzik (2011) proposes that institutions should adopt the practice of comprehensive internationalization to maximize such benefits.

Comprehensive internationalization is defined by the American Council on Education (2023) as a strategic, coordinated framework that integrates policies, programs, initiatives, and individuals to make HEIs more globally oriented and internationally connected. According to Mittelmeier et al. (2021), comprehensive internationalization defines individualized institutional approaches to integrating global or international elements into teaching, research, and service delivery. These authors cite "study abroad provisions, internationally minded social opportunities, branch campuses, international student recruitment, diversification of staff, diversification of programs offered, and/or inclusion of foreign language study" (Mittelmeier et al., 2021, p. 1) as

comprehensive internationalization activities. Knight (2004) had earlier categorized such activities into internationalization at home and internationalization abroad as discussed in II.I.2.

II.1.2. Internationalization abroad versus internationalization at home

Internationalization abroad encompasses all forms of cross-national education, including programs, courses, curriculum, and projects, as well as student and staff mobility (Knight, 2006). International student mobility (ISM) is the most common form of internationalization abroad, in which students complete all or part of their education in a foreign country (Mittelmeier et al., 2021). However, due to various student-specific limitations, ISM serves only a small percentage of all HE students (Amutuhaire, 2023). Furthermore, ISM selectively benefits privileged students in society, to the extent that students from disadvantaged backgrounds can rarely access international education (Waters, 2012).

Internationalization at home is defined as "the intentional incorporation of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students, within domestic learning environments" (Beelen & Jones, 2015, p. 8). Furthermore, Knight (2006) notes that "internationalization-at-home-related factors" include the international/intercultural dimension of the curriculum, research collaboration, and foreign language studies (p. 128). As Mittelmeier et al. (2021) explain, internationalization at home can provide an internationally oriented learning experience within a home country environment, allowing students to reap the benefits of internationalization without leaving their home countries.

Regardless of the differences in circumstances between and within countries, HEIs worldwide are now involved in various international activities (International Association of Universities, 2012), but the most prominent has been ISM (de Wit & Hunter, 2015; Knight, 2008, 2012; Wang & Wang, 2022). However, ISM continues to be confronted with challenges resulting from global political and economic changes (Choudaha & de Wit, 2019). Therefore, its future and sustainability seem uncertain; the demographics of individuals who are able to participate in ISM are hazy (Bitschnau, 2023) – hence the need for more investigation on the subject.

II.1.3. Rationales of internationalization of higher education

Fakunle (2021) states that IHE has been widely framed using micro and macro-level perspectives. Considering the neoliberal agenda that characterizes today's educational policies globally (Teng et al., 2020), economic factors continue to influence macro and micro frameworks of IHE (de Wit & Deca, 2020), giving rise to both micro- and macroeconomic rationales for IHE. Macroeconomic rationales for IHE inform interests at the level of host countries and institutions that enroll high-fee-paying international students (de Wit, 2020). Such rationales are reflected within policies and plans that are developed by host institutions and nations (Ilieva et al., 2017; Tarc, 2019). When implemented, macro-level rationales result in a better global institutional ranking, greater proportions of international students and staff, and international research collaboration and funding for HEIs (Fakunle, 2021). Such rationales clearly explain ISM from the global South to the global North ISM (King & Sondhi, 2018), but conceptualize intra-regional mobility only partially. Intra-African student mobility is undoubtedly informed by different rationales – which this study seeks to explore. Further, Kondakci (2011) holds that the macro-level economic rationales do not reflect students' choices of a host country. In particular, in order to better conceptualize internationalization, it is essential to understand why some global South countries (such as Uganda and South Africa) have been positioned as education hubs and attractive study destinations for international students.

Microeconomic rationales consider international students as knowledge consumers seeking educational opportunities to improve their competitive advantage and economic contribution to society (Lomer, 2018). These rationales explain why students become internationally mobile in the first place (Fakunle, 2021). The explanation has traditionally been framed using the model of *push and pull* factors. According to Colón (2018), 'push' factors are any country's political, economic, and cultural conditions that motivate students to seek study opportunities beyond national borders. In turn, 'pull' factors relate to the same sort of factors that attract international students to the destination country. The most significant factors that 'push' students to become mobile include lack of study opportunities and perceived low quality of education in the home country. Significant 'pull' factors include the perceived high quality of education in the host nation, the institution's reputation, high-quality staff, and future employment opportunities (Fakunle,

2021). In addition to these factors, historical factors also influence contemporary mobility trends Colón (2018).

However, the push and pull factors model has been criticized by some scholars (de Haas, 2021; Skeldon, 1990; van Hear et al., 2018) who argue that such factors represent only external forces that influence student behaviors and choices – without accounting for students' own characteristics and preferences (Wilkins et al., 2012). Further, while ISM may be influenced by limited study possibilities in home institutions and higher quality HE in the host country, the model does not fully explain the emergence of "regional hubs in non-western counties" (Fakunle, 2021, p. 674). Furthermore, as King and Sondhi (2018) advance, the push and pull factors model mostly describes student flows to the global North from other countries. Such a conception does not, fully explain student flows to non-European parts of the world (Majee & Ress, 2020), nor does it fully explain intra-regional ISM (King & Sondhi, 2018). This study contributes to a better understanding of ISM by considering international students' socioeconomic backgrounds and the rationales of ISM in an area outside Europe, i.e., East Africa.

Existing dominant conceptual frameworks depict internationalization as a policy-driven activity as an end in itself, that does not explore individual actions and motivations (Willis & Taylor, 2014). An opposing position is held by de Wit (2020), who argues that IHE is not an end in itself. Clearly, more clarity is required about what counts as IHE, and what IHE policy development entails. Such a process needs to take cognizance of the cultural knowledge and educational experiences of diverse international students, in order to better inform IHE processes (Tesar & Arndt, 2017). Further, the ethical, inclusive, and humanistic perspectives of internationalization should be incorporated into policy formulation activities (Buckner & Stein, 2020). It is essential for educational policies to consider the impact of the diverse cultural knowledge brought about by internationalization, as well as the need to investigate the neoliberal agenda (Fakunle, 2021). Offering alternative theoretical and conceptual foundations and orientations toward diverse potential confluences can also strengthen the ability of governments, institutions, and students to resist the prevailing ideologies and marginalizing behaviors that have become prevalent in the sector (Tesar & Arndt, 2017).

Different rationales influence decision-making processes for students to participate in ISM, and "they vary over time and by country or region; they are not mutually exclusive" (de Wit, 2011, p. 245). This study asserts that existing ISM frameworks focus on experiences in the global North and may not precisely depict the context of East Africa's lower-level economies. Further, the histories of East African countries differ from those in Europe, so it is critical to consider local contexts, needs and preferences. The present research uses Critical Social Theory (CST) (section II.3) to investigate the phenomenon of ISM in East Africa. According to this theory, internationalization has evolved and requires rethinking. "Internationalization in higher education is at a crossroads," writes de Wit (2014), "and the notion of internationalization requires an update, refreshment, and fine-tuning in light of the new world and HE order" (p. 97). Accordingly, this study contributes to the desired end, as advocated by that scholar. Therefore, all dimensions of internationalization – including philosophical, ethical, political, and relational considerations – need to be revisited.

Philosophical considerations indicate the intent or goal of internationalization: "Stakeholders informed by their own philosophical and ethical principles (liberal, neoliberal, critical), practices, processes, and asymmetrical power bases" (Ledger & Kawalilak, 2020, p. 661), which are frequently related to the goal of internationalization. Considering the evolution of internationalization over time, some of its earlier ideals and aims have been lost or replaced by others (de Wit & Deca, 2020). For example, economic rationales have become more prevalent (de Wit & Altbach, 2021), and there is a concern that HE may become less sensitive to social needs, such as those described in the Sustainable Development Goals (Jones et al., 2021).

The dominance of economic rationales is linked to reduced government financing for HEIs globally, in that the admittance of high-fee-paying overseas students is a means to subsidize the education costs of local students (Shih, 2017). However, this practice may result in increased inequality in the home countries of internationally mobile students, including a 'brain drain' (Johnstone & Lee, 2014). As a result, there is a risk that internationalization will repeat unequal geopolitical relations and exacerbate global income inequality (Stein, 2016). Indeed, that is not what the advocates for intra-African ISM want it to be.

The ethical dimension of IHE is related to the power balance between global and local actors (Stein, 2016). There have been arguments that internationalization fosters neocolonialism (Schinkel, 2018; Zuchowski et al., 2017); and that it maintains imperial and political links that serve as market places and sources of income for institutions in the global North (Bolsmann & Miller, 2008). This view relates to the core–periphery characterization of countries. Wallerstein (1976) holds that core countries have a high concentration of diversified production with increased profits, high technology, and high wages, in contrast to those of the periphery, in which less diversified production with low profits, low technology, and low wages is concentrated. According to Glass and Cruz (2023), the core–periphery dynamics are changing, with 'nodes' in the periphery through which the 'core' connects to other peripheral countries. In this way, internationalization allows advantaged states to exploit less advantaged nations, thus resulting in a power imbalance. Thus, the current state of affairs regarding internationalization must be understood in the light of global historical challenges – particularly in terms of colonial capitalist connections – in order to keep it ethical and also to avoid the risk of reproducing power imbalances (Stein, 2016).

However, ethical intents are pursued within a space defined by specific powers, socio-historical circumstances, collectivities, and subjectivities (Stein, 2017). There are also political issues linked to internationalization (Stein et al., 2019), which need to be considered. The ethical and political dimensions of internationalization are inextricably linked (Yang, 2020); as a result, the political dimension of internationalization must be reconsidered in order to pursue ethical practices. Notably, this does not suggest that politics is secondary to ethics; on the contrary, politics informs the context, substance, and framing of any particular ethical approach or activity (Stein, 2016). In the light of the link between ethics and politics, internationalization should undermine rather than reinforce existing 'subject-leader' relations.

II.2. Critical social theory

Critical Social Theory (CST) is a framework that challenges the ideological foundations of standard practices while creating new conceptions of those practices, their significance, and their function in society, using stakeholder views and experiences (Lather, 1986). The theory advocates for social change (Lather, 1986) and originates from the works of theorists based at the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, Germany, between the 1920s and 1930s. Those theorists were

concerned about the pervasive inequalities and injustices in daily social relationships and arrangements, and thus considered societies as human constructions that deserved reconstruction (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010).

Theorists at the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt initially studied Socialism and Marxism. However, in response to social, political, and economic forces of the time, they changed their focus from orthodox Marxism, and incorporated other perspectives on theory and culture. Therefore, there are different perspectives on CST regarding specific concerns, theoretical constructs, and disciplinary applications. Nevertheless, there are specific core tenets that hold true for all critical social theories. For example, all critical social theories explore the relationship between the structures in a society and its members, in which everyone is affected, albeit in different ways and to varying extents (Dant, 2003).

In line with the thinking behind CST, 'instrumental reason' is one way in which contemporary societies maintain oppressive structures (Dant, 2003, p. 160) which conceal or ignore society's beliefs, aspirations, and experiences. For instance, the worldviews of the dominant social class are frequently accepted as common sense, without question. This has, however, led to the continued economic and political exclusion of lower social classes (Gramsci, 1971). Therefore, critical social theorists advocate participation in an ideology that is historically rooted in examining how practices develop and gain support within modern systems and reflect people's roles and experiences in daily practice (Calhoun & Karaganis, 2001). In order to reconsider and redefine how IHE is perceived, CST can be used to critique the instrumental emphasis of current internationalization strategies (Brandenburg & de Wit, 2011; de Wit, 2016). The dominant structure of inequalities is assumed to result from nature, without any criticism (Freeman & Vasconcelos, 2010). As a result, CST uses criticism as part of an anti-oppressive strategy geared toward societal change; it is emancipatory and encourages the freedom to consider alternative interpretations and realities from those that are prevalent in society (Dant, 2003).

According to critical social theorists, theory and practice are not distinct types of human activity. Instead, they exist together intrinsically in practice, or in how people carry out their theoretical interpretations of the world (Schwandt, 2005). The current situation surrounding IHE is related to how theory and practice have been influenced by one another. Therefore, the CST framework can

be used to enhance IHE, by denaturalizing existing assumptions and notions that frame and limit our perspectives on internationalization (Buckner & Stein, 2020). As with other theories, this theory allows scholars to identify dominant discourses and deconstruct them, in order to investigate how power normalizes specific ideas while diminishing or eliminating others (Ayashiro, 2015; De Poy & Gitlin, 2016; Froner, 2018). Using CST, this study sheds light on how powerful histories and assumptions have contributed to normalizing certain ideals of internationalization (for example, the belief that ISM is entirely and equally beneficial to all students) and how different sorts of participation may be enabled.

Furthermore, CST asserts that any account, whether local or otherwise, needs to be examined for multiple meanings, while acknowledging that historically impacted, oppressive, and emancipatory knowledge must be understood within local and contextually specific practices (Leonard, 1990). Therefore, this study uses CST to highlight the inequalities that characterize ISM in East Africa, by exploring the rationales of ISM in East Africa, using the views of different respondents and informants, including students, university staff, and national policymakers.

The study submits that existing internationalization strategies in the three East African countries are constructed based on uncontrolled market forces, in such a way that they benefit only the elites that access prestigious institutions, politicians' egalitarian claims notwithstanding (Brown & Lauder, 2006). It is critical to avoid disruptive responses to these existing market forces that might replicate the 2015 'Fees must Fall' student protests that occurred in South Africa, London, California, and Chile (Linden, 2017). This study not only contributes to the scholarship of critical internationalization (section II.4), but also takes cognizance of timely calls to action to address burgeoning HE needs among African communities. Further details of the critical conceptualization of internationalization are discussed in the following section.

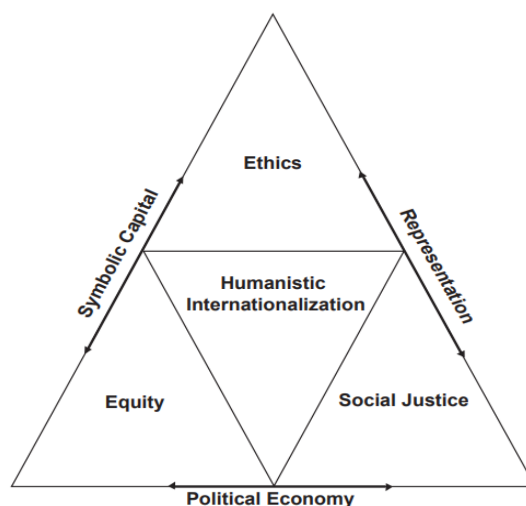
II.3. Conceptualization of critical internationalization

Critical internationalization advocates for humanistic rationales (Buckner & Stein, 2020) that can mitigate social injustices and promote initiatives and positive outcomes for all people by addressing global interconnectedness and power differentials (Viggiano, 2020). Past studies on critical internationalization (Altbach & Balán, 2007; Vavrus & Pekol, 2015; Waters, 2006) have pursued this perspective by focusing on and analyzing the ways in which HEIs in the global North and South occupy different positions within the global political economy. Unlike such studies, the

present study focuses on the inequalities perpetuated through internationalization within the same region of the global South i.e., East Africa. Vavrus and Pekol (2015) explain that individuals and institutions in the global South experience internationalization differently from those in the global North, sometimes to a less extent. This underlines the need for a study on internationalization based in the global South, using a critical perspective.

There are three dimensions that constitute today's internationalization, i.e., representational, political-economic, and symbolic capital dimensions (these three dimensions are discussed in the following sub-sections); and these become more humanistic if they incorporate equity, ethics, and social justice aspects (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015). Figure 2.1 illustrates the interaction of the different elements of present-day's internationalization with the critical perspectives that inform humanistic internationalization. This is IHE that "is needed to foster the contemporary wellbeing of our students and their future freedom to enhance their set of capabilities" (Soong & Maheepala, 2023, p.1215).

Figure 2.1: *Author's Illustration of the Interaction between Contemporary Internationalization and Critical Social Theory.*



This study uses CST to propose a comprehensive critical perspective on internationalization by complementing the political economy, representational, and symbolic capital dimensions of internationalization with equality, ethics, and social justice aspects. The study focuses on ISM (a component of IHE), and how ISM continues to serve certain sections of student populations,

nations and institutions at the expense of others. Thus, this study challenges the ideological systems that bolster the unequal political-economic relations evident in IHE and ISM.

This section has explained how CST can be used to illuminate the enduring structures of inequality that undergird internationalization and ISM. The following sections discuss the three dimensions of today's internationalization highlighted earlier;

II.3.1. Internationalization and representation

Critical internationalization scholars argue that today's challenges (e.g., inequality) must be recognized as cultural or political contestation over who is included and who is excluded (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015). This corresponds to the *representational* dimension in internationalization. Considering East Africa, for example, the countries in the region occupy different political and economic positions. Their nominal GDPs are diverse. For example, the nominal GDPs in billions of US dollars for Kenya, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Uganda, Rwanda, South Sudan, and Burundi are 110.555, 76.582, and 63.909, 48.352, 12.098, 4.784, and 3.686, respectively (IMF, 2022). This is, in part, related to the difference in students' economic capacity to participate in ISM within the region. But is it not possible to use these differences in economic capacity to serve more students for example through establishing scholarships that target disadvantaged students?

Furthermore, East Africa continues to witness political and economic inequality, as evidenced by a privileged English identity, and a marginalized identity for others (Hall, 1997). For example, the former British colonies in East Africa (Kenya and Uganda) which use English as their official language, are the regional leaders in ISM (ICEF Monitor, 2017). English is the primary language in science, technology, research, and publications (Altbach, 2013; Márquez & Porras, 2020). Therefore, universities whose researchers do not research and publish in English are excluded, thus affecting their global ranking and how the world perceives them in terms of quality. This renders them unattractive study destinations for international students.

Globally, the world-class universities at the center of the knowledge production network use English in their academic and research activities. They remain at the top of the global knowledge rankings every year (Boussebaa & Tienari, 2021). In other words, institutions that use English offer more advantages and are seen to embody more symbolic and financial capital than others

(Vavrus & Pekol, 2015). Such universities also have a significant influence over global research and funding agendas (Boussebaa & Tienari, 2021) that inform what counts as authoritative knowledge and the legitimate ways of acquiring it. This is also witnessed in East Africa, in which the top ten best universities are in countries that use English as an official language. Rwanda, which only recently adopted English as an official language, comes in the seventh position out of ten (Onserio, 2022). Clearly, it should be acknowledged that for financial and ideological reasons, some universities – especially those in weaker economies – face challenges in attempting to transcend the global rankings (Oleksiyenko & Sa, 2010). This shows that ISM and internationalization benefit countries, students, and institutions unequally. Therefore, the unequal political-economic relations in internationalization must be attended to, i.e., we need to address the ideological exclusion phenomenon that continues to be prevalent in ISM.

A multitude of inherited hierarchies influence today's world and divisions that appear to normalize unequal global relationships, colonial representations, and resource imbalances. Regrettably, the effect of these has become/is becoming worse with the proliferation of internationalization that continues to occur without a consideration of equal representation. This condition can be improved only through revisiting existing assumptions about people and institutions and the change process (Stein, 2019). For example, the continuing influence of colonialism in today's internationalized HE environment is linked to uneven mobility across countries. According to Stein (2017), it is crucial to understand and modify how economic, national, and other power structures and human choices inform inequalities concerning internationalization processes and policies. Altbach and de Wit (2018) hold a similar view and argue that internationalization is undergoing fundamental shifts and needs to be reconsidered.

In agreement with these views and while adopting CST, this study holds that ISM in the global South influences, and is influenced by, the disparities between students, knowledge production, HEIs, and national and institutional policies, i.e., differences in representation, all of which need to be scrutinized. By applying CST, focusing on equity, ethics, and social justice (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015), the study assesses the contemporary market-driven, deregulated HE landscape between countries (Atkinson & Wade, 2015) – particularly between Uganda and its neighboring countries, Burundi and Rwanda.

II.3.2. The political economy of internationalization

Vavrus and Pekol (2015) explain that there are global patterns of inequality and exclusion of students from the lower social classes, as manifested in ISM trends, the marketing of international education, and profit-making intentions. This characterizes the *political economy* of internationalization which tend to normalize the domination of society by the upper social class, while the economic and political marginalization of the members of the lower social class persists. This reflects on internationalization as an unjust and unethical process. However, such issues are rarely appreciated or investigated in research that focuses mainly on the social and psychological benefits of studying abroad. In the context of this study, as international students in the region are increasing in number, it is clear that the international education industry in the region is growing. However, internationalization and ISM driven by profit-making intentions without considering the equity, ethical, and social justice perspectives, promote exploitation and social inequality. It also limits the attainment of a desirable global public good (Stein, 2019).

National and institutional bodies (e.g. international students' offices and national HE regulatory bodies) need to coordinate public and private international education efforts among East African countries (Moshtari & Safarpour, 2023). The only regional body concerned with student mobility is the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) (IUCEA, 2015). However, the mobility program coordinated by IUCEA is imbalanced regarding its benefits to students and the countries concerned. For example, out of the 63 holders of the East African Community 2022/2023 student mobility scholarships, Rwanda and Burundi hosted no student from another country. In comparison, Uganda received 17 scholars from other East African countries (East African Community, 2022). Thus, Uganda is positioned to benefit more from the East African Community scholarship by having intercultural student communities in its universities, than those countries not hosting such international students.

Brooks and Waters (2011) suggest that international academic credentials embody 'human capital' and 'cultural capital.' Such capital can be exchanged for economic capital in the labor market (Bourdieu, 1986). However, the political and economic factors in the sending and receiving countries determine what students and countries benefit from international education, and how they do so. Sometimes, international students never return home after graduating from a foreign

HEI. This results in a brain drain and human resource loss for the sending country (which, in most cases, tends to be a weaker economy). However, countries receiving international students (usually more robust economies) gain more from this arrangement (Scott, 2015). This is an example of the exploitative connections and inequitable access to resources that characterize IHE (Stein, 2019), and need to be addressed. While there have been claims that internationalization promotes equality, past studies (Brown & Lauder, 2006; Deppe et al., 2017; Wagner, 2020) indicate that it favors mostly transnational and national elites who enjoy opportunities to attend the world's most famous universities. Thus, the present study counteracts popular internationalization approaches (Buckner & Stein, 2020; Suspitsyna, 2015; Vavrus & Pekol, 2015) that perceive IHE as fair and necessary (see chapters six to nine).

Shepherd (2008) reveals that international students use sophisticated strategies to choose the destination country, institution, and subject for study. For example, their subject choices are usually closely aligned with specific career and 'employability' objectives. This claim is validated by data from the US Institute of International Education, which shows that 41% of international students in the US opted for business and management, engineering, or mathematics and computer science in 2006/2007 (Open Doors, 2007). Similarly, British Council data shows that 44% of international students in the UK during the 2003/2004 academic year were enrolled in business studies, engineering, technology, or physical and mathematical sciences programs. In comparison, only 9% were enrolled in social science subjects (British Council, 2004). These considerations show that internationally mobile students seriously consider their choices of study courses. It would therefore seem that international students are very aware of the close relationship between credentials and employment outcomes, and the need to secure a 'positional advantage' in an increasingly global knowledge-based economy (Brown & Hesketh, 2004). These values hold for industrialized countries; the picture may differ in African countries that operate primarily on agrarian economies. This confirms the need to obtain a perspective on ISM from developing economies.

The global HE sector has been linked to market thinking (Gupta, 2015), and this is no different for HEIs in East Africa (Siringi, 2022; Twebaze, 2015), where HE is increasingly being considered a commodity that can be marketed and sold by both public and private institutions (Downie & Herder, 2007; Mamdani, 2007). Due to globalization and internationalization, institutions can now

reach markets beyond national borders. They are able to attract high-fee-paying international students to capitalize on these opportunities to increase earnings (Tannock, 2018). This, however, raises ethical concerns because institutions may prioritize profits over academic values (Stein, 2019); some Ugandan universities have already been accused of this misdemeanor (Ogachi, 2009).

Furthermore, due to commodification, universities tend to build foreign branch campuses that often provide subpar education services (Hickey & Davies, 2022). Students' rights as consumers of such educational services need to be protected. It is for this reason that the Rwandan Government closed branch campuses such as Mount Kenya University (Waruru, 2015) and Kenyatta University (Nganga, 2018). Therefore, it is crucial to explore how universities can internationalize their educational offerings without compromising quality.

II.3.3. Symbolic capital and internationalization

Bourdieu (1986) identifies three forms of capital, i.e., economic, cultural, and social capital. Economic capital is an individual's power over economic resources such as assets or money. In contrast, cultural capital refers to an individual's knowledge, experience, or connections that enable them to interact successfully within a specific field. Social capital refers to the resources available to an individual within the field, based on group membership, relationships, or networks of influence and support. Combined, the three forms of capital transform into *symbolic capital*. Thus, as defined by Bourdieu (1986), symbolic capital is "the acquisition of a reputation for competence and an image of respectability that are easily converted into political positions" (p. 291). In other words, symbolic capital represents the spoken and unspoken rules that guide behavior in specific situations. Thus, as adopted in this study, symbolic capital is a noticeable factor that informs students' choices as to whether or not to participate in ISM.

Informed by the preceding view, Brooks and Waters (2011) assert that student mobility operates in a way that reproduces social class advantage and social inequality, i.e., it benefits those with more symbolic capital than those with less. For example, only students from privileged families who can shoulder the costs associated with international education can engage in mobility. By doing so, the students earn academic credentials from abroad and consequently are better positioned to enjoy more advantages in domestic and international labor markets. They get better jobs and earn more than those who cannot afford international education, thereby reproducing and

exacerbating inequalities. Thus, as Bourdieu (1986) and Waters (2005) clarify, middle-class reproduction occurs when families use western-based educational qualifications – an institutionalized form of cultural capital – to create a positional advantage for their children concerning employment opportunities. This, in turn, helps to reinforce this group's class advantage.

Taking cognizance of internationalization as a global force, and Bourdieu's (1986) notions of field, capital, and habitus, this study explores how ISM in East Africa is informed by the desire to reproduce class. Tran (2015) holds that ISM is no longer confined to the traditional focus on educational purposes; it now considers students' divergent aspirations to transform their life possibilities. ISM may be considered an investment in students as they pursue international education. In line with this notion, van Mol et al. (2021) assert that international students are driven to position themselves successfully regarding local competitive opportunities, as well as within the global job marketplace. This view holds that international education is a means of liberation that resolves some inner contradictions of the home HE system, e.g., gender discrimination or failure to access educational choices. This implies that ISM is seen as a consumer choice in which students relocate for non-financial reasons, in search of better amenities and opportunities in the host countries. That is why students do not only think about joining HE; they also consider the environment in which they will reside and study (Beine et al., 2014).

A similar view is expressed by the ICEF Monitor (2017), namely that students are attracted to HEIs in Uganda because of the low cost of living and better security conditions than in other East African countries. Countries like Burundi, DRC, and South Sudan have endured political unrest for a long time and are near Uganda; thus hosting more students from these countries cannot be attributed merely to replication of social class, but rather to a search for a safe environment. This study contributes to a better understanding of how social class reproduction interacts with situational factors to bring about observed ISM trends in East Africa.

II.4. Inter-regional and intra-regional student mobility

Cross-border student movement is an essential aspect of ISM, as indicated in the definition of ISM[4]. ISM can occur between countries within the same region (which is termed 'intra-regional ISM'), or across different regions (which is termed 'inter-regional ISM') (Woldegiorgis &

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[4] See definition for ISM under operational definitions

Doevenspeck, 2015). Based on the definition of a continent as a large contiguous landmass, usually considered as a collective region (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2020), a continent is one example of a region, so that ISM within a continent is a case of intra-regional ISM, while ISM between different continents falls under inter-regional ISM. Thus, *intra-African* ISM is an example of intra-regional ISM while *inter-African* ISM is an example of inter-regional ISM. We discuss intra-African and inter-African ISM in sections II.6.1 and II.6.2, respectively. This section clarifies the context of ISM in Africa.

II.4.1. Inter-African student mobility

Inter-African mobility (a case of inter-regional ISM) has occurred in Africa for a long time; it was used by the French, British and Portuguese colonialists to train the small number of Africans who were required to support colonial administrations (Abrokwaa, 2017). The practice was common among the colonies, where the colonizers applied an assimilation policy to train Africans in European ways of managing metropolitan institutions (Labouret, 1940). The practice continued in many countries after independence, considering the few HEIs on the continent that were able to offer postgraduate training to educate and equip local people (section I.1.2).

Inter-African ISM has remained persistent even in the face of new trends; for example, between 2016 and 2021, sub-Saharan Africa's outbound ISM increased by 21%; 14% of these mobile students studied in France, while 10% studied in universities in the US (Campus France, 2022a). Other major destinations for African students outside Africa include the UK, Germany, China, Canada, Malaysia, Japan, Russia, and Korea (Glass & Cruz, 2023; ICEF Monitor, 2017; ICEF Monitor, 2021). Saudi Arabia and Turkey also attract many African students (Trines, 2023). The continued growth of Africa's inter-regional ISM is attributed to the possibilities such as access to better HE services and employment opportunities that are opened up through inter-regional mobility (outbound mobility) (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015).

Further, while Africa's HE sector has expanded over the years to attain its current state, the expansion rate has not been commensurate with demand in terms of quality and quantity (Lebeau & Oanda, 2020). Thus, inter-African mobility continues to be one of the options for African students to obtain better HE services (Perkins & Neumayer, 2014), mainly from European universities, which account for 41% of Africa's outbound mobility in 2021 (Trines, 2023). Besides

altruistic aims, the commercial intentions of this type of student mobility have been reported in various studies (Campus France, 2022b; de Wit & Deca, 2020; Yang, 2020). In particular, universities in the global North actively recruit international students – not for the sake of internationalization, but as a source of revenue. The practice also normalizes the subjugation of African HE systems (Govender & Naidoo, 2023). In fact, a number of questions can be addressed in this context: Doesn't East Africa have high-quality institutions? Wouldn't the continued flow of students out of East Africa disrupt its development? While answers to such questions may not be presented in this thesis, the study provides a starting point in the search for answers to such questions.

Nigeria has the highest number of students outside Africa, accounting for about 17% of all outbound mobile students from sub-Saharan Africa. It is followed by Cameroon and Zimbabwe in the second and third positions respectively (Kigotho, 2023a). In East Africa, Kenya has the highest level of outbound student mobility, with students destined mainly for the US (Moshtari & Safarpour, 2023). Other African countries such as Morocco, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and the Democratic Republic of Congo also have significant numbers of students studying outside Africa (Trines, 2023).

According to Trines (2023), many African students have, through inter-regional student mobility, migrated from Africa to countries in the global North. This has consequently exacerbated the brain drain, since graduates very often join the host country's workforce and contribute to its economic development instead of returning to Africa (Alemu et al., 2022; Knight & Woldegiorgis, 2017). According to Knight (2012), some positive possibilities include skills transfer (brain circulation), and a contribution to economic development in the home country through remittances (Amuedo-Dorantes & Pozo, 2023). However, the extent of brain drain is a problem whose negative consequences (discussed in section III.1) cannot be ignored.

A significant downside of inter-African mobility is that Africa is mainly the sender, rather than the receiver of international students (Mohamedbhai, 2017; Pires, 2000; Trines, 2023), which counteracts its benefits. It is only under a few cases of the Erasmus+ program that African universities have hosted international students from the global North (European Commission, 2019a, 2019b). Unbalanced student flows between Africa and other continents bring more

challenges than benefits, causing a net disadvantage for Africa. The practice entrenches a 'center-periphery' relationship, in which Africa is at the periphery of knowledge production, while the global North countries that host most international students are at the center. Since the world operates on a knowledge economy, Africa is vulnerable to continued dependency on the knowledge and technologies produced elsewhere, thus reducing its development prospects (Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2019b).

II.4.2. Intra-African student mobility

Considering the various challenges that are associated with inter-African ISM, scholars argue that intra-African mobility is the solution (Agbaje, 2023; Mohamedbhai, 2017; Sehoole & Lee, 2021). Intra-African ISM is an example of intra-regional ISM in which student mobility occurs between African countries. Although inter-African ISM has been persistent for some time, African countries are now becoming increasingly attractive study destinations for students from other African countries (Adebisi & Agagu, 2017; Agbaje, 2020). This has been attributed partly to the increased demand for HE amidst the limited capacity to supply adequate HE services in some African countries (ICEF Monitor, 2019a; Laakso, 2020). It can also be attributed to increasing political stability and levels of economic development in some African countries, the collapse of Apartheid in South Africa, and regional integration, among other factors (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015).

Several past initiatives promoted intra-African student mobility, including the Arusha UNESCO Convention of 1981, the Accra Declaration of 2004 (Trines, 2023), and the Pan African University Network (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018) (pointed out in section III.2). Other significant efforts include the EU-funded Erasmus+ Intra-African Academic Mobility Scheme that supports student and staff mobility in Africa, and the 'Harmonization of African Higher Education, Quality Assurance and Accreditation' (HAQAA) initiative which seeks to develop a credit transfer system in Africa to ease student mobility on the continent (Trines, 2023).

Different African countries have established regional hubs to attract international students. For example, South Africa hosts 7% of all mobile students in sub-Saharan Africa (Campus France, 2022) and about 32% of the mobile students that stay on the continent (Trines, 2023). Indeed, South Africa is the third most popular destination for international students after France and the

US, and the first choice in Africa (Campus France, 2022b). Other significant players on the intra-African ISM scene include Angola in the Southern African region, and Uganda and Kenya in East Africa. Tunisia and Morocco are regional hubs for North Africa, while Senegal and Ghana are hubs for the West African region (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015). The particularities of these regional African hubs are further discussed in Section III.1.

There have been claims that some African universities which host international students have yet to attain satisfactory HE quality standards (Okalany et al., 2016). One case in particular reports that international students in South Africa experienced xenophobic attacks (Nada & Araújo, 2018) amidst individual difficulties in accessing decent accommodation and other resources (Mutongoza & Olawale, 2023). African universities reportedly lack appropriate cooperation mechanisms and management structures to ensure smooth decision-making processes and active involvement of all partners (European Education & Culture Executive Agency, 2018). At the same time, universities in Africa tend to have no clear internationalization policies to guide the process (Moshtari & Safarpour, 2023).

While intra-African ISM accounted for only 20% of Africa's mobile students in 2021 (Trines, 2023), studying this phenomenon from a critical point of view reveals some of its challenges as a step towards maximizing its potential benefits for many students. How do the rationales of inter-African ISM compare with those of intra-African mobility? Is intra-African mobility serving the needs of potential students irrespective of their backgrounds? This study investigates intra-African student mobility using evidence from East Africa, thus supplementing the existing discourse with this regional evidence. Factors that have been explored in the past – and how they shape ISM – include tuition differentials (Murphy et al., 2017), proximity between countries (Rodríguez et al., 2011), the social class of international students (Di Petrio, 2020), and migration policies (Alves & King, 2022). The present study deepens the conversation by considering how such factors inform intra-African ISM differently from South–North ISM.

II.5. Theorization of international student mobility

Lucas (2009) opines that students crossed borders in search of knowledge as early as the beginning of HE systems. However, the rate at which student flow is occurring in modern times is unprecedented (Kuroda et al., 2018). For example, Guruz (2011) holds that there were only 2 million international students worldwide in 2000, but this number had more than doubled by 2015,

reaching 4.6 million. It is predicted that the number will reach 8 million by 2025 (Hsu & Huang, 2017). Many researchers have investigated the topic and made empirical and theoretical contributions to the ongoing discourse (e.g., Gümüş et al., 2020; Knight, 2012; Riaño et al., 2018; Sehoole & Lee, 2021; Waters & Brooks, 2010).

Earlier studies on ISM (Aderlnto, 1978; Allaway, 1971; Cummings, 1984; Snyder & Kick, 1979) investigated the policies and goals of international education from the perspectives of sending and receiving countries. After the 1980s, studies that explored student flows through the perspective of the overall concept of internationalization became more prominent (Barnett & Wu, 1995). Such studies have continued to expand to include broader discussions of economic and political relationships between sending and receiving countries (Gümüş et al., 2020). However, these studies often employ instrumentalist and functionalist approaches, focusing on specific inputs (activities), processes (arrangements), and outcomes (goals) of internationalization, while disregarding the context that shapes it (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015).

Instrumentalist and functionalist lenses consider international students as a means to profit-making and economic growth; however, they denigrate the other goals of internationalization, such as promoting mutual understanding among cultures, nurturing global citizenship, and the enrichment of humanity (Lo, 2018). Recent approaches have been criticized for promoting dominant neoliberal discourses about the role of HE in ensuring economic competitiveness. Such approaches accept the status quo regarding the rich and the poor, while failing to account for the broader historical and social-political forces that influence opportunities for participation in ISM and internationalization in general. Therefore, in promoting intra-African ISM, these objectives must be incorporated to ensure that the benefits of internationalization are realized. While avoiding profit-making intentions altogether may not be possible, the issue can be approached differently and should not constitute the main reason to promote ISM in Africa.

Therefore, it is necessary to seek alternative lenses through which ISM can be viewed. Knight (2014a) suggests that the guiding principles and values of internationalization must be re-examined because it is 'losing its way.' De Wit (2014) holds a similar view and argues that the "internationalization of HE is at a turning point and thus requires an update, refreshing, and fine-tuning considering the new world and HE order" (p. 97). For example, with ISM as a significant

indicator of internationalization, a primary aim for institutions is to admit students with different nationalities, in order to encourage diversity on university campuses (Bista et al., 2018). However, diversity should go beyond nationality, to include socioeconomic background, ethnicity, linguistic background, and migration status (Buckner & Stein, 2020). This is because internationalization should improve students' understanding of the world's many countries, societies, and languages; provide exposure to diverse perspectives; and prepare students to work closely with those from different linguistic or cultural backgrounds (de Wit & Altbach, 2021). Students sharing the same nationality may not necessarily share the same ethnicity or even social or economic background; thus, considering the diversity of such students based on their nationalities limits the understanding of the student body and restricts institutions in developing relevant and targeted approaches to support all their students.

Further, ISM should be structured in a way that helps students understand or rethink their place in the world (Buckner & Stein, 2020). The 'content of internationalization' should acknowledge the unequal political, economic, and cultural relations between countries; it could help students – particularly those in privileged nations – to wrestle with the historic and ongoing power imbalances that grant them distinct privileges based on their national origin (Buckner & Stein, 2020). Ethical responsibilities and alternative possibilities for engaging with and across differences can be developed through internationalized initiatives. In East Africa, for example, partner states have been differently advantaged or disadvantaged through history (section I.2). So, how can these member countries equip their international students to benefit from such variances without exacerbating ongoing differences? The present study uses Critical Social Theory to illuminate the enduring inequality that undergirds internationalization, in an attempt to suggest alternatives.

II.6. Conclusion

The present chapter has presented and discussed the conceptual and theoretical frameworks regarding IHE and ISM. It introduced definitions of IHE provided by different scholars over time, starting from the early 1980s, reflecting how the concept has evolved from being competence-based, or an activity and a motive, to becoming a process. With this understanding, this study adopts de Wit et al.'s (2015) definition that IHE is "the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of post-

secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff and to make a meaningful contribution to society" (p. 29).

The chapter has highlighted the different dimensions of IHE, arguing that ISM is its most visible form. ISM has recently been influenced by the neoliberal agenda, and hence there is a need for a new theoretical lens with which to study internationalization, particularly regarding intra-African ISM. The chapter refers to micro- and macroeconomic rationales, including the 'push and pull factors' model developed to explain ISM (Colón, 2018). A reference was made to the criticism leveled at these frameworks for ignoring students' characteristics, which are considered important in this study.

This chapter conceptualizes ISM which may take the form of either intra-regional or inter-regional ISM. It points out the challenges associated with inter-regional ISM and highlights that intra-regional ISM has been considered as a possible solution to those challenges. However, this would depend on how intra-African ISM is differently conceptualized from inter-African ISM, as this study sought to discover.

Most existing studies approached ISM from an instrumental or functionalist point of view, hence promoting or maintaining the dominant neoliberal discourses about the role of IHE in ensuring economic competitiveness. However, such approaches do not analyze the significant historical and social-political forces that influence opportunities for participation in ISM. This study, therefore, adopts Critical Social Theory (CST) as the theoretical lens to advocate for a better form of internationalization in terms of intra-African ISM.

The chapter introduces CST as a theoretical foundation for challenging social practices that have been arbitrarily accepted as the standard to develop new conceptions, their significance, and their function in society. CST is helpful in highlighting the inequalities in East Africa's ISM practices, and contributing to the scholarship of critical internationalization. This chapter argues that existing ISM strategies were formulated based on political and social market forces, hence benefiting mainly the elites who are able to access prestigious institutions.

Applying CST to internationalization, the study espouses the critical conceptualization approach, and this chapter analyzes how internationalization relates to representation, political economy, and

symbolic capital. It points out that some East African countries inherited advantages, such as colonial institutions, the language of instruction, and economic power. These inherited attributes influence the prominence of these countries in internationalization in particular ways, which need to be understood and critiqued.

Internationalization and ISM are usually driven by profit-making intentions that disregard equity, ethical, and social justice perspectives. As a result, such approaches may not deliver the desired development goals. The chapter argues that there is a need to account for the exploitative connections and inequitable access to resources that characterize ISM; otherwise, there is an ongoing risk of reproducing economic inequalities.

The chapter has shown how ISM is usually fashioned to reproduce social class advantage and social inequality. For example, it is mainly students from affluent families who can pay the higher tuition associated with international education, hence they are the ones most likely to become internationally mobile. This selectively locates them in an advantaged position in domestic and international labor markets, enabling them to obtain excellent jobs, which in turn has the potential to reproduce their higher social class. The study investigates the extent to which intra-African mobility strives to overcome inherited social stratification, beyond simply the number of international students in East Africa.

The following chapter presents an overview of IHE and ISM within East Africa. It attempts to highlight the specificities of the three East African countries which are the focus of the present study.

CHAPTER THREE: OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND STUDENT MOBILITY IN EAST AFRICA

III.0. Introduction

Internationalization has evolved over the past three to four decades from a marginal aspect to a vital element of the higher education (HE) reform agenda, and is essential for national economic development, trade, and reputation (de Wit & Deca, 2020). Under its influence, the mobility of students and staff has become prominent; branch campuses and international HE providers are common, while institutions compete for students and resources at local and international levels. While these changes have been experienced on a global scale, the present chapter gives an overview of the internationalization of higher education (IHE) in Africa (and in East Africa in particular), referring to its peculiar regional manifestations (e.g., student mobility), benefits and challenges over time. This is done by discussing general cases of internationalization in Africa and then linking to relevant situations in the three East African countries of interest.

III.1. Internationalization of higher education in Africa

The internationalization of Africa's HE sector has a long history, extending from the period of colonial occupation on the continent (Alemu et al., 2022). During the colonial period, some of the higher education institutions (HEIs) established in Africa were linked to those in Europe, through colonial ties (Alemu, 2014). An example of such a case was the establishment of a branch campus of the University of London in Ghana in 1948, i.e., the University College of Gold Coast (now the University of Ghana) (Nicolas, 2021). Additionally, the colonial HEIs in Africa used curricula, languages, structures, and management practices that were European – such features still characterize HE on the continent today. That is why internationalization is often viewed as being synonymous with 'Europeanization' – a homogenization process that leads to the destruction of local cultures (Jones & de Wit, 2021).

Despite this earlier experience with aspects of internationalization, many researchers (Alemu, 2014; Alemu et al., 2022; Teferra & Greijn, 2010) hold that Africa is regarded as an insignificant player in the field of IHE. This is because HE in Africa is considered peripheral and thus experiences one-sided relationships with the rest of the world (Moshtari & Safarpour, 2023). That is why Teferra (2014) contends that African HE systems have been internationalized by omission

rather than by participation. Similarly, Alemu et al. (2022) hold that "higher education institutions in Africa are the most internationalized in the world, but from the perspectives of benefits, voices, participation and the model of internationalization, they are the most marginalized, peripheralized and challenged" (p. 4). This situation explains why IHE in Africa and the rest of the global South has not attracted much research attention (Morosini et al., 2017). The phenomenon represents "the colonial politics of knowledge production, which devalues not only non-Western knowledge but also produces colonial representations of the non-West that rationalize Western exceptionalisms and justify Western political and economic interventions abroad" (Stein, 2017, p. 15).

Without acknowledging the past occurrences of internationalization in Africa, a new agenda to internationalize Africa's HE sector was conceived during the UNESCO Conference on the Development of HE held in September 1962 in Antananarivo, Madagascar (Andoh & Salmi, 2019). The same authors explain that, among other things, the conference called for the internationalization of universities in Africa. The call was made based on perspectives from the Western industrialized nations that regard internationalization as a transformative process. However, from the perspective of countries in the global South, it is a challenging, imbalanced, and hegemonic process (Alemu et al., 2022). Advocates for the internationalization of Africa's HE sector argue that the process increases chances for HEIs in Africa to collaborate at international and local levels, hence helping students to have world-class training to compete with graduates from institutions across the world (Moshtari & Safarpou, 2023). These arguments present internationalization as an entirely beneficial process, while ignoring its (un)intended consequences, or even the unequal circumstances that shape it (Levinson, 2011). Such a pattern of thought has colonial roots (Smith, 2012), and continues to endure (Campbell & Murrey, 2014).

The notion of IHE was not adopted immediately after the conference, since most African governments were preoccupied with nationalistic agendas of universities and the Africanization of university curricula (Andoh & Salmi, 2019). However, IHE started to interest Africans in the late 1990s as globalization became relevant for African governments, followed by the emergence of world university rankings, in particular the launch of Shanghai Jiao Tong University's Academic Ranking of World Universities in 2002 (Andoh & Salmi, 2019). Consequently, African HEIs have, in the recent past, strengthened their international activities through the provision of international programs, the establishment of branch campuses, partnerships with institutions abroad, and

increased international mobility of students and staff (Moshtari & Safarpour, 2023; Wan & Geo-JaJa, 2013). Andoh and Salmi (2019) argue that since 2003, African HEIs, such as the University of Ghana, the University of Ibadan, the University of Nairobi, and the University of Dar Es Salaam, have developed an international mission. These universities have established specialized units charged with coordinating the international mobility of students and staff, and liaising with international donors, alumni, and embassies regarding partnerships and collaboration.

Andoh and Salmi (2019) also argue that since its popularity rose in the early 2000s, internationalization has yielded substantial benefits for African universities. However, those authors do not mention any threats associated with IHE; they romanticize internationalization and point out that the first 50 most-cited articles from top African universities in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, and Tanzania – as shown by the Web of Science data – were (in the majority) co-authored with researchers from universities in industrialized countries. However, according to Mamdani (2017), African researchers tend to serve only as data collectors when they collaborate with researchers from the global North; they are seldom part of the data analysis stage, which would be vital for them to develop the competencies necessary to develop Africa's HE expertise. Thus, the claims by Andoh and Salmi (2019) can only be celebrated to a lesser extent.

There are also cases of internationalization of African universities through joint postgraduate programs that involve African and international partner universities (Adidja, 2022; Burquel, 2013). According to Adidja (2022), a joint Ph.D. in Agricultural Rural Innovations is run by Makerere University (Uganda), Egerton University (Kenya), Sokoine University of Agriculture (Tanzania), Wageningen University and Research Centre (the Netherlands), Agreenium (France), and the University of Copenhagen (Denmark). The joint initiative has strengthened the quality of postgraduate training and spurred innovative approaches in curriculum design and the delivery of postgraduate training in Africa (Adidja, 2022). However, concerns about program sustainability, compatibility, complementarity of the partners, and the rationales of joint degree programs (Varano & Verspeeten, 2019) cannot be ignored.

While IHE clearly offers benefits, it is also associated with several risks (Amutuhaire, 2020) – with brain drain being the most significant risk for emerging African economies (Alemu et al., 2022). Many Africans who studied in the global North have yet to return home after their studies

(Krstic, 2012). This represents a loss of investment for African countries in educating such students, since the graduates marginally contribute to the economic development of their nations. The brain drain challenge has meant that knowledge workers and other human resources in specific sectors of the economy have remained low in Africa. Consequently, the continent faces a 'dependency syndrome' and relies on Western systems, standards, support, and knowledge (Alemu et al., 2022). As a result, African universities are at the bottom of global rankings, which are determined based on institutional research productivity and publications.

Additionally, as Knight (2013) indicates, IHE is associated with the risk of destroying cultures, and reducing the multiplicity of languages, resulting in homogenization of cultures and structures; which threatens the quality of HE and, in a way, supports imperialism. Similarly, Alemu (2014) explains that IHE, initially meant to facilitate capacity building through international collaboration, is slowly being substituted by initiatives to improve status and generate more revenues, thus causing unhealthy competition. The unregulated flow of policies and education systems from the North to the South is another challenge associated with IHE, as further elaborated by Alemu (2014). The risks associated with IHE and the power relations that shape it must be acknowledged, so as not to sustain or reproduce them within an uneven global HE landscape (Stein, 2019).

Those challenges notwithstanding, there is a difference between the modes of internationalization emphasized in Africa and those in the global North. Morosini et al. (2017) explain that while the global South accentuates mobility in IHE, the global North emphasizes global citizenship education. For this reason, forming networks for collaborative research between scholars and institutions is more common in the global North (European Union, 2015) than in the global South. This is not to say that international student mobility (ISM) is nonexistent in the global North, but the reason for its existence in the North differs from that in the South. For example, the Erasmus exchange program in the European Union was established to facilitate students from different countries to meet and form close relationships, hence promoting a common European identity amongst themselves (European Union, 2012). The reasons for ISM in Africa, on the other hand, include overcoming challenges associated with the education system and insecurity in the home country (Sehoole & Lee, 2021). As much as ISM is the most popular internationalization activity in Africa's HE arena, other activities such as research partnerships (Alemu, 2014; Lobnibe, 2020) and academic collaborations (Andoh & Salmi, 2019; Haley et al., 2022) also exist on the continent.

Further, Jones and de Wit (2021) assert that only a few countries in the global South have a defined internationalization policy. They conduct their internationalization activities in an unorganized way, which cannot be expected to guarantee optimal outcomes. Alemu (2014) holds that HEIs in Africa – especially universities – exhibit variable efforts towards internationalization in teaching and research; some have engaged in research and academic collaborations or partnerships, and student and staff mobility, while others have not. Additionally, Zereza (2019) argues that most African countries compete for supremacy as they pursue their internationalization agenda, yet collaboration is more desirable. A focus on competition is a narrow interpretation of internationalization; internationalization goes beyond competition to include international cooperation and global competence (de Wit & Jones, 2022). The present study validates claims about the status of East Africa's IHE context (see chapters six and seven).

Furthermore, there has been a shift in internationalization strategies in Africa, aiming to increase staff and student mobility between African countries and institutions. As a result, there has been an increase in intra-African internationalization (Jowi, 2011; Sehoole & Lee, 2021), characterized by increased partnerships and collaborations between scholars, academicians, researchers, and institutions within the continent. It is vital to explore this new trend of intra-African internationalization, in order to make it more productive and valuable. An important consideration is international students' rights – as Yang (2020) explains, concern has been raised about the responsibilities of HEIs in this regard, and national systems that disregard students' rights. From the rights perspective, international education is an avenue through which students can access high-quality education and adequate resources to support their learning (Tran & Nyland, 2018); yet, international education providers sometimes provide mediocre qualifications (Yang, 2018a). The ethical nature of intra-African ISM is essential for this study. The study interrogated how ISM in East Africa might provide an enriching educational experience while minimizing social inequalities and promoting social justice and development through cooperation.

According to de Wit and Jooste (2014), it is common for the emerging nations of the global South to copy internationalization strategies from the global North, rather than being innovative in developing context-based, more relevant approaches. What Africa needs is greater focus on the quality and diversity of activities that facilitate IHE; institutional curricula and learning outcomes that are internationally and locally relevant; and commitment to the establishment of ethical HE

partnerships, both locally and internationally (de Wit & Jooste, 2014). As mentioned, only a few studies have focused on IHE in Africa, yet a deeper understanding of emerging internationalization trends is necessary. The quality rather than the quantity of ISM in East Africa is relevant in this study, to demostrate how IHE in Africa differs from the approach in the global North. Approaches to IHE should be ethical and promote equality in participation and the benefits sought.

IHE has become central in the evaluation criteria for academic programs in HEIs globally (de Dosch, 2021). It is the reason behind research partnerships, academic mobility, and study-abroad programs (Knight, 2012). However, Teferra (2020a) asserts that the current conception of IHE partially suits Africa. He argues that while some nations and institutions choose to pursue the international dimension, many others have taken this path because they are "under coercion, duress, and contestation" (p. 169). Thus, while recent efforts to ground internationalization in the strategic visions of Africa's HEIs are acknowledged (Andoh & Salmi, 2019), many of such efforts are structured by enduring unequal power relations. Instead, as advanced by Morosini et al. (2017), IHE should be informed by sharing solidarity, and equality of partners.

III.2. Internationalization of higher education in East Africa

East African countries are making efforts to internationalize HE at national and regional levels, notably through the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA) and the East African Community Common Markets Protocol. EACHEA aims to increase cooperation in HE through investments in research and knowledge production. Oanda and Matiang'I (2018) record that the Bologna Process (BP) – which led to the establishment of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in Europe – contributed to the formation of the EACHEA, when Europe was motivated to establish similar processes outside Europe (Trines, 2018). Further continental interventions that aimed to improve cooperation in Africa's HE sectors were also applied in East Africa to promote the establishment of the EACHEA. For example, after the UNESCO Arusha Convention of 1981, African nations agreed to harmonize and recognize HE qualifications, in order to support the mobility of staff and students across the continent (Kadhila & Libebe, 2021). Other Africa-wide initiatives are the Pan African University Network, the Nyerere Scholarship, and the Academic Mobility Program (Woldegiorgis, 2019).

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) plays a vital role within the EACHEA, promoting collaboration between regional universities, and coordinating the mobility of staff and

students within the region (IUCEA, 2015). They also manage a scholarship scheme that supports the mobility of students across partner states. A qualifications framework has been established to equate the qualifications attained from regional universities, and facilitate student mobility between regional universities. However, concerns have been raised about the sovereignty, ownership, and relevance of the standards developed by IUCEA, since many of its activities are funded by foreign partners, including the German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD) and the German Rectors Conference (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). The argument is that IUCEA may end up implementing only those standards relevant to the funders' context and directives, which may be irrelevant to achieving East Africa's development goals.

Further, Shabani et al. (2014) highlight that the EACHEA exhibits few modifications in terms of policy and structure compared to those of the former colonial University of East Africa. Therefore, such development efforts should be reworked to reflect desired academic and ideological outputs. It is necessary to explore whether such efforts are designed to serve foreign interests in the region, or will create more robust HE systems (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). In particular, intra-African ISM should aim to mitigate the challenges brought about by south-to-north ISM, rather than replicating them. Van der Wende (2017) contends that establishing common HE areas, as witnessed in East Africa, is only a response to global trends in HE regarding competition for talent and research funds. This study contributes to the understanding of the extent to which ISM in East Africa is founded on rationale of quality improvement and serving the true intentions for Africans.

ISM is an important component of the EACHEA, and some countries have positioned themselves to make significant monetary gains from its expansion (ICEF Monitor, 2017; Maseruka, 2010; The PIE News, 2019). This suggests that ISM in the region is founded on an economic rationale and informed by competition (ICEF Monitor, 2017; Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). However, such an approach to internationalization – informed mainly by economic reasons without an ethical perspective – is not sustainable and threatens social justice efforts (Stein, 2019). Further, the future of such rationales remains questionable, since there are suggestions for students from East African Community member states to pay the same tuition as domestic students (Rwothungeyo, 2016). Since most incoming international students in Uganda are from within East Africa, this study explores the implications of such IHE issues in the three selected East African countries.

III.2.1. Internationalization of higher education in Uganda

As is the case for many countries in the global South (Alemu, 2014), studies on IHE in Uganda are not abundant, although some scholars (Amutuhaire, 2013; Bisaso & Nakamanya, 2020; Kasenene, 2012) have written about the topic. As pointed out in section I.2.1, one of Uganda's earliest cases of IHE occurred when the University of London established a branch campus at Makerere during the colonial period, which was later transformed into a college of the University of East Africa (Itaaga et al., 2013) and served mainly students from East Africa (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). At the time, mainly students from the higher social class participated in HE (Ssekamwa, 2005). This influenced their participation in ISM (Charton, 2020), i.e., only students from wealthy households, such as monarchs and chiefs, accessed foreign education.

However, a change regarding students' socioeconomic backgrounds has been reported; thus students from lower socioeconomic classes have now also become mobile (Deuchar, 2022; Tran & Vu, 2018; Xu, 2017). This is a reaction to the existing job stress that graduates rely on an international education to beat their competitors on the job market (Pham & Thompson, 2019). This indeed redefines the rationales underlying ISM. As Iorio and Pereira (2018) submit, students and their households may use ISM to contest social class positioning. The possibilities for such a reality remain blurred in the current climate of education and credentials inflation (Araki & Kariya, 2022). Graduates are being expected to possess a wide range of competences with their qualification being just one of them (Pham & Thompson, 2019). A foreign qualification may not necessarily guarantee transition across the social class ladder. This study’s second objective investigates the interaction between intra-African ISM and the contestation of social class.

During the early days of its establishment, Makerere University (MU) provided education of a very high quality (Tabaire & Okao, 2010). While there are some indications that the quality of education has since decreased due to underfunding (Hyuha, 2017), MU still commands respect as a high-quality institution within the region (Kiiza, 2019). With its high-quality standards and inherited reputation as the oldest university in the region – that has trained some celebrated leaders (Ricart-Huguet, 2022), Makerere enjoys admiration and attracts several international students enrolling in its course programs. In 2022, 2,694 international students were enrolled in MU (QS International, 2022). Perceptions about a high-quality education at MU have extended to Uganda's younger universities, some of which now admit even more international students than MU.

Kampala International University (KIU), a private university much younger than MU, admits more international students than MU does (James, 2021). In 2022, for example, more than 7,100 international students were enrolled in programs at KIU (QS International, 2022), compared to 2,694 international students at MU in the same year (UniRank, 2022). However, the difference in the number of international students admitted is not necessarily a result of an institution's quality and reputation, but may instead be an outcome of the internationalization strategy it has adopted.

It should be pointed out that among the various internationalization strategies, the most common is international study mobility (ISM) – the enrolment of international students in home institutions; although ISM does not account for all the processes involved in IHE (Morosini et al., 2017). Thus, there are various ways in which HEIs in Uganda have chosen to internationalize and the choice of institutional internationalization strategy is informed by, among other things, institutional philosophies and histories (Bisaso & Nakamanya, 2020). Further, Itaaga et al. (2013) assert that although not all HEIs in Uganda have adopted similar strategies, their strategies generally include study abroad programs, recruitment of international students, and student exchange programs. There is also a growing trend of establishing branches of foreign universities in Uganda, introducing programs providing an international perspective and cross-cultural skills, and research and academic collaborations, among other strategies (Bisaso & Nakamanya, 2020). Institutions can also opt for academic and research partnerships as their internationalization strategy (El Kirat et al., 2022). For example, partnering with leading HEIs is crucial for Uganda's Mbarara University of Science and Technology (Bisaso & Nakamanya, 2020). Bisaso and Nakamanya (2020) further state that Busitema University and MU have adopted academic partnerships and collaborations in academics and research as their internationalization strategies. Therefore, while universities in Uganda consider ISM to be important, other strategies have equally taken root in Uganda's HEIs.

However, Kasenene (2012) expresses skepticism regarding the status of IHE in Uganda, and associates it with various challenges including:

- the absence of a strong internationalization policy to guide the process,
- limited knowledge about what IHE entails on the part of HEI management, and
- bureaucratic procedures in institutions.

The lack of internationalization policy raised by Kasenene (2012) corroborates Jones and de Wit's (2021) views that most global South countries have no defined internationalization policy. Indeed, the process occurs by chance and is not intentional, confirming the position of Teferra (2020a).

Given that Uganda, just like much of the rest Africa, is still recovering from the adverse effects of colonialism, there is skepticism about fully embracing internationalization (Alemu et al., 2022), which scholars have linked to the influence of neocolonialism (Zuchowski et al., 2017; Schinkel, 2018). This view is supported by Teferra (2020a), who holds that IHE continues the neocolonial project and that efforts should be tailored toward making IHE more productive, fair, and effective. Thus, nations and institutions should pursue internationalization strategies that do not reproduce the challenges caused by colonialism. As Teferra (2020b) elaborates, African institutions should implement an approach of "smart internationalization" by being "locally grounded and internationally flavored" (p.5).

Uganda's HE sector served about 280,000 students, including over 20,000 international students, most of whom are from the East African region in 2022 (National Council for Higher Education, Uganda, 2022a). These international students likely contribute to the extracurricular activities of university life, broaden diversity on campus, and help all students better prepare for life and the workplace in an increasingly globalized society. They also foster a more global mindset in the host community. These benefits are consistent with the sociocultural rationale for internationalization, which, as Knight (2004) explains, focuses on a nation's function, culture, and language and the importance of understanding the languages and cultures of others. However, Uganda should go beyond the assertion of national identity and promote intercultural understanding. The theoretical conceptualizations of the political and sociocultural rationales of IHE and ISM should contribute to redressing regional geopolitical challenges (Majee & Ress, 2020). Therefore, as a significant player in ISM in the East African region, Uganda should promote a better understanding of such rationales of IHE.

One factor favoring Uganda as a destination for East African students is its education system. As explained in chapter one, Uganda operates on a 7-4-2-3 education system, compared to the 6-3-3-4 system in Rwanda (a similar education structure was used in Burundi but this was changed in 2013). Students who would have otherwise spent four years in an HEI spend three years once

admitted into Uganda's HEIs. This option promotes inbound HE students' mobility because it saves time and money. ISM is also promoted by Uganda's language policy, which mandates the use of English at practically all levels of education (Nankindu et al., 2015). Uganda has also become a popular destination for mobile students because of a shift in Rwanda's language policy from French to English (Trines, 2019), and the desire of the inhabitants of Burundi to study in English (Nizonkiza, 2005). It is also simple for students to move to Uganda from other English-speaking African countries, such as Tanzania and Kenya. Other factors contributing to Uganda's high inbound ISM include low education costs, the relatively secure environment, and the low cost of living in the country (Itaaga et al., 2013).

Private universities in Uganda admit more international students than public ones (Kiiza, 2019). For example, a private university – Kampala International University – is Uganda's leading university regarding international student admissions (James, 2021). However, the quality of education offered by private institutions is usually low (Baban, 2021; Muhangi, 2020; Swanzy, 2018). While such institutions offer improved access to HE for many students (including international students) (Tamrat, 2018b), the quality of education provided should be assessed to ensure that ISM is beneficial to all parties involved. Low-quality education for Africans will widen the gap between Africa and the rest of the world (Anas & Musah, 2023).

The Ugandan Government has implemented regulations to encourage and broaden possibilities for HEIs to engage in ISM (Obwona & Ssewanyana, 2007), although the detailed regulations for mobile students in Uganda still need to be clarified. Since most international students in Uganda come from other East African countries, creating a uniform policy on this topic for the East African Community would be advisable. To date, only a few research studies (Amutuhaire, 2024; ICEF Monitor, 2017; Kiiza, 2021) have investigated Uganda's ISM trend in relation to the East African region. Similarly, research has yet to be done on the evolving nature of ISM in Uganda and what it involves today. The present study contributes to narrowing this gap by exploring Uganda's position as a major host of international students in East Africa as shown in chapter seven.

While Uganda views education export as a significant contributor to GDP growth (Othieno & Nampewo, 2012), the policy framework guiding investment for the purpose is lacking, mainly because of a scarcity of research that can inform the policy making process. The entrance of

international students into a country requires a firm commitment from researchers and policymakers (Halic et al., 2009) to adequately address students' concerns and demands (Ozturgut & Murphy, 2009). Furthermore, the future of ISM depends on interaction between institutional and national policies (Choudaha & de Wit, 2019). Research into educational investment regarding scholarships, student support, migration policies, and their impact on ISM in Uganda is warranted. It is clear that strategies for ISM at the institutional and national levels in Uganda have yet to be examined, and this study contributes towards addressing that knowledge vacuum.

Uganda's existing internationalization strategies and conditions mean that the country is a receiver rather than a source of international students (Rana, 2020). Despite this, the country also exhibits outbound mobility. The ICEF Monitor (2017) indicates that over 1,000 Ugandan students studied in foreign universities in 2017, with preferred destinations being the UK, the US, and South Africa. Countries like China, Malaysia, Saud Arabia, and Italy also host international students from Uganda. However, with the coming into force of the EACHEA in 2017, the number of Ugandan students enrolled in regional universities has been soaring (Trines, 2023). The World Bank recently established centers of excellence in various East African countries (IUCEA, 2019; World Bank, 2016). These centers recruit students from regional partners and certainly attract Ugandan students to the countries that host centers of excellence.

III.2.2. Internationalization of higher education in Rwanda

According to Trines (2019), 4,839 university students from Rwanda studied in other countries in 2017. The number of outbound mobile students from Rwanda increased from 5,546 in 2019 to 6,303 in 2021 (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, n.d.). Consequently, Rwanda's outbound mobility rates were 7.69% and 6.81% in 2019 and 2020, respectively (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, n.d.), which were higher than the global average of 5.7% (O'Malley, 2018). One of the factors that has increased Rwanda's high outbound student mobility rate is the availability of national scholarship programs that facilitate study outside the country, according to Trines (2019). Kritz (2015) holds a similar view, and submits that funding international scholarships to meet the growing demand for tertiary education is part of the country's strategy to compete effectively in the global economy. In other words, the scholarships are an investment in the development of human capital in Rwanda, with the aim of producing graduates who can contribute to the country's socioeconomic development upon returning home. The country holds on to the graduates such that they must

return home on completing their studies (LSE, 2016). Therefore, the practice presents no risk of brain drain from the country since most scholarship holders usually return home upon graduation.

Another reason for Rwanda's high outbound mobility is that the HE sector is still in the early stages of development, and therefore offers limited academic programs for students. In particular, courses in dentistry and other medical and postgraduate programs are limited (Kabeera & Nayebare, 2013; Trines, 2019). Trines (2019) clarifies that until the 2010s, all medical and dental education occurred at the national university, or in universities abroad. Even now, the medical and dental schools in the country need to increase their capacity to train the desired number of graduates. In many fields, the absence of a program of choice for students encourages them to seek it in another country. The lack of qualified academic staff complicates teaching in the country's HEIs (Corey, 2019) and also encourages students to search for alternatives abroad.

After the 1994 genocide and consequent ousting of the Hutu regime, Rwanda cut its relations with France in 2006 and opted for an Anglophone alignment rather than a Francophone one (Scott, 2007). This expressed Rwanda's dissatisfaction with France's support for the Hutu regime, whose actions had led to the genocide (Trines, 2019). Further, and as earlier pointed out in chapter one, Rwanda substituted French as the medium of educational instruction with English in 2008 (Corey, 2019; Samuelson & Freedman, 2010). McGreal (2009) argues that this action has strengthened the links between Rwanda and its English-speaking East African neighbors, including Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania. Further, Rwanda strengthened its ties with the US and Britain, both English-speaking countries. Hence, the need to train its students in English became desirable. Another important issue arising from the language policy change is that it facilitates the mobility of students from Rwanda into English-speaking countries (Trines, 2019).

While some Rwandan students study in other countries such as Uganda (Kiiza, 2019), the most popular destination for them is the US (Baxter, 2019). For example, the number of Rwandan students in the US increased from 1,069 in 2016/17 to 1,232 in 2017/18 academic year, representing a 13.2% increment (Trines, 2019). On the same point, the Institute of International Education (2017) reported that Rwanda is among the top ten countries with the highest number of international students in the US. The high popularity of the US as a study destination for Rwandan students has been attributed to partnerships between the Government of Rwanda and American

HEIs (Tashobya, 2018). For example, the Kagame Scholarship funds Rwandan students to study in the US, on condition that they return home after graduation (Ngabonziza, 2015).

However, Rwanda recently adopted a different perspective on IHE. Whereas the proportion of Rwandan students enrolled internationally exceeded 15% in the early 2000s – when the country was struggling with the impact of the genocide, their proportion decreased to 6% in 2017 (Trines, 2019). Thus, the overall number of outbound international students from Rwanda has been decreasing over the years. The decrease is attributed to the growing HE capacity in Rwanda – the number of HEIs has increased, and there have been some quality improvements. While the number of outbound students is still high, the decreasing rate indicates the country's capacity to regulate the drivers of outbound mobility (Trines, 2019).

Besides Rwanda's level of outbound mobility, it is worth mentioning that the country has also begun to register inbound international students, and the numbers continue to grow. Trines (2019) explains that most inbound students into Rwanda are from the neighboring Francophone countries, i.e., the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Burundi. The same author attributes Rwanda's inbound ISM numbers to East African regional integration initiatives and the establishment of the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA) (Ligami, 2017). The establishment of EACHEA has resulted in harmonization of the HE systems in partner East Africa; and a scholarship scheme to facilitate ISM within East Africa has been established (IUCEA, 2015). These factors increase the rate of Rwanda's inbound ISM.

Further, there has been growth in research collaborations between universities in Rwanda and those in the rest of East Africa (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). Through such collaboration, the World Bank, for example, funded the establishment of four centers of excellence at the University of Rwanda (IUCEA, 2019). The Centers of Excellence serve as regional incubators for technical innovation and graduate research in Rwanda and have been enrolling graduate students from other African countries, thus increasing inbound ISM into Rwanda. The number of African international students in Rwanda has more than doubled, from 731 in 2015 to 3,860 in 2022, after the World Bank established the four centers of excellence at the University of Rwanda (Trines, 2023).

III.2.3. Internationalization of higher education in Burundi

A UNESCO (2021) report highlights challenges regarding access to reliable educational statistics in Burundi – the information is scattered in archived databases and is often incomplete. Nevertheless, an attempt is made in this section to contextualize the status of ISM in Burundi.

Since establishing the first HEI in Burundi in 1964, HE was structured along short and long cycles. Studies in the short cycle averaged two to three years, while the long cycle was four years on average, except for courses in agronomy and medicine, which lasted for 5 and 7 years respectively (Tuyisenge, 2020). The license-master-doctorate training structure, equivalent to the bachelor-master-doctorate in other countries, was introduced in Burundi in the 2011/12 academic year (UNESCO, 2021). Tuyisenge (2020) explains that before adopting the bachelor-master-doctorate reform, some students were able to access private higher education institutions (HEIs) without a secondary school diploma, whereas access to public HE in Burundi was subject to a student having completed a humanities graduation diploma at their secondary school. This dual standard was clearly problematic, and meant that degrees from Burundi HEIs had minimal international recognition (Provin, 2017). To address the challenge, a law was enacted in Burundi in 2011 that established similar admission standards for private and public HEIs (Tuyisenge, 2020). With the reform, private institutions were regulated, and all students may now access both public and private HEIs only if they have a state diploma, achieved after sitting and passing the national examination. Candidates with a general, pedagogical, or technical humanities certificate (but not a state diploma) can apply for post-secondary vocational education.

These standardization processes have improved the quality of HE in Burundi and enhanced the qualifications from its universities in terms of comparable global standards. The old education system was incompatible with many of the world's education systems and did not easily enable students to transfer to and from Burundi. The enhanced comparability standards now facilitate student flows in and out of Burundi (Tuyisenge, 2020; UNESCO, 2021).

As highlighted in chapter one, outbound ISM from Burundi has a long history, beginning in the 1970s when the insecurities in the country led to the killing of HE staff and students (Obura, 2008). Most of the surviving students fled the country and continued their studies in foreign countries, especially Belgium and France. The political instabilities destabilized the country's education

system, leading to a low-quality HE system; the situation worsened when academic staff also migrated to foreign countries. Even teachers who went abroad for further education did not return on completion of their studies (Tuyisenge, 2020). Therefore, more and more students had to be sent abroad, seeking better education. Clearly, the low quality of education and political instabilities in Burundi contributed to pronounced outbound student mobility from the country.

Kritz (2011) reports that students from Burundi have multiple international study destinations, including France, Canada, the US, Norway, and the UK. In 2007, Burundi sent 970 students to these countries, representing 5.7% of the country's HE students. However, student flows from Burundi keep fluctuating; for example, in 1999 Burundi's outbound mobility ratio was 17.23% which continued to decrease and settled on 8.5% in 2018 (Knoema, 2023). This can be attributed to HE policies that aim to stabilize the quality of HE in the country (Tuyisenge, 2020). After stabilization of the education system, Burundi registered international student student inflows mainly from the DRC and Rwanda (Kritz, 2011). However, according to Trines (2019), more students from Burundi continue to study in Rwanda compared to Rwandans studying in Burundi. Overall, close to 3,000 students from Burundi were internationally mobile in 2023 (UNESCO, 2023a).

Additionally, the East African Community – through the establishment of the EACHEA – continues to shape student flows in and out of Burundi. In particular, they offer a scholarship scheme that facilitates the mobility of East African students within the region (IUCEA, 2015), enabling Burundi students to enroll in foreign institutions. However, considering the historical inefficiencies of Burundi's HE system (Nizigama, 2019; Provin, 2017) and the language of instruction being French – while most East African partner states use English (Dunlop, 2021) – Burundi sends out more students than it can attract. It only attracts students from countries with French language capabilities, i.e., Rwanda and the DRC. This has perpetuated the unequal ISM flows that have long existed in East Africa (Odebero et al., 2015).

As highlighted earlier (section III.2), the East African community partnered with the World Bank to establish centers of excellence in four East African countries, i.e., Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda (Trines (2019). However, due to Burundi's issues and struggles in offering postgraduate training opportunities, no center was established in the country (IUCEA, 2019). As a result, the failure to establish a center of excellence in Burundi implies that the country can only

benefit from the project by sending its students to those countries that host the centers, which again increases the levels of outbound ISM.

III.3. Conclusion

Chapter three has described the extent of growth in IHE in East Africa, particularly the internationalization practices in three East African countries: Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi. While there are different options through which HEIs can internationalize their activities, ISM is the most popular. The purposes of ISM in Africa differ from those in the global North; in the global North, global citizenship among students and the generation of revenue are the main justifications for ISM. In Africa, while institutions may need to generate revenues by recruiting international students, other reasons prevail, e.g., escape from insecurities, the search for quality HE, and developing the home country's human resource capacity.

Further, the chapter has indicated that IHE in East Africa is as old as HE in the region. The first HEI in the region, i.e., Makerere University (MU), used to recruit students from the whole of East and Central Africa during the early days of its establishment. At that time, MU was a branch of University College in London. Today, the socioeconomic background of current internationally mobile students differs from the scenario in the past; nowadays, even students from less affluent families are able to be mobile, as opposed to the early days when only students from the high social class received the opportunity of international education. Later, MU (as the center of the University of East Africa), had branch campuses in Kenya and Tanzania, all of which continue to display aspects of IHE. Internationalization continues in the region, especially now that the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA) has been established. As indicated, ISM remains an essential aspect being pursued in the EACHEA. However, there are indications that most East African nations and institutions still need to develop internationalization policies in order to coordinate and promote their IHE activities.

IHE in Africa has risks, the significant one being brain drain from the sending countries. Intra-African student mobility is an option that could contribute to solving Africa's brain drain challenge. However, it needs to be conceptualized in ways that do not exacerbate the challenges of south-to-north ISM. Copying practices from the global North by weak economies – without adapting them to the African context – can only worsen existing IHE challenges.

Uganda has internationalized its HE sector primarily by attracting international students from other countries to its institutions. This has required Uganda to improve the quality of its HE offerings, particularly to expand the number of academic programs in universities. These actions have been complemented by lower tuition fees, a comparatively secure environment, the language policy, and the historical aspect of MU being a high-quality institution that trained some past regional presidents – all of which have been additional advantages for the university and the country.

Rwanda puts more emphasis on outbound, rather than inbound ISM. This relates to the country's long-term absence of a robust HE system, due to political instabilities and the genocide that destroyed social structures. Outbound ISM possibilities were adapted to solve human resource challenges amidst a weak HE system; for example, the government provides scholarships to students to study in foreign countries. The country's HE system is yet to amass the capacity to meet the needs of all students, especially regarding quality staff and the number of academic programs on offer. These issues and the change in the country's language policy from French to English encourage outbound, rather than inbound ISM.

Burundi experienced a high rate of outbound ISM in the 1970s when political instabilities weakened the country's HE system and encouraged the extent of brain drain. The brain drain and a weak education system worsened as qualifications from Burundi's HEIs lost global recognition, and its graduates could not compete globally. The country adopted changes in 2011 to improve the quality of HE and made it more compatible with other systems worldwide. Consequently, Burundi has attracted international students from Rwanda and DRC. As the HE system became more compatible with those in the rest of the world, students from Burundi can now study efficiently in other countries. However, there is still a high rate of outbound ISM in Burundi since the country's education language policy (still primarily French) puts it at a disadvantage.

This chapter has pointed out the inequalities and competition that shapes IHE in the three selected East African countries. Some of the inequalities stem from the region's history, and there have been marginal efforts to harness internationalization to address the inequalities. These issues are further discussed in the following chapter (chapter four), while reviewing the literature pertinent to the study objectives.

CHAPTER FOUR: LITERATURE REVIEW

IV.0. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to reviewing the literature related to the topic investigated in the light of the research questions, i.e., 1) How do HE systems in the sending and receiving countries of international students affect ISM in East Africa? 2) How does social class privilege influence ISM in East Africa? 3) How do immigration policies affect international students in East Africa? The review highlights the gaps in the current literature that the present study is designed to address. The review considers books, journal articles, internet content, and other secondary sources that provide information pertinent to ISM in East Africa. As O'Leary (2010) explains, the researcher uses existing literature sources to compare and contrast arguments and synthesize findings, in order to contribute to the body of knowledge regarding IHE and ISM in East Africa. The review also identifies emerging debates, themes, patterns, and trends on these topics. The review addresses each research question and identifies and summarizes gaps in the existing body of literature.

IV.1. Higher education systems and international student mobility in Africa

Education is the primary determinant of people's standard of living and employment status; it is also vital for national economic and industrial development (Prasad & Jha, 2013). The vital role played by HE in human socioeconomic growth has also particularly been emphasized (Kupriyanova et al., 2018). An efficient HE system prepares students to contribute to, and benefit from a better world. Therefore, students need to choose HE systems and institutions that effectively prepare them for a bright future. Agreeing with this view, Mitic and Mojic (2020) assert that the quality of a HE system impacts students' HE choices, while Lo et al. (2022) explain that the quality of an HE system is a significant predictor for ISM, since students tend to flow from a country with a low quality HE system to one that offers high quality HE options.

Rodriguez et al. (2011) assert that the quality of a country's HE system, as measured by the number of top-ranked universities, influences students' decisions as to whether or not to pursue further education there. Even though there are only a few top-ranking universities in Africa, intra-African student flows are evident. However, quality in HE is a slippery concept that is difficult to define; its interpretations are context- and people-dependent (Cadena et al., 2018), and different parties –

especially students and academics – often have different perceptions regarding the nature of quality in HE (Elassy, 2015). Indeed, quality is a subjective concept, and it depends on the perspectives held by the one defining quality, its purpose, and standards. Such issues must therefore be clarified as we explore the quality of some HE systems in Africa.

Many less apparent factors, including colonialism, the Structural Adjustment Policies of the 1990s, and the Education for All programs have interacted to create the current HE systems in Africa. How countries progressed through such circumstances contributes to the nature of existing HE systems and operations. Understanding why HEIs in Africa are what they are is equally important as making efforts to improve the situation. Various scholars and researchers (e.g., Kigotho, 2020; Kupriyanova et al., 2018; Zereza, 2021) have analyzed HE systems in Africa, and point out that the quality of these HE systems is still wanting. They express concern about limited student access (Musau, 2018), little research output (Zereza, 2021), and poor teaching and learning practices (Musau, 2018). In particular, efforts to trace how the state of affairs eventually became what it is today should be emphasized. As conceived in this study, these factors inform the observed levels of ISM in Africa and have historical linkages that are rooted in inequalities.

This discussion of higher education systems and international student mobility (ISM) in Africa is divided into four sub-sections relating to the four geographical regions of the African continent, i.e., Southern, Northern, Western and Eastern Africa, as follows:

IV.1.1 Higher education systems and international student mobility in Southern Africa

The most prominent player in the ISM from the Southern African region is South Africa, which is home to the best universities in Africa (Times Higher Education, 2023a) and is the most popular destination for international students on the continent (Campus France, 2022a; ICEF Monitor, 2023; Sehoole & Lee, 2021). Over 40,000 international students were enrolled in South African universities in 2019 (ICEF Monitor, 2023), hailing mainly from the SADC region (Zimbabwe, Namibia, Swaziland, Lesotho), Kenya, and Nigeria (Ratshilaya, 2021). Sehoole and Lee (2021) indicate that the main reason drawing international students to South Africa is the quality of its HE system, which has also kept South Africa's outbound mobility low (ICEF Monitor, 2023). South Africa's high-quality HE system stems from sustainable funds and other resources (in comparison to those in other African universities) (UNESCO UIS, 2012), low tuition costs compared to high-

ranking universities in the global North (Mudhovozi, 2012), and a high rate of employability on return to the student's home country (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015). Thus, in agreement with Sehoole and Lee (2021) and contrary to common generalizations (Afolabi & Idowu, 2020; Mba, 2017), it is clear that some African countries do have quality HE systems.

While the quality of an HE system influences international student flows into a given country, the South African context points to an additional perspective on student mobility, i.e., the regional perspective of ISM in Africa (Sehoole & Lee, 2021). Regional solidarity is a response to the resolutions of the Association of African Universities conference on the General Agreement on Trade in Services and the Internationalization of HE in Africa held in Accra in 2004, which sought to eliminate various barriers and obstacles to ISM in Africa (Woldegiorgis & Dovenspeck, 2015). For this reason, over 50% of South Africa's international students are from its neighboring countries (Ratshilaya, 2021). Thus, while Provin et al. (2020) assert that HE in Africa is yet to be recognized as a research area, this study holds that exploring ISM within and around Africa is essential. The shifting trend of ISM from South–North to South–South, for example, warrants additional investigation, considering that ISM can exacerbate inequities across nations by reinforcing the supremacy of some countries' HE systems over others (Laakso, 2020).

International student flows into South Africa had been increasing consistently since 1994 (Ratshilaya, 2021), but recent trends have indicated a decrease (ICEF Monitor, 2023). This is raised by Orla and Tasmeera (2022), who point out that the number of international undergraduates in South Africa's public HEIs decreased from 5.93% in 2015 to 3.09% in 2020. The country also registered a 2.88% decrease in the total number of international postgraduates from 2015 to 2020. While COVID-19 and political unrest might have contributed to the observed decrease, the ICEF Monitor (2023) indicates that all South Africa's universities were engrossed in crisis management and in responding to daily challenges at that time. This negatively affected how such institutions were perceived concerning quality standards, and hence may have caused a decrease in incoming student flows. However, the trend is slowly changing with the Policy Framework for Internationalization of Higher Education in South Africa that came into force in 2020 (Orla & Tasmeera, 2022). According to this framework, each institution must develop an internationalization policy and plan per the targets set by the South African Department of Higher

Education and Training. While these factors have been conceived in the South African context, they may have comparable implications for other countries in East Africa.

IV.1.2 Higher education systems and international student mobility in North Africa

North Africa is the second leading region on the African continent with the best universities (Times Higher Education, 2023a), with Egypt and Morocco playing a significant role in ISM. According to Warden (2022), 4.5% of all students in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region were internationally mobile in 2019. However, most of these students were outbound and destined for institutions in the global North. Many factors explain each county's levels of outbound ISM; according to Waters (2010), students who do not gain access to the desired academic program or home institution search for an institution of comparable standard in a foreign country; hence becoming internationally mobile (outbound from their home country). The lack of access to a desired program and institution is just one of the issues about a country's HE system that promotes outbound mobility.

A case in point is Morocco, whose international students pursue their studies mainly in France, Germany, and Canada (ICEF Monitor, 2023). In Morocco, the quality issue driving outbound mobility is associated with the country's language policy (Loutfi & Noamane, 2020). Morocco gradually replaced French with Modern Standard Arabic in all public schools after independence in 1965 (El Kirat & Laaraj, 2016). By the 1980s, all public schools, including the preschool, were using Arabic as a medium of instruction. The prominence of Modern Standard Arabic in Morocco's public education system is reportedly the reason behind the country's high illiteracy rates (Sanga & Mackie, 2022). French is only introduced as a subject in public schools in grade 3, leaving students with minimum chances of becoming fluent. Consequently, many students struggle to access and succeed in most public university science and technology programs that are taught in French. Sanga and Mackie (2022) explain that such students are often rejected by the most prestigious Moroccan public university faculties, and they therefore opt to study in foreign countries. Adding to the language struggles in Morocco, private schools continue to use French and not Modern Standard Arabic (Sanga & Mackie, 2022).

Amidst these struggles with local languages of instruction, English is progressively substituting France as the language of instruction in Morocco's education system, considering that English

dominates the world's scientific fields (El Kirat & Laaraj, 2016; Language Magazine, 2014). Given this reality, many Moroccan outbound students pursue HE in predominantly English-speaking countries such as the US (ICEF Monitor, 2015). This situation illustrates the power struggles between local languages and European languages. Adopting French or English reflects how 'peripheral countries' follow international trends, not by choice, but by coercion (Teferra, 2019).

As mentioned above, private schools in Morocco continue to teach in French; however, students in private schools are mainly from high socioeconomic backgrounds. Therefore, the education system in Morocco implicitly favors students from the high social class (usually few), who are able to attain a high level of mastery of French, thus enhancing their chances of gaining admission to the country's most prestigious faculties and universities. Such students are also better positioned to gain admission to HEIs in predominantly French-speaking countries such as France and Canada, since they are linguistically prepared to study in such countries. Thus, the language policy in Morocco reproduces social class differentials by preferentially preparing graduates from high social class families for high social positioning after graduation. As explained by Sanga and Mackie (2022), graduates from the country's prestigious university faculties have high employment prospects. At the same time, graduates returning from studies abroad usually obtain well-paying jobs back home (Bourdieu, 1986; Sisavath, 2021). In both cases, high social class divisions are maintained and reproduced.

Regarding inbound student mobility, Morocco is a regional education hub that hosted about 23,500 international students in 2023, mainly from Gabon, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Senegal (ICEF Monitor, 2023). The high number of African students in Moroccan HEIs is attributed to the government's emphasis on cooperation agreements with various African nations within the framework of mobility programs for students, academic staff, and researchers (Kasraoui, 2023). Additionally, public HEIs in Morocco do not charge tuition fees from students, including international ones; and they offer academic programs in English, French, and Arabic (ICEF Monitor, 2023). This has enabled Morocco to attract students from various linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Egypt also plays a significant role in ISM in Africa. While Marei (2021) claims that Egypt receives more international students than it sends, the ICEF Monitor (2023) indicates that Egypt is the

country with the fourth highest level of outbound mobility in the MENA region. The ICEF Monitor (2023) approximates the numbers of inbound and outbound students in/from Egypt (in 2020) to be 34,000 and 43,700, respectively. As is the case with Morocco, the outbound students are destined for countries outside Africa, mainly Arab countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, and other countries in the global North, including Germany, the US, Canada, and France. Thus, while Sehoole and Lee (2021) believe that ISM in Africa has a regional focus, the regional focus in North Africa is mainly with Arab countries, rather than fellow African countries. However, the region also shows the enduring pattern of ISM from the global South to the North. Egypt is home to some of the best universities in Africa (Times Higher Education, 2023a), implying that the quality of the HE system is high. This should have reduced the extent of outbound mobility, as has been the case in South Africa (ICEF Monitor, 2023).

Interestingly, Egypt attracts international students from countries in the global North, including Germany and the US (ICEF Monitor, 2023). This has been attributed to the several branch campuses of foreign universities in Egypt, which include the University of Prince Edward Island (Charlottetown, Canada), Toronto Metropolitan University, Coventry University (UK), the British University of Hertfordshire, the University of London, and the British University of Central Lancashire (ICEF Monitor, 2023). The authors of the ICEF Monitor (2023) indicate that these branch campuses have increased the number of quality HEIs in Egypt that attract international students. This shows that having a variety of HEIs in which international students may choose to enroll, influences the quality of the host country's HE system, which in turn, contributes to boosting the economy (ICEF Monitor, 2023).

One of the reasons for the growth of Egypt as an education hub in North Africa is that it is comparatively safer than other countries in the Arab world, such as Yemen, Libya, Iraq, or Somalia (Marei, 2021). While this does not relate directly to the quality of the country's HE system, it should be noted that nothing works properly in a country if peace and security do not prevail. This relates to Cadena et al. (2018)'s explanation that institutional services that are not directly academic (e.g., security, availability of computers and internet, accommodation, and sports facilities) determine the quality of a national HE system, which in turn, influences ISM levels. Indeed, Sehoole and Lee (2021) point out that ISM trends in Africa are influenced by the insecurities that characterize some African countries.

IV.1.3. Higher education systems and international student mobility in West Africa

It is also worth discussing the quality of HE systems in West Africa and how this informs ISM trends in Africa. Ghana and Nigeria are of particular interest, and as claimed by the ICEF Monitor (2021), outbound student mobility from those two countries greatly exceeds that from other African countries. According to the ICEF Monitor (2020), public universities in Ghana can accommodate only 20% of applicants. The "structural inequalities based on age, region, social class, gender, ethnicity, and rural/urban origin that determine access to university education" (Ayelazuno & Aziabah, 2021, p. 11) further complicate the situation for students seeking entry into HE in Ghana. ICEF Monitor (2020) explains that private universities would absorb the applicants not admitted by the public universities, but private universities in Ghana are less appealing to students because of their low quality. Discussing the low quality of private HEIs in Ghana, Armah (2022) holds that private HEIs struggle to attract and retain qualified teaching staff because of low pay despite the high teaching loads. These institutions also face stiff competition for lecturers from well-established and better-resourced public universities, further explains Armah (2022), and these factors negatively affect the quality of private HE in Ghana. Thus, as is the case in many African countries, outbound ISM in Ghana occurs due to searching for HE opportunities in terms of quality and quantity, which are important attributes for any HE system.

The traditional study destinations for Ghanaian students have been the UK and the US, but new destinations, including South Africa, Australia, and Canada, have emerged. The ICEF Monitor (2020) indicates that scholarship funding for Ghanaian students has also increased student flows to Germany, Russia, China, and Japan. Scholarships greatly influence student mobility; for example, there was a noticeable reduction in the number of Nigerian students in the UK when UK universities reduced the number of scholarships for international students (ICEF Monitor, 2021).

Similar to Egypt in the North, Ghana has positioned itself as a regional education hub in West Africa, hosting 5,718 international students in 2020 (Sasu, 2022), mainly from Nigeria, Gabon, Benin, Congo, Mali, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, and Ivory Coast (Nyarko & Ephraim, 2016). In writing about the increased student inflows into Ghana, Kamran et al. (2019) hold that Ghana's academic credentials are highly respected in Africa, which is why the HEIs in the country continue to attract international students. Kamran and co-authors further explain that Ghana is a popular host for Nigerian students (constituting about 70% of the international student population), given

the many difficulties HE students face in accessing quality university education in Nigeria. Thus Ghana is a viable alternative for many African international students since the country is less costly and closer to home than study destinations abroad, such as Australia, Canada, China, or the United States.

Further, Ghana's HE sector has been expanded to widen access, thus increasing the number of available options in which local and international students can enroll (Badoo, 2021) but this is yet to solve the perennial limited access to university education in this country (Kigotho, 2021a). As explained by Badoo (2021), the HE system in Ghana constitutes a vibrant system of both private and public institutions with sustainable funding mechanisms, enough academic facilities, and a transformative policy environment. These attributes clearly strengthen the country's HE sector and are important determinants of its quality and the ability to attract international students. However, the question remains as to why a country that admits thousands of international students is unable to admit a higher percentage of domestic students. Is it possible that HEIs in Ghana prefer international students to domestic students because they pay higher fees? Exploring such possibilities is however beyond the scope of this study.

Still in West Africa, the ICEF Monitor (2021) reports that nearly 100,000 Nigerian students were enrolled in universities abroad in 2020. Alagbe (2022) explains that the quality of HE in Nigeria is low, and the country's booming middle class is always willing to pay the price of studying abroad. Writing about the country's university sector, Dakuku (2021) describes many of Nigeria's universities as 'glorified secondary schools' established to increase the number of institutions (quantity) rather than addressing the quality thereof. Nigeria has the highest number of universities in Africa – 279 (Zereza, 2021), but they are under-resourced, poorly managed, and sometimes not fit for purpose (Dakuku, 2021). This view is corroborated by Kamran et al. (2019), who argue that HE students in Nigeria often face challenges related to strikes and complicated admission processes into universities. These are further factors which reduce the quality of educational opportunities, resulting in the fact that Nigeria's HE system had no capacity to accommodate more than 20% of university applicants between 2012 and 2017 (ICEF Monitor, 2020). This scenario shows that sacrificing quality for quantity in HE is no remedy to address high levels of outbound ISM.

The low quality of Nigeria's HE system has forced many students to become internationally mobile to study in the US, Canada, Malaysia, the UK, Ghana, and South Africa (ICEF Monitor, 2020). Many of Nigeria's international students enroll in academic programs focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels (Alagbe, 2022). Therefore, in terms of quality, it is suggested that the country has not made significant investments in these fields, resulting in the need for students to search for opportunities in foreign countries.

There have been claims that employers in the Nigerian economy prefer to employ graduates with foreign credentials as opposed to those with national ones (Alagbe, 2022). This points to the likelihood of a mismatch between the skills inculcated by the national HE system and those required by the job market. This is another example of the quality challenges with the country's education system, again showing that this is a clear predictor of outbound ISM. Another example of a driver of outbound mobility is the security threat posed by the Boko Haram insurgent group that has caused a lack of security in the country (Agbaje, 2021). This has forced many domestic students to study abroad, as well as reducing the number of international students wishing to study in Nigeria, as Agbaje (2021) further explains.

Altbach (2008) identifies research as one of the primary functions of HE (primarily in universities), which also determines an institution's quality (Thorsten, 2017). In particular, an institution's research capacity and reputation regarding the doctoral programs it can administer, and the quality and quantity of resulting publications, potentially affect how it attracts students locally and internationally (Richardson, 2015). While the research capacity of universities in Africa has been said to be low (Economic Commission for Africa, 2018), some countries have made significant strides, compared to others. Clearly, those with comparatively better research capacity may be prominent players in retaining local students and attracting international ones compared to those that are still developing such expertise.

The preceding discussion shows that ISM in Africa is influenced by the quality of HE systems in the various countries; in particular, the search for better quality education drives students to become internationally mobile (Nyerere, 2021). As explained by Beine et al. (2014) and Rodriguez et al. (2011), the quality of an HE system, expressed in terms of university rankings (among other

things), positively influences the flow of international students into an institution. Thus, in selecting a destination country for their HE studies, internationally mobile students assess HEIs based on many of the abovementioned factors. Wang and Chen (2018) expound on the same view, asserting that the quality of education, mutual recognition of academic credentials and degrees, and availability of international student scholarship opportunities are essential determinants of inbound ISM.

IV.1.4. Higher education systems and international student mobility in East Africa

ISM studies have often concentrated on south-to-north mobility, in which the search for high-quality HE services is the main driver (Didisse et al., 2019; Wamuthiani, 2018). The present study examines the influence of HE systems in East Africa on student mobility, which has yet to receive significant research attention. For example, according to Van Bouwel and Veugelers (2013), only a few research-based surveys have investigated the impact of HE quality on ISM. The same authors contend that quality differences between HE systems in developed countries are smaller than those between developed and developing countries. Therefore, examining student flows between countries without significantly different development levels offers new perspectives on internationalization debates.

The present study considers Uganda as a popular destination for international students in East Africa (ICEF Monitor, 2017), while Rwanda and Burundi are countries that send international students to Uganda (Itaaga et al., 2013). In general, most of Uganda's international students are from East Africa (Kiiza, 2019). According to Lomer (2018), students choose high-quality HEIs, and the absence of such institutions in one country motivates them to search for them in another. This literature review explores such claims in the East African context. Having quality, HE systems increases the benefits of ISM for the region and highlights areas for improving collaboration while minimizing competition in enhancing regional development. The long-term goal is for the region to retain its own students and attract those from other regions (Sanchez et al., 2017). This is an essential aspect of regional development, particularly in order to provide a highly-skilled workforce. International students contribute to regional growth and development through knowledge creation, economic performance, innovation (OECD, 2017), and business networks with their home countries (Flisi & Murat, 2011).

The ICEF Monitor (2017) indicates that Uganda is a favorable study destination for international students because of its relatively peaceful environment compared to some neighboring countries. While this is understandable, some countries such as South Sudan and Somalia – previously at war and sending international students to Uganda – are now slowly regaining peace. Nevertheless, Uganda continues to receive students from such countries. Therefore, national security interacts with other factors (e.g., quality of education) to influence ISM trends in the region. Moreover, lecture spaces and other facilities at some universities in Uganda have yet to reach satisfactory standards (Ssempebwa et al., 2012a), and the use of technology is also low (Woldegiorgis & Amutuhaire, 2023). Thus, if institutional services contribute to student flows – as claimed by Erdei and Káplár-Kodácsy (2020) - then it is not clear how Uganda can continue to attract significant numbers of international students despite its questionable institutional services. This study clarifies this question in chapter seven of this thesis.

As indicated earlier, Rwanda's HE system is in the early stages of development (Section I.2.2); it has fewer educational programs than other East African countries – especially doctoral programs – and does not fully satisfy its student population (Habarurema, 2019; Kabeera & Nayebare, 2013; Trines, 2019). The country, therefore, experiences high rates of outbound mobility, with students searching for desired academic programs and better quality teaching in other countries. However, this scenario does not necessarily justify Uganda being one of the top destinations for students from Rwanda. Although the ICEF Monitor (2017) claims that the quality of Uganda's HE system has positively influenced its inbound ISM, Hyuha (2017) holds a contrary view; to him, the quality of Uganda's HE has dwindled since 1992, such that it cannot account for the observed ISM trends in the country.

Some researchers (Moshtari & Safarpour, 2023; Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018) have examined various internationalization efforts in East Africa. However, they have not addressed the significant link between current ISM trends and the challenges emanating from the colonial impacts on African education systems. Laakso (2020) explains that "colonial connectedness has been a burden for Africans to pursue academic professions" (p. 444). This study clarifies and explains the existing contradictions in the literature in chapters six and seven. It examines ISM between countries without colonial linkages, while pointing out the continued influence of coloniality on existing trends in some East Africa's education systems.

Habarurema (2019) contends that access to Rwanda's HE sector is limited, due to, among other things, the high costs; on the other hand, Uganda's HE offerings are said to be cheap compared to those in its East African Community partner states (Herrmann, 2013; Itaaga et al., 2013). The cost issue may also contribute to explaining the nature of student flows between the two countries. However, according to Murphy et al. (2017), the cost of education (in terms of tuition fees) usually rises with the quality of services provided. This might logically imply that the quality of education in Uganda is low and insufficient to attract international students, yet universities in Uganda continue to enroll significant numbers of international students. Thus, this study investigates the interaction between educational costs and other institutional management issues (such as the administrative culture) in selected East African countries, which affect observed ISM trends.

As Walker (2022) indicates, the HE sector in many countries worldwide tends to be underfunded, so students have become a popular source of revenue for institutions (Alstete, 2020). Admitting fee-paying students to public institutions, or increasing their number in private institutions, has become the easiest method of increasing institutional revenues (OECD, 2020). Thus many institutions in East Africa are increasingly admitting high-fee-paying international students to recover part of the costs of providing HE opportunities and services. These perspectives have intensified the commodification of HE, such that HE is now a tradable item defined by specific attributes that students need to seek out (Wilkinson & Wilkinson, 2020). HEIs now invest heavily in advertising and other marketization practices, in order to lure more students to choose that institution over any others (Münch, 2014). Thus, East African HEIs now compete for students (or 'customers') and other resources in an open market (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018).

However, if students are viewed as customers, there is a risk that economic interests will eventually subordinate the ethical imperatives to provide education. In other words, the view that education is a marketable good does not account for the role of education as a practice of human freedom (Hooks, 1994), and an essential element that transforms and develops humans. Further, highly entrepreneurial and marketized HE systems are prone to scams. Without stringent measures, the system can become exposed to bogus providers that exploit profit opportunities. Moreover, profit maximization interests may make HE less inclusive by making it costly and less affordable for students from lower social classes (Kottmann et al., 2019). Therefore, inclusive policies on tuition fees should influence the internationalization agenda. Inclusive policies regarding tuition should

inform the internationalization agenda. Does it seem controversial for nations to advocate equal access to international education? Why should HEIs tuition policies that discriminate against international students?

Tannock (2018) expresses concerns about the marketization of HE and that the practice has reduced social justice and educational equality imperatives. First, treating international students as 'cash cows' and outsiders goes against the principles of social justice and educational equality (Yang, 2020). HE will undoubtedly remain an item on the international market, but as pointed out by Mittelmeier and Lomer (2021), the fundamental question is whether it should be sold as a commodity. The duo further argues that education is a service, but is now conceived as a good and an export. Educational services are interpreted in terms of their value for money as influenced by the functionalist and instrumental approaches that have economized education's historical, social, and cultural contributions to society (Mittelmeier & Lomer; 2021). At the same time, Kang et al. (2019) hold that the global increase in ISM should be in tandem with growth in the capacity to provide inclusive and equitable education in the host countries. This study examines Uganda's inbound ISM vis-à-vis efforts to promote equitable and inclusive international HE.

One of the factors that improves the quality of any country's HE system is the research capacity of its HEIs (Griffioen, 2020). Despite this understanding, research capacity in Sub-Saharan African universities – including East Africa – has remained low, leading to the exclusion of such institutions from global university rankings (Waruru, 2017). This is attributed to the low level of investment in research capacity in African countries – noticeably, no African country spends more than 1% of its gross domestic product (GDP) on research and development (Kigotho, 2021b). Although country differences exist, this lack of investment reduces the performance of universities in the HE sector. In particular, Hyuha (2017) claims that in Uganda, only Makerere University has been conducting any research at all. At the same time, Burundi has negligible research capacity (Tuyisenge, 2020), while Rwanda needs more professors and doctoral students to conduct research activities (Trines, 2019). This study investigates how research capacity in the three selected countries informs ISM trends in East Africa.

Further, Findlay et al. (2010) hold that countries in the global North, such as the UK and France, are centers for notable HE systems and research outputs, and they attract the world's best and

brightest students because they have high-quality HE systems. On a positive note, Beine et al. (2014) suggest that nations can develop high-quality research systems based on human capital accumulation. In a similar vein, Lepori (2016) advances the view that the enrollment of international students improves institutional reputation and revenues, thus in turn, increasing an institution's ability to recruit more talented students. These views indicate that high-quality education can be a cause and a consequence of ISM. In all cases, ISM is an activity in which students engage, with the result of generating personal and institutional benefits, and possibly perpetuating such opportunities. However, personal, institutional, and national inequalities are seldom interrogated in these cases (Kommers & Bista, 2020). This study interrogates national differences and inequalities and how they inform East Africa's inbound ISM.

Raghuram (2013) indicates that the motivations for students to become mobile differ, and may be academic or non-academic. This is clarified by Knight (2009), in that sometimes international students aim to accumulate qualifications, internships, and work experiences before they return to their home countries. To enable such students to acquire these desired competencies, national systems and HEIs need to be structured in ways that facilitate such possibilities. This points to the importance of having a HE system in which institutions are well linked to society. There should be strong links between a university and the industrial sector, for example, since the industrial sector consumes the 'products' of the university. Maassen et al. (2019) suggest that institutions need to strengthen links between themselves and society, considering current political changes, increased social crises, and the advent of the knowledge-based economy. Indeed, such links influence the quality of HE, which in turn influences ISM practices and trends. However, the interaction between the HE quality and the observed ISM trend in East Africa does not feature well in the literature, and this study contributes to the narrowing of such a knowledge gap.

IV.2. International student mobility and social class reproduction

Social class is a relational notion that defines and ranks classes of people in a society (Schwadel, 2016). Thompson (2016) defines *social class* as a hierarchical categorization of people based on wealth, educational achievement, occupation, income, and affiliation with a subculture or social network. Similar views are presented by Bourdieu (1987), namely that *class* refers to material resources as well as cultural, symbolic (section II.4.3), and social capital. Clearly, different social

classes exist in any given society, and their consideration is necessary in order to understand the disparities that are apparent in that society (Wright, 2009). This is because social class influences several elements of life by determining access to, and possession of material resources, or daily activities that determine one's quality of life (Barata et al., 2013). According to Barata et al. (2013), social class impacts educational attainment, with those from higher social classes generally obtaining better qualifications from more prestigious institutions. As a result, education impacts, and is influenced by social class and inequalities in society (Iorio & Pereira, 2018).

Di Petrio (2020) claims that ISM tends to reproduce social class inequalities. This view is confirmed by Waters (2006) who argues that social class reproduction happens when families pursue Western-based educational credentials to provide their children with a competitive advantage in the labor market and reproduce their social status. While this notion is based on the European context, it also applies in other contexts. Irrespective of the context, students who study in foreign countries tend to come from privileged backgrounds, whereas those in disadvantaged positions do not have the same opportunities. This is because only students from privileged backgrounds have the required amount of symbolic capital (section II.4.3) that makes them capable of international mobility (Bourdieu, 1986; Brooks & Waters, 2011). Consequently, students from disadvantaged positions miss out on the several advantages which come with studying in a foreign country, such as contribution to personal development (Zimmermann & Neyer, 2013), increased employment opportunities before and after graduation (Di Pietro, 2015), and improved earnings (Kratz & Netz, 2018). This entrenches their disadvantaged social class position. While UNDP (2017) and Harsch (2017) point out that inequalities are commonplace in Africa, selective participation in ISM stands to exacerbate existing inequalities.

The preceding discussion suggests that internationally mobile students usually have a solid base of social capital, connected with reliable financial and social stability, as shown by various studies conducted in the global North (King et al., 2010; Waters, 2012). On the other hand, many scholars (Hao, 2012; Kritz, 2013; Kotsi & Agiomirgianakis, 2013) have emphasized the dubious social systems in the global South. Would social systems in the global South provide the necessary social capital for ISM, especially regarding mobile students from lower socioeconomic classes? The idea behind social capital is that graduates reap considerable benefits due to their involvement in ISM (Waters, 2007). Such benefits may be more evident in the global North than in the global South,

since in African societies, unemployment and underemployment rates remain high (Assan & Nalutaya, 2018; ILO, 2021). In that context, the picture regarding the contribution of ISM to better employment outcomes remains to be seen in East Africa. In the United Kingdom, for example, ISM is associated with potential employment rewards; therefore, many families invest in ISM because of the many anticipated benefits after graduation (Bourdieu, 1987). However, similar studies have yet to validate such findings in East Africa. While this study does not measure the employment outcomes for East Africa's internationally mobile students, it clarifies how social class positioning informs existing ISM trends in East Africa.

Jones et al. (2021) suggest that internationalization – in its different forms – should enable HEIs to become more inclusive and relevant for human development. It is therefore critical to consider how ISM can be harnessed to make HEIs more inclusive and of service to all students, irrespective of their social class positioning. Amutuhaire (2023) indicates that internationalization strategies such as ISM discriminate against students with disabilities and refugee backgrounds, as well as those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. This study exposes the weaknesses associated with ISM in East Africa, as a starting point for improving the quality of internationalization in the region. It would be more beneficial if intra-African ISM were to become more inclusive than South–North ISM. In other words, intra-African ISM should become more inclusive and more relevant for human development compared to North–South ISM.

Reflecting different findings from some of those discussed above, some researchers (Deuchar, 2022; Tran & Vu, 2018; Xu, 2017) have reported that the social class of international students has become more diverse, with students from lower social classes also becoming mobile. This occurrence has been explained by Frigotto (2010), and Iorio and Pereira (2018), in the sense that students from lower socioeconomic classes participate in ISM in order to resist their existing class positioning. Students from lower social classes can benefit from ISM participation in terms of increased economic resources when they find employment (before or after graduation), upward occupational mobility, access to new opportunities or life experiences, new relationships, and broader social networks (Kelly & Lusis, 2006), thus challenging the notion of ISM as a classed endeavor. Clearly, the motivations for pursuing ISM may differ, depending on an international student's current social class positioning. By seeking opportunities for intra-African ISM in particular, students from lower socioeconomic classes are able to avoid the substantial education

costs they would have incurred by participating in south-to-north ISM. Such trends, however, have not been subjected to detailed analysis, hence the significance of this research. This study examines how intra-African ISM has enabled students from East Africa's underprivileged social class to improve their social class and resist their current social class positioning. In other words, this study reports on the extent to which ISM in East Africa tends to reproduce social classes in chapter eight of the thesis.

Iorio and Pereira (2018) show that social class and migration interact and intersect in various ways that are best understood by considering the range of international locations in which migrants live. Therefore, examining the social class of internationally mobile students in Uganda can contribute to a better understanding of intra-African ISM. Several other studies (e.g., Horst et al., 2016; Kelly & Lusis, 2006) have comparable interests in this topic, but they were conducted in different locations, with different contexts. Thus, it seems essential to investigate this issue in the East African context, in order to obtain knowledge and interpretations distinct from those commonly based on European ideas. Banaji (2016) explains that transferring research questions disregarding local and international inequalities corrupts the resultant knowledge. In such a case, the knowledge produced reproduces misleading assumptions, which is a disservice to the research and user communities, and the marginalized altogether.

Measures of social class have been a subject of discussion over many years (Otero, 2008). Still, there is agreement that social class depends on a combination of variables, including occupation, education, income, wealth, and place of residence (Bell, 2015). These variables are combined differently to give various ways of measuring social class (Bollen & Bauldry, 2011). One must, therefore, choose the appropriate methods to measure social class.

According to Avvisati (2020), individual components for measuring social class include formal education credentials, occupation titles, and income. For students who are, in most cases, dependent upon their parents, measuring social class may involve assessing these components regarding their parents (Otero, 2008). Similarly, Cowan et al. (2012) argue that measuring a student's SES should include, as components, parental educational attainment, parental occupational status, and household or family income, with appropriate adjustments for household

or family composition. The present study uses test items in which internationally mobile students rated themselves concerning these components of social class (see Appendix I).

Darin-Mattsson et al. (2017) point out that an individual's highest level of educational attainment bridges socioeconomic conditions across generations. Therefore, a parent who has attained a high level of education is in a high social class, and so are his children. By measuring the parent's highest level of education (which is an indicator of social class), the student's social class is measured indirectly. In addition to education, the parents' occupation can be assessed (Darin-Mattsson et al., 2017). This may involve characterizing a person as an employer or an employee, and distinguishing organizational characteristics, such as size, type of organization, skill requirements, power relations, and working conditions (Rose & Harrison, 2010). In addition to the preceding indicators, household income is also used to measure social class (Avvisati, 2020). This relates to the level of income security and stability (Darin-Mattsson et al., 2017). The reason for including parental and household income in measuring a student's social class is that such income determines the financial resources available to the student.

Thus, the present study measures the three mentioned indicators i.e., parents' level of education, employment status and level of household income to ascertain the social class level for each student who participated in the study. An average index for parental educational attainment, and a measure of household possessions were computed to determine a student's social class.

IV.2.1. International student mobility and social classes in Uganda

Differences in status and wealth existed among Ugandans as early as the precolonial period (De Haas, 2022). Some members of the society were chiefs and kings, which constituted the high social class; the subordinates of the chiefs and kings formed the lower social class (Robertson, 1982). However, the differences between such classes were less pronounced, but the colonialists who capitalized on them for their advantage exacerbated the differences (De Haas (2022). The British colonialists who colonized Uganda favored the Baganda and allowed them to benefit from the colonial investment more than any other tribe in Uganda (Selhausen et al., 2017), further entrenching the inequalities between the people.

While we cannot trivialize the colonialists' role in spearheading formal education in Uganda, they only carried forward work started by the missionaries (Mngomezulu, 2012), who arrived in

Uganda before the British colonialists (Ward, 1991). Thus, there is a close link between Christianity and the history of formal education in Uganda; the missionaries introduced Christianity and gave their converts formal education (Nabayego, 2013). At the same time, the missionaries helped some Ugandans study in foreign countries. A case in point is the White Father missionaries who, in 1890, facilitated 11 Baganda boys to study abroad (Lubega, 2021). Some of the boys trained to become missionaries while others became medical doctors after training in Malta and France, further explains Lubega (2021). While this literature does not state the social class of these students, it still indicates that Uganda's outbound student mobility has a long history.

Selhausen et al. (2017) explain that the British colonialists limited the post-primary education of the African population in their colonies, leaving it a privilege for the sons of chiefs who would later serve in the various administrative capacities of the colonial government upon graduation. Thus, attaining HE in Uganda during the colonial period was associated with one's social class, and the colonial masters forbade members of the non-ruling classes to attain HE, just like it was in other British colonies (Collins, 1970). The Ugandans who attained HE at the time had studied in foreign countries since no HEI had been established in the country at the time (Tabaire & Okao, 2010). Additionally, the numbers of these high social class students allowed by the colonial government to access HE outside Uganda had to be limited: "Ugandan natives should be restricted to Britain, and their numbers should be kept minimum" (Montani, 1979, p. 361).

After independence in many African countries in the 1960s, African students, including those from Uganda, continued traveling abroad for HE (Myers, 1972). These students would return upon graduation to occupy the jobs left vacant by the colonists (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015). In Uganda, MU, established before independence, mainly relied on expatriate staff, many of whom left the country upon independence (Mngomezulu, 2012). There was, therefore, a staff shortage to offer advanced training at MU; sending students abroad to study was the most viable way of addressing such a shortfall in human resources. Such students came from the high social class, mainly from the rich Baganda and non-Baganda chiefs (Montani, 1979).

Even nowadays, ISM in Uganda is still a practice of the members of the high social class and the rich since only a tiny population among Ugandans who can afford to pay the high costs associated with education abroad are in the middle or higher social class (Rana, 2020). A small number of

students from the lower social class access foreign education through scholarships (Amazan et al., 2016; Cosentino et al., 2019), though these rarely target lower social class students. Most of the study-abroad scholarships available in Uganda are merit-based (Bhandari & Mirza, 2016; Ruhinda, 2024), such that the student's social class has no direct influence.

However, Uganda is not a significant source (sender) of international students abroad since only a few students from Uganda pursue their education in foreign countries (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). For example, in 2017 – the latest year for which data are available, not more than 6,000 Ugandan students studied abroad, which is only more 500 students than in 2011 (Rana, 2020). Rana (2020) further explains that most outbound Ugandan students study in English-speaking countries, mainly the US and the UK, with some intra-African ISM mainly towards South Africa and Kenya. Other countries with a sizeable number of internationally mobile students are Uganda, Saudi Arabia, and Malaysia, as further pointed out by Rana (2020).

IV.2.2. International student mobility and social classes in Rwanda

Right from colonial times, and until the Rwandan genocide in 1994, the Rwandan community was classified based on genealogical lines and socioeconomic levels, whereby the minority Tutsi (15%) reigned over the majority Hutu (84%), and the Twa (1%) were neglected or ignored (Moshman, 2015). Thus, as Dennehy (2020) explains, one's ethnicity (primarily Hutu or Tutsi) – rather than citizenship – was the most crucial issue for Rwandans at the time. The Tutsi dominated politics and economics and belonged to a higher social class, whereas the Hutu belonged to a lower social class (King, 2014). At that time, Rwandans even had to carry identity cards specifying one's ethnicity: Tutsi or Hutu, and, by implication, one's social class. Kinzer's (2008) study of social inequalities prior to the Rwandan genocide demonstrates how the historical social class system (described above) provoked the Rwandan genocide of 1994 and its negative repercussions (Dennehy, 2020; Uvin, 1998).

Furthermore, education attainment influenced, and was influenced by the said inequities. As King (2014) explains, education environments contributed to the severity of the genocide, with schools exacerbating the levels of violence. Even though education facilities were restricted during the Belgian colonial occupation of Rwanda, most of the available education opportunities were preserved for Tutsi children, despite their minority status. Worse than that, most of the Hutu

children who attended primary school could not complete it, leaving Tutsi students to pursue secondary and HE. The genocide was a response to the inequalities in the country at the time, as explained further by King (2014).

Following the Hutu taking control of the country after independence from Belgium in 1962, the situation was altered such that the Hutu dominated the Tutsi. Nonetheless, access to education was still based on class, this time with the Hutu being favored over the Tutsi (Moshman, 2015). According to Moshman (2015), educational access for the Hutu grew, whereas for the Tutsi, educational access beyond primary school was restricted, due to stringent quotas. These social injustices precipitated the genocide of 1994 with the Hutu attempting to cleanse the Tutsi from the Rwandan community. The genocide ended in July 1994, and the new government enforced the view that citizenship comes before ethnicity, and prevented Rwandans from being classified as Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa (Moshman, 2015). The same author further states that while Rwandans identify today as Rwandans (rather than as Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa – as they did before the genocide), they still perceive themselves and each other in ethnic terms. Moshman (2015) explains that Rwandans have a proclivity to perpetuate social class and cement social inequality, in spite of the government stating that Rwandans should not be classified based on ethnicity. Thus the inherited effects of these ethnic and social classes continue to exist.

As indicated earlier (section I.2.2), government policy seeks to facilitate Rwandans attaining education from abroad (Ngabonziza, 2015; Trines, 2019). However, considering the country's limited economic capacity (IMF, 2022), only a tiny percentage of HE students in Rwanda can be funded to study in foreign countries. Those who receive such an education always want to see the same happen for their children (Siebelt, 2005), since qualifications from abroad are more valued than those attained in a home institution (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015; Waters, 2006). Therefore, whether it is intentional, or an unintended consequence, social class tends to be reproduced in this way. This contributes to explaining why Rwanda still has the severe level of inequality in East Africa (Orrnert, 2018). Rwanda's context contradicts the views of Iorio and Pereira (2018) that lower social class students can use ISM to resist social class positioning. Rwanda's context needs to be recast in the light of the country's historical factors as shown in chapter eight.

Further, recent development patterns in Rwanda have shaped the country in a way that reinforces social inequalities. According to Corey (2019), the southern part of Rwanda is more developed and has well-performing secondary schools, compared to the northern part. Considering the selection procedures and personal requirements for students to pursue an international education, students from the developed region thus have higher chances of becoming internationally mobile. As indicated earlier, their participation in ISM gives them more chances to obtain higher earnings from excellent employment opportunities. In effect, they can more easily maintain their higher social class positioning, i.e., reproduce their parents' social class, compared to students from the north of the country.

IV.2.3. International student mobility and social classes in Burundi

The state of affairs in Burundi can be understood only by evaluating its sociopolitical evolution as a country (Mayanja, 2019). In its early days, Burundi was a culturally homogeneous and cohesive kingdom, with people speaking the same language and sharing the same rituals and traditions (Obura, 2008). Today, as in Rwanda, its population comprises three ethnic groups (Tutsi, Hutu, and Twa). According to Mariro (1998), ethnic origins did not cause differences between the local people before colonialism, despite the intrinsic inequalities in any society; however, the situation changed when colonialism set in. As in Rwanda, the Belgians gave the Tutsi administrative responsibilities because they saw them as the superior group, while the Hutu – who were seen as inferior – were at the service of the Tutsi. The discrimination guaranteed unequal access to social services such as education – which the Tutsi dominated, further embedding them in advantaged positions (Dunlop, 2021). This situation established and deepened ethnic polarization, mutual hatred, and persistent violence (Mayanja, 2019).

Following independence in 1962, the Tutsi (14% of the population) took control of the country's affairs. They actively barred the Hutu majority (85% of the population) from all economic and political institutions (Dunlop, 2021). This imbalance fueled Burundi's civil conflicts from 1993 to 2005, during which time many educated Hutu were slain (Call, 2012; Lemarchand, 1995). The Tutsi controlled all legislature, cabinet, governorship, and army positions (Call, 2012). This situation also influenced educational access, resulting in the majority of Tutsi children receiving education at the expense of the Hutu children (Nkurunziza, 2012). According to Jackson (2000), a minister of education, himself a Tutsi from Bururi - a predominantly Tutsi province - once

demanded that students from his home region (mainly Tutsi) should be admitted to law or economics courses at university (courses that guaranteed better jobs after graduation) despite their poor grades. Students from other regions (mainly non-Tutsi) with better grades were only admitted to this university to study literature. The minister set aside the most exceptional jobs in the public and commercial sectors for his favored associates. At the same time, those from other regions with a different ethnicity were destined to seek lower-paying jobs, such as teaching.

Between 1966 and 1993, according to Nkurunziza (2012), Burundi increased educational investment in the southern region compared to other regions (since the then-sitting president came from the south). The south also produced more university students compared to the other regions (Jackson, 2000). At the same time, in the province from which the president came, there was only one Hutu for every 23 Tutsi graduates, with many of the Tutsi landing good jobs in Tutsi-owned businesses. Jackson (2000) declares that the situation persisted, with that province sometimes accounting for over 15% of the total HE student population in the country. Mobile students originated from this location, given that the parents in this area had the financial means to make mobility possible. In addition to regional disparities in access to educational resources, ethnic disparities continued to play a role. For example, Panabel (1988) asserts that 76% of the teachers in northern Burundi in 1988 were Tutsi. This was because almost only the Tutsi attended school at that time (Verwimp, 2019). Tutsi enrolment at the university level was around 94% for specific courses, including law and economics, in 1989/1990 (Baraka & Hakizimana, 1992).

During the same period (between 1966 and 1993), Dunlop (2021) highlights another systemic flaw in Burundi's education system that privileged the Tutsi while disadvantaging the Hutu. The primary level completion tests (*Concours*) were set in French, yet the school system required that children began learning French in class five – just a year before the primary level completion exam. As those in control of public services, the Tutsi were fluent in French, as were their children (Call, 2012). This gave them an advantage over the Hutu, who were demoted to the community's lower echelons. As a result of this disparity, the few Hutu children who had entered primary school found it practically impossible to progress beyond this level.

While the highlighted studies focused on the lower levels of education, the discrimination experienced at such levels influenced a student's participation in HE. During national tests (at both

primary and secondary levels), students were asked to specify their ethnicity, with I denoting Tutsi and U denoting Hutu. This characterization was used to again favor Tutsis over Hutus, for example, during the screening of university applicants; this resulted in Tutsis always outnumbering Hutus at university (Nindorera, 2018).

Thus Burundians have experienced various negative effects associated with living in a society where ethnicity and social class play a central role, and are likely to influence the potential for students to participate in ISM. The disparity in access to education had differentiated implications for the citizenry. Since the Tutsi accessed more educational opportunities, they accessed well-paying jobs that improved their social class and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). The case was different for the Hutu, who had limited access to education. Even The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (2002) recorded that Burundi sends some of its students abroad for studies in military schools or traditional universities, since the country has inadequate infrastructure (such as laboratories) and expertise (qualified staff). Such outbound ISM students are most certainly from Burundi's high social class, since they have the appropriate symbolic capital (section II.4.3). This study examines the impact of social class on Burundi's internationally mobile students and presents the findings in chapter eight.

The dearth of information regarding Burundi's ISM activities means that the picture of its inbound and outbound mobility trends is incomplete. However, based on the discriminatory practices in the country's education system (Dunlop, 2021), it can be argued that social classification practices have discriminated against the less privileged members of society and influenced not only the quality of education they received, but also their quality of life thereafter. The privileged members of the society continued to position themselves and their lineage to perpetuate such privileges. However, in most cases, this had the effect of depriving others of similar life qualities. With ISM usually reproducing societal inequalities, it is crucial to investigate this situation in Burundi, in order to avoid maintaining class differences in the country. The findings of the investigation on this issue are presented and discussed in chapter eight.

Creating an enabling environment for increased participation of students from disadvantaged social classes in ISM is necessary because it contributes towards discontinuing the transfer of inequalities from the education system to the labor market (Netz & Finger, 2016). Students from advantaged backgrounds who have benefited from ISM are able to position themselves

strategically in the labor market, compared to those from disadvantaged backgrounds (Di Pietrio, 2014). The present study contributes towards understanding and eliminating these practices which tend to reproduce social inequalities as discussed in chapter eight.

IV.3. International student mobility and immigration policies

Globalization has altered many elements of societies and human existence, and with it, global economic integration has become unavoidable (Okoli, 2011). Dey (2013) defines globalization as a social and cultural process in which people from various cultural backgrounds interact more frequently in all areas of life, than had been possible in the past. Globalization has emphasized the significance of IHE, as shown by increased flows of international students (ISM) to receive HE services in countries other than their home countries (Lee & Stensaker, 2021). How institutions engage in, or benefit from ISM depends on national policymakers and the policies that they formulate. A vital consideration, in this case, is a country's internationalization policy, in association with foreign, economic, and security policies – specifically immigration and visa regulations (Rudge, 2016). Overall, such policies relate to the broader rationales for ISM for the receiving and sending country in question. For example, the cultural and financial contributions of international students during their stay in the host country incentivize many countries to attract international students (Campus France, 2019; Hillman & Cowan, 2021).

International students contribute to the economic development of their host nations by studying and residing there, bringing about a mutual relationship between home and host nations. However, there is an interaction between national and individual rationales, in that the various student motivations to become mobile shape the student's mobility experience. Gribble (2008) explains that some students use foreign education as a pathway to permanent residency in the host nation. Others use it to access employment during or after their studies (Riaño et al., 2018). The interaction between individual rationales for ISM and broader national goals of internationalization and how such interaction shapes ISM, has not been analyzed in East Africa. This this is the gap addressed in this study.

Further, most advanced economies have, over the years, been experiencing a reduced working-age population (She & Wotherspoon, 2013). This has inevitably increased competition for highly skilled migrant workers; and international students are one source of such workers (Knight, 2012). Governments in such countries have implemented systems for attracting and integrating

international students, including changes to immigration and visa regulations and procedures (Riaño et al., 2018; Varghese, 2008). While scholars have described the phenomenon in positive ways – such as 'brain training' and 'brain circulation' – this is an attempt to conceal the fact that the practice exposes some countries, especially developing ones, to total 'brain loss' (Knight, 2012, p. 28). In effect, developing countries then have a smaller talent pool that is essential for economic and social development. Further, the practice presents ethical challenges, as students who are more positioned to contribute to the host country's talent pool are preferred (She & Wotherspoon, 2013; Spencer, 2011). Indeed, some international students have become more desirable to host countries than others. This contradicts ISM's overarching goal of promoting global citizenship for the benefit of all students, regardless of their social profile (Bista et al., 2018).

The HE sector is becoming an increasingly important player that can collaborate closely with national immigration services and the industrial sector to develop strategies for attracting and retaining knowledge workers (Knight, 2009). However, some countries (such as the UK) have developed strategies aimed at limiting levels of ISM. Rudge (2016) points out that the number of international students in the UK had reduced because the government has adopted a 'tougher stance' towards migration. Thus, ISM depends on contextual factors such as priorities of time and a country's scope of investment in HE. At the same time, contextual circumstances such as the national job market and unemployment situation influence the migration policies in a country. For example, the employment situation in the global North differs dramatically from that in the global South. The laws regulating international students (who are also migrants) also differ in both regions. The interaction between such laws and student mobility in the global South does not feature prominently in the literature on student migration studies, and is therefore part of what this study investigates.

Education is recognized as an export product in Uganda (Othieno & Nampewo, 2012). For example, in the fiscal year 2008/09, education export contributed 5.3% to Uganda's GDP, while earnings from education services exports totaled US $36 million in 2010 (Uganda Export Promotion, 2012). Available data also shows that education exports annually contributed over 5% to Uganda's GDP from 2009 to 2017 (Opentoexport.com, 2022). Legal, administrative, language, and cultural barriers to ISM in Uganda need to be streamlined in order to strengthen this sector. Further, international students' experiences with existing policies and how such policies influence

the nature of student mobility in East Africa need to be examined. Rudge (2016) holds that policies that boost outbound mobility as a mechanism for strengthening international relationships and reputation are shared among countries in the global South. Such countries support students to study in foreign countries in order to build diplomatic ties and foster economic development through capacity building in the sending country. However, such opportunities are less emphasized in Uganda, since its policies encourage inbound ISM to a greater extent than outbound ISM (Rana, 2020). This study explores Uganda's policy position regarding the experiences and employment of international students and their likely impact on ISM trends in the East African community.

Raghuram (2013) contends that the characterization of internationally mobile students is ambiguous; they can also be regarded as migrant students or job seekers. Brown (2021) explains that international students often face financial difficulties in their host countries, as well as challenges related to seeking employment, both as students and after graduation. These students are cut off from their support networks at home, face visa restrictions in terms of employment, and have no reliable networks such as those possessed by domestic students; hence, they need support in managing financial and employment challenges. Host institutions can play a major role in supporting international students in navigating the dynamics of obtaining jobs in the host nation. Considering their potential contributions to an HE institution, international students are usually coveted; however, they may also be viewed with disdain since they potentially threaten the employment situation, particularly in nations with reduced employment opportunities (King, 2012). This complicates and entangles the benefits and challenges of mobility for students, institutions, and the broader society, making it a worthy research subject for this study, reported and discussed in chapter nine.

Uganda's employment situation is already precarious (an unemployment rate of 3.2% for adults and 5.3% for youth in 2020) and has low job quality, i.e., only 20% of workers are in paid employment (World Bank, 2020). World Bank (2020) also indicates that the ratio of waged employees is about 50% in sectors other than agriculture. At the same time, close to 67% of Ugandans are in self-employment or work for their families in agriculture, and three out of five youths are engaged in unpaid occupations, contributing to household enterprises, which are primarily farms, further explains World Bank (2020). Advocating for the employment of international students in a country with unemployed citizens may invite radicalism and

xenophobia, as was the case in South Africa in 2008 and 2009 (Choane et al., 2011). RocApply (2020) recommends that international students in Uganda can be employed in part-time and low-level positions such as housekeepers, cafeteria workers, library assistants, administrative support in HEIs, supermarket cashiers, computer apprentices, or information and technology assistants. However, considering Uganda's low job quality as explained, such jobs may not appeal to international students. Thus, Uganda's reluctance to employ international students may be attributed not only to existing immigration laws, but also to constraints in the employment sector, and the international students' own preferences.

While it was as high as 9.5% in the 2012–13 academic year, Uganda's overall HE enrollment proportion of international students began to decline, reaching 7.1% in the 2016–17 academic year (NCHE, 2020). Without discounting the impact of COVID-19 and the ensuing lockdown, which restricted cross-border travel, Uganda's international student population fell by 0.92%, from 19,981 in 2019/20 to 19,555 in 2020/21 (NCHE, 2022b). This could indicate mismanagement of the country's ISM opportunities, for example, the mishandling of employment rights for international students. According to Riaño et al. (2018), international students' employment rights have not been subjected to an exhaustive investigation globally, and it challenges ISM based on the concepts of hospitality and reciprocity.

Hospitality and reciprocity are issues that test the ethics and policies that regulate ISM (Ploner, 2018). Yang (2020) explains that these two aspects inform the social relationship between the host nation and the international students. The relationship constitutes a power divide in which the host (country and its citizens) is powerful and can deny hospitality to the international student and their home country. In particular, the sustainability of mobility (not only in economic terms, but also in terms of its existence in the future) depends on reciprocity, where those who have enjoyed international hospitality (the mobile students and their home country) should return the favor. For example, the home countries of Uganda's international students should be hospitable to Ugandan students studying in those countries.

The future of ISM depends on meaningful interaction between institutional and national policies (Choudaha & de Wit, 2019). Nonetheless, a review of the available literature does not reveal information about such provisions in Uganda, which may be attributed to the lack of a clear

internationalization policy in most global South countries, as pointed out earlier (section III.2.1). Indeed, the strategies and policies for ISM at both institutional and national levels have yet to be exhaustively examined. This study investigates national student support systems and migration policies and how they affect ISM in Uganda, as a step towards narrowing that knowledge gap.

Waters (2010) asserts that student migration is often associated with some form of 'failure' in the home education system, for example, failure to gain admission to a competitive course in a home institution. In such a case, the student seeks admission to a foreign institution in order to overcome the 'failure'. Indeed, such failures in their home country HE systems frustrate international students, and in trying to overcome them, they should be free from further frustration. This study, therefore, contributes to understanding how migration laws can be structured to alleviate the predicaments faced by international students (chapter nine).

International students are part of the more significant migration industry that involves other institutions, recruitment teams and agents, and other persons facilitating student flows (Beech, 2018). The interaction between these players to bring about and also optimize student mobility is what Xiang and Lindquist (2018) call the "infrastructuralization of migration" (p.753). This notion refers to the socio-technical platform that shapes migration and aims to mobilize social and technical processes in order to facilitate it. Such processes may include recruitment, identification, documentation, and transportation, so as to more efficiently 'transplant' migrants from sending to receiving countries. Applied to the context of ISM, this may entail formal agreements between institutions and governments in order to facilitate student flows. This may even go beyond such arrangements, mainly when students need to be absorbed into the host country's workforce during or after their studies. Therefore, the success of ISM between the two countries depends on the quality of the 'migration infrastructure.' The absence of an adequate infrastructure (or the presence of an ineffective one) may cause students to draw away from a particular host country.

As in most countries, international students studying in Uganda must have a student visa (a student's pass) obtained through specific procedures (RocApply, 2020). The benefits and limitations associated with the possession of a student visa are investigated in this study as reported and discussed in chapter nine. Another knowledge gap to be investigated is that the status of mobile students as a source of expert labor in East is not documented clearly. In particular, "foreign

students and researchers are increasingly interested in acquiring several degrees or gaining valuable work experience in numerous countries, before returning to their home countries after several years of international study and work," writes Knight (2012; p. 28). Graduates require professional experience before returning home, necessitating work-friendly policies in the host country, notwithstanding the need for student expectations to be aligned with the host country's employment conditions.

Research has proven that employing immigrants (which may include international students) significantly benefits both local organizations and the host country. For example, according to Beaverstock and Hall (2012), foreign personnel contribute to the development of national economies by bringing with them international competence and expertise. As Rolfe et al. (2013) point out, foreign workers strengthen the host country's human capital stock, increase labor productivity, and impact how firms are run. Furthermore, private businesses employing foreigners often succeed compared to those that don't employ foreigners (Hatzigeorgiou & Lodefalk, 2013). This view is corroborated by a Danish study that found that hiring a foreigner boosted the likelihood of a company engaging in export business the following year (Malchow- Møller et al., 2011). Thus, the failure to develop an employment strategy for foreigners, particularly international students, highlights a missed opportunity. This may be attributed to the absence of a comprehensive policy framework, law, or migration policy that establishes or defines migrants' rights to work as desirable (IOM, 2018). This study contributes to the understanding of the factors that inform the status of Uganda's international students in relation to the country's immigration policies.

More broadly, international students' rights exist in the international human rights law framework (Marginson, 2012), among which the right to employment is enshrined. International students have a right to employment and should not be discriminated against compared to national students. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the sending and receiving countries to provide a supportive policy environment to afford jobs to international students. Unfortunately, the policy environment in the receiving countries often victimizes international students (Baas, 2014) and undermines their responsibilities as global citizens (Tran & Vu, 2017). As they pursue their international education, they clearly need to do so taking cognizance of the laws in both their home and host countries; and above all, they should be guided by ethical behavior. Therefore, the interaction between

international students' responsibilities and those of their host countries – especially in countries struggling with international trends and local development – needs investigation (chapter four).

An important conclusion is that there should be a common understanding between sending and receiving countries regarding the treatment of international students. The relationship between the host and the guest should be characterized by unfeigned mutual exchange of benefits, and meaningful communication between the host and international students as representatives of their home nations (Ata et al., 2018). Based on this understanding, this section has explored immigration policies that apply to international students in Uganda.

IV.3.1. Policies that encourage student retention in the home country

Analysis of the ISM situation in East Africa reveals inequalities, with some countries achieving a more active and beneficial position from ISM activities than others (Trines, 2018); in particular, some countries are mainly senders rather than receivers of international students regionally. This situation needs to be approached from a policy perspective, otherwise, existing inequalities will intensify, thus watering down the benefits of internationalization and ISM.

According to Gribble (2008), one of the possible policy options that can address the imbalance associated with ISM and alleviate the challenges associated with students searching for jobs in the host country is *the retention of students in their home countries* i.e., limiting outbound ISM. Nations and their HEIs should play a more significant role in this intervention, for example, increasing investment in HE, expanding the HE sector in the home country, and encouraging cross-border HE provision. Cross-border HE is used, in this case, to refer to "the educational service that reaches the student across national borders, rather than the student receiving the service abroad, as in another form of international education" (UNESCO, 2006, p.65). While this is a valid policy intervention, it limits students' movement, essential for their growth as global citizens contributing to and benefiting from a better world (Bista et al., 2018).

The East African region is generally associated with high unemployment rates (Enami, 2020). Migrating from one East African country to another for study purposes and searching for jobs only increases competition for the few available jobs in the host country. Although encouraging students to study in their home countries up to completion would reduce competition for jobs in a potential host country, this contradicts the purpose of ISM. Students would miss out on the benefits

of ISM if their home policy environment discourages them from seeking mobility. Therefore, both the sending and receiving countries for international students need to formulate policies to encourage mobility without destabilizing regional economies. Such policy options could be combined with internationalization at home (see chapter two) (Mittelmeier et al., 2021) in order to maximize the benefits for all participants.

IV.3.2. Policies that encourage students to return home

Countries can encourage students to participate in ISM, while at the same time formulating policies to encourage their *return* to their home country (Wen & Shen, 2016). Such interventions work best in countries with limited employment opportunities, such as those in the global South. According to Gribble (2008), encouraging former internationally mobile students to return to their home countries brings many benefits, such as the accumulation of valuable knowledge and skills relevant to the development of their home countries. Returning students will also have established networks with their host institutions that are essential for academic cooperation. The horizons expand to a greater extent if the returning mobile student had been employed in the host country.

There are several mechanisms that countries can use to encourage internationally mobile students to return home after completing their studies. These include bonding arrangements (Delgado, 2020) and repatriation schemes (Brooks & Waters, 2021). Through bonding arrangements, "students must sign a contract to promise to return to work in their home nation for a specific number of years." Repatriation schemes "offer very attractive terms and conditions in relation to, for example, work and housing" (Brooks & Waters, 2021, p. 562) when, upon graduation, the student returns to work in the home country. However, the success of such policy options requires that both the sending and receiving countries appreciate such options, in order to ensure that there is harmony between them. While this was beyond the scope of this study, it is essential to understand how host countries can harmonize the employment needs of international students with the requirement to return home. Such understanding would promote regional development and also guard against brain drain that can be brought about by IHE.

IV.3.3. Policies to engage diaspora with their home country

Another policy option is to engage the *diaspora* (Brooks & Waters, 2021). The diaspora option refers to mechanisms by which graduates in the host country can be encouraged to contribute to

development in their home countries, as they can choose to stay in their host country rather than return home. Clearly, appropriate enabling policies would be required. Brooks and Waters (2021) argue that it is crucial to engage diaspora academics or other employed people in the diaspora; internationally mobile students also provide an essential path for development engagements, even while still engaged with their studies.

Mechanisms such as establishing and maintaining diaspora networks (Gribble, 2008) and transnational entrepreneurship activities (Moghaddam et al., 2018) – in addition to knowledge and skills transfer (Siar, 2014) – offer alternative pathways to engage the diaspora for national development. A review of the available literature shows that establishing knowledge networks has not been typical in countries in the global South (Siar, 2014). However, there is some understanding that the number of highly skilled expatriates from the same country of origin in the global South and the networks that they build are increasing; but again, there is little such knowledge about such expatriates being engaged in the development of home countries. Therefore, this study contributes to understanding the concept of knowledge networks using perspectives from East Africa. In the same way, the study explores the interaction of such networks (if any) with labor laws, especially for international students in Uganda (c.f. chapter nine).

IV.4. Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the literature about the quality of HE in Africa in general and East Africa in particular, the extent to which ISM benefits students from privileged social classes in the East African countries of Rwanda and Burundi, and the policy provisions that regulate international students as likely migrant workers in Uganda. This was done in light of the broader migrant policy regulation in East Africa, and aligns with the study's research questions, i.e., 1) How do HE systems in international students' sending and receiving countries affect ISM in East Africa? 2) How does social class privilege influence ISM in East Africa? 3) How do immigration policies affect international students in East Africa? The chapter indicates that scholars, authors, and policy analysts continue to advocate for IHE without questioning its role, nor how it deepens historical inequalities between nations. This shows that it is critical to reassess the relevance of IHE in all forms. Its existing approaches seem to favor historically privileged nations and social classes while denying social justice to other nations and social classes.

This chapter has argued that many concealed factors inform current ISM trends in East Africa. While issues such as colonialism, the SAPs, and Education for All have been experienced over many years, the ways in which East African countries transitioned through those periods continue to shape the quality of HE provided, which is a significant determinant of student flows. Past studies have had an interest in HE systems in Africa, but most of them are concerned mainly with the poor quality of HE systems, without accounting for the evolution of country differences and how such differences continue to influence current educational experiences. We address this issue by pointing out the country specific differences stemming from colonialism that shape education in the chosen countries today in this review. However, the HE quality indicators and how they individually shape student mobility have yet to be analyzed in the East African context. This study attempts to address this issue in chapters six and seven. The review indicates that the countries considered in the study have differences in the number of HEIs, the quality of teachers, the number of programs offered (especially at the postgraduate level), and research capacity. It was envisaged that such differences influence ISM trends, and the validity of this view is tested in this study, and the findings presented in chapters six and seven. Understanding national differences and capacities should be a basis for cooperation rather than competition, with the aim of maximizing the benefits of ISM.

The review also indicates that market forces drive ISM in East Africa, with the primary intention of profit maximization. This challenges the possibility of providing quality HE, as the profit-making intentions may, for example, limit the possibilities of improving research and publication outputs. Further, higher tuition fees could limit HE access for students from less affluent backgrounds, hence challenging the aim of HE being a 'public good'. These considerations test the ethics of internationalization. The study, therefore, illuminates the challenges associated with the commercialization and marketization of HE in East Africa.

A review of the social class of international students and their participation in ISM is also presented. Although there are no direct methods for measuring the social class of students, the literature indicates that parents' formal education credentials, occupation titles converted to a status or prestige scale, and income are individual components that can be used to measure socioeconomic status. The review indicates that ISM in East Africa reflects social class disparities, which it continues to propagate. It points to how symbolic capital is associated with social class,

and how it informs ISM. From this perspective, students from high-class families use the benefits of international educational opportunities to ring-fence their positions in society. This practice perpetuates social class inequalities and may even exacerbate them, considering that ISM favors students from privileged backgrounds to begin with. However, the employment situation in East Africa, with many graduates being unemployed, leaves the extent of social class reproduction questionable, and this study examines such circumstances in chapter eight.

Further, the review indicates that students from less affluent families may use ISM to transcend social class positioning. This view explains the increasing number of students from lower social classes who have become internationally mobile. However, such an increase can also be attributed to the global increase in demand for HE, rather than to the importance accorded to international education being a means of transcending social class. The present study examines the reasons for students' participation in ISM in the light of their particular social class.

This chapter provides an overview of social class inequalities in Rwanda – this is a historical issue from colonial times. The review indicates that most students from Rwanda's high social class are able to benefit from ISM. Rwanda offers scholarships for students to participate in ISM; although these are not directly targeted to students from the high social class, conditions favor students from wealthy families.

The situation in Rwanda is replicated in Burundi, a country which also experiences social inequalities associated with colonial history. However, information regarding ISM trends in Burundi today are limited. From time immemorial, the Hutu ethnic group has been perceived to be of a lower social class, and has not been able to access education (at all levels) on equal terms with the Tutsi group. As a result, the Hutu are less represented in many spheres of life including education, and certainly ISM.

Finally, the review considered immigration policies that regulate mobile students in the host country, particularly the potential for them to be employed locally. International students often face financial challenges while in the host country, which could be minimized if they are able to accumulate personal earnings. Further, some international students desire to accumulate work experience while studying abroad. These needs should be viewed in the broader context of human

rights, which holds that international students should be entitled to employment in their host country.

The literature reviewed indicates that international student recruitment is one of the tactics used by some countries to attract and retain highly skilled migrant employees, which raises ethical questions. While some arguments claim that the practice leads to sharing skills between nations, the negative consequences of brain drain (among others) cannot be ignored. Since mobile students are a part of the migrant population in any country, it is also essential to consider the significance of the national employment situation in a given country. Countries in which citizens experience a high rate of unemployment may be reluctant to consider employing international students.

Clearly, any observed ISM trends result from an interaction between personal reasons for becoming mobile, and broader institutional and national rationales for internationalization. This interaction was examined in the present study, using the search for employment opportunities among international students as an example. Thus, immigration laws that restrict international students' employment possibilities also limit the realization of their goals in becoming internationally mobile.

The review shows that ISM policies, notably in terms of visa and immigration requirements, impact the academic and professional interests of internationally mobile students. This reveals the importance of close collaboration of HEIs with immigration authorities and the private sector, in order to build an integrated strategy for moderating ISM without jeopardizing student intentions and goals. It should be recalled that such an integrated strategy would depend on the presence of an efficient ISM infrastructure in participating countries. This study examines the migration policies that regulate international students, as part of the broader ISM infrastructure in sending and receiving countries.

The next chapter is devoted to the research methodology that was adopted in this study to explore ISM in East Africa.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

V.0. Introduction

This chapter introduces and discusses the research paradigm, the research methods, the research design, and the choice of study sites (with justifications for their choice), the sample size, and sampling techniques. The chapter also presents the research motivations, research objectives, research problem and questions, and data collection tools. A discussion of the data types collected, data collection methods, and quality measures is included. The chapter also presents the data analysis procedures, ethical considerations of the study, as well as its limitations.

V.1. Research motivations, objectives, questions, and hypotheses

The present study examines student mobility in higher education in East Africa in order to contribute to a better understanding of intra-African ISM. Internationalization is perceived to be consistently beneficial to students, HEIs and nations (Shields & Lu, 2023), and universities around the world are involved in various activities that promote internationalization (Tight, 2022). In the same vein, universities in Africa have been urged to expand their internationalization efforts (Zimmermann et al., 2021) in order to effectively contribute to the continent's development. Such arguments emphasize the positive outcomes of internationalization, yet they ignore its challenges (Govender & Naidoo, 2023). Moreover, most of the available studies on internationalization and ISM (e.g., Glass & Cruz, 2023; Rodríguez et al., 2011; Waters, 2012) were conducted outside Africa, or focus on South–North ISM (Perkins & Neumayer, 2014; Trines, 2023). Consequently, intra-African ISM has remained underexplored and the present study contributes to a better understanding of this issue.

As intra-African ISM continues to grow, Agbaje (2023) argues that it will enable Africa to overcome the problem of brain drain usually associated with ISM from the South to the North. Moreover, intra-African ISM makes ISM more inclusive i.e., it makes mobility more affordable and accessible and of service to students from all socioeconomic backgrounds (Sehoole & Lee, 2021). This study investigates the extent to which intra-African ISM is comparable to South–North ISM. To this end, the study examines the underlying rationales of ISM in East Africa, particularly in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi.

The study pursues the following three research objectives;

(i) Investigate the influence of quality of HE systems in East African sending and receiving countries regarding ISM;
(ii) Determine how ISM benefits East Africa's privileged classes;
(iii) Investigate immigration policy provisions for international students in East Africa.

To achieve the foregoing study objectives, the study addresses and attempts to answer the following three research questions:

(i) How do HE systems in the sending and receiving countries of international students affect ISM in East Africa?
(ii) How does social class privilege influence ISM in East Africa?
(iii)How do immigration policies affect international students in East Africa?

The study assessed the quality of the HE systems in international students' home countries based on quality indicators proposed by Cadena et al. (2018). The quality indicators (section A, Appendix 1) considered in this study included the number of reputable universities, the amount of tuition and other education costs, the quality of university programs, chances of being admitted into the programs of choice, unattractiveness of HEIs, availability of a variety of academic programs, the quality of teaching, opportunities for improving English Language competencies, the national HE policies, encouragement of skills development among students by the university, and the availability of research opportunities in universities in the home country.

V.2. Research paradigm

According to Khatri (2020), a research paradigm refers to the theoretical or philosophical grounding for the research work. The definition by Khatri is in line with an earlier definition provided by Kuhn (1970), which states that "a research paradigm is a range of beliefs and agreements shared by scientists about how problems should be understood and addressed" (p. 10). Therefore, a research paradigm clarifies the subject of the investigation, the nature of the questions addressed in the study, the results obtained, and how they are made meaningful (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016).

Different research *paradigms* exist, but the three common ones are positivism, constructivism (interpretivism), and pragmatism (Goldkuhl, 2012), each of which is now discussed. Dudovskiy (2018) asserts that positivism adheres to the view that only 'factual' knowledge gained by the use

of senses (e.g., observation), including measurement, is reliable. Therefore, under this paradigm, the researcher's role is to collect data and interpret it objectively. The findings thus obtained are usually observable and quantifiable (Collins, 2010), and the researcher is independent of the study, without any personal interests in the study (Crowther & Lancaster, 2008).

The constructivist (interpretivist) research paradigm holds that access to reality is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments (Myers, 2008). When they follow this paradigm, researchers integrate personal interests into the study as they interpret elements of the study (Dudovskiy, 2018). The third research paradigm, i.e., pragmatism, recognizes that various ways of undertaking research and interpreting the world exist. Therefore, several realities and one point of view cannot provide the whole picture (Saunders et al., 2012). From this description, it is observable that the positivist and interpretivist paradigms exist at the extreme ends of a continuum, while the pragmatic paradigm can be thought of as being in between, containing elements from both the paradigms at the extreme ends (Collis & Hussey, 2014).

None of the research paradigms discussed is necessarily right or wrong, but one may be more applicable in a given situation, in order to shape theory for general understanding (Babbie, 1998). Against this background, the present study follows the pragmatic research paradigm compatible with mixed-methods research studies (section V.3) that integrate quantitative and qualitative approaches to research problems (Allemang et al., 2021). Additionally, this paradigm is preferable since it does not limit the research to consideration of a single philosophy or reality during the research process (Creswell, 2014). The use of the pragmatic research paradigm allows the researcher to integrate research approaches and strategies to make the study more meaningful, while integrating different research methods, including qualitative, quantitative, and action research methods (Dudovskiy, 2018).

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), a research paradigm encompasses at least three elements: *ontology, epistemology,* and *methodology*. Consideration of these elements makes a study academically sound, with findings that are more convincing. In particular, the study methodology should be easily justifiable, since it rigorously appraises the research process and clarifies the theoretical assumptions underpinning the study, hence determining the validity and reliability of

the study findings (Crotty, 2003). According to Hay (2002), a research inquiry should ideally start with ontology progressing to epistemology, methodology, research methods, and data sources.

Amakari and Eke (2018) define *ontology* as "a belief system that mirrors how an individual interprets what represents a fact" (p. 2). Similarly, Richards (2003) asserts that ontology is "the nature of our beliefs about reality" (p. 33). Rehman and Alharthi (2016) posit that the researcher's assumptions about reality – i.e., how it exists or what can be known about it – influence the research process. Thus, ontology concerns the question of "whether or not there is a social reality that exists independently from human conceptions and interpretations and, closely related to this, whether there is a shared social reality or only multiple, context-specific ones" (Ormston et al., 2014 p. 4). Considering the ontology of a study answers the question as to whether social entities should be perceived as objective or subjective, thus giving rise to two aspects of ontology, i.e., objectivism and subjectivism (Dudovskiy, 2018).

Objectivism, as explained by Amakiri and Eke (2016), "portrays the position that social and business entities exist in reality external to social or business actors concerned with their existence" (p. 2). Hence, objectivism asserts that social phenomena and meanings exist independently of social actors (Bryman, 2012). Objectivists submit that only one objective reality about a research phenomenon or situation exists, regardless of the researcher's perspective or belief (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988). They also view reality as being external to the social actor (Carson et al., 2001) and hence there is a need to structure and control the research process by defining the research topic, formulating relevant research hypotheses, and designing an appropriate research methodology (Carson et al., 2001). On the other hand, subjectivism is an ontological position that considers social phenomena and their meanings to be a construction of social actors (Bryman, 2012). Thus, this type of ontology considers social phenomena as a creation built from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors.

This study adopts the subjectivist ontology. However, since the study follows a pragmatic paradigm and a mixed-methods approach, the study also explores objectivism. Malouf (2019) clarifies that a pragmatic paradigm is intersubjective in the sense that it is both subjective and objective, "accepting both the existence of one reality and that individuals have multiple interpretations of it" (p. 6). Consequently, this study explores the research topic from the

viewpoints of both subjectivism and objectivism. Additionally, mixed research methods require both objective and subjective views of reality (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The author believes that internationalization and its different manifestations are not static (Altbach & de Wit, 2018; Dewit et al., 2015). Therefore, we must keep rethinking and redefining how we view the various manifestations of IHE.

To put the changing nature of IHE into context, Petzold and Bucher (2018) posit that contrary to the situation witnessed during the past three decades, many HE students participate in ISM today. With this development, the demographics of mobile students have changed, such that even students from lower social classes are mobile today (Choudaha, 2017). Recalling that most African countries have insufficient capacity to provide adequate services in the HE sector (Dahir, 2017) and that, of necessity, ISM operates within a policy framework (Choudaha & de Wit, 2019), the study adopts both subjective and objective ontology as already indicated. For example, the objective ontology is essential to examine the attributes of educational systems in the receiving and sending countries of international students. Further, the study uses the subjective ontology to examine those attributes that require the interpretation of international students' social classes, and the policy processes surrounding the employment of internationally mobile students.

According to Pascale (2011), the subjective ontology allows multiple, individual, or socially constructed realities in which the researcher and participants independently construct personal interpretations within the same context. Therefore, the responses obtained in this study are credible and reliable (further discussed in section V.8), since the respondents (section V.4) provided them based on their knowledge of, and experience with ISM. Relating such responses to the researcher's interpretation of intra-African ISM provides further clarification of an objective ontology since multiple categories of respondents are used. Accordingly, this researcher subscribes to the view that reality is socially constructed through personal experiences, and that people make meaning from their interactions within a bound context; he also believes that some aspects of knowledge are measurable and quantifiable while others are not. Thus, by applying interpretive and subjective ontological approaches, this study explores the hidden complex factors surrounding ISM in East Africa, which neither subjective nor interpretive ontologies alone could exhaust. In line with this joint approach, the research considered qualitative and quantitative data (chapters six to nine) in order to construct meaning.

Epistemology is defined by Hallebone and Priest (2009) as the study of the standards by which researchers distinguish what does or does not constitute knowledge. Similarly, Khatri (2020) defines *epistemology* as a "philosophical perspective about the nature and sources of knowledge gained during research" (p. 1437). Thus, as Dudoviskiy (2018) explains, epistemology focuses on what is known to be accurate; and it also specifies the nature, sources, and limits of knowledge (Pascale, 2011). Clarifying the epistemological stance of the research process is essential; according to Khatri (2020), "it helps to establish faith in the data, and affects how the researcher uncovers knowledge in the social context under investigation. It provides guidelines to researchers to define the scope of fundamental research" (p. 1437). In other words, the epistemological approach of a study clarifies the nature of knowledge sought by the researcher – in order to contribute to existing knowledge about the issue under investigation (Cooksey & McDonald, 2011). Sources of the knowledge sought may be intuitive (i.e., feelings, beliefs, or faith), authoritative (i.e., from more knowledgeable people or literature), analytical (i.e., obtained by logical reasoning), or empirical (relying on established, objective facts) (Dudoviskiy, 2018).

There are various different epistemologies with which a researcher may choose to pursue a given study. Regardless of the chosen epistemological stance, this notion expresses the relationship between a researcher and the available sources of knowledge (Hiller, 2016). In a study that involves humans, interaction between the researcher and the study subjects is vital; it is the avenue that provides access for the researcher to the required knowledge, as further clarified by Hiller (2016). According to Kelly and Cordeiro (2020), from an epistemological point of view, pragmatism allows the researcher to focus on 'practical understandings' of concrete, real-world issues, rather than being preoccupied with philosophical concerns about truth and reality. The pragmatist epistemological stance interrogates the value and meaning of research data by examining its practical consequences, rather than by emphasizing the method of inquiry (Morgan, 2014). Thus, the pragmatist epistemological stance guided this exploration of ISM in the selected East African countries.

Following Morgan's (2014) approach, the researcher exercised flexibility regarding data collection methods and tools; this was essential for this study, since not all data could be collected exhaustively using only one method. The researcher went beyond objectivist and subjective orientations to explore the linkages between knowledge and social contexts, since knowledge

influences practice (Biesta, 2010). Since this study sought to investigate ISM rationales in three East African countries, such rationales are explained by involving mobile students and policy makers in Uganda, and those in some of the countries where mobile students originate, as well as their host institutions.

Polkinghorne (1983) defines *methodology* as "the examination of the possible plans to be carried out - the journeys to be undertaken so that an understanding of phenomena can be obtained" (p. 5). The methodology announces the logical flow of the research processes about a given research problem (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). In agreement with Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), Keeves (1997) explains that research methodology specifies the research design, methods, approaches, and procedures followed in a given investigation. The assumptions made during the study, the limitations encountered, and how they were mitigated or minimized are also part of the methodology, as further pointed out by Kivunja and Kuyini (2017). Other issues the research methodology addresses include data collection, study participants, data collection tools, and data analysis (Khatri, 2020). This researcher discusses these elements of the research methodology in detail in the following sections.

V.3. Research design

King (2002) advises that studies about ISM should be exhaustive and engage multiple perspectives, frameworks, theories, and methodologies. They should be interdisciplinary (McInnis et al., 2006), qualitative, or should follow a mixed-methods approach (Butcher & McGrath, 2004). They should also reflect student voices (Haan & Sherry, 2012), such as describing their experiences as they study in a foreign country (Brooks & Waters, 2011). With such views under consideration, this study adopts a mixed-methods research design to explore ISM in East Africa.

According to Plano and Ivankova (2016), mixed methods research integrates quantitative and qualitative approaches to "best understand a research purpose" (p. 140). Further, Keanen (2019) explains that a mixed-methods approach helps to understand complex phenomena, and this makes it highly relevant for this study about ISM. The present study integrates qualitative and quantitative research approaches to obtain comprehensive and refined conclusions in exploring ISM in East Africa. Most of the incoming mobile students in Uganda are from the East African region; hence the study findings give perspectives on ISM in East Africa.

Past studies that explore ISM (e.g., Caruso & de Wit, 2015; Nerlich, 2013) – particularly from the perspective of economic rationales – hold that quantitative research methods are more relevant for an exploration of ISM. Those studies explored ISM based on the rational choice theory, the human capital theory, and the perspective of return on investment in education. In such circumstances, it was appropriate to predict ISM practices using quantitative methodologies (Keanen, 2019). While such studies provide insights into ISM, Lörz et al. (2016) argue that rational choice and cost-benefit analyses neglect student assessments of their mobility experience, which causes these theories to be less exhaustive in explaining ISM. Thus, quantitative methodologies alone may not completely explore the less predictable factors that influence ISM. While qualitative designs might be applicable on their own, Keanen (2019) argues that a mixed-methods approach provides a more holistic interpretation of ISM.

Therefore, considering the intentions of this study, an explanatory, sequential, mixed-methods case study design was adopted (Cook & Kamalodeen, 2019). Creswell and Plano (2018) define mixed methods case study design as "one in which quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and results are integrated, in order to provide in-depth evidence for a case(s), or to develop cases for comparative analysis" (p. 116). Since purely quantitative or qualitative methods would have been insufficient to capture meaningful ISM details in this study, a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analytical methods were used. This allowed each method to complement the other, hence enabling a deeper analysis that capitalized on the strengths of each approach (Kiiza, 2019). The study is explanatory and sequential, in that it involves the collection and analysis first of quantitative, and then of qualitative data, in two consecutive phases. Quantitative data were collected from internationally mobile students in Uganda using an e-mail questionnaire. This was followed by qualitative data collection using semi-structured interviews with policymakers at institutional and national levels in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi.

Simons (2009) defines a case study as "an in-depth study from different perspectives of the complexity and singularity of a particular project, policy, institution, program, or system in a real-life context" (p. 10). Through a case study, a researcher is able to collect and analyze data that makes it easy to understand given phenomena through intensive examination of programs, events, activities, processes, or study participants, over a long period of time (Creswell, 2014). Besides

such attributes, a case study uses qualitative and quantitative data resources that are chosen to encapsulate the phenomenon's complexity, which was necessary for this study.

Case study designs are common in social science research because they are flexible and pragmatic (Lalor et al., 2013). Notably, a case study allows for studying highly context-bound phenomena with multiple variables that need to be more amenable to control. Consequently, data collection and analysis methods become pragmatic (Merriam, 1998) and were thus deemed to be appropriate for a study on ISM. Typical with case study research is the bounding of 'the case,' that is, considering the case as "a thing, a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries" (p. 27). From this perspective, the units considered in this study were the internationally mobile students studying at Makerere University (MU) and Kampala International University (KIU) in Uganda during the 2022/2023 academic year.

Most studies about ISM have ignored the global South, which constitutes a knowledge gap. Considering this lack, Lee et al. (2011) assert that a case study is appropriate especially when exploring a research issue when there is a need to hear silenced voices by talking directly with people affected by the issue. Therefore, it was appropriate to examine ISM in MU and KIU as case study universities, which allowed the researcher to 'listen' to the voices of mobile students studying in these two African universities. This provided knowledge about intra-African ISM that cannot be obtained by examining the mobility of African student into universities in the global North. Exploring student mobility in the chosen universities in Uganda highlights lesser-known issues about intra-African ISM, which need to be included in the mobility literature. Furthermore, studies have indicated that ISM studies should go beyond students, to involve other stakeholders (Weibl, 2014). For this reason, interviewees in this study include staff in international students' offices within the two universities, personnel from national HE regulatory bodies of Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi, and immigration officials in Uganda.

Even while adopting this carefully-considered design, the researcher was aware of several long-held criticisms. For example, Ward et al. (2014) hold that a researcher may get lost in details and fail to perceive the broader picture and findings from case studies. Similarly, Kiiza (2019) argues that case studies are less rigorous, making them less reliable, hence one cannot generalize the findings. The criticisms notwithstanding, the present research capitalizes on the benefits of case

study design to provide elaborated descriptions of phenomena in a bounded setting. Case studies also offer a strategy to analyze identified phenomena by means of comparative analysis. Considering the benefits of case study design, the said weaknesses could not discount its application in this study.

As already indicated, the study adopted a mixed-methods research design. According to Thakur (2021), the research design influences decision-making processes, the conceptual framework, data collection, and analysis methods adopted to address a research problem. With this in mind, this study adopted strategies at the conception, data collection, and data analysis stages to incorporate a mixed-methods approach. The researcher conceived the study topic and the research problem encapsulated in the main research question, i.e., 'What rationale underlies ISM in the East African countries of Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi?' The main research question was divided into three more specific questions to focus on for the purposes of this study (section V.1), which formed the basis for adopting a mixed-methods research design.

The researcher designed qualitative and quantitative tools to allow for a mixed-methods approach to *data collection*. An e-mail questionnaire was designed for internationally mobile students, which constitutes this study's quantitative component. Additionally, in-depth interview protocols were designed for selected students, staff in international students' offices, officials in HE regulatory bodies in the selected East African countries, and immigration officials. These data collection tools constitute the qualitative component of the study (Siddiqui & Fitzgerald, 2014).

At the point of *data analysis*, the data collected using the various research tools were analyzed using appropriate qualitative and quantitative methods. The study's quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated (chapters six to nine) to develop an informed, holistic view of ISM in the chosen East African countries. The respondents and informants provided the desired qualitative and quantitative responses about rationales for ISM in their context. The researcher analyzed quantitative and qualitative data, one after the other, and then linked the results for presentation.

V.4. Population, sample and sampling techniques

The study was conducted in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi. Uganda is the leading country in East Africa in terms of hosting the majority of incoming, internationally mobile students (Odebero,

2015), while Rwanda and Burundi are some of the countries sending students into Ugandan HE institutions (ICEF Monitor, 2017). Since these three countries are home to students involved in ISM in East Africa, they can certainly provide insights regarding the concept of ISM and practices in the region.

In Uganda, the study included Makerere University (MU), Kampala International University (KIU), the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). MU is the largest, oldest, and best university in Uganda (MU Visitation Committee Report, 2016). It has a long history of enrolling international students, and is the public university that enrolls the majority of international students in Uganda (NCHE, 2011). These attributes make MU a good choice among Uganda's state-funded universities. On the other hand, among the private universities, KIU is the most vibrant and enrolls the most international students in Uganda (Kiiza, 2019). In the words of Ssempebwa et al. (2012b), KIU is a "top South-South foreign student-enrolling university in East Africa" (p. 143). MU and KIU were chosen as case studies in this study, considering the study's purpose and attributes demonstrated by these two institutions.

The objectives of this study is to investigate immigration policy provisions for international students. Therefore, Uganda's Ministry of Internal Affairs is among the study sites. The first objective is to investigate the influence of quality of HE systems in East African sending and receiving countries regarding ISM, so interviews with staff from the national councils for HE in Uganda (NCHE), Rwanda, and Burundi provided information regarding quality measures for HE systems in these countries. International students were also interviewed to achieve the objective that sought to determine how ISM benefits East Africa's privileged classes.

V.4.1. Study population

Sargeant (2012) holds that one of the essential activities encountered during a research study design process is to identify relevant study participants. These individuals or groups need to agree to participate in a research process (Given, 2008). Decisions in selecting research participants depend on the research questions, theoretical perspectives, and evidence that will inform the study (Creswell, 2009). According to Sargeant (2012, p.1), the participants "must be able to inform important facets and perspectives related to the phenomenon being studied". Therefore, in a study about ISM, participants with informed views regarding ISM should be chosen. For this reason, the

population for this study includes international students, staff in charge of international students in universities, a senior immigration officer, and staff concerned with quality regulation in the HE sector.

According to the ICEF Monitor (2017), Uganda's international students originate chiefly from East African countries including Rwanda and Burundi, among other nations. It is clear that internationally mobile students in Uganda's universities are appropriate students for inclusion in this study. They are experiencing the issues investigated (e.g., their social classes in objective 2) and can undoubtedly provide relevant data to address the research questions. Also, since students' rationales for participating in ISM differ from one student to another, this information can be better understood by engaging with individual students involved in mobility. Furthermore, quality of national HE systems (objective 1) and mobility regulations (objective 3) influence ISM trends and practices. Thus, involving personnel involved in HE quality regulation in the study countries, staff from universities hosting international students, and staff from the immigration offices in the host country offered a better understanding of ISM in East Africa.

V.4.2. Sampling techniques and criteria

Since it is usually impractical to have an entire population participate in a study (for reasons of time, cost, and other resources) a researcher usually needs to select a sample from a given population. According to Dana (2020), sampling is "the selection of a subset of the population of interest in a research study" (p. 8).

The study adopted *homogeneous purposive sampling* to select MU and KIU from the population of universities in Uganda. Purposive sampling, also called judgment sampling, "is the deliberate choice due to the participants' qualities" (Etikan, 2016, p. 2). Thus, the two universities (one public and one private) were selected based on the attribute that they host the majority of Uganda's incoming international universities (section V.4.). Other universities in Uganda have fewer numbers of international students (Kiiza, 2019), and including them in the study would have only made the study costlier without improving the quality of the findings. Bernard (2002) explains that under purposive sampling, the researcher uses personal judgment to determine the most appropriate source for the desired respondents. Thus, the researcher identified and selected international students (see further details below) from MU and KIU, as well as staff members from

HE regulatory bodies in the three chosen countries and the immigration office in Uganda, as being proficient and well-informed about the issues under investigation (Cresswell & Plano, 2011).

In adopting the purposive sampling technique to select the study sites, the researcher was aware of the concomitant weaknesses. For example, Sharma (2017) argued that the method limits the possibilities for generalizing the findings. While this may be so (as with using case studies), the main intention of this study was to gain exhaustive information from the chosen study sites, rather than to generalize the results more broadly. This sampling technique was preferred because it enabled the researcher to identify and select information-rich cases that could be assumed to provide relevant data (Patton, 2002). The basic idea was to concentrate on data sites that offered attributes most relevant to the research topic.

It was then necessary to select a representative sample of international students from the two purposively selected universities. As with selecting study sites, international students were also selected through purposive sampling since they belonged to a predetermined group (McNeill & Chapman, 2005). In this case, the target population of international students in Uganda comprised 2,444 international students from MU, and 6,715 international students from KIU (Kiiza, 2019). It was necessary to obtain the students' personal e-mail addresses to which the questionnaire could be sent. However, only 537 and 433 e-mail addresses for international students in MU and KIU respectively could be obtained. Thus these constituted the (reduced) accessible population from which the study sample was drawn.

V.4.3. Sample size

Using Yamane's formula of sample size determination (Yamane, 1967), the researcher calculated the desirable quantitative sample size for each university. Yamane's formula holds that $n = N / (1 + N (e)^2)$ where n = the number of samples, N = total population, and e = tolerance level. At the 95% confidence level, e = 0.05. Applying the formula to the accessible population of international students in each university gave a sample size of 229 and 208 international students from MU and KIU, respectively. Thus, the researcher selected a total sample of 437 international students using simple random sampling. Simple random sampling is a method in which all population members have equal but independent chances of being chosen as respondents (West, 2016). The researcher used the lottery method in which the names of international students from each university were

listed and numbered from first to last. The numbers corresponding to the names of the international students were shuffled in a box, and a sample of 229 and 208 international students from MU and KIU, respectively, was randomly selected. This technique is advantageous because it eliminates sampling bias (Senam & Akpan, 2014).

A questionnaire was sent by e-mail to each student in the selected sample. The e-mail questionnaire accomplished the quantitative part of the study by identifying the factors surrounding the mobility of international students in Uganda. In particular, the researcher obtained responses about the quality of HE in Uganda and their home countries, the social class of mobile students, and immigration laws in Uganda.

For the collection of qualitative data, 10 international students (four from MU and six from KIU) were interviewed (they had to first express willingness to participate in the interviews via the e-mail questionnaire – the quantitative phase of the study). Interviews were also conducted with one staff member from the international students’ office (in MU), the Dean of Students (at KIU), and the senior immigration officer in Uganda's Ministry of Internal Affairs. An HE officer from Uganda's NCHE, the President of the Commission for HE in Burundi, and the Head of the Internationalization and Cooperation unit at the University of Burundi were also interviewed. The Director General of Rwanda's Higher Education Council avoided participating in the study at the last hour.

V. 4.4. Response rate

The response rate is the ratio of respondents who completed a questionnaire, relative to the number of respondents to which it was assigned (OECD, 2005). This study relied on questionnaires sent via e-mail to 437 international students, 229 from MU and 208 from KIU. Table 5.1 presents the number of completed and returned questionnaires in comparison to those that were sent out.

Table 5.1: Response rate.

Institution	Number of questionnaires sent out	Number of questionnaires completed and returned	Response rate (%) per institution
Makerere University	229	82	35.8
Kampala International University	208	113	54.3
Total	**437**	**195**	**44.6**

Out of the 437 international students to whom the questionnaire was sent, only 195 filled it out and returned it, presenting an overall response rate of 44.6%. While this may be considered a low value, Wu et al. (2022) explain that the average response rate for electronic questionnaires is 44%; thus the response rate in this study is in the range of common experience. The respondents from Kampala International University (KIU) gave a high response rate (54.3%), compared to Makerere University (MU) (35.81%). This shows the relative availability of the respondents from the two universities to participate in the study; the respondents from KIU were more conscientious to participate than those from MU. This is due mainly to the fact that the researcher was able to mobilize and address the target respondents at KIU before they received the questionnaire via e-mail. Attempts to organize a similar experience at MU proved to be futile, since the administrative technicalities in that university challenged such attempts.

V.4.5. Demographic attributes of respondents

The study analyzed the demographic details of the student respondents, in order to have a better understanding of their background characteristics. These details include age, gender, level of education, and country of origin, as summarized in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Demographic characteristics of international students in Uganda.

Demographic characteristic	Category	Count	Percentage
Gender	Male	111	56.9
	Female	79	40.5
	I prefer not to say	5	2.6
Age (years)	21 – 30	119	61.3
	31 – 40	60	30.9
	41 – 50	14	07.2
	51+	00	00
Level of education	Bachelor's degree	114	58.8
	Master's degree	21	10.8
	Ph.D.	54	27.7
	Other	06	3.1
Home country	Kenya	97	49.7
	Tanzania	27	13.8
	Rwanda	17	8.7
	Burundi	15	7.7
	Others	15	7.7
	South Sudan	13	6.7
	DRC	11	5.6

Respondents' gender

Table 5.2 shows that most of the respondents (56.9%) were males, while females constituted 40.5%. Unger (2022) claims that women constitute only a quarter of internationally mobile African students. Although the composition of female students involved in this sample is more than the claimed 25%, they still represent a lower percentage than the males. This reflect the gendered nature of student mobility within East Africa. The fact that more male than female African students are involved in ISM may also suggest that intra-African student mobility still shows evidence of the colonial idea of limiting education opportunities for African women (Aboagye, 2021). However, this does not negate other factors, as explained by Cordua and Netz (2022): "beliefs, opportunity structures as well as experiences and decisions made before and during higher education" (p. 1081) can also limit women's participation in ISM. Indeed, many other reasons can hold for the low representation of women in the study sample.

Respondents' age and level of education

Table 5.2 shows that most respondents in this study were aged between 21 and 30 years, and none of them were older than 50 years. This explains why most of the students (58.5%) were enrolled

in bachelor's degree programs. Table 5.2 also indicates that six respondents (3.1%) were enrolled in the 'Other' category for level of education. Further analysis revealed that four of them were enrolled on postgraduate diploma courses, while two were on a semester abroad program. The proportions of respondents at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree levels (58.8%, 10.8%, and 27.7%, respectively) show that the study population was less heterogeneous in terms of levels of study than expected, and also contradict the situation in the global North: OECD (2020) reports that in 2018, the respective percentages of international students who graduated from OECD countries were 8%, 19% and 26%. According to the OECD report, high percentages of postgraduate graduates are due to the knowledge-based economies in those countries. However, the situation differs in Africa, where most economies have a meager score on the knowledge economy index (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2019).

A low proportion of doctoral qualifications from East Africa means not only a low research output, but also a low proportion of appropriately qualified academic staff to supervise doctoral students. This is a challenge for HEIs in most African countries where the percentage of academic staff with Ph. D.s is usually less than 40%, and for some countries and specific study fields, the proportion may be as low as 20% (Mohamedbhai, 2020). This affects not only graduate education but also undergraduate levels of study. Therefore, doctoral training in Africa needs to be improved in order to enhance the quality of training and supervision in HE.

Respondents' nationalities

The majority of the respondents in this study were from Kenya (49.7%), followed by Tanzania (13.8%) and Rwanda (8.7%) – all these countries share borders with Uganda. This is in line with the view that the likelihood of student mobility increases when there is a common border between two countries (Vögtle & Windzio, 2019). Sehoole and Lee (2021) support the same opinion that most international students in a given country come from countries which share a common border. Of course, this cannot be viewed in isolation from other possible underlying factors that facilitate mobility in specific situations: Tanzania, Rwanda, and South Sudan share a border with Uganda, but the number of Uganda's international students from those countries is far less than those from Kenya (see possible reasons below).

International students are attracted to Uganda as a study destination because of the affordable tuition for international students, the generally secure setting, and the large variety of courses

offered (ICEF Monitor, 2017). Besides these reasons, an extra advantage for Kenyan students is the similarity between the education systems in Kenya and Uganda, the use of English as a language of instruction, together with colonial linkages between Kenya and Uganda as former British colonies (Nankindu et al., 2015). This explains the higher percentage of Kenyan students studying in Uganda. On the other hand, Rwanda and Burundi, formerly colonized by Belgium, have education systems that differ from that in Uganda. Indeed, this dissimilarity explains why comparatively few students from these two countries were studying in Uganda. However, the critical issue is whether such international education can bring about development in the home countries. Aina (2010) advises that for African universities to become global players as well as locally relevant institutions, they must reposition themselves by changing the mode of knowledge production, knowledge systems, and content, and by forming partnerships that enhance development. Is it possible for HEIs in East Africa to preoccupy themselves with idea?

V.5. Data collection tools

The data collection tools used in this study were a student questionnaire sent by e-mail and interview protocols (used to collect data from staff in international students' offices, deans of students, a senior immigration official in Uganda, and heads of HE regulatory bodies in Burundi and Rwanda). Each tool is discussed in the following sub-sections. Since respondents were in different locations, it was easier to contact them by e-mail. The researcher sent periodic reminders to the respondents to mitigate the low response rate associated with e-mail questionnaires (Hikmet & Chen, 2003).

V.5.1. E-mail questionnaire

An e-mail questionnaire (Appendix 1) was designed to collect data from inbound international students as respondents in this study. According to Narayan and Nayak (2019), e-mail questionnaires are cost-effective and can quickly gather data from many people. The positive attributes of questionnaires notwithstanding, the researcher was aware of some challenges associated with their use. For example, Narayan and Nayak (2019) hold that e-mail questionnaires usually have low response rates because respondents often ignore e-mails. For this reason, periodic reminders were sent to the 437 respondents, 195 of whom completed the questionnaire and returned it (response rate of 44.6%). Additionally, short questionnaires tend to attract more responses than longer ones (Williams, 2024). Thus, the questionnaire in this study was kept short

and precise. Technology-related challenges such as the availability of the internet and computers have been cited (Narayan & Nayak, 2019); however, this was not a serious threat in this study, since the questionnaire could be filled in using smartphones, which are common to university students in Uganda.

The introductory part of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) expressed the purpose of the study and solicited the respondents' participation by completing it. The second part of the questionnaire solicited personal information such as age, gender, home country, and qualifications. These questions were designed with multiple-choice selections. The next part of the questionnaire required respondents to give their opinions about the quality of education in their home country vis-à-vis that received in their institution of choice in Uganda. Items in this part of the questionnaire consisted of closed questions that were answered on a five-point Likert scale. Possible responses to these questions included one representing strongly disagree (SD), two representing disagree (D), three representing uncertainty/ not sure (NS), four representing agree (A), and five representing strongly agree (SA). The items are stated in a negative form, so that agreement indicates a 'bad' situation, and disagreement indicates a 'good' situation. The overall Likert scale score was calculated as the summation of each item's attribute value as respondents selected their options (Bhattacherjee, 2012).

The next section in the questionnaire solicited responses about the social class of the respondent. Items in this part offered multiple-choice responses in which the respondent chose the most appropriate response. The final part of the questionnaire was about national policies concerning mobile students in Uganda. As for the section concerning the socioeconomic status of students, this part of the questionnaire also had items designed with multiple-choice responses for the participants to select the most appropriate ones.

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were invited to express their willingness to participate in follow-up interviews.

V.5.2. Interview protocols

The researcher prepared interview protocols (Appendix II - VI) to carry out in-depth interviews with informants efficiently. The categories of interview participants are:

- international students,

- staff in the international students' office at MU,
- the dean of students at KIU,
- a senior immigration officer in Uganda, and
- staff from national HE councils in Uganda and Burundi

DeCarlo (2018) asserts that an interview protocol is a set of questions that a researcher asks participants to obtain valuable information in meeting the study objectives. It is a set of guidelines for the interviewer to follow during the interview. In posing such questions, the researcher collects data to better understand the views of the participants. During interviews, informants who prefer talking rather than writing can express their views verbally, which may be anonymized (Orodho, 2009). As a data collection method, in-depth interviews provide detailed information that other methods may not readily obtain. Significantly, they do not limit participants to predetermined responses, thus allowing free responses and flexibility, since the researcher can adjust questions during the interview.

Different interview protocols (Appendices II, III, IV, V, and VI) were designed for each category of respondents. In all cases, the interview questions sought background information about the respondents. They then posed questions about recurring themes related to the quality of HE in the relevant country considered in the study, the socioeconomic status of incoming mobile students, and policy regulations concerning incoming mobile students. Generally, the questions in the interview protocols were designed to achieve the objectives of the study, although in some cases, the questions sought responses that would contextualize the study.

V.6. Data collection

The researcher collected data from respondents based at MU and KIU (international students, the Dean of Students at KIU, and staff from the international students' office at MU), the senior immigration officer in Uganda, as well as staff from HE councils in Uganda and Burundi. The participant from Rwanda's HE council avoided participation with no explanation. Thus, different procedures had to be followed for the collection of data from the various categories of respondents. This section presents the processes involved in acquiring permission, obtaining the desired information, and accessing respondents. Since a mixed-methods approach was involved and different study sites were visited, the data collection and presentation methods had to reflect practical issues.

V.6.1. Quantitative data collection process at Makerere University (MU) and Kampala International University (KIU)

The researcher first obtained introductory letters from the study supervisor (at the University of Bayreuth, Germany), which were used to apply for a research permit from the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST). A written request for permission from the Vice Chancellor at MU for the researcher to conduct the study there was submitted, with attached copies of the introductory letter from the supervisor and the research permit. In response, the Vice-Chancellor issued the researcher another letter, introducing him to the university's international students office.

The first step was to visit the international students office at MU. Armed with the permission letter from the Vice-Chancellor, the researcher requested the staff in this office to provide him with details of international students studying at MU, particularly their phone numbers and e-mail addresses. The researcher was directed to the Registry, from where, together with research assistants, he obtained 537 e-mail contact addresses of international students. As indicated earlier, e-mail questionnaires (see Appendix I) were sent to a random sample of 229 of these international students. The researcher contacted the university's international student leader to make the task more personal. The international student leader introduced the researcher to the international students. The researcher described the purpose of the study during this interaction and the students, who offered to respond to the items in the questionnaire (should they be in the sample to receive it).

The same procedures were followed to collect data from international students at KIU. However, there is no international students office at KIU – instead, international student affairs are handled by the Dean of Students. The authorization from the university's Vice Chancellor was therefore taken to the office of the Dean of Students, who allowed the Department of Academic Affairs to provide the desired details of international students in KIU. That department provided 433 e-mail contact addresses for international students studying at KIU. Of these, only 208 were selected and received the questionnaire by e-mail, following the random sampling process (section V.4.3). Unfortunately, the international student leader at KIU could not easily be accessed, and was therefore not engaged during the process.

V.6.2. Qualitative data collection process at Makerere University and Kampala International University

In-depth interviews were conducted to collect qualitative data from international students, staff in the international students office, and the Dean of Students. Only those international students who had expressed willingness during the quantitative phase to participate in the interviews were contacted. By means of phone calls and e-mail communication, the researcher scheduled convenient dates for the interviews with the informants. Ten international students were interviewed (six from KIU and four from MU), as well as one member of staff from the international students office at MU, and the Dean of Students at KIU. Further details are shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Categories of interview informants from universities in Uganda

Category	Gender	Count	Total
International students	Male	6	10
	Female	4	
International students office staff	Male	1	1
Dean of Students	Male	1	1
Total		**12**	**12**

V.6.3. Qualitative data collection process at Uganda's immigration head office in Kampala

This researcher made a formal request to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Uganda, for permission to conduct interviews with staff in the immigration department. A copy of the introductory letter from the supervisor was attached to this request. After several follow-up calls, reminders, and various other attempts, the researcher was advised to contact the commissioner in charge of immigration. The commissioner then assigned a senior immigration officer to handle the interview. Only one senior immigration officer was delegated and he fixed an appointment for the interview. The information obtained through this interview was also used to partly address the third study objectives.

V.6.4. Qualitative data collection process at the Commissions for Higher Education in Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi

Qualitative data was collected from staff in the higher education commissions and councils in Uganda and Burundi, followed a similar procedure. In Uganda, the first requirement was a research permit from the National Council for Science and Technology (NCST), which had been obtained

earlier, for the quantitative phase. Using the research permit and the introductory letter from the supervisor, the researcher wrote a formal request to the director of Uganda's National Council for Higher Education (NCHE). After several failed e-mail reminders that attracted no response, coupled with some phone calls, the quality assurance director was delegated to handle the interview. However, he was interrupted on the very day scheduled for the interview, so he had to delegate the task to the higher education officer who was available to respond to the interview questions.

In Rwanda, the process started with seeking affiliation from a designated institute in Rwanda as a requirement for applying for a research permit in the country. After securing affiliation with the University of Rwanda, the researcher applied for, and obtained a research permit authorizing him to conduct interviews in Rwanda. In liaison with the local supervisor appointed by the University of Rwanda, the researcher contacted the Director General of Rwanda's Higher Education Council. She requested for the interview protocol to enable her to prepare for the interview before scheduling a date; however, she never scheduled a date, nor did she delegate even after several reminders. Consequently, no interviews were held with officials from Rwanda's HE council. The local supervisor appointed by the University of Rwanda advised this researcher to use the online secondary data and responses from the Rwandan international students among the student interviewees, and this researcher heeded the advice.

In Burundi, there is no specific body concerned with the regulation of research activities, especially for foreigners in the country. However, to ensure that all opportunities had been attempted, the researcher sought affiliation from the University of Burundi. The researcher contacted the president of the National Commission for Higher Education in Burundi who also works with the doctoral school at the University of Burundi. A formal request and a copy of the supervisor's introductory letter were sent to the president, who in turn fixed an appointment for the interview. The president of the commission went on to involve the head of the Internationalization and Cooperation unit at the University of Burundi as an additional informant. The data analysis used all the information obtained through these interviews to clarify and support the data obtained via the questionnaires.

V.7. Data management and analysis

Whyte and Tedds (2011) define *research data management* as data organization, from the start of data entry into the research cycle, to disseminating and archiving valuable results. Thus, data management concerns all those processes or activities involved in the 'data lifecycle', ranging from how the data was 'created' to storage, security, preservation, retrieval, sharing, and reuse. These stages should also consider the researcher's technical capabilities, ethical considerations, legal issues, and governance frameworks (Sanjeeva, 2018).

In line with this view, the research data for this study was carefully managed; for example, data collected using the e-mail questionnaire was edited and then coded (categorized). During the data editing stage, questionnaires were checked for inconsistencies (e.g., age not matching with study level; one respondent aged 23 years claimed to be doing a PhD), partial responses, and non-uniformities in recording answers. Five questionnaires were not considered for data capture into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) because they had been completed to less than 50%. The edited questionnaire data were entered into the SPSS interface. Using SPSS, the data were summarized by generating tables and graphs.

The qualitative data collected during the interviews were coded by categorizing responses to each question, and each category was given an identification code. From the coded qualitative data, summary statements with representative quotes were developed, in order to examine identified themes across participants. The emergent themes were used during the data analysis phase (section V.7.2).

According to Singh and Kumar (2015), *data analysis* is "the science of examining raw data with the purpose of drawing conclusions about the information" (p. 50). In related terms, Mohan and Elangovan (2011) hold that data analysis refers to those closely related activities that summarize and organize data in order to answer research questions, or to suggest hypotheses or questions if these had not been initially stated in the study. With this understanding, this researcher engaged with the data to make meaning, as informed by existing theoretical and methodological foundations during the data analysis stage.

In any study, the chosen research design influences the data analysis process (Haradham, 2017). Thus, since this study adopts a mixed methods research design, data analysis was conducted to

incorporate mixed methods by integrating quantitative with qualitative data. However, the researcher acknowledges the views of researchers such as Fauser (2018) and Hauken et al. (2019), that data analysis in a mixed-methods is usually lengthy, challenging, and costly, as the case was in this study. The analysis involves qualitative and quantitative procedures, as discussed in the following sections.

V.7.1. Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative data analysis involved using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) to make 'sense' of these data. As described in section V.5.1, the questionnaire (Appendix 1) was divided into sections. The Responses to the questions in section A of the questionnaire related to the demographic characteristics of the respondents and enabled the researcher to understand the respondents better.

Total scores for the scales and subscales were used to generate descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations (chapters six to nine). These statistics were used to explore the study variables: quality of the HE systems in Uganda and home countries of international students, social class, and experiences with immigration procedures in Uganda. Analysis of the responses from section B of the questionnaire contributed to answering the first research question (section V.1). Further, analysis of the data collected in section C of Appendix 1 (the final parts of the questionnaire) contributed to answering the second and third research questions of the study, respectively.

V.7.2. Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which is a method for qualitative data analysis that involves searching through data to identify, analyze, and report reiterating patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Similarly, Kiger and Varpio (2020) explain that thematic analysis can be used to analyze data by assigning codes, constructing themes, and interpreting patterns. Maguire and Delahunt (2017) confirm that thematic data analysis aims to identify data patterns that are important for answering the research questions. Based on this approach, interview responses were recorded verbatim and then transcribed before analyzing the transcripts to seek repetitive themes and patterns which were then edited, coded, and tabulated.

Coding was then carried out based on the themes identified. Coding involves carefully reading through the transcribed data line by line and then isolating the data into meaningful units of analysis (themes) (Maree, 2014). Thus, coding reduces lots of data into small chunks of meaning (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017), making the data analysis more manageable. The coded data were used to construct summary statements, and representative quotes were recorded and used to examine the predefined themes across informants. The themes used in the analysis emerged from the quantitative data analysis. Therefore, as explained by Bingham & Witkowsky (2022), deductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. Conclusions and interpretations were then made in a narrative form and incorporated into the findings from the quantitative data to address the objectives and research questions. As Kiiza (2019) explains, "when various data collection techniques are combined in a case study, the results are high quality while the findings arising from the one approach in the same study may be confirmed by those from the other approach" (p. 62).

V.8. Quality control

It is vital to address quality issues in mixed methods studies like the one at hand (see detailed quality control criteria discussed in the following sub-sections). Quality control refers to strategies and procedures for ensuring data integrity, quality, and reliability at all the stages of the research process (Emerson, 2020). To achieve integrity, the study must be conducted in compliance with the relevant ethical, legal, and professional standards (Ndebele, 2015), and the researcher must avoid bias at all stages so that the data is collected and analyzed and the results interpreted in light of the research questions (Shaw & Satalkar, 2018). The researcher devises mechanisms such as multiple checks or use of checklists (Aboumatar et al., 2021), and takes precautions to limit errors during data collection and analysis, in order to enhance quality control. Lavrakas (2008) suggests that different quality control measures can be adopted, depending on the nature of the study. In other words, quality control mechanisms differ from one study to another. However, in all cases, a study should be carried out while ensuring integrity, without any falsification elements (Vink, 2014).

The quality control process is associated with innumerable challenges and difficulties, resulting mainly from the complexity of the (mixed methods) approach to research (Fàbregues & Molina-Azorín, 2017). According to Bryman (2014), mixed methods research studies are characterized by

several cumbersome quality procedures such as the description of "where integration has occurred, how it has occurred and who has participated in it" (Cameron, 2011, p. 8) that are not broadly applicable. In particular, since a mixed-methods design includes aspects from qualitative and quantitative research approaches, there have been arguments (Fàbregues & Molina-Azorín, 2017) that both qualitative and quantitative quality control criteria should be adopted. Nevertheless, others argue that a new approach to quality determination for mixed methods studies is desirable (Fàbregues & Molina-Azorín, 2017). While acknowledging these perspectives and in agreement with Myrset (2021), this study aligns with the view that quality measures for mixed methods need to be adopted from both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms, as appropriate.

V.8.1. Quantitative quality control criteria

Heale and Twycross (2015) explain that researchers should aim to obtain results and consider the *rigor* of the research process. They further explain that *rigor* is "the extent to which the researchers worked to enhance the quality of the studies" (p. 66). According to Lobiondo-Wood and Haber (2013), *rigor* refers to validity and reliability in quantitative research, as explored further hereunder. *Validity* is the level to which a concept is accurately measured in a quantitative study (Heale & Twycross, 2015). According to Lobiondo-Wood and Haber (2013), validity clarifies how quantitative research tools measure what they are meant to measure. To achieve validity in the present study, the researcher determined the content validity index (CVI) of the e-mail questionnaire. This involved technical evaluation of the relevance of every question to determine its Item-level Content Validity Index (I-CVI). To achieve this, the researcher shared the questionnaire with five research experts. The experts evaluated the relevance of the questionnaire test items and scored each on a 4-point scale (1 = *not relevant*, 2 = *somewhat relevant*, 3 = *quite relevant*, 4 = *highly relevant*). I-CVI was determined based on the formula: "number of experts giving a rating 3 or 4 to the relevancy of each item, divided by the total number of experts" (Zamanzadeh et al., 2015, p. 169).

Based on the suggestions of Zamanzadeh et al. (2015), test items with I-CVI greater than 0.78 were regarded as being valid and hence were retained. On the other hand, the wording for test items with an I-CVI less than 0.78 but greater than 0.49 were modified according to the recommendations of the experts, while the rest were excluded from the questionnaire.

Additionally, the research experts checked the test items for wording and clarity to conform to the constructs in the conceptual framework (chapter four), in order to improve the construct validity.

Reliability is the measure of whether quantitative research instruments are consistent in measuring whatever they are measuring (Heale & Twycross, 2015). It considers the extent to which the study results are dependable and consistent with the possibility of being accurately replicated (Leppink & Pérez-Fuster, 2017). Thus, in this study, the questionnaire items were tested for reliability using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Method (Bonett & Wright, 2014) provided by SPSS. The test items were fed into the SPSS interface, and each was analyzed for reliability (consistency). All the test items in the questionnaire had a reliability coefficient of at least 0.70, which is acceptable, as Taber (2017) recommended. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient Method easily determines the reliability coefficient and requires less time than other methods (Kruschke et al., 2012).

V.8.2. Qualitative quality control criteria

Cope (2014) identifies *credibility* and *trustworthiness* as quality criteria that apply to qualitative research. Myrset (2021) holds that quality measures in qualitative studies include *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, *confirmability*, and *reflexivity*. These quality measures in qualitative studies serve the same purpose as validity and reliability in quantitative research. Table 5.4 provides meanings of these concepts, as defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) (cited by Irene and Albine, 2018).

Table 5.4: Meaning of the various quality measures in qualitative research.

Quality measure	Definition
Credibility	The confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings.
Transferability	The degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings, with other informants.
Dependability	The stability of findings over time.
Confirmability	The degree to which the study findings can be confirmed by other researchers.
Reflexivity	The process of critical self-reflection about oneself as a researcher (own biases, preferences, preconceptions), and the research relationship (relationship to the informants, and how the relationship affects their answers to questions).

Based on the definition in Table 5.4, *credibility* determines the extent to which the findings accurately represent the informants' original views. According to Roy et al. (2019), prolonged engagement with participants makes a study more credible. To accurately represent the informants' views in this study, the researcher spent additional time with student interviewees, and also

corroborated the information they provided, with data from interviewees from the national commission for HE in Burundi. Similar attempts were unsuccessful with international students from Rwanda since the target respondent avoided being interviewed. The researcher spent over three months engaging with the student informants. Consequently, the researcher obtained in-depth insights into the research context. In addition, the prolonged engagement enabled the researcher to build rapport and trust with student informants, which encouraged them to express their views freely. Courteous phone calls and e-mail exchanges with the other categories of informants enabled the researcher to establish the desired relationship with them and encourage them to respond without reticence.

Not only should the findings in a qualitative study be credible, but also transferable, hence the quality criterion of *transferability*. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), transferability concerns applicability. Along the same line, Irene and Albine (2018) assert that the researcher should ensure transferability by clearly describing the research process and the participants, to allow potential users to assess whether the study findings are transferable to another setting. For this purpose, the researcher endeavored to describe the research process in detail (as shown in this chapter).

The quality measures *dependability* and *confirmability* can be considered concurrently (Irene & Albine, 2018). Dependability in qualitative research is analogous to reliability in quantitative research (Janis, 2022), and as indicated in Table 5.4, it measures the extent to which the study findings are consistent over time and conditions. Dependability is linked to confirmability which measures the extent to which a study might be replicated by a different researcher and yield the same results. Thus, the two quality measures are concerned with establishing that the interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination, but are derived from the data (Irene & Albine, 2018). To achieve these criteria, the researcher maintained an audit trail describing the steps from starting the research project, to developing and reporting the findings. Thus, the researcher could keep auditing the research process to align it with the research design (section V.3). At the same time, this allowed the researcher to present objective findings without being influenced by personal viewpoints and preferences.

The last quality measure described in Table 5.4 is *reflexivity*, defined by (Jamieson, et al., 2023) as "the act of examining one’s own assumption, belief, and judgment systems, and thinking carefully and critically about how these influence the research process" (p. 1). In line with this

view, the researcher's past experience as a university lecturer in Uganda was essential in enhancing reflexivity. That experience helped him to identify with the students and build trust with them quickly. Kuchah and Pinter (2012) explain that rapport-building activities (e.g., chatting with participants) can reduce the gap between the researcher and the informants, thus "establishing confidence and a favorable interview atmosphere" (p. 286). In addition, the researcher found it easy to remain in the universities for many days, since these were familiar environments for him. The researcher also maintained a research diary containing notes about the participants' comments, and annotations of the researcher's thoughts during the interviews which further enhanced the reflexivity of the study. Musgrave (2020) holds that researchers must always reflect on their background, motivations, and roles (as shown in their choice of the research design) to ensure reflexivity in qualitative studies. The present study is about the IHE which relates to the researcher's background and motivations, particularly as a member of the African Network for Internationalization of Education (ANIE) and a Master of Arts in higher education studies. The researcher also hails from East Africa and has previously worked with, or been part of some East African universities, which provides a familiar context. Previously, the researcher researched internationalization and the prevention of HIV/AIDS, under the auspices of the ANIE and using evidence from Makerere University.

V.9. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations contribute to the success of a research process (Sterling & De Costa, 2018). In this view, the research process should be characterized by fairness, and moral accountability (De Costa et al., 2020). This research study adopted several strategies regarding ethical considerations, including during the conception of the study, proposal stage, data collection, data analysis, report writing and presentation of findings. Maree (2014) advises that researchers should acquaint themselves with the research policy of institutions that oversee the research activities in which they engage. To this end, the researcher attended the course on 'Good Ethical Conduct' organized by the Graduate School of the University of Bayreuth, which enlightened him about the ethical conduct required by the university. Thus, the study meets the ethical standards of the University of Bayreuth.

Before the data collection stage, the researcher obtained permission from several institutions and other bodies, to conduct the research. An approved research proposal, and data collection tools,

accompanied these permission requests. Consequently, permission was obtained from the University of Rwanda (UR), Makerere University (MU), Kampala International University (KIU), Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST), and Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), as well as Rwanda's National Council for Science and Technology.

Concerning the participants in the quantitative part of the study, their informed consent was sought through e-mails and the explanatory note on the questionnaire, which indicated the voluntary nature of participation. From the selected random sample (229 students from MU and 208 from KIU), 82 and 113 respondents (respectively) completed the e-mail questionnaire, thus indicating their voluntary consent. Similarly, for those who indicated their willingness to participate in the in-depth interviews, their submission of the completed questionnaire indicated their voluntary consent to do so. All other participants in the interviews were verbally informed at the start of each interview that their participation was voluntary. Interviewees were free to stop at any point during the interviews if they felt uncomfortable. In addition, the researcher asked their informant to express their consent to record the interviews verbatim for further analysis by signing a consent form (Appendix VII). Each interview lasted for 45 minutes at maximum.

Furthermore, to ensure their confidentiality, anonymity, and safety (Creswell et al., 2016), interviewees were not identified by their usual names in the final research report, while the questionnaire was anonymous. The researcher also informed all the respondents (interviewees and those who filled out the questionnaire) that their information would be used purely for academic purposes, in helping the researcher to fulfill the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy award. Applicability (and possible implementation) of the recommendations made in the study sit with the universities and the governments concerned, beyond the researcher's mandate.

V.10. Limitations of the study

The main limitation experienced during the study was that the target informant in Rwanda implicitly refused to conduct an interview. This was after following all the country-specific procedures required by foreign researchers in Rwanda. The designated research fees were paid, the research permit was obtained, and the terms set by the informant were followed. On contacting this informant through the local university supervisor, she asked the researcher to explain why he wanted to conduct the study in Rwanda and how the study would benefit Rwanda. The required explanation was provided by e-mail, and the target informant responded and asked for an advance

copy of the interview questions to enable her to prepare for the interview beforehand. This was done, and the target informant responded with a promise to respond to the questions appropriately, but she could not fix an appointment for the interview at that time. The researcher could clearly not remain in Rwanda for an unknown duration. Despite numerous reminders that attracted no response, the informant remained uncooperative. Only on one occasion did the target informant receive this researcher's phone call, and again the promise to send the responses was repeated, but this was never fulfilled.

It is interesting to note that other researchers have experienced related challenges, and point out that research participants in Rwanda tend to be fearful and suspicious (Manirakiza, 2018; Thomson, 2010). Uncertainty surrounding the consequences of participation in certain research studies frightens them, and thus limits their willingness to participate (Begley, 2013). Fear and mistrust were also witnessed in this study, on the part of the international students from Rwanda, whereby they would not comment outwardly about some aspects of the education system in their home country.

Another limitation is the small number of respondents in this study. Only 15 students expressed an interest in participating in interviews, but only 10 made themselves available to the researcher. The researcher hoped to have more than staff from the Immigration Department in Kampala, the international students' offices at the two universities, and the HE regulatory bodies participating in interviews. However, it turned out that only one staff from the relevant offices could be nominated as an interviewee for the institutions concerned. The study would have realized more opinions had the number of interviewees been higher.

There was also a limitation resulting from using an e-mail questionnaire as a data collection tool since these are usually associated with a low response rate. While the researcher targeted a response rate of at least 70%, the realized response rate was 45%. Although this lies within the permissible range, a higher rate would have been preferable. Further, there is a general negative attitude towards research among Africans, and this often limits their participation in research studies (Khan, 2021).

Another limitation of the study is the lack of generalizability of the results. This study was conducted in Uganda (a receiving country) with several other countries as sending countries, yet

only Rwanda and Burundi were analyzed. The results provide a perspective on the development of ISM in Uganda and thus give an insight into ISM in East Africa. However, these results can only partially reflect the perspectives of ISM in all East African countries, as these differ in their context. Having more East African countries on the sending and receiving sides would have improved the generalizability of the study findings to East Africa and the whole African continent. This researcher acknowledges this is a limitation.

Lastly, my positionality as an international student myself, critiquing international student mobility, was interesting – the process in which I am involved seemed contradictory to the participants. They wondered why I decided to study abroad myself, moreover in the global North, considering the challenges that ISM can bring about. One of the informants even asked why my study was about student mobility in the global South and not about South-North student mobility since that is what describes my own situation. I responded that South-North ISM had been researched widely compared to ISM in the global South, which made this study necessary.

V.11. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodological approaches used in the study. It details the philosophical grounding of the study and the research design and justifies the choices made. In addition, the chapter describes how the investigation process integrated a mixed-methods research design, as well as the sampling approaches employed, the data collection process and procedures, and the data analysis processes employed. Finally, the chapter discusses quality concerns about quantitative and qualitative research methods and how these were addressed, the ethical strategies employed in the study, and the limitations of the study.

A pragmatic research paradigm was adopted for the study since it aimed to measure and interpret different types of data. This paradigm is flexible in using different philosophies in the research process. Therefore, the researcher was able to integrate qualitative and quantitative research approaches and strategies to develop a more meaningful study. The study is subjective but explores an objectivist ontology in the form of the mixed methods approach. Therefore, the study is 'intersubjective', since it includes both objective and subjective orientations. Further, a pragmatist epistemological stance guided the research process to interrogate the value and meaning of data about ISM in the study context. The study is concerned about the practical consequences of the

data, not the inquiry method itself. It investigates ISM's qualitative and quantitative growth, which could be analyzed better through a mixed methods approach.

The study respondents were international students at MU and KIU - two universities in Uganda chosen as case studies. Data from these respondents were collected using a self-administered questionnaire, distributed and completed electronically. The collection of this quantitative data from the sample of international students was followed up with in-depth interviews with those who expressed willingness to participate in interviews. Their views were corroborated with those collected from staff in charge of international student affairs, the senior immigration officer in Uganda, and staff from some HE regulatory bodies from Uganda and Burundi.

A sample of 437 international students (229 from MU and 208 from KIU) was selected using simple random sampling. The study realized a response rate of about 45% on the questionnaire (82 respondents from MU and 113 from KIU), and conducted 16 interviews (10 students and 6 staff members). The questionnaire data were analyzed using SPSS, while the qualitative data were analyzed by means of thematic analysis. The information obtained from the two analyses was integrated and interpreted.

The study findings are presented in forthcoming chapters (chapters six to nine) to answer the research questions. The following chapter, chapter six, is devoted to presenting and interpreting data that answers part of the first research question: how do HE systems in international students' sending countries affect ISM in East Africa? The second part of the first research question is addressed in chapter seven.

CHAPTER SIX: THE EFFECT OF HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN EAST AFRICA'S SENDING COUNTRIES ON INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY

VI.0. Introduction

The study explores the rationales for student mobility in East Africa. These rationales have traditionally been explained using the *push and pull factors model* (Bogue, 1957; Lee, 1966), especially in studying student migration from resource-poor to resource-rich countries in the global North. The model regards the economic advantages of migration from a resource-poor to a resource-rich country as the main driver of ISM (King, 2012). However, as Sehoole and Lee (2021) explain, the push and pull factors model does not perfectly explain regional student mobility; in particular, contextual factors in the global South influence regional student mobility differently, compared to those in the global North. Thus, the first objective of the present study is to investigate the influence of quality of HE systems in three East African sending and receiving countries regarding ISM.

This chapter presents the findings to address part of the first research question – namely HE systems in sending countries only, and that the rest of this question (receiving country – Uganda) is addressed in chapter seven. Therefore, this chapter presents and discusses the findings pertinent to the education systems in international students' home countries i.e., Rwanda and Burundi, as possible drivers of outbound mobility. The chapter examines the quality of HE in international students' home countries based on the availability of universities with an international reputation, HE costs, program availability, and educational programs offered in English, among others.

VI.1. Quality of higher education in the sending countries

In most countries, HEIs operate within a national HE system (Jungblut & Maassen, 2017). Different HE systems exist, but some essential elements are common to all, namely, the types of HEIs, authority within the institutions, and the types of governance (Clark, 1983). From this perspective, the study considered HEIs and relevant policies as constituents of the HE system in international students' home countries (the sending countries i.e., Rwanda and Burundi).

International students were asked to rate eleven items about HE quality in their home countries i.e., Cadena et al.'s (2018) HE quality indicators. The items were close-ended questions (Appendix

1) stated in negative form so that agreement indicated a 'bad' situation and disagreement showed a 'good' situation. The questions also had options given on a Likert scale that comprised five options, namely, namely strong disagreement (SD) (1), disagreement (D) (2), neutral (N) (3), agreement (A) (4), and strong agreement (SA) (5). A high rating (5) indicates an unsatisfactory experience and a low rating (1) means a satisfactory experience, while 3 indicates indecision.

Table 6.1 shows the descriptive statistics for the first four of the 11 items analyzed to assess the quality of HE in the sending countries. The seventh edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines stipulates that the table size should not overlap pages (APA, 2020). Therefore, only the items (four items) that fit on a single page are displayed.

Table 6.1: Descriptive statistics on respondents' own rating of HE quality in the sending countries.

Item No.	Parameter for measuring the quality of education system at home	Category	Number (percent)	cumulative Number (cumulative percent)	Mean	Standard deviation
1a	The tuition and other education costs in my country are very high	SD	01 (0.5)	07 (3.6)	4.40	0.86
		D	06 (3.1)			
		N	25 (12.8)	25 (12.8)		
		A	46 (23.6)			
		SA	117 (60.0)	163 (83.6)		
1b	The quality of teaching in my home country is low	SD	02 (1.0)	07 (3.6)	4.29	0.84
		D	05 (2.6)			
		N	22 (11.3)	22 (11.3)		
		A	71 (36.4)			
		SA	95 (48.7)	166 (85.1)		
1c	I was not admitted to program of my choice in universities at home	SD	28 (14.4)	74 (38.0)	3.02	1.31
		D	46 (23.6)			
		N	52 (26.7)	52 (26.7)		
		A	33 (16.9)			
		SA	36 (18.5)	69 (35.4)		
1d	There are fewer chances for improving competences in English Language in my home country universities	SD	85 (43.6)	106 (54.4)	2.46	1.50
		D	21 (10.8)			
		N	28 (14.4)	28 (14.4)		
		A	37 (19.0)	61 (31.3)		
		SA	24 (12.3)			

Table 6.1 provides an overview of international students' own rating of the quality of HE in their home countries. The mean values for two of the items shown in Table 6.1, i.e., tuition and other education costs in the home country are very high (mean = 4.40), and the quality of teaching in the

home country is low (mean = 4.29) were above four, suggesting the existence of quality-related challenges in those HE systems. Other items with mean values above four, though not indicated in Table 6.1, were: HE policies in the home country are poor (mean = 4.13); The HE system in the home country encourages the development of few soft skills among students (mean = 4.11); Availability of few research opportunities in the home country universities (mean = 4.33); and availability of few reputable universities in the home country (mean = 4.51). The mean values on these indicators are above three, suggesting agreement (with negatively phrased items) – that is, the home country's HE system regarding those indicators is defective, and indeed, those indicators have contributed to existing trends in outbound ISM.

Two items, including failure to get admitted to the preferred academic program in the home country (mean = 3.02) and the quality of university programs in the home country being low (mean = 2.99), had a mean value of 3 (or close to 3) which suggests indecision regarding a particular HE quality indicator. In particular, the mean value of failure to be admitted to educational programs of choice in their home country (mean = 3.02) indicates that respondents were undecided or unable to express opinions on this indicator.

Three items, i.e., the attractiveness of universities at home (mean = 2.24), availability of chances to improve English Language competencies (mean = 2.46), and the low number of academic programs offered in the home universities (mean = 2.34), gave mean values of less than 3, suggesting disagreement with the specified (negatively stated) indicator. Therefore, the sending countries have attractive institutions, offer sufficient academic programs for study and offer satisfactory chances to improve English Language competencies, notwithstanding the observed outbound mobility trend. This implies that the mobility of the students included in this study resulted from factors other than the attractiveness of universities in the home country, chance to improve English Language competencies, and the number of academic programs offered by HEIs in the sending countries.

Respondents' views on the quality of HE systems in their home countries were spread (not clustered around the mean) on many items. This is because most indicators' standard deviation values are greater than 1.00, indicating varied responses to those items. Only two indicators (i.e., quality of the HE system and education costs) show standard deviation values of less than 1.00.

This suggests that on these items, many international students had similar views about the quality of HE systems in their home countries. Nevertheless, considering the mean and standard deviation values for all items, respondents indicated some quality-related challenges in the HE systems in the sending countries.

Table 6.1 also shows the cumulative percentages on the items for disagreement (SD and D together) and agreement (A and SA together). Two items shown in Table 6.1, i.e., high tuition and other education costs in the home country (83.6%) and the low quality of teaching in the home country universities (85.1%), show high cumulative percent values located at the end of the scale that signifies the existence of HE quality challenges in the sending countries (that is, agreement with negatively stated items). Items on which respondents agreed to the negative statement, hence indicating the existence of HE quality challenges in the home country – though not included in Table 6.1 – were poor HE policies in the home country (86.5%); the HE system in the home country encourages the development of few soft skills among students (86.7%); availability of few research opportunities in the home country universities (84.2%); and availability of few reputable universities in the home country (83.8%). Such factors indeed drive students to become internationally mobile. However, other items including few chances of improving English Language competencies (54.4%) – see Table 6.1, the attractiveness of universities at home (51.8%), and the number of academic programs offered in the home universities (53.6%) had cumulative percent values located on the end of the scale that signifies a better HE quality in the sending countries. The outbound ISM from the considered sending countries resulted from factors other than those depicted in such items.

All items under question 1 of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) were aggregated into one average index (i.e., QoHES) to obtain an overall view of how international students rated the quality of the HE system in their home countries. The average index was computed by summing up responses to items 1a to 1k (section B in Appendix 1) and dividing the total by the number of items (i.e., 11). Table 6.2 provides the resultant descriptive statistics.

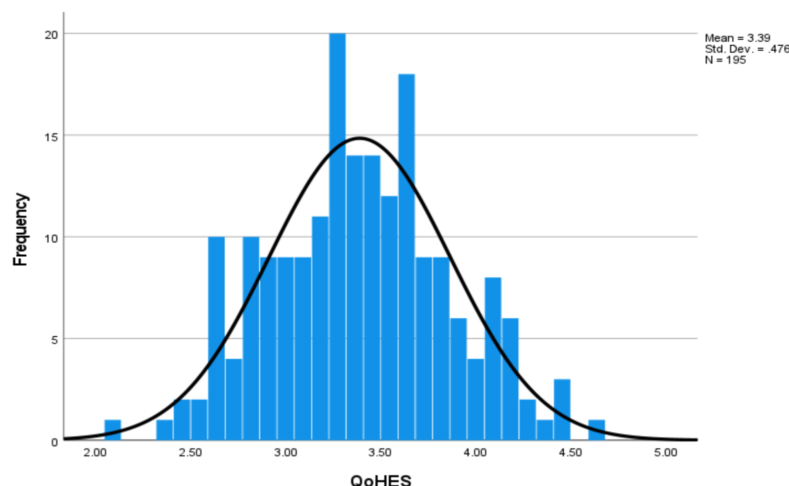
Table 6.2: Overall descriptive statistics on the quality of the HE system (QoHES) in the sending countries.

Statistic		Value
Mean		3.39
95% confidence interval	Upper	3.50
	Lower	3.32
Median		3.34
Standard deviation		0.48
Range		2.55
Skewness		0.70

According to Table 6.2, international students' perceptions of the HE system in their home countries are greater than three (overall mean value is approximately 3.40) on the Likert scale of 5 options. The responses have mean values ranging from 3.32 to 3.50 at the 95% confidence level. A mean value of slightly greater than 3 indicates indecision regarding the negatively stated items used to measure HE quality in the sending countries.

Further, international students' opinions regarding HE systems are slightly clustered around the mean, as indicated by a low standard deviation value, i.e., 0.48. The range in the in opinion about the quality of HE at home is 2.55, which affirms the already mentioned standard deviation value (0.48). Furthermore, the participants' views regarding HE quality in the home country are almost normally distributed, as indicated by a slight positive skew (0.70). Thus, there are nearly equal tendencies towards satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the quality of HE in international students' sending countries, as depicted in the frequency histogram shown in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1: *Distribution of respondents' views on the quality of the higher education system in their home countries.*



While the quantitative findings showed nearly equal tendencies toward satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the quality of HE in international students' sending countries, the qualitative findings indicated that the sending country HE system faced quality issues. Consider the following response given by the informant from the National Commission of Burundi:

> The quality of education in Burundi is low, especially due to underfunding. Those who study in other countries do so in search of better quality education. Besides, the language of instruction used in universities in Burundi encourages students to study in other countries. English has been promoted as the lingua franca, yet it is not used for instruction in most HEIs in Burundi. This forces students to study abroad. (Interview with official from National Commission for HE in Burundi, December 1st, 2022).

From this response, outbound mobility in Burundi seems to be influenced by the search for better quality HE characterized by English language instruction and educational resources. Further, this response clearly expresses the hegemony of the English language as the commonly used language in HE. However, Altbach (2011) contends that English is also "the language of academic neo-colonialism, in the sense that scholars everywhere are under pressure to conform to the norms and values of the metropolitan academic systems that use English" (p. 18). It is, therefore, challenging to downplay the views of Schinkel (2018) and Zuchowski et al. (2017) that internationalization is associated with neocolonialism, especially for developing countries. This researcher holds that rather than strengthen the link between internationalization and neocolonialism, intra-African ISM

should be used to weaken it. This view corresponds to the political economy and representation dimensions in the critical perspectives of internationalization (Figure 2.1).

To further clarify the influence of the HE system in the sending country on student mobility, respondents were asked to answer the question "How likely is it that the HE quality in your home country influenced your choice to study in Uganda?" (Appendix 1, section B, question 11). The question had options on a Likert scale of five possibilities, namely highly unlikely (HU) (1), unlikely (U) (2), neutral (N) (3), likely (L) (4), and highly likely (HL) (5). A high rating (5) indicates a higher likelihood, and a low rating (1) indicates a lower likelihood that international students' decision to study in Uganda was influenced by the quality of the HE system in their home country. Figure 6.2 shows the distribution of respondents' views on this question.

Figure 6.2: *Respondents' responses about the likely influence of the home country's higher education system on mobility.*

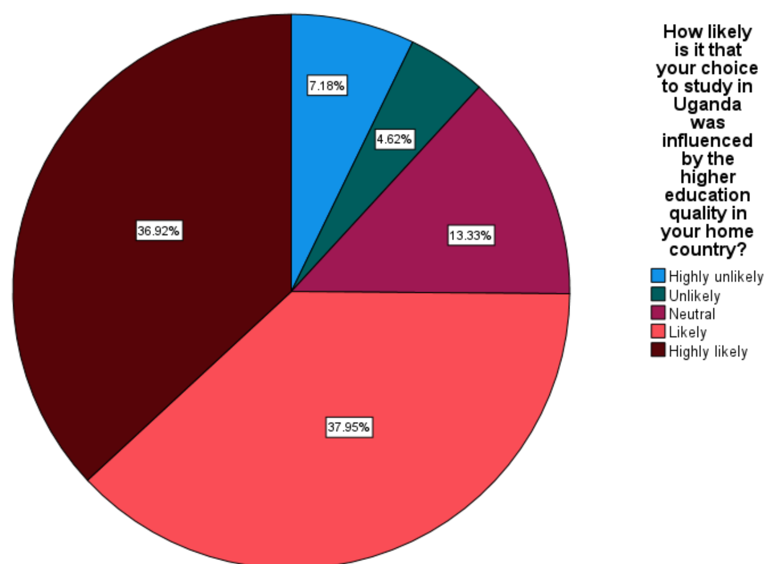


Figure 6.2 indicates that about 75% (sum of the 'likely' and 'highly likely' categories) of the respondents were influenced by the quality of the HE system in the home country to become mobile. Conversely, about 12% of the respondents indicated that the home HE system was unlikely to influence their mobility out of their home country. Considering these percentages, the quality of HE in one's own country clearly influences ISM trends in the home countries for the international students considered in this study.

This scenario can be better understood based on the explanation offered by the informant from the international students office at MU, in his comment about the decreasing number of international students in Uganda. He declared:

> …. Uganda used to admit many international students from Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia, and South Sudan countries which faced instabilities at the time. With peace prevailing in these countries, the number of international students from these countries has reduced. After the war, these countries built their education systems to attain the desirable quality for the citizens. The reduction in the number of international students in Uganda is not necessarily indicative of the problems with Uganda's education system but rather an indicator of the growth of regional educational systems…. (Interview with official from the international students officer at Makerere University, November 15th, 2022).

This finding implies that outbound mobility in the countries considered in this study can be due to problems associated with the education system in a given country. Thus, issues that threaten the quality of the HE system in a given country encourage outbound mobility. The status of Uganda as a host country for a sizeable number of international students in the East African region is not inherent, but is likely to change somewhat as the neighboring countries develop more robust education systems. Therefore, as war and insecurities in Uganda's neighboring countries reduce, investment in education increase, and this reduces the outbound ISM from the countries concerned.

VI.1.1. Tuition policies and higher education costs in the sending countries

According to Yang and Wang (2016), tuition policies and costs are essential factors in analyzing the quality of a country's HE system. Tuition policies influence the tuition amount that HE students are required to pay, which is just one of the many costs that they encounter (Amutuhaire, 2022a). Therefore, when a national HE tuition policy dictates high tuition fees, students search for cheaper options beyond their home country's borders, very often becoming internationally mobile (Chemsripong, 2019; Herrmann, 2013). Thus, tuition fee differentials within a region constitute an incentive for mobility. For example, according to Nuwagaba (2013), HE in Rwanda is costly and unaffordable to many Rwandans, which certainly explains why some of those students choose to study in Uganda. International students in this study agreed that tuition and other educational costs in their home countries are very high, thus influencing their outbound mobility decisions.

Both qualitative and quantitative findings in this study agree on this matter. For example, the HE officer at Uganda's NCHE declared that tuition and other educational costs are drivers of mobility in East Africa:

> Higher education costs in Uganda have been increasing over the years, but they are not a true reflection of what it takes to produce a graduate. Besides, such costs are comparatively lower than those in the neighboring countries. Students from neighboring countries come here to exploit the lower education costs. (Interview with NCHE official, December 15th, 2022)

These findings align with Wakeling and Jefferies' (2013) conclusions that tuition fees affect student mobility in the UK and Ireland. They argue that lower tuition fees in home institutions discourage students from being mobile, and that they consider becoming mobile when cheaper HE services exist beyond a country's borders. Since universities in Uganda are cheaper HE providers compared to those in other East African countries (Itaaga et al., 2013), Uganda experiences mainly inbound ISM. The East African case is also observed in North Africa and Southern Africa (section IV.1), where Morocco receives many students from Gabon, Mali, Ivory Coast, Guinea, and Senegal (Sanga & Mackie, 2022), while South Africa attracts students from the SADC region (Ratshilaya, 2021). The ICEF Monitor (2023) attributes the student flows into Morocco partly to the fact that public universities in that country do not charge tuition fees for domestic or international students, while the student flows into South Africa result from the country's low tuition costs (Mudhovozi, 2012). This should, however, be interpreted in the light of other prevailing circumstances, since HE fees alone cannot exhaustively explain ISM trends in a country or a region (Wakeling & Jefferies, 2013).

As a step towards establishing the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA), there have been efforts to harmonize the tuition fees charged by universities in the region since 2014 (Kigotho, 2014). International students (including those from within the region) pay between 20% and 30% higher fees than domestic students. With the harmonization, students from the East African member states are regarded as domestic students, with the intention of addressing social justice expectations as suggested by Critical Social Theory (CST). However, the Higher Education Officer at Uganda's NCHE explained that "even when there have been efforts to harmonize the tuition fees in East Africa, this has remained on paper and has not been implemented." (Interview with NCHE official, December 15th, 2022). Therefore, tuition fee differentials continue to shape ISM trends in East Africa.

All universities in East Africa set their tuition fees considering existing market forces, and this has resulted in disparities regarding fee structures. University tuition fees are sometimes set at unaffordable rates for many students (Amutuhaire, 2022a), and the fees are even higher for international students. This limits participation in ISM to only those who can pay the exorbitant fees. In the light of the tenets of CST, internationalization strategies should be ethical and equitable, for example, tuition fees should encourage the participation of students from less affluent backgrounds. However, even with regional integration, universities in Uganda still offer their education services more cheaply than others (Buluma et al., 2020; Kigotho, 2014). At the same time, the cost of living – which adds to a student's total expenses – is cheaper in Uganda compared to the regional sending countries (Hermann, 2013). These factors collectively increase Uganda's inbound student flow. Even so, it is not entirely true that lower tuition fees alone entice all international students.

The foregoing discussion highlights high tuition fees as an issue that influence patterns of inequality, exclusion, and the profit-making dimension of ISM, which rarely receive recognition in research studies. Most studies focus on international education's social and psychological benefits (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015). The burgeoning industry of international education opportunities reflects an aspect of global inequality and the struggle for hegemony that is rarely considered as pursued in this study. The present study submits that the global South requires better quality HE – that is ethical and equitable (as opposed to an increase in quantity) – in order to achieve development goals.

VI.1.2. Quality of teaching in higher education institutions in the sending countries

The quality of HE in a country is influenced by the quality of teaching in HEIs (Cadena et al., 2018). The teaching methods, availability of resources for teaching, methods of assessment, and the nature of the curriculum all influence the quality of teaching (Brainard, 2021). However, the quality of teaching in Africa's HEs has been ranked poor, since teachers often lack the desirable teaching skills (Asamoah & Mackin, 2015). They rarely update their approach or practices to cope with the demands of changing times (UNESCO - IICBA, 2007). At the same time, the number of PhD graduates in East Africa is reportedly low (Corey, 2019; Kasozi, 2019; Kwizera, 2013; Niragire & Nshimyiryo, 2017), resulting in a low number of qualified university teachers, thus again adversely affecting the quality of university teaching. Such factors affect both the overall

quality of the HE system in a country (Van Bouwel & Veugelers, 2013), and ISM trends (De Angelis et al., 2017). As shown in Table 6.1 (Item 1b), international students in this study suggested that the quality of teaching in their home countries is low. This points to the likelihood that teachers in these countries experience challenges in managing students' learning needs.

According to Alton-Lee (2003), the quality of teaching can be improved if, as a process, it focuses on student achievements and facilitates high standards of student outcomes for all diverse groups. In such a process, the curriculum goals and resources, including usage of Information and Communications Technologies, task design, teaching, and school practices, should be effectively aligned (OECD, 2014). Students often fail to achieve their objectives when such attributes are missing in an institution. In turn, an institution characterized by low-quality teaching will not attract international students. Therefore, searching for better quality teaching in HEIs may increase intra-African mobility since international education beyond the continent's borders is more expensive and mainly affordable to a few students, especially those from the high social class.

According to the interviewees in this study, the teaching in Burundi was said to be of low quality, which may explain why students from that country study in Uganda. Consider the following statement from the President of the National Commission for HE in Burundi. He stated that:

> The quality of teaching at the University of Burundi was once high, but it reduced when the Structural Adjustment Policies were introduced in the 1980s. The situation worsened when the education system expanded, and Burundi's demand for university education increased, leading to massification. Most professors have not appreciated the technology-driven pedagogy, yet this is the way to go…. (Interview with official from National Commission for HE in Burundi, December 1st, 2022).

Regarding the phenomenon of massification of HE, Mohamedbhai (2014) explains that interventions to improve access to the primary and secondary levels of education in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1980s increased the number of students qualifying for HE. However, the number of HEIs is still low, and most of them were designed to serve lower student numbers. Although the number of HEIs has increased since the 1980s, it is not yet commensurate with the continent's population and demands for HE.

According to Zereza (2021), Africa's share of the world's 18,772 HEIs is only 8.9%, compared to 37% for Asia, 21.9% for Europe, 20.4% for North America, and 12% for Latin America and the

Caribbean. Considering that the number of students seeking to access HE exceeds the institutional capacity in Africa, public institutions started enrolling students beyond their capacity (Mubai, 2021). However, all this happened when the Structural Adjustment Policies – that discouraged investment in HE – were being implemented in many African countries (Schattock, 2010). This resulted in an inefficient HE sector characterized by an inadequate supply of educational resources and infrastructure, which in turn, reduced the quality of teaching (Mohamedbhai, 2014), as explained in the response above by the Burundi official. While this was the case in most parts of Africa, countries were affected differently, depending on historical, economic, and political factors. Thus, this study holds that searching for better quality teaching embedded in the broader historical and social-cultural inequalities can explain the increasing ISM trends in East Africa. Yet, past studies have not interrogated such an issue.

VI.1.3. Availability of academic programs of choice in the sending countries

Different authors (Courtois, 2018; Kritz & Douglas, 2018; Van Bouwel & Veugelers, 2013) have, over time, explained that ISM results from limited educational opportunities in the home country, which consequently forces students to search for such opportunities in foreign countries. The present study, however, contradicts this claim. Most respondents indicated that the failure to obtain admission to their desired study program (Table 6.1, item 1c) was not a contributing cause to their mobility. This suggests that outbound mobility in such countries is influenced by factors other than the absence of study opportunities in the home country. However, this finding needs to be contextualized for some countries, in particular, Belgium formerly colonized Rwanda and Burundi, while France colonized the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The two colonial powers were indisposed to establishing HEIs in their colonies (Gareth, 2010). This factor, combined with the political instability in those countries (section I.2), limited the development of their HE systems, in terms of the number of institutions, their quality, and capacity – which in turn, increased outbound student mobility. Therefore, the conditions for mobility as predicted by the push and pull factors model cannot sufficiently explain ISM in East Africa, since such a model considers only the observed trends without unearthing the underlying contextual issues. For example, having mobile students in Uganda does not necessarily imply that there are fewer study places in the sending countries. Indeed, the availability of study places is just one factor that interacts with various others to bring about the observed ISM trends.

Courtois (2018) asserts that ISM programs are instrumental for *capacity-building* in developing countries where education provision is not commensurate with demand. This view depicts the situation in Africa, but marginalizes the vital role that can be played by the initiatives already in place. While African HEIs have many areas that should be improved, their current contribution towards the continent's development goes beyond their incompetence. An assessment that emphasizes a lack of educational infrastructure and staff, for instance, typically overlooks the existing capacity of these institutions to equip their citizens to benefit, and fit in with their societies (Adebisi, 2016).

Emphasizing the inadequacies may further entrench Africa's dependency on the global North, since the emphasis has always been put on charity and aid to Africa, with the perception that for Africa to develop, it must rely on the outside world (Badawi, 2017). However, it is necessary to go beyond the usual labels of dilapidated institutions and common stereotypes about Africa's HE, and bring new conceptualizations into perspective. In the first instance, HEIs in Africa have developed to different extents, such that a fair generalization may not be possible. Various African countries do have quality institutions in terms of infrastructure and resources. Consider the high quality lecture hall block at KIU and the library block at MU in the photos shown below.

KIU Lecture block. **MU Library.**
Source: Field photos.

Therefore, in line with the views of critical internationalization scholars (Buckner & Stein, 2020; Suspitsyna, 2015; Vavrus & Pekol, 2015), African institutions should develop their institutions such that the flow of students within the region is informed by cooperation rather than competition. Initiatives promoting knowledge and student exchanges within Africa, such as the African Centers of Excellence in Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania, and the Inter-University Council for East Africa (Sehoole & Lee, 2021) among other initiatives, need to be appreciated. In

other words, there is some capacity in East Africa and generally on the whole of the African continent that can be developed further for the betterment of the continent.

VI.1.4. Opportunities to improve English Language competences in the sending countries

The cumulative percentage value (54.4%) on item 1d in Table 6.1 indicates that most of the respondents in this study agreed that their home institutions provide desirable opportunities to learn English. At the same time, 31.3% cumulatively agreed that their home institutions don't provide chances to improve English language competencies. This finding indicates that the search for study opportunities in English Language was no motivation for these students' involvement in mobility. This is understandable since the majority of respondents are from English-speaking countries (Kenya; 49.6% and Tanzania; 13.8; Table 5.2). Students from francophone countries such as Burundi and the DRC were marginally represented in the sample. However, as explained by Llanes et al. (2016), most international students choose studying in countries that facilitate them to improve their English Language competences.

However, some interview responses indicated that searching for opportunities to improve English Language competencies motivated them to become internationally mobile. For example, a Rwandan international student at KIU explained his desire to improve his English proficiency:

> The main reason for me to come here [Uganda] for studies was to become more fluent in English, and I am achieving it. Lectures and all other students' tasks are carried out in English, which has helped me to improve my English speaking capabilities…. (Interview with a Rwandan national studying at KIU, November 14th, 2022).

These findings show that some international students in the study sample were motivated by the search for "linguistic capital" (O'Regan, 2022, p. 2), to enable them to make use of global economic opportunities. Such findings point to the geopolitical issues in ISM that have not attracted much attention in research (Buckner & Stein, 2020). While a language familiar to the student and the teacher is essential for teaching success, there is a likely risk of homogenization (Jones & de Wit, 2021) and 'death' of other languages and cultures due to unregulated English Language promotion (Alfarhan, 2016). This study points to the economic inequalities and hegemony associated with the prevalence of the English Language. More than 20 of 54 African countries are English-speaking (Ellen, 2023) at the expense of their native languages. However, the dominance of the English language promotes neo-colonial and neoliberal practices and presents sociolinguistic

problems that limit the progress of nations, students, and citizens (Ntombela, 2023). In line with view, Hall (1997) explains that global political and economic inequalities have produced a privileged English identity and a marginalized identity for the rest of the world. To him, "English identity is strongly centered" (p. 174), such that its usage has been overemphasized, to the detriment of other languages.

In line with the representational dimension of internationalization (Fig 2.1), nations that do not offer academic programs in the English language are more likely to serve as senders, rather than receivers of international students. This does not only limit the benefits of mobility, but also intensifies the likely risks. However, for Africa and other formerly colonized regions, the issue of colonial linkages must be factored in. Education in the colonies was administered in the language of the colonizer, which has persisted. The field of internationalization is inherently tilted, by favoring those countries that inherited English from the colonizers. This inequality remains obscured by the benefits of ISM, and the present study advances that such inequalities should be addressed. Unsurprisingly, Kenya and Uganda – the predominantly English-speaking countries in East Africa – are the major destinations for international students in this region (ICEF Monitors, 2017).

VI.1.5. Presence of reputable universities in the sending countries

In the present study, it was found that the reputation of a university influences ISM. University reputation, mainly expressed in global rankings, is a crucial feature of today's HE systems, as was reported for universities in South Africa (ICEF Monitor, 2023) and Egypt (Marei, 2021). University rankings are based on standardized measures to track 'non-subjective' improvements in quality over time, and hence express the level of institutional performance (Berman & Hirschman, 2018). Clearly, changes in a university's ranking would affect the recruitment of international students (Soysal et al., 2022). International students in this study reported the absence of reputable universities in their home countries (Apeendix I, item 1e), and this was found to encourage outbound mobility.

According to Zereza (2021), only 60 African universities appeared among the 1,500 best universities listed on the Times Higher Education rankings in 2021. The top-rated African universities are from Egypt (21), South Africa (10), Algeria (8), Nigeria (6), Morocco and Tunisia, with five each. The only East African countries represented were Uganda and Kenya, which had

one highly-ranked university each. According to Vavrus and Pekol (2015), a highly-ranked university is a more desirable destination for mobile students. Therefore, Uganda, which hosts one of East Africa's highly ranked universities, receives more international students than Rwanda and Burundi, whose universities are not highly ranked, hence being the region's international student-sending countries.

However, Soysal et al. (2022) explain that the influence of university rankings on the recruitment of international students cannot be explained merely on the basis of an institution's yearly updated ranking; it is the university's entire reputation that is important, which has been socially mediated and accumulated through time. Thus, as explained in chapter one and two of this dissertation, the issues surrounding ISM in East Africa are related to the history of HE in East Africa. MU and Nairobi University, which happen to be the best universities in the region based on the rating by the Times Higher Education (2022), are among the oldest universities in the region. They have accumulated a reputation over time, which influences their capacity to enroll international students. Countries like Rwanda and Burundi have a shorter history of HE than Uganda, Kenya, or Tanzania. This is due to the different colonizers to whom the emergence of HE in this region is attributed. The British, who colonized Uganda and Kenya, established universities there, as opposed to Belgium (colonizer of Rwanda and Burundi), which preferred to send Africans abroad for educational purposes (section I.2). Indeed, this explains why the latter two countries are the primary sources of international students, rather than receivers.

However, it is essential to interrupt the colonial narrative so that it does not continue influencing perspectives on HE, long after colonizers have left the continent. First of all, it is essential to understand how prestigious institutions came to acquire such a status. The financial and ideological factors that influence the prestige and financial resources of such institutions should be questioned and restructured, where possible (Oleksiyenko & Sa, 2010). This will enable African institutions to develop creative pathways for their own quality HE systems, irrespective of colonial legacies. Furthermore, according to Schleicher (2015), university rankings are defective since they are "derived not from outcomes, nor even outputs – but from idiosyncratic inputs and reputation surveys" (p. 8). With similar views, Brankovic (2021) explains that ranks are only consequential and do not reflect the quality of any university, whether as a place of work or study. Therefore, relying on rankings in seeking to improve the quality of HEIs may be misleading. Nevertheless,

this should not discourage African HEIs in their search for quality improvement. They must continue doing so, but such improvements should not necessarily be informed by the desire to improve rankings alone. At the same time, ISM practices within HEIs should be structured to benefit from quality improvements, and also to incentivize further quality improvement.

From the perspective of the quality of HE in Rwanda, Andersson and Marttila (2016) refer to a mismatch between graduate skills and those required by Rwanda's energy sector. This mismatch has been attributed to low standards of education, leading to a lack of qualified staff in the country (Niragire & Nshimyiryo, 2017). Indeed, the skills gap challenge affects many African countries, and contributes to the continent's unemployment rates (Nthabiseng, 2016). While Africa's unemployment rate among the youth is not the highest globally, it still needs to be addressed. In 2020, the total youth unemployment level in Africa was 10.6% compared to 13.8% for global youth unemployment (ILO, 2021). However, this rate ignores the fact that many of those regarded as being employed are underemployed, while others are in the low-paying jobs of the informal sector (Donkor, 2021). Thus, comparing the African employment situation with the rest of the world – especially more advanced economies – conceals the broader picture. Moreover, the African youth unemployment rate does not reveal existing country or regional disparities. With a projection that 49% of the world's youth will be in Africa by 2050 (Awad, 2020), this unemployment rate needs to be addressed before it escalates to uncontrollable levels.

The above discussion shows that the quality of HE in the selected East African countries is not optimal. From the perspective of student mobility, both sending and receiving countries in East Africa need to address institutional reputation. The institutions and the level of education that they provide need to be relevant to the local context. This entails decolonizing the curriculum so that it is tailored to solving local needs (Mheta et al., 2018). However, that is not the focus of current trends in internationalization of HE and the curriculum, which are informed by hegemonic, neoliberal, and capitalist tendencies; this, in turn, has propagated the commercialization of HE systems (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2021a). Marketization practices are clearly visible in KIU – it is a young private university, yet it enrolls more international students than other universities in Uganda. This has been possible due to its aggressive marketing strategies (ICEF Monitor, 2017). However, as Hooks (1994) explains, subjecting education to market forces jeopardizes its role in

highlighting the importance of human freedom and facilitating human development and transformation.

VI.1.6. Attractiveness of universities in the sending countries

As explored in this study, students' choices are influenced by university *attractiveness* (Columbu, et al., 2021). Moreira and Gomes (2019) agree that university infrastructure, access to resources, accreditation, cost, and employability contribute to university attractiveness and determine how one chooses a university for study. With this notion of attractiveness in mind, international students in this study reported that universities in their home countries are unattractive. These findings confirm Chao et al.'s (2017) assertion that students locate what they cannot find at home through mobility. However, from the point of the view of universities, it is more likely that, in the face of competition, they will invest in the physical attractiveness of the university, rather than in the quality of education (Hart & Rodgers, 2023). Therefore, while internationalization and student mobility can contribute to institutional development through competition (Amutuhaire, 2020), there is also a likelihood that competition may adversely affect the quality of education offered.

Quality HE is what Africa needs, yet this has sometimes been sacrificed because of unhealthy competition for students and resources. In an attempt to maintain a good public image, KIU once ignored doctoral examination procedures. Consequently, questionable Ph.D. qualifications were awarded to some candidates, but fortunately, those awards were rejected by Uganda's NCHE (Badagawa, 2013). Therefore, while the respondents in this study indicated the absence of attractive institutions in their home countries, it should not be inferred that Uganda has necessarily maximized the value of, or hosts the best institutions. Indeed, student mobility tends to be in response to market forces, including branding and advertisement strategies, rather than quality education (Bista et al., 2018).

With the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the commercialization of education, universities find it challenging to effectively pursue their mission as educational institutions, but instead they are seen as profit-making institutions. Indeed, as Abbas (2014) claims, the survival of universities depends on how they 'sell' their names. In the same way, university branding is vital for student mobility (Diez, 2014). A university that does not brand itself properly will likely face decreased revenues, internal misalignment, poor performance, and misaligned

priorities (Mersino, 2013). In the light of these views, student mobility in the global South is being regulated by market competition for international students, which contradicts the tenets of CST. Indeed, this marketization tendency needs to be reviewed, to ensure that ISM contributes to desirable outcomes.

VI.1.7. Higher education policies in the sending countries

This study also examined the influence of education policies on student mobility (Appendix 1, item 1i). Regardless of the domain, policies should be implemented to improve service delivery, while reducing inequalities and discrimination against disadvantaged groups (Mzangwa & Dede, 2019). Education is a fundamental human right and an instrument for achieving social justice (Uyanga & Emana, 2016). HE policies specify how institutions are organized, funded, and run, and this may differ from one country to another; nevertheless, such policies should be fair, justifiable, and inclusive. However, the formulation and implementation of HE policies tend to be context-dependent (Sørensen & Paulsson, 2019), which influences their effectiveness.

The quantitative findings in this study suggest that HE policies in international students' home countries are not predictors of mobility (Appendix I, item 1i). It should be noted that the policy environment was included as a test item in this study in terms of whether it enhances the quality of HE in students' home countries, rather than whether or not it influences outward mobility. Nevertheless, some of the interviewees in this study clarified the influence of HE policies on mobility. For example, the former head of the Cooperation and Internationalization Unit at the University of Burundi explains how the policy environment currently influences ISM within the country. He declared:

> Many of the students from Burundi who studied in Europe, especially France or Belgium, never returned, leading to brain drain. This has limited the country's human resource capacity. With the current growth in mobility partnerships and cooperation agreements between Burundi and African countries, we will likely reduce the brain drain risk. We now encourage students to study within the African continent because many countries on the African continent now can offer quality education. Further, it is easier for a student to easily adapt to the African environment than when one goes beyond the continent. Our students used to take a long time to adapt, for example, to the way of life and weather in Europe, which affected their studies. (Interview with the former head of the Cooperation and Internationalization Unit at the University of Burundi, December 2nd, 2022).

While the informant raises many issues, he points to proximity between countries as one of the factors that influences ISM, the same way as highlighted by Rodríguez et al. (2011). However, as in the case of Ghana (section III.1), proximity to home interacts with many other factors to inform ISM trends in a region or a country (Kamran et al., 2019).

The same informant also refers to the interventions to mitigate the brain drain challenge which ultimately redirected the mobility pattern towards intra-African mobility, more so than what it had been in the past. Thus, having a sizeable number of international students from Burundi studying in Uganda can be related to such developments. Indeed, as advanced by Jungblut and Masseen (2017), HEIs, legal frameworks, regulations, HE policies, or funding models are central to what HE systems can achieve, and how it is achieved.

Contrary to this study's findings that HE policies in the sending countries are not predictors of mobility, past researchers (Ferencz, 2012; Ilieva, 2019; Popa & Knezevic, 2018), reported that unfavorable HE policies in a country encourage outbound student mobility. For example, the absence of supportive HE policies that are strategic about human capital development for all citizens, irrespective of their background, increases outbound mobility. In particular, policies that control university student admission procedures can influence their mobility out of a county. This was expressed in an interview with a Nigerian international student at KIU. The student was frustrated by the admission process at home, which motivated him to seek educational opportunities in Uganda. He confessed as follows:

> I sat for the National Eligibility Entrance Exam intending to join Ahmadu Bello, University Zaria [in Nigeria]. The results were delayed, and my father, who had contacts with KIU, processed my admission. That is how I ended up studying here. (Interview with a Nigerian international student at KIU, November 13th, 2022).

Further, the type of mobility a country engages in influences ISM patterns (Colucci et al., 2014). For example, Rwanda has educational policies that encourage students to study in foreign countries by offering funding scholarships to do so (Times Reporter, 2013). A similar case is witnessed in Ghana, where many Ghanaian students are offered opportunities to study in Europe, China and Japan (ICEF Monitor, 2020). This is in contrast to the strategies held by Kenya (Waruru, 2019) and Uganda (Hermann, 2013), which encourage inbound student mobility. Clearly, mobility patterns for both inbound and outbound ISM in the global South are informed by prevailing

national policies, amongst other incentives. At the same time, such patterns show the significant role played by educational scholarships to encourage student mobility (Knight & Woldegiorigis, 2017). Is it contradictory to develop more scholarship programs that facilitate exchanges and cooperation within East Africa (intra-African ISM), while also complementing existing programs that promote mainly South–North ISM? Indeed, East Africa can benefit more from intra-African student mobility programs than those encouraging outbound mobility.

Kromydas (2017) explains that labor-market-driven policies have infiltrated HE, leading to an ever-increasing competition. Consequently, HE has become a marketplace, diverting from its initial purpose of providing an environment for human growth (Santamaría, 2020). HE has become more of a costly tool for economic advancement. Even though national and institutional regulations are geared toward openness, only a few can afford the cost of a university education. Instead, policymakers should consider the intrinsic value of HE and its usefulness in advancing the development of inclusive education systems, and just and informed societies. Therefore, irrespective of the type of mobility a nation may promote, it should not hamper the development of quality institutions within that country. Even in cases where outbound mobility is encouraged, HE systems should be developed to provide better education to home students who do not participate in mobility programs. In effect, inbound international students could also then be attracted, thus leading to balanced student flows. This is essential for the achievement of socially just patterns of internationalization.

Furthermore, HE policies are formulated in the context of broader national policies, such as immigration laws and university admission policies. Therefore, a combination of HE policies and repressive national policies may discourage mobility (Chankseliani, 2016). Similarly, since HE policies need to be in tandem with prevailing national laws at the time, a lack of political will can become an obstacle to mobility. The formal governance relationship between state authorities and HE, and how such a relationship is perceived, interpreted, translated, operationalized, and used inside HEIs influences their quality (Fumasoli et al., 2014). Nevertheless, institutional autonomy remains essential for HEIs (Jürgen, et al., 2013). Thus, the ways in which authority is formally distributed in HE systems, and how institutional autonomy is interpreted and used in practice within institutions, are relevant to our understanding of change dynamics in HE (Jungblut &

Maassen, 2017). This has far-reaching impacts on ISM (Chankseliani, 2016); however, these effects are not pronounced, based on the findings (Table 6.1, item 1i) in this study.

In addition to the preceding issues, the president of the National Commission for Higher Education in Burundi further declared that:

> The University of Burundi is headed by the Vice Chancellor appointed by the sitting head of state. This compromises the quality of decisions the vice chancellor can make. In most cases, the intention not to conflict with the appointing authority will always prevail…. (Interview with official from National Commission for HE in Burundi, December 1st, 2022).

This view is an indicator that institutional autonomy in Burundi is limited. Institutional autonomy has been a subject of research for some time, and has been conceptualized in various ways, such as being linked to academic freedom, self-governance, and institutional independence (Le, 2022). Central to the different conceptualizations is the principle that freedom of thought is a non-negotiable condition that is necessary to uphold a university's mission in providing scientific knowledge to society (Neave, 2012). Therefore, institutional autonomy relates to self-governance: the power of an institution to govern all matters concerning admission, curriculum, assessment, recruitment, finance, and research, without control or influence from the government (Tight, 1992).

While the above response refers to the situation in Burundi, other East African countries have experienced challenges related to institutional autonomy. For instance, in 2020, the Kenyan government, through its Cabinet Secretary for Education, attempted to control university affairs at the University of Nairobi (Munene, 2020). In this incident, the Cabinet Secretary for Education dissolved the University Council and refused to appoint a new vice-chancellor, resulting in the college operating without a leader for over two months, further explains Munene (2020). To improve institutional autonomy, Moshtari and Safarpour (2023) advise that state systems should avoid centralism, and grant autonomy to universities, which should help to establish and facilitate international connections. On a related note, Turcan and Gulieva (2016) indicate that internationalization and its sustainability depend on the structure and exercise of autonomy in university settings – that is, the process cannot be successful unless there are changes in current levels of autonomy. Therefore, ISM trends seen in Burundi and the wider East African region are shaped by the state of institutional autonomy within these countries, among other issues.

Informants in this study reported the absence of explicit internationalization policies as an issue that characterizes their institutions, and this seems to cut across all East African countries (Moshtari & Safarpour, 2023). In particular, the informant from the National Commission for Higher Education in Burundi confirmed that the country lacks an internationalization policy. At the institutional level, even the University of Burundi – with which he is associated – does not have such a policy, nor does it have any associated strategic plans. The absence of an internationalization policy has limited not only the extent of the IHE in the country, but also the benefits it could bring, as further explained by the president. According to him, these are managerial issues that have made the university less effective, hence acting as drivers for outbound student mobility. With an internationalization policy in place, the coordination of mobility processes (for example) would become more organized (Lomer, 2018). This shows that student mobility in East Africa occurs as an unplanned activity, and mainly by chance (Amutuhaire, 2023).

VI.1.8. Soft skills development among students in the sending countries

This study also examined the extent to which universities promote soft skills among their learners (Appendix 1, item 1j). So-called 'soft' skills include critical thinking skills, adaptability, creativity, networking, and effective communication skills (Chavan, 2018). Besides technical skills (the so-called 'hard' skills), soft skills are less tangible, yet are critical in order to enhance one's study and career capabilities (Gray, 2016). Employers consider soft skills necessary in their employees, yet many HEIs do not pay attention to imparting such skills (Ejiwale, 2014). Contrary to the expectations of employers, HE systems in some African countries provide mainly passive learning environments that encourage memorization rather than creativity (Kigotho, 2022). That is why Kamanga (2020) pointed out that the education system in Burundi often prioritizes traditional teaching methods that encourage rote learning and memorization while limiting learners' creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving capabilities. This scenario notwithstanding, graduates should be equipped with soft skills, especially during their student life before joining the labor force, to enable them to transition smoothly. On this topic, respondents in this study indicated that soft skills development in the home country institutions is satisfactory, to the extent that this factor is not a predictor of ISM in the chosen East African countries.

Further, Handayani and Wienanda (2020) explain that soft skills development occurs over time and they develop better when individuals study or stay abroad for a period of time. Therefore, in

terms of ISM, international students are more positioned to hone their soft skills in the host institution, compared to staying in their home countries, even if the home institutions themselves are in a position to inculcate such skills. According to the respondents in this study, the quality of HE regarding soft skills development in their home country is satisfactory. However, in line with the findings of Handayani and Wienanda (2020), who assessed the contributions of ISM programs on soft skills development among students and alumni of a Vocational College in Indonesia and concluded that ISM is essential for the development of soft skills, the situation depicted in this study is likely to change over time, such that the search for improvement of soft skills among students becomes a driver of ISM.

The above finding contradicts the statement that HEIs are often blamed for not inculcating employable skills in graduates before they join the world of work (Assan & Nalutaya, 2018). Tembasi (2022) also claims that most universities do not offer soft skills training, or do not give these skills the weight they deserve. Citing an example in Rwanda, Tembasi (2022) explains that the university curriculum ignores soft skills while prioritizing hard skills, and cross-cutting issues such as gender, entrepreneurship, values, and citizen education. Such an issue must be considered if the quality of HE in this region is to be improved. Nevertheless, in assessing the role of soft skills in informing ISM, one must consider that such analysis tends to reflect more on local economic conditions than on university quality (De Angelis et al., 2017).

According to Assan and Nalutaya (2018), the unemployment and underemployment situations in Africa are due partly to HE curricula and teaching programs that do not give the desired space to inculcating soft skills. This suggests that addressing the unemployment situation should start with considering how to improve the acquisition of soft skills by students before graduation. As reported by Handayani and Wienanda (2020), communication and interpersonal skills – which are examples of soft skills – tend to develop to acceptable levels during mobility programs. Similarly, conflict resolution skills are better enhanced when students have been exposed to an international environment. Students need to interact with people who are different from themselves during their international study programs, thus enabling them to adapt to these new encounters (Hogan & Warrenfeltz, 2003).

Universities need qualified academic staff to impart the desired competencies to students before graduation. In spite of this clear need, some countries in East Africa are yet to expand their number

of academic staff to desired levels. Consider the response from the informant from the National Commission for HE in Burundi:

> There is only one doctoral school in this country, which started in 2019. It has not produced the desirable number of doctorates to teach at university. We, therefore, do not have enough people qualified to teach at the university level. The few available ones were trained mainly in Europe, and since the constitutional crisis in 2015, we have not had doctorates through this pathway. Our doctoral school has adopted a new model to increase the number of doctorates in the country. This model involves collaboration with foreign partners in supervising doctoral candidates, accessing resources in the resource-rich universities and local technological development to allow online education... (Interview with official from National Commission for HE in Burundi, December 1st, 2022).

This submission indicates that the quality of HE in Burundi needs to be improved through providing more suitably qualified human resources. This challenge could be addressed through internationalization strategies founded on exchange rather than competition. Countries with many doctoral graduates need to share their human resources with other countries, in order to promote regional human resource capacity development. However, the current internationalization approach in East Africa is associated with nationalism – in which national interests and positions seem to outweigh global interconnectivity (Wandia, 2008). The most recent case of nationalism is highlighted by Nakkazi (2019), who argues that nationalistic politics have limited student exchanges between Uganda and Rwanda. Further, de Wit and Jones (2017) warn that such tendencies weaken internationalization efforts and disconnect the local from the global. In the same way, Knight and de Wit (2018) assert that nationalism and inward-looking policies are a threat to present and future challenges of internationalization of HE, and should be avoided.

VI.1.9. Availability of research opportunities in the sending countries

International student respondents in the study evaluated opportunities to do research in universities in their home countries (Appendix 1, item 1k). Research is one of the primary roles of universities; it is precisely this role that differentiates universities from other HEIs. However, UNESCO (2021) reports low levels of investment in research on the African continent. Apart from limiting research output regarding knowledge production, there is also a limited number of scholarly publications from this part of the world. In situations like this, students – especially postgraduate research students – benefit significantly from international mobility programs. This is because international postgraduate research students are able to gain access to invaluable resources, contacts with global

experts, and unique insights that significantly enhance their research opportunities and employment prospects (Richardson, 2015). Indeed, the search for research opportunities may explain the observed student increasing ISM trends in East Africa. Commenting about the research and publication situation in Burundi, the informant from the National Commission for HE declared that:

> The available professors in Burundi have all been trained abroad, with some of them not being exposed to publication. Such professors always oppose the requirement to publish. (Interview with official from National Commission for HE in Burundi, December 1st, 2022).

According to De Angelis et al. (2017), students usually flow towards institutions that offer more research opportunities. Therefore, a lack of opportunities to conduct research increases outbound student mobility (Kritz, 2016). This study's findings supports those views, in that respondents reported limited research opportunities in their home universities. In other words, limited research opportunities in a country tend to incentivize outbound study mobility.

The extent of research universities in Africa is yet to attain the levels witnessed in the global North, yet such universities are more desirable in emerging economies than anywhere else (Altbach, 2013). The same author argues that research universities result in differentiated and compelling academic systems, and enable countries to join the global knowledge society and compete in sophisticated knowledge economies. In particular, the desire to improve service quality and promote development should be an incentive for the development of more research institutions in Africa, instead of seeking to join the 'European league.'

Besides increasing research activities particularly in East Africa and Africa as a whole, Vessuri (2008) suggests that the HE sector needs to reposition itself with regard to how research is conducted. The tendency of university researchers to be dismissive of values in society other than the search for knowledge needs to be revisited, so that they will become more responsive to social issues. In the context of this study, and while advocating for the growth of research and research universities in the global South, such a tendency needs to be corrected. It should be the role of universities to produce scientists as well as socially responsible scientists. Therefore, intra-African ISM should be explored for this purpose while enhancing cooperation and collaboration between researchers and institutions rather than exploitation.

Further, Vessuri (2008) explains that in developing economies – such as those in East Africa – HE, science, and technology are often blamed for failing to narrow socioeconomic disparities between different social groups. On the contrary, the disparities have been widened, especially those between the knowledgeable and the ignorant. Now is the time to control the situation, so that research institutions do not follow a similar path. As de Angelis et al. (2017) argue, student mobility trends are influenced by the research capacity of the country or institution. From the base of existing research capacity and its use in solving social issues in the receiving universities in this study (in Uganda), efforts for improvement in other East African countries can be initiated.

Kenya is another country that has been rated highly regarding research capacity (Barasa & Omulando, 2018). This may explain why Kenya is among the popular destinations for international students in East Africa (ICEF Monitor, 2017). The significance of this scenario is that there are regional institutions that can offer HE services to mobile students from elsewhere in the region. This intra-African trend is essential for the development of regional capacities. It also discourages the mobility of students beyond the continent which can help to mitigate the challenges from South–North ISM.

VI.2. Conclusion

Chapter six presents and discusses the findings related to the state of HE systems in international students' home countries, in the context of this study. The analysis of qualitative and quantitative data in this study indicates that the quality of HE systems in the sending countries is yet to meet the expectations of international students.

The study reports that HE systems in international students' home countries (specifically, Rwanda and Burundi) are characterized by:

- High tuition fees and other education costs
- Universities with a low international reputation
- Universities with a small number of academic programs
- Low-quality teaching in universities
- Limited opportunities to improve English language proficiency for some students
- Limited opportunities for students to develop employable skills
- Limited research opportunities

These are the factors that drive international students out of these countries. Attributes of home country HE systems, such as the quality of university programs, the availability of programs of students' choice, HE policies, and the teaching of life skills to students, were reported to be satisfactory at home country universities. These factors therefore, do not predict outbound mobility from Rwanda and Burundi.

The chapter also reveals that the search for HE systems with desirable qualities leads to students' outbound mobility, to the extent that 75% of the respondents held that low-quality HE in their home countries instigated their participation in ISM. These findings must be interpreted in view of the sociopolitical and historical issues in these sending countries, including the legacy of colonialism. These challenges are aggravated by the limited extent to which internationalization itself has been considered in these countries, which do not have an internationalization policy at institutional or national levels.

Although East African Community member states agreed to harmonize tuition fees for international students in the region, this initiative has yet to be applied; some universities still charge East African students the same fees as other international students from beyond the region. These tuition fees are usually high, so this situation limits the participation of students from less affluent backgrounds. Thus, commercial interests continue to influence the levels of internationalization and ISM in the region.

The following chapter, chapter seven, investigates Uganda's HE system and how its attributes shape the mobility of incoming students within the East African region (second part of the first research question). The chapter considers the general quality of universities in Uganda, the management of such institutions, the teaching quality and institutional resources, and how such attributes inform ISM trends in East Africa.

CHAPTER SEVEN: INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

VII.0. Introduction

This chapter discusses the extent to which the quality of Uganda's HE system influences student in-flow from other countries (second part of the first objective). The quality of a HE system is measured by characteristics such as institutional management, research output, student services, and teaching quality (Cadena et al., 2018; Lourenço & Sá, 2019). In addition, existing studies (Bratti & Verzillo, 2019; Kosztyán et al., 2021; Lourenço et al., 2020) have shown that HE systems are characterized by the language of instruction, the ranking and reputation of universities, the quality of facilities, and the educational costs, which also influence the flows of students into and out of a given country. Indeed, the attractiveness of the HE system in the host country has a positive effect on inbound ISM trends (Lourenço et al., 2020).

Considering the above characteristics, the present study examined the quality of Uganda's HE system and its influence on inbound ISM. This chapter attempts to determine whether Uganda's HE characteristics – including management of universities, quality of teaching in universities, quality of student services in universities, links between society and universities, research in universities, and resources for universities in Uganda – influence ISM flows. This chapter presents and discusses the respondents' and informants' views on their overall satisfaction with Uganda's HE system, before addressing each institutional characteristic as listed above.

VII.1. General quality of higher education in Uganda

Based on the findings presented in Figure 7.1, the majority of international students in the sample (80.5%) expressed satisfaction with the quality of HE in the selected universities Uganda. This indicates hope for growth beyond the familiar narrative of the poor status of education in Africa. Most of the available literature highlights inadequacies in Africa's HE systems – for example, low access rates for students of the relevant age and the under-representation of women, especially in the science fields (Mba, 2017) – while ignoring the self-improvement efforts in Africa's HE and the contextual factors. This study demonstrates some of the progress made by East African HEIs in managing the challenges they face, instead of continually relying on help from the global North.

However, this is not a suggestion for complacency; indeed African countries need to continue improving themselves in terms of the quality of their HE systems. In examining the extent of self-improvement to date, the study explored the quality of HE in selected universities in Uganda, based on the HE characteristics discussed in this chapter. Figure 7.1 shows the findings from the analysis of the quantitative data gathered from the questionnaire.

Figure 7.1: *Degree of international students' satisfaction with Uganda's higher education system.*

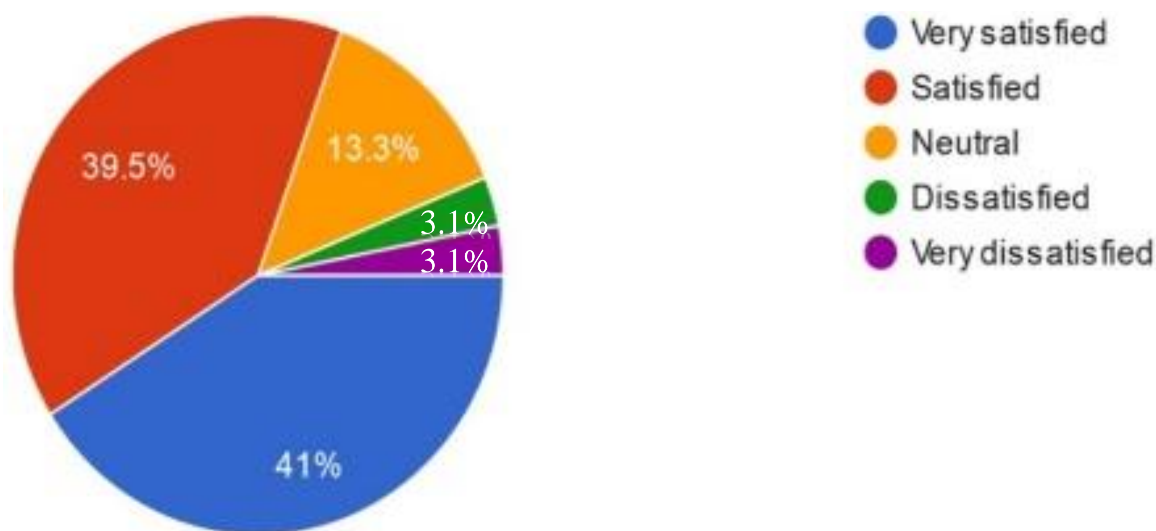


Figure 7.1 shows that 80% of the respondents were satisfied (sum of Satisfied and Very dissatisfied) with the HE system in Uganda, while only 6.2% were not satisfied (sum of Dissatisfied and Very dissatisfied). A Kenyan international student at MU expressed the reasons behind his satisfaction, in the following response:

> …it was possible for me to study in Kenya but I wanted to be part of 'the famous MU'; the oldest university in the region. My father studied here and resided in Livingstone Hall, I hope to reside in the same hall next year…. (Interview with a Kenyan national studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

This response points to Uganda's history in the provision of HE, which is clearly associated with the provision of quality HE. For example, when asked why MU is among the top recruiters of international students in East Africa, the International Students' Officer at MU responded, arguing that:

> Makerere University has a long history; it is the oldest university in Africa, giving it an extra advantage compared to other regional universities. Secondly, the university offers quality education. I do not know whether you have heard about the 'Harvard of Africa.' This old term was used about the quality of education in this university, and the university has continued to work towards

> maintaining that legacy. Makerere also has memoranda of understanding with several universities within and beyond Africa. Through these understandings, Makerere continues to receive foreign students on exchange programs…. (Interview with official from the international students officer at MU, November 15th, 2022).

This view agrees with Rodriguez et al.'s (2011) claim that the quality of education provided by an institution determines that institution's potential to attract international students. Thus, as indicated by their quantitative responses to the questionnaire, international students in this study were satisfied with the quality of education in Uganda, which explains their inward mobility into the country. Indeed, the effort put in by institutions in Uganda to satisfy international students' wishes has increased the country's attraction for international students.

Other factors that depend on students' own characteristics and networks also influence their decisions to study in foreign countries. In line with this, the following response was obtained during an interview with a Kenyan student at KIU:

> …my elder brother studied in Uganda; he is the one who advised me to study here. I am studying for the Diploma in Clinical Medicine, and the 'cut off' points for this program in Kenya are very high. My brother advised me that KIU would admit me on this program, which was impossible in Kenya…. (Interview with a Kenyan national studying at KIU, November 18th, 2022).

This informant's view clarifies the importance of networks in influencing ISM trends. Beech (2015) explains that student mobility proceeds and is sustained through predetermined 'pathways,' i.e., international students follow paths indicated by their social networks. These networks, together with students' previous experiences with mobility, promote the occurrence of ISM. The above testimony shows that these two brothers are in a 'network' that influenced the mobility decision of the younger one. The influence of a network on one's mobility decisions does not fit perfectly into the push and pull factors model, but may relate to class reproduction – by extension. For example, in this case, the advice exchanged between these two brothers can be seen as an attempt to ensure that they attain HE qualifications and thus maintain a higher social class. The response may also be interpreted as an attempt for the family to resist existing social stratification by transcending to a higher social class.

Either way, the issue of networks suggests that ISM trends usually follow defined streams and established social structures. Therefore, it remains difficult for nations and institutions without a

track record of admitting international students to prove themselves as being worthy of attention (Oleksiyenko & Sa, 2010). At the same time, students without ISM-relevant networks find it difficult to gain access to mobility opportunities. Thus, students with existing ISM networks seem most favored to benefit from mobility opportunities. At the same time, the design of current ISM opportunities in East Africa is structured to reproduce inequalities, since only dominant institutions and nations remain attractive destinations for students.

The same response about the two brothers raises questions about the quality of education in Uganda's private HEIs. The student implies that he was admitted to KIU with lower grades than were required in Kenya. Admitting students with lower entrance grades makes one wonder whether the intention is to broaden student access to HE, or to make profits through the admission of many high-fee-paying international students. Chao (2014) explains that ISM was initially conceived to promote cross-cultural understanding, teamwork, and friendship, but is currently driven by commercialization; it is now seen as a significant industry with profit maximization as the primary motive. This applies in the Ugandan context as education is one of the exports offered by this country (Othieno & Nampewo, 2012). The higher fees paid by international students compared to domestic students in Uganda (as is the case in most other countries) exemplify this profit motive (Mande & Nakayita, 2015), and it challenges the ethical considerations in IHE.

Wakeling and Jefferies (2013) explain that, at times, some students may be willing to pay higher tuition fees – especially if the search for quality HE is the reason for their participation in ISM. According to Wyness et al. (2017), and Van Bouwel and Veugelers (2013), higher tuition fees translate into high quality education. From this perspective, one may question the quality of HE services pursued by international students in Ugandan universities (since the costs are lower). How universities in Uganda (chapter seven) strike the delicate balance between lower charges and the provision of high quality education services is a critical issue. However, more often, tuition fees are determined in response to public intervention, and therefore may not strictly reflect the level of services provided. The administration costs for international students clearly exceed those for national students, which should influence the fees payable by such students (Hillman & Cowan, 2021). However, the topic of the influence of fees on the quality of HE services is beyond the scope of this study.

Further, universities in Uganda have been said to recruit international students aggressively (ICEF Monitor, 2017). Indeed, as explained by Chemsripong (2019), lower fees is a strategy devised by universities in Uganda to retain home students and also to attract international ones. However, such a response indicates the growth of marketization, neoliberalism, and academic capitalism tendencies that are currently shaping Africa's HE sector (Maringe & Chiramba, 2020). With these tendencies, HE has inevitably become commodified, and the number of private institutions that compete with public ones has increased. This shifts the role of education provision from the state to the private sector. For example, there are more private universities than public ones in Uganda (NCHE, 2018). While this would reduce the pressure on the government to provide HE, the profit-making intentions in both public and private institutions may also limit the equity and quality of service delivery (Johnson & Hirt, 2011). This jeopardizes the ethical intentions in the IHE.

Even in a situation where tuition fees for East African students have, in theory, been harmonized so that students from East African partner states should pay the same fees as domestic students (Kigotho, 2014), the policy has not been implemented, according to this study's informants. International students from other East African member states still pay higher tuition fees in universities in Uganda than domestic students. Therefore, disadvantaged students such as refugees, less affluent families, and people with lower socioeconomic backgrounds, are excluded from international education opportunities. Therefore, is essential to embrace a critical perspective on internationalization, while focusing on increasing inclusivity (Stein, 2019). The question becomes: Is it possible to have an internationalization experience that enhances quality, while being inclusive at the same time?

Further, the Dean of Students at KIU – whose office is charged with international student affairs – revealed that students who do not meet the admission requirements are required to attend the Higher Education Certificate Program (bridging courses) to enable them to reach the required competencies. He contends that the program is essential in order not to compromise the quality of education offered to international students by the university, since it offers them the chance to meet the minimum admission requirements for a desired degree course, while maintaining high-quality standards. He explained that:

> An access program enables students without the National Council for Higher Education entry admission requirements to gain admission into a degree program. This mostly applies to those

> international students whose home country's HE entry qualifications are not equivalent to Uganda's Advance Certificate of Education. It is a qualification program for students with some academic inefficiencies, to enable them to pursue degree programs. Such students attend the program and gain admission to the desired course on successful completion. (Interview with NCHE official, December 15th, 2022).

Regarding the Higher Education Certificate Program, the Higher Education Officer in Uganda's National Council for Higher Education explained that it is an alternative pathway to higher education:

> The Higher Education Certificate Program considers general biological and physical sciences disciplines. It is not a mechanism of allowing failures in higher education, but rather an alternative pathway. Functional educational systems in the current times must be designed to offer multiple entry routes. (Interview with NCHE official, December 15th, 2022).

The officer in charge of the international students office at Makerere University answered the question related to what the university is doing to increase or maintain admission numbers of international students, stating that "Makerere University is considering the use of bridging programs for students from countries that have education systems different from that of Uganda." Writing about the Higher Education Certificate Program, Kitubi (2022) explains that it comprises two terms, over one year. The candidate must score the required cumulative grade point average to qualify for admission into the desired undergraduate degree program.

The preceding responses suggest that while profit-making intentions characterize ISM in Uganda, provisions to maintain high standards have also been instituted. Faulkner et al. (2017) hold that the practice of HEIs offering preparatory programs to international students has grown. These programs are also called bridging, pathway, or foundation programs. Such programs aid international students in adjusting to the sometimes-different educational environment in their host country (Faulkner et al., 2017). They also often help to improve the language skills of international students to prepare them for their undergraduate studies. Research has indicated that international students often face linguistic challenges that limit their progression (Terraschke & Wahid, 2011), hence the necessity for such preparatory programs. Further, Floyd (2015) explains that such programs enable international students to fulfill the minimum academic entry criteria for the degree programs they want to pursue. Thus, the Higher Education Certificate Program in Uganda ensures that quality HE is provided to students, while providing alternative entry routes.

On a related note, an international student from South Sudan studying at MU supported the same views. He explained that:

> The quality of education in Uganda is much better than that of South Sudan and other East African countries. I am getting the best quality education in the region from Makerere. Another plus is that Uganda is safe; my parents got me out of South Sudan when war destabilized everything – even our education system was affected….(Interview with an international student from South Sudan studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The response here alludes to the quality of education in Uganda, with specific reference to Makerere University. Bisaso (2017) and Bukuluki et al. (2017) hold the same view and assert that education at MU is of high quality, as shown by the high research output involving international collaboration, and the support given to academic staff to attain higher degrees. Indeed, MU has a long history of offering quality education in East Africa (Tabaire & Okao, 2010). However, the same does not necessarily hold for other universities in Uganda. According to Hyuha (2017), only MU carries out research, while the others focus on teaching. He states that the quality of HE in Uganda was formerly high, but started decreasing in the 1990s. He further claims that the HE sector is underfunded, has a low research output, the staff need to be more qualified, the infrastructure is usually wanting, and the sector (as in other sectors of the country) is infested with corruption. However, the findings of the present study (Figure 7.1) point to a satisfactory quality of HE in Uganda, as opposed to the views just cited.

Further, this study agrees with Lo et al. (2022) that the global ISM trends are increasing because international students naturally search for quality HE opportunities in other countries. Therefore, the flow of international students into Uganda exemplifies a search for quality education. However, the search for quality education is not an end in itself; it is also a search for the benefits that result from a quality education, as advanced by Raghuram (2013), in that an individual's studies and qualifications affect their career prospects and such should not be ignored. Teichler (2011) also posits that ISM from a country with a weak HE system to a stronger one, or from a less to a more economically developed country, brings higher returns for students and their home countries. This perspective highlights East Africa's unequal HE environment as being the foundation for inbound ISM into Uganda.

Knight (2014a) argues that internationalization should be based on "cooperation, partnership, exchange, mutual benefits and capacity building instead of competition, commercialization, self-interest, and status building" (p. 76). Contrary to this view, universities in Kenya and Uganda actively compete for students at the expense of cooperation, partnership, capacity building, and mutual benefit (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). This has almost dichotomized ISM in East Africa into senders (e.g., Rwanda and Burundi) and receivers (i.e., Uganda and Kenya) of international students, with consequent winners and losers. However, internationalization that is structured in this manner is unsustainable (Ramaswamy & Kumar, 2022) and may not deliver the desired development intentions. Concerted efforts from all sectors are required to mitigate the several development-related challenges that East Africa faces (African Development Bank Group, 2023). Since HE is central to achieving development goals (UNESCO, 2023b), all partner member states should participate equally in and benefit from its internationalization.

The quotation above by the student from South Sudan also indicates that safety is a vital consideration in the search for quality education. Responses linking safety to the quality of education were expressed by students from South Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria, and the DRC. Consider this opinion expressed by a Nigerian student at MU:

> Primarily, it is because of insecurity that I left Nigeria. However, I had all other countries where I could have opted to study, but Uganda offers an admirable quality of education, especially Makerere University. In East Africa, Makerere University still commands academic respect…. (Interview with a Nigerian international student at MU, November 15th, 2022).

Earlier studies, such as those by Agbaje (2021) and Badoo (2021), elaborate on the influence of peace and security on international education activities. In her study, Agbaje (2021) explains that several security issues – exacerbated by terrorist attacks by the Islamic State West African Province and Boko Haram – have made Nigeria a less popular study destination for international students. The situation has even encouraged Nigerian students to seek study opportunities in other countries. While terrorist attacks have also happened in Kenya, Nyerere (2021) explains that these have not deterred international students from enrolling in universities in Kenya. Nyerere (2021) explains that international students view terrorism as a global challenge that can occur to anyone and anywhere, making it a less critical problem, hence contradicting the findings of this study. This study indicates that peace and security are essential determinants of ISM for intra-African mobility. This factor does not feature much in ISM studies conducted in the global North. For

example, according to Rodríguez et al. (2011), peace and security are not among the factors that influence ISM for the Erasmus Mundus Program in Europe. Those authors identify country size, cost of living, distance, educational background, university quality, the host country language, and climate as significant factors that influence ISM. Thus, while ISM is a global phenomenon, some of the influencing factors depend on the host country's contextual conditions.

According to one of the informants in this study, a particular attribute that has contributed to better quality HE in Uganda, is flexible admission procedures. His views are captured in the following response:

> Kenya has admission requirements that complicate the admission process, but the story was different as I sought admission here [Uganda]. The education system is flexible; with multiple course programs I could choose […]. The university recruitment staff interacted with me in a friendly manner and supported me throughout the admission process. (Interview with a Kenyan national studying at KIU, November 18th, 2022).

According to Kritz (2011), failure to gain admission to a home institution is one of the factors that forces African students to study in foreign countries. In a related manner, Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik and Grote (2019) explain that long and complex admission procedures discourage international students from enrolling in a particular institution. The situation worsens when proof of admission is required in applying for a student visa. The response given above suggests that challenging admission processes encourage Kenya's outbound ISM, but discourage inbound ISM into Kenya. The aim to increase the number of international students requires that institutions deliberately make the admission process less challenging. For example, the Joint Science Conference in Germany recommended that more straightforward application and admission procedures should be adopted to help institutions select suitable international students capable of completing their studies in Germany (Gemeinsame Wissenschaftskonferenz, 2013). Clearly, such attempts must be carried out in a way that upholds the quality of education.

The same informant also indicated that the availability of program choices influenced his choice to study outside his home country. While the quantitative findings in this study do not point to the lack of suitable educational programs as a factor that motivates students to study outside their home countries, this interviewee brings this issue into view. His statement is supported by Brooks and Waters' (2009) assertion that privileged international students use international education to

overcome 'failure' and secure success in elite institutions. 'Failure' in this sense is interpreted as an unsuccessful attempt to find the program of choice or to meet the admission criteria for the chosen program in a home university. Therefore, international education offers a second chance to students who cannot access their preferred HE options in institutions in their home country.

In most cases, student choices concern the prestige of the chosen program and institution (Waters, 2006). It might be possible for a student to gain admission in their home country, to an alternative program of study, or in a lower class institution. However, students often opt for high-class foreign institutions, in order to assume or maintain a high social class. This idea was further explained by another Kenyan international student at MU:

> My father wanted me to study law at the University of Dar es Salaam. I applied for this course while completing high school but I was not admitted. Knowing that Makerere is in the same league as the University of Dar es Salaam, I applied for admission here (Makerere University) and was admitted. That is how I ended up here. (Interview with a Kenyan national studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

This view explains the assertion by Brooks and Waters (2009) that students often choose to study in foreign institutions after failing to gain admission to prestigious home institutions. In such cases, the host institution where international students are enrolled is their second best option.

However, Morano-Foadi (2005) argues that an international institution is the first choice for students wishing to maximize their symbolic capital. This is because, to such students, a qualification from a foreign institution is likely to offer more outstanding symbolic capital and benefits than a home institution can provide (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015). Nevertheless, this view must be understood in the light of prevailing broader economic issues. In East Africa, for example, the costs associated with international education in the global North are unaffordable for many students, and so they would have to study in their home country institutions. With the improved capacity of African nations to provide quality HE options, others opt for international education in neighboring countries (Sehoole & Lee, 2021), hopefully for the same costs as domestic students.

The findings discussed above were further explored to understand the qualities they seek in Uganda's HEIs. In this study, international students were asked about the indicators of HE quality proposed by Cadena et al. (2018), i.e., management of universities, quality of teaching in HEIs, quality of student services in HEIs, community-HEI linkages, research in HEIs, and resources in

HEIs in Uganda. The researcher analyzed the quantitative and qualitative data obtained, and the findings relevant to Uganda as a receiving country are presented and discussed in the following sections. First, the researcher tackles management of universities in Uganda.

VII.2. Management of universities in Uganda

Regarding the management of universities in Uganda, respondents were asked to rate their experience of four possible parameters to assess university management practices, based on a five-point Likert scale. The Likert scale included five options, namely strong disagreement (SD) (1), disagreement (D) (2), neutral (N) (3), agreement (A) (4), and strong agreement (SA) (5) (Question 2, Appendix 1). The total score for each item was determined and then divided by the total number of responses for that item to obtain the mean. Since the items are positively phrased, a mean value of greater than 3 represents satisfaction regarding the parameter used to assess university management; a mean value of less than 3 represents dissatisfaction with the management practice; and a mean value of 3 represents neutrality. Table 7.1 provides the descriptive statistics obtained.

Table 7.1: Descriptive statistics on respondents' self-rating of university management practices in Uganda.

Item No.	Indicator for management quality	Category	Number (percent)	Cumulative number (cumulative percent)	Mean	Standard deviation
2a	Administrators are kind and professional in handling students' concerns.	SD	01 (0.5)	09 (4.6)	4.27	0.77
		D	08 (4.1)			
		N	08 (4.1)	08 (4.1)		
		A	99 (50.8)			
		SA	79 (40.5)	178 (91.3)		
2b	Administrators interact openly and honestly with students	SD	01 (0.5)	12 (6.1)	4.15	0.88
		D	11 (5.6)			
		N	23 (11.8)	23 (11.8)		
		A	83 (42.6)			
		SA	77 (39.5)	160 (82.1)		
2c	The university has stable sources of finance	SD	01(0.5)	18 (9.2)	3.70	0.88
		D	17 (8.7)			
		N	56 (28.7)	56 (28.7)		
		A	86 (44.1)	121(62)		
		SA	35 (17.9)			
2d	My lecturers have a normal workload	SD	01 (0.5)	03 (1.5)	4.22	0.61
		D	02 (1.0)			
		N	08 (4.1)	08 (4.1)		
		A	127 (65.1)	184 (94.3)		
		SA	57 (29.2)			

Table 7.1 presents a view of international students' self-rating on the quality of university management practices in the selected universities. The mean values on all the items are above three, suggesting that management practices in their host universities is good. The responses are less spread out 'than might be expected since the standard deviation on each of the four indicators is low, i.e., between 0.61 and 0.88. Therefore, most respondents interpreted the quality of management in their universities in a similar way. The perceived good university management in Uganda contributes to better quality HE systems, hence attracting international students from foreign countries.

Similarly, the cumulative percentages also suggest good management of universities in Uganda. On all the items, higher cumulative percentages are located on the side of the scale that represents agreement that there are good management practices. For example, 94% of the respondents expressed that their lecturers' workload is normal. Additionally, 82.1% of the respondents expressed that the administrators interact openly and honestly with students. These results also suggest that the management of universities in Uganda is appreciable.

All items used to assess the quality of university management (Question 2, Appendix 1) were aggregated into one average index, QoUM (Quality of University Management), to obtain an overall view of university management in Uganda from the perspective of international students. The aggregate index was computed by summing up responses to items 2a to 2d (section B in Appendix 1) and dividing the total by the number of items (i.e., 4). Table 7.2 provides the descriptive statistics that were obtained.

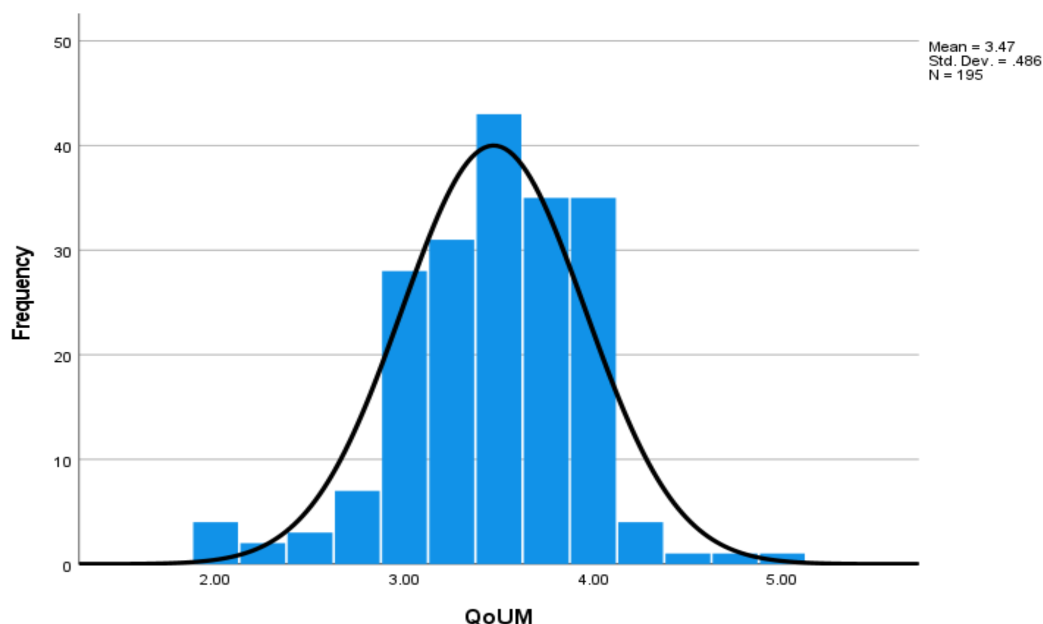
Table 7.2: Overall descriptive statistics on the quality of university management (QoUM) in Uganda.

Statistic		Value
Mean		3.47
95% confidence interval	Upper	3.54
	Lower	3.40
Median		3.50
Standard deviation		0.49
Range		3.00
Skewness		-0.48

According to Table 7.2, international students' perceptions of management of their host universities in Uganda are high (mean approximately 4.0), with opinions having mean values ranging from 3.40 to 3.54 at the standard confidence level of 95%. Further, international students' opinions regarding the management of universities are clustered around the mean (as indicated by a low standard deviation value, i.e., 0.49). The difference in opinion about the quality of university management (range) is 3.00, which reflects the low standard deviation (0.49) already mentioned.

Furthermore, international students' views regarding the quality of university management are slightly skewed to the left as indicated by the slight negative skewness value (-0.48) (i.e., the left tail is slightly longer than the right tail, indicating that there are more values towards the higher end of the scale). These results show that international students in this study were pleased with the management practices in the selected universities in Uganda. The distribution is depicted in the frequency histogram shown in Figure 7.2.

Figure 7.2: *Distribution of international students' views on the quality of university management in Uganda.*



Although Figure 7.2 suggests that universities considered in this study are well managed, some managerial challenges were detailed by the interviewees. For example, staff in the international students office at MU explained that their university has no clear internationalization policy, thus hampering their operations. According to that informant, the challenge is tantamount to defective managerial support for the internationalization agenda. He admitted that:

> An internationalization policy would, in explicit terms, for example, explain the university's internationalization goals, such as diversifying the countries from which international students come, or increasing the mobility of our students. Without such a policy, we as staff fail to determine where to focus our efforts. Establishing cooperation agreements and activities with international partners is difficult under such circumstances. (Interview with official from the international students officer at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The absence of student mobility guidelines was associated with the absence of an internationalization policy at MU. The above informant further explained that the absence of such a policy has limited the university's capacity to work with foreign partners in developing curricula and activities for mobile students.

In a related manner, the Higher Education Officer at the National Council for Higher Education in Uganda explained the following about the lack of national internationalization policies:

> There are no national efforts to promote student mobility. The existing student flows result from institutional efforts to attract international students. Many students, especially those from Nigeria, are here because their family members are employed here. Others, e.g., those from DRC, South Sudan, Burundi, and Somalia, come due to political insecurities in their home countries. As peace has been restored in these countries, the number of international students in Uganda from these countries has kept on reducing. (Interview with NCHE official, December 15th, 2022).

According to Lomer (2018), countries that have succeeded in enrolling international students in their institutions have well-developed national policies to attract international students. Such policies enable and structure the HE sector, the country, and its institutions, in order to compete in the global education market. On the contrary, the absence of an internationalization policy at national and institutional levels results in uncoordinated internationalization efforts, which limits progress. Whereas the preceding response was made about Uganda and its institutions, the situation is the same for other countries in East Africa. For example, describing the internationalization policy environment in East Africa, Moshtari and Safarpour (2023) report that the absence of more explicit policies and guidelines, ineffective organizational structures, and non-reciprocal relationships, among other challenges, characterize internationalization in this region. This study holds that an effective internationalization policy at institutional and national levels can contribute to higher student exchanges and mobility levels, thus enhancing institutional and national competence.

Another managerial issue reported by the informants is understaffing of the international students offices. At MU, only two staff members reportedly handle issues pertinent to over 2,000 international students in this university. This leaves many international students' issues unattended, and causes inefficiencies on the side of the staff and dissatisfaction for the students. At KIU, there is no designated self-standing unit charged with managing international student affairs. International student affairs are handled by the Dean of Students Office, and they do not enjoy the attention that they deserve. Related views are reported by Moshtari and Safarpour (2023) in their study on challenges and strategies for IHE in East Africa. They state that existing organizational structures in most universities in the region are characterized by a lack of international relations staff; this inhibits international communication and means that institutions cannot play a significant role in internationalization initiatives. Similarly, Tamrat and Teferra (2018) explain that the absence of administrative units charged with internalization affairs, inefficiency, and staff-

related challenges limit how internationalization efforts can be initiated, directed, and controlled, which in turn, limits the implementation of a systematic internationalization process. Therefore, internationalization – specifically ISM in East Africa – appears to lack a clear pathway, and therefore happens as the result of uncoordinated efforts, or simply by chance (Amutuhaire, 2023).

This study also reveals that there are inefficiencies in the academic units at MU, in terms of processing students' results, especially those on short-term mobility programs such as semester-abroad programs. These inefficiencies challenge both the staff in the international students office and the students concerned, who are expected to submit their grades to their home universities before they can continue their education at home. A staff member from the international students office at MU explained as follows:

> Many times, international students do exams and complete the semester here, after which they travel back to their home countries as the university processes their results. The academic units often delay to release students' scores to me for posting. The students become restless since they can only be allowed to progress after their semester abroad results have been submitted. This is one of the biggest challenges I have always dealt with in this office…. (Interview with official from the international students officer at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The informant explained further that, at times, they have to pick up international students from the airport. However, their office has no vehicle to effect such a requirement, nor does the university make provisions to enable such an activity. These problems point to the need for more administrative support. They emanate from the failure to prioritize internationalization processes, and the absence of internationalization and mobility policies that are required to guide mobility activities. Such examples illustrate the lack of managerial support and the lack of resource supply to the international students office. Different international students come with different needs, especially in times of sickness and other welfare issues, which the university has not always handled properly. The lack of managerial support may be linked to the university's loss of interest in internationalization and attempts to attract more internationally mobile students. This is captured in the response given by the international students officer at MU. According to him:

> International students are no longer a source of revenue to the university as the case was before the fees policy was changed. Previously, the tuition fees were collected directly into the university's fees collection bank accounts, but this was changed. The fees are now collected into the Uganda Government Revenue [URA] accounts. In such circumstances, the funds are not available at the

> university's discretion. (Interview with official from the international students officer at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The implication is that MU is no longer motivated to attract international students as a source of income, since the funds do not directly benefit the institution. However, this is only the case with public universities, since the stated fee policy does not affect private institutions. However, KIU (a private university) displays financial problems of a different nature – students complained of penalties being incurred when there is a delay in clearing tuition fees. A Kenyan national studying at KIU declared:

> We usually face hardships that limit us from clearing tuition fees in time, which attracts a penalty from the university. This policy should be revised because it burdens us further, considering that our tuition is paid in foreign currency and the penalty usually represents a greater expense on our part. It does not help…. (Interview with a Kenyan national studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The foregoing response exemplify an approach to internationalization founded on capitalistic and neoliberal views, in which ISM is regarded purely as a source of revenue (De Wit & Jones, 2022). However, Ramaswamy and Kumar (2022) hold that internationalization perceived in this way is unsustainable. Further, student mobility structured with economic gains as the primary intention – rather than broadening competencies and enhancing global citizenship – entrenches social inequalities (Weibl, 2015). The situation is even more complicated in the context of this study, in which public universities are losing interest in admitting international students because the monetary gains have been redirected to the national coffers, meaning that the institutions themselves are not the direct beneficiaries. Buckner and Stain (2020) hold that institutions should aim at "reciprocal or transformative outcomes in pursuit of ISM, such as challenging and broadening students' worldviews, reframing the power dynamics of intercultural relationships, or enhancing epistemic equity between different communities and nations" (p. 10). In other words, fronting economic intentions as the sole reason for ISM places the achievement of other significant benefits at risk. This study points to the lack of institutional and national polices to guide internationalization and ISM in East Africa.

The reduced interest in internationalization is not limited to the institutional level, but in fact, originates from national structures. The Higher Education Officer at Uganda's National Council for Higher Education explained this issue in the following statement:

> There are no visible national efforts tailored towards attracting more international students. Institutions are, for example, at liberty to determine the tuition fee amounts and individually develop mechanisms to attract international students. We have no national strategies aiming at attracting international students to Uganda. The existing strategies are institutional-based, especially in private universities aiming to develop staff capacity. Such incentives are, however, limited to a few institutions and have limitations such as 'bonding the staff' [a contract that requires a staff member to work in a given institution for a specified number of years before serving elsewhere]. (Interview with NCHE official, December 15th, 2022).

This informant further clarified the state of university management in the selected universities in Uganda. Considering the qualitative and qualitative analyses in this study, one could say that university management in Uganda is fair in some respects, but others require improvement. The professionalism of the administrators, openness to students, and the work load for academic staff appear to be satisfactory. However, this is not an excuse for complacency, since several instances have been reported that display university mismanagement. On various occasions, strikes by students and staff have been witnessed in many of Uganda's universities. In 2021 the academic staff in Uganda's public universities went on strike because of meager pay levels (Mukhaye, 2021). This is just one of several past incidents in which university staff went on strike. For example, Lwanga et al. (2020) cite cases of leadership and management conflicts at Kyambogo University, and misunderstandings between leadership and the management board at the Uganda Pentecostal University. Additionally, those authors mention students' failure to graduate, and embezzlement as management issues that have characterized universities in Uganda. Such incidents paint a picture of university mismanagement in Uganda, and consequently discourage inbound ISM while encouraging outbound ISM. A similar effect has been witnessed in Nigerian universities and, according to Kamran et al. (2019), this challenge has affected the quality of university education in Nigeria and encouraged outbound mobility.

University management practices significantly influence the direction of student mobility (Bedenlier et al., 2018). Particularly in the case of Uganda – whose interest is to increase inbound student mobility (Hermann, 2013), and reduce outbound student mobility – it is suggested that management structures and practices should be implemented in a way that attracts students. Management practices should be framed around ethical principles, instead of being directed by market forces and excessive advertising, as exhibited by many universities (Hyuha, 2017). For example, Liu (2021) explains that while institutions may be justified in charging higher fees to

international students compared to domestic ones, the income thus realized could be used to train more international graduates from less privileged backgrounds, to enhance their capabilities and enable them to consider and address global issues. The same author goes on to suggest that tuition income from international students could also be used to support international research activities to address developmental challenges in less developed countries – which is what ethical internationalization entails. Allowing ISM activities to be controlled by market forces entirely will have the effect of destabilizing the fledgling HE systems in East Africa.

According to Hyuha (2017), Uganda's HE system has shown substantial growth, especially in terms of the number of private HEIs that have been established in recent years. However, this growth brings with it new managerial challenges. Since the majority of the private universities are for-profit organizations, they are not operated like public ones, and their profit-making intentions determine managerial decisions. Even so, cost recovery intentions challenge efficiency in these universities, as they do in the heavily underfunded, government-owned public universities. Due to funding gaps, all universities have adopted cost recovery mechanisms and marketization practices (Mamdani, 2007). Significantly, economic intentions reduce concerns about global injustices for both domestic and international students, increase the adverse effects of unbalanced development, and polarize the world (Liu (2021). Ethical internationalization is desirable – this facilitates students from less affluent backgrounds to study in more affluent economies (and vice versa), in order to strengthen their commitment to an equitable and just world.

VII.3. Quality of teaching in universities in Uganda

This study also examined the quality of teaching in the selected universities in Uganda. Teaching is one of the primary roles of HEIs, and it should be carried out to the satisfaction of students. New trends in HE driven by competition, students with diverse backgrounds, demands for value for money, and the advancement of ICTs, are all factors that continue to complicate the quality of teaching in universities (Roy, 2016). Further, the meaning of 'quality teaching' remains unclear because of the inherent attributes of quality as a concept that can be regarded as an outcome, a property, and sometimes a process (Henard & Leprince-Ringuet, 2008). Therefore, choosing accurate and measurable indicators for assessing the quality of teaching is a challenge. However, there is an understanding that quality teaching should be student-centered and accommodate all

learners (Oinam, 2017). Therefore, the interdisciplinary nature of courses, the teacher's pedagogical skills, and the variety of course programs and resources for teaching are some of the contributing factors that determine the quality of teaching (Cadena et al., 2018).

This researcher examined the quality of teaching in Uganda's universities by asking respondents to respond to eight items. Responses to these items are based on a Likert scale offering five options, namely strong disagreement (SD) (1), disagreement (D) (2), neutral (N) (3), agreement (A) (4), and strong agreement (SA) (5) (Question 3, Appendix 1). The total scores for each item were determined and then divided by the total number of responses for that item to obtain the mean scores. Since the items are positively phrased, a mean value of greater than 3 represents satisfaction regarding the quality of teaching; a mean value of less than 3 represents dissatisfaction with the quality of teaching; and a mean value of 3 represents neutrality. Table 7.3 provides the descriptive statistics that were obtained for the first four of the items used, since they are the only ones that could fit on a single page in line with the APA guidelines (APA, 2020).

Table 7.3: Descriptive statistics on respondents' self-rating of teaching in universities in Uganda.

Item No.	Indicator of quality of teaching	Category	Number (percent)	No. (cumulative percent)	Mean	Standard deviation
3a	The academic staff have high mastery of their teaching content	SD	05 (2.6)	18 (9.3)	4.12	1.04
		D	13 (6.7)			
		N	26 (13.3)	26 (13.3)		
		A	61 (31.3)			
		SA	90 (46.2)	151 (77.5)		
3b	Teaching in my university is interdisciplinary	SD	04 (2.1)	18 (9.3)	3.98	0.97
		D	14 (7.2)			
		N	27 (13.8)	27 (13.8)		
		A	86 (44.1)			
		SA	64 (32.8)	150 (76.9)		
3c	My university has many study programs (certificates, diplomas, degrees, or PhD.)	SD	02(1.0)	12 (6.1)	4.05	0.93
		D	10 (5.1)			
		N	38 (19.5)	38 (19.7)		
		A	72 (36.9)	145 (74.3)		
		SA	73 (37.4)			
3d	My university offers several joint degree programs	SD	71 (36.4)	166 (85.1)	1.89	0.96
		D	95 (48.7)			
		N	15 (7.7)	15 (7.7)		
		A	06 (3.1)	14 (7.2)		
		SA	08 (4.1)			

Table 7.3 provides an overview of how respondents rated the quality of teaching in the chosen universities in Uganda. Four further indicators (including student-teacher interactions, availability of teaching resources, prioritization of teaching-related expenses, assessment and evaluation) were used to assess the quality of teaching, but only the remaining four items are shown in Table 7.3 in line with APA guidelines that require all table items to fit on a single page (APA, 2020). The mean values of three of the indicators to assess the quality of teaching in universities are above 3, suggesting a better quality of teaching. Only one indicator, i.e. provision of joint degree programs, has a mean value of less than 3 (1.89). This shows that the selected universities in Uganda do not provide joint degree programs to the desirable extent. International joint-degree programs are essential for comprehensive internationalization, which goes beyond academic-level collaborations in universities while fostering cross-border mobility of students and staff (Chan, 2021).

Respondents' views regarding the quality of teaching are a bit spread out, since the values of the standard deviations on each indicator are close to one, ranging from 0.93 to 1.04. This suggests that all response choices are represented among the respondents, although many of the responses do not differ significantly from the mean. Considering these values of means and standard deviations, the quality of teaching in the selected universities in Uganda appears to be carried out to the satisfaction of international students, with the exception of joint degree programs.

Interpreting the findings depicted by the cumulative frequencies provides a similar picture. On all the items in Table 7.3 (except for one), higher cumulative percentage values lie on the side which indicates better quality teaching. Regarding the availability of several study programs in Uganda (item 3c), 74% of respondents (cumulatively) agreed that their chosen universities provide many study options. A similar picture is obtained for item 3a (i.e. lecturers' mastery of the teaching content) – the majority of respondents (77%) agreed (cumulatively) that their lecturers have adequate knowledge in their teaching areas. These results support those shown by the mean values, suggesting that university teaching in Uganda is of acceptable quality to international students.

These findings are also reflected in informants' views about the universities they attend in Uganda. For example, a Kenyan international student at MU advanced the following explanation regarding the quality of teaching at his university:

> …the lecturers in my university are up to the task, and they challenge us to achieve academic excellence. Where necessary, the teaching involves hands-on experiences in the laboratories or the field during internships. I would say the teaching is centered on the student and involves using individual assignments and group works on top of lectures given by our skilled lecturers... (Interview with a Kenyan national studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

Talking about the quality of teaching in Uganda's universities, the Higher Education Officer at Uganda's NCHE affirmed that:

> The quality of teaching in Uganda's universities has been improving over the years and has always been good though there are some 'generational challenges,' e.g., the need for quick fixes and laziness among students, which have been understood and addressed. Further, there is a need to step up technological developments and digitization to improve the quality of teaching. This was witnessed during the lockdown period when universities showed that they were not technologically prepared. (Interview with NCHE official, December 15th, 2022).

Nevertheless, these findings should not be taken as implying that the teaching in Uganda is ideally better than that in HEIs in the international students' home countries. This is because even in Uganda as a host country, challenges related to the quality of teaching exist (Atwebembeire et al., 2018). The same authors claim that some university teachers in Uganda interact with students less than half of the expected contact hours, hence being inconsistent in their teaching approach. It is therefore likely that the quality of teaching in Uganda and in the sending countries does not differ significantly. However, considering this study's findings presented above, the quality of teaching remains important for ISM in East Africa. Due to the similarity of the quality of teaching in Uganda and the sending countries, if not investigated, the anticipated increasing trend of intra-African mobility could be reversed, with students opting to study in other regions. This comes at a price the African continent would pay, for example, in the form of brain drain.

The items used to assess university teaching quality in Uganda (Appendix 1, Question 2) were aggregated into one average index, QoUT (Quality of University Teaching) to obtain an aggregate view of respondents' interpretation of the quality of university teaching in Uganda. The aggregate index was computed by summing up responses to items 3a to 3h (section B of Appendix 1) and dividing the total by the number of items (i.e., 8). Table 7.4 presents the descriptive statistics related to this question.

Table 7.4: Overall descriptive statistics on the quality of university teaching (QoUT) in Uganda.

Statistic		Value
Mean		3.51
95% confidence interval	Upper	3.56
	Lower	3.46
Median		3.38
Standard deviation		0.35
Range		2.00
Skewness		-0.06

Table 7.4 shows that the mean perception of the international students about the quality of teaching in the sampled universities in Uganda is slightly towards the higher end of the scale (mean = 3.51), with opinions having mean values ranging from 3.46 to 3.56 at the 95% significance level. International students' opinions regarding the quality of teaching are concentrated around the mean (as indicated by a low standard deviation value: 0.35). The difference in opinion regarding the quality of university teaching in Uganda (range) is 2.00, which confirms the low standard deviation value. Furthermore, international students' views regarding the quality of university teaching are slightly negatively skewed, as indicated by the negative skewness value (-0.06) (i.e., opinions are slightly shifted towards high quality of university teaching). All these findings suggest good quality of university teaching, which probably attracts international students. The distribution of this data is shown in Figure 7.3.

Figure 7.3: *Distribution of international students' views on the quality of university teaching in Uganda.*

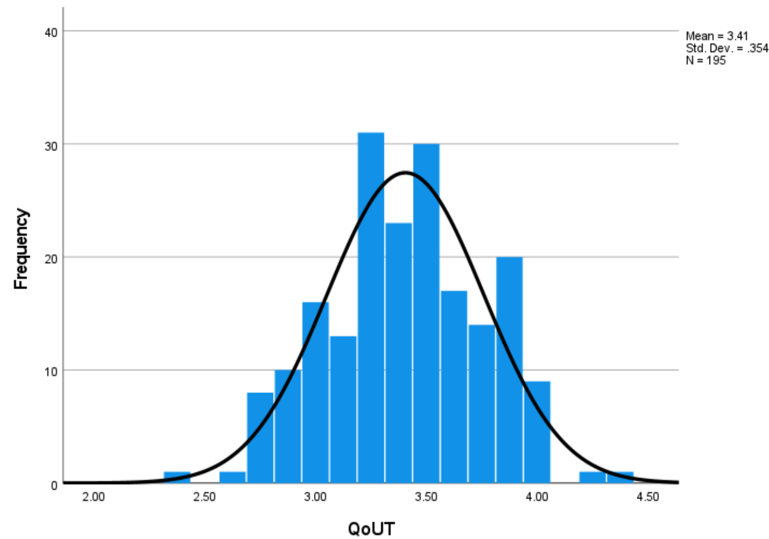


Figure 7.3 indicates that the international students are satisfied with the quality of university teaching in Uganda. This perception was explored further through interviews that provided further insights. For example, staff in the international students office at MU asserted that:

> …some of the international students often express dissatisfaction with the teaching mode at MU. The teaching at MU is not technologically driven like in some foreign countries, especially those in Europe from which some mobile students come. However, with time, and after finding that the content being taught meets their expectations, the students adjust to the teaching methods. (Interview with official from the international students officer at MU, November 15th, 2022).

This response, in part, relates to the one raised by the president of the Commission for Higher Education in Burundi when commenting on the quality of teaching at the University of Burundi. He said that "the quality of teaching at the University of Burundi was once high []. Most professors have not appreciated the technology-driven pedagogy, yet this is the way to go…." (Interview with official from National Commission for HE in Burundi, December 1st, 2022). In both cases, the use of technology in teaching has yet to be appreciated. Rivers et al. (2015) explain that some of the significant factors that limit the adoption of ICTs in teaching in African universities include limited technological capacities and essential resources, such as electricity, equipment, and funding, together with resistance from teaching staff. It is clear that HEIs need to develop the use of these technologies, not only for the benefit of their own students, but also in order to promote their attractiveness in terms of ISM. The recent COVID-19 pandemic revealed that the physical mobility

of students across borders is prone to challenges. It becomes impractical when restrictions limit physical movement, especially during pandemics, wars, and other insecurities. Therefore, alternatives such as virtual and hybrid mobilities (UNESCO, 2022a; Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour, 2022) need to be considered.

This study reports that teaching in Uganda as a host country for international students is good (mean = 3.51). The study examined the quality of teaching based on students' interpretations, as opposed to many other studies that assess the quality of teaching from lecturers' self-reports (Noben et al., 2022). Mulu (2012) asserts that the quality of teaching in HE in sub-Saharan Africa has not been well addressed. Nabaho et al. (2016) also explored the quality of teaching at MU and reported that different quality assurance strategies are used, including recognition of teaching, student evaluation of teaching, pedagogical training, monitoring and supervision of teaching, and competence-based deployment. While those strategies differ from the factors explored in the present study, it is necessary to note that there are several different institutional quality assurance practices, and universities should consider applying any of such practices to improve themselves.

Van Bouwel and Veugelers (2013) explain that the quality of teaching in a country predicts the direction of ISM particularly that with better quality teaching, inbound student mobility increases. Therefore, the findings of this study suggest that a relatively good quality of teaching in the two universities in the sample, explains the observed inbound ISM trend in Uganda. However, this finding should be interpreted considering other factors that also influence ISM. Hyuha (2017) contends that the quality of university teaching in Uganda was high before the late-1980 economic crisis which altered circumstances for the worse. He explains that during that time, lecture theatres in many universities in Uganda were overcrowded, while the quality of the academic staff had reduced. This situation does not, however, rule out this study's findings since institutional improvements are possible over time. While the quality of teaching in the sampled universities may not be exemplary, it may be good enough to encourage students' inflow from other countries.

VII.4. Quality of student services in universities in Uganda

According to Cadena et al. (2018), the quality of student services – ranging from opportunities to learn a foreign language, campus healthcare services, the intercultural environment, and the social aspects of the university – determine the quality of service provision. Therefore, this researcher examined the quality of student services in the sampled universities by asking international

students to respond to eight items whose responses are based on a Likert scale offering five options, namely strong disagreement (SD) (1), disagreement (D) (2), neutral (N) (3), agreement (A) (4), and strong agreement (SA) (5) (Question 4, Appendix 1). The total scores for each item were determined and then divided by the total number of responses to obtain the mean scores. The items are positively phrased such that a mean value of greater than 3 represents satisfaction regarding the student services, a mean value of less than 3 represents dissatisfaction with the student services, and a mean value of 3 represents neutrality. Table 7.5 presents the relevant descriptive statistics.

Table 7.5: Descriptive statistics on respondents' self-rating of student services in universities.

Item No.	Indicator of quality of service	Cate gory	Number (percent)	Number (cumulative percent)	Mean	Standard deviation
4a	The university provides excellent healthcare services	SD	02 (1)	04(02)	4.78	0.62
		D	02 (1)			
		N	02(1)	2 (1)		
		A	25 (12.8)	189(96.9)		
		SA	164 (84.1)			
4b	My university has an intercultural environment	SD	02 (1)	13 (6.6)	3.93	0.97
		D	11 (5.6)			
		N	30 (15.4)	30 (15.4)		
		A	108 (55.4)			
		SA	44 (22.6)	152 (78)		
4c	I am satisfied with the counseling services in my university	SD	04(2.1)	16 (8.3)	3.96	0.83
		D	12 (6.2)			
		N	39 (20.0)	39 (20.0)		
		A	72 (36.9)			
		SA	68 (34.9)	140 (71.8)		
4d	My university offers me opportunities to learn foreign languages	SD	04 (36.4)	38 (53.8)	3.56	1.03
		D	34 (17.4)			
		N	39 (20.0)	39 (20.0)		
		A	85 (43.6)	118 (60.5)		
		SA	33 (16.9)			

Table 7.5 shows how international students rated the quality of student services in their universities in Uganda. Six indicators, including opportunities to learn foreign languages and university entry requirements were used, but only four are shown in Table 7.5 in line with APA guidelines that all table items should fit on a single page (APA, 2020). The mean values on the four indicators shown are all greater than 3. However, the mean value (3.56) for the item measuring opportunities to learn

foreign languages is lower than that for the other indicators, even though it indicated satisfaction; hence this suggests that there is room for improvement.

Further, the respondents' views are clustered around the mean, as shown by the low standard deviation values that range from 0.62 to 1.03. Only one indicator (opportunities to learn a foreign language) has a standard deviation greater than 1 but less than 2. This indicates that respondents' views are slightly more spread around the mean on this item. Thus, with mean values greater than 3, the study suggests good quality of services for international students in Uganda.

Furthermore, the cumulative percentages indicate that the students appreciate the quality of university services. For example, 72% of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the counseling services in their universities. At the same time, 78% of the respondents indicated that their universities provide an intercultural environment. However, as the case was with the mean values, the cumulative percent (60.5%) on the item concerning opportunities to learn a foreign language does not show great satisfaction. Thus, the results obtained considering the mean values and cumulative frequencies support each other, and generally indicate that the quality of student services in Ugandan universities is generally towards the higher end of the scale.

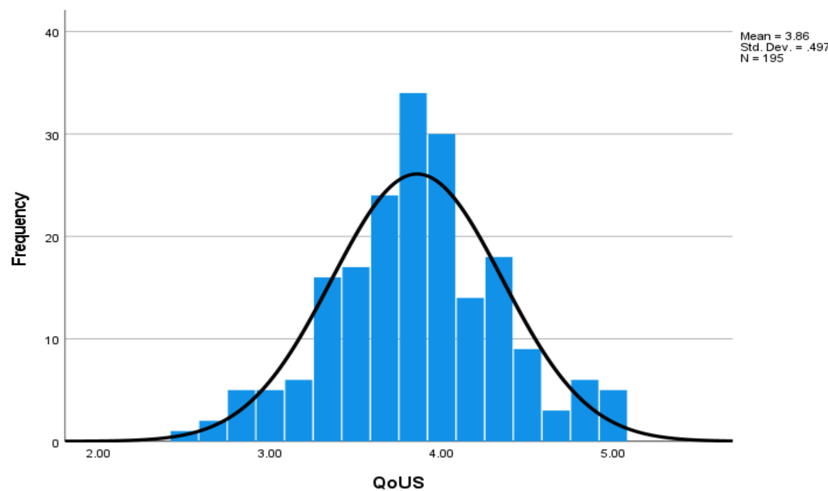
The items used to assess the quality of student services in the selected universities (Appendix 1, Question 4) were aggregated into an aggregate index, QoUS (Quality of student Services) to obtain an aggregate view of respondents' interpretation of the quality of student services in the selected universities. The aggregate index was computed by summing up responses to items 4a to 4f (Appendix 1, section B) and dividing the total by the number of items (i.e., 6). Table 7.6 presents the descriptive statistics related to this question.

Table 7.6: Overall descriptive statistics on the quality of student services (QoUS) in universities.

Statistic		Value
Mean		3.90
95% confidence interval	Upper	3.93
	Lower	3.79
Median		3.83
Standard deviation		0.50
Range		2.50
Skewness		-0.001

Table 7.6 shows that the mean perception about the quality of student services according to international students in the sampled universities in Uganda is high (mean approximating 4), with opinions having mean values ranging from 3.79 to 3.93 at the 95% significance level. International students' opinions regarding the quality of student services in the sampled universities are concentrated around the mean (as indicated by a low standard deviation value, i.e., 0.50). The difference in opinion regarding the quality of university services in Uganda (range) is 2.5, which indicates minimum spread among respondents' views. Furthermore, international students' views show a negligible negative skew (skewness = -0.001). All these values suggest tendencies to a good quality of student services in the sampled universities which attracts international students. This is well shown in the distribution presented in Figure 7.4.

Figure 7.4: *Distribution of international students' views on the quality of student services in universities.*



These findings indicate a positive perception of student services in Uganda's universities. This could be related to the availability of specific offices that address the particular needs of international students. In the case of MU, the international students officer revealed that their duties include:

- Supporting students through the admission process and registration,
- Orientation of international students,
- Acquisition of student passes for international students,
- Transcript processing from different university academic units,
- Finding suitable accommodation for international students, and

- Supporting international students through the fees payment process. (Interview with official from the international students officer at Makerere University, November 15th, 2022).

Although the quantitative findings show positive perceptions of the quality of university services, the qualitative findings are different. For example, a Liberian national studying at MU expressed his dissatisfaction with the quality of services there. He explained:

> …. I arrived late in the night at the airport. While I had communicated to the university's contact person that I was coming, no pick-up arrangements were in place, so I had to find my way out. That night gave me my worst experiences in Uganda. The only fair part is that the airport taxi driver was friendly and advised that he would carry me to the MU guest house. I had to start the search for accommodation in private providers the next day. While I expected to pay for such accommodation, the hassles involved should have been communicated earlier to enable me to make up my mind…. (Interview with a Liberian national studying at MU, November 20th, 2022).

The dissatisfaction expressed by this student supports the earlier view expressed by a staff member in the international students office at MU that the lack of accommodation for international students is a challenge that they face their work. This informant from MU's international students office was dissatisfied with how the university communicates with international students during admission procedures. An interviewee from KIU raised a similar issue, declaring that:

> …The university communicated that they had accommodation facilities. However, they never clarified that accessing these facilities was competitive, I was not prepared for this eventuality, and by the time I arrived, and other students had already taken up all the accommodation spaces. I got an alternative accommodation facility from private providers far away from campus, which is a big challenge. The daily transport fares from the distant accommodation facilities often force students to look for cheaper alternatives which are at times located in slums... (Interview with a Kenyan national studying at KIU, November 18th, 2022).

There is also a challenge regarding the process of equating qualifications from the students' home countries, which the staff in the international students office at MU explained as having reduced the quality of services they are able to offer. This is how the interviewee explained it:

> …The process involves in-person submission of physical academic documents, yet the process is long. International students must travel from their countries to deliver these academic documents and then return to collect the certificate of equivalence. This makes the process costly in terms of time and money which discourages the students. The students that persist to the end of this challenging process may not recommend fellow nationals to study in Uganda. This has contributed to reducing the number of international students coming here... (Interview with official from the international students officer at MU, November 15th, 2022).

While these views express dissatisfaction with services offered to incoming international students, an informant from Somalia explained his satisfaction with the provision of medical services at KIU. While this issue is not directly related to academic life, one can only study satisfactorily when healthy. The student acknowledged:

> … if one of us is sick, an ambulance carries sick students to the nearby Kibuli Moslem Hospital or any other hospital deemed necessary by the health professionals. Importantly, all international students have medical access coverage. This is very important for international students, especially those without experience with tropical diseases. (Interview with an international student from Somalia studying at KIU, November 18th, 2022).

Another student commended the services provided by KIU through the office of the Dean of Students, as follows:

> Students, like any other person, can experience challenges that may interrupt student life. Through the Dean of Students Office, KIU provides guidance and counseling services. The services provide psychosocial support for the students to continue their studies uninterrupted…. (Interview with a Burundian national studying at KIU, November 18th, 2022).

The responses of the international students from Somalia and Burundi confirm the quantitative results (Table 7.5), according to which 96.9% and 71.8% of the respondents were cumulatively satisfied with the health services (item 4a) and counseling services (item 4c) at their universities. Based on these quality indicators, student services at the selected universities in Uganda are satisfactory and account for Uganda's inbound ISM.

The services considered in this section are not directly linked to the educational experiences of international students, but they directly influence their life and time in the host institution. These services play an essential role in determining the overall quality of education obtained from such an institution. This study reports a generally high quality student services in the sampled universities in Uganda. The highest mean value was registered for the item on healthcare services for students. This can be attributed to the role of the National Council for HE in Uganda (NCHE) in overseeing the establishment and operation of HEIs in the country (Kasozi, 2009). Besides this national body, the institutions have internal processes to ensure that their services conform to the standards.

Student mobility extends beyond the subject matter to campus and classroom experiences and the local cultures in the host country, which add to students' cultural experiences (Erdei & Káplár-Kodácsy, 2020). The same authors state that student mobility gives students opportunities for deep self-reflection. This, in turn, builds their self-awareness and self-efficacy through the realization that one can overcome challenges (e.g., language barriers, finding their way on unfamiliar transportation systems, and relating to people who are culturally different). These broader aspects of education cannot be found in textbooks, but they afford participants substantial gains such as intercultural competencies (Clapp-Smith & Wernsing, 2014). The university environment – particularly its intercultural features – is a significant topic to consider in examining the nature and benefits of ISM. However, it is essential to refrain from reproducing the challenges propagated by Eurocentric mobility patterns; as south–south mobility grows, equity must remain an important consideration. All participants must be perceived as equal players who deserve to be appreciated for their diversity. Further, when HEIs emphasize the economic gains that accrue from ISM, they may fail to attend to such students' needs appropriately (Mittelmeier & Lomer, 2021; Yang, 2020). Consequently, international students may not gain the desired experiences from their time in the institution in their host country.

The quality of university services is an important consideration in order to promote intra-African ISM. De Angelis et al. (2017) hold that from a policy perspective, mobility patterns and how they change over time are usually clear. Nevertheless, it is essential to understand the specific drivers that universities can modify in order to increase their attractiveness. While this is important, students should remain at the center of all choices made, since they are the primary beneficiaries of any resulting actions. The quality of services offered will always be important in attracting students (or not) to enroll in a particular university (De Angelis et al., 2017).

This findings and the associated discussion in this section reveal that the sampled universities are concerned about their quality of student service provision. Therefore, several challenges need to be addressed before such institutions can significantly propel intra-African ISM forwards. HEIs in Uganda need to develop more rigorous strategies to assess the quality of their services while considering student factors, as well as the pedagogical dimension (Horváth et al., 2020). Such advances will enhance the quality of student services in universities, make the institutions more cosmopolitan, and reduce their dependence on the global North. For example, the framework for

a regionally harmonized quality assurance mechanism in East Africa (IUCEA, 2010) can be strengthened to make quality measures more inclusive and exhaustive. The partner states must have a shared view and understanding of what quality entails as intra-African ISM grow.

VII.5. Links between society and universities in Uganda

Regarding the links between universities and the society as a determinant of the quality of university education in Uganda, respondents were asked to rate their experience of nine possible parameters to assess links between the university and society, based on a five-point Likert scale. The Likert scale included five options, namely strong disagreement (SD) (1), disagreement (D) (2), neutral (N) (3), agreement (A) (4), and strong agreement (SA) (5) (Question 5, Appendix 1). The total score for each item was determined and then divided by the total number of responses for that item to obtain the mean. Since the items are positively phrased, a mean value of greater than 3 represents satisfaction regarding the parameter used to assess university – society links; a mean value of less than 3 represents dissatisfaction with the university – society links; and a mean value of 3 represents neutrality. Table 7.7 provides the descriptive statistics that were obtained.

Table 7.7: Descriptive statistics on respondents' self-rating of links between society and selected universities in Uganda.

Item No.	Indicator of quality of links with the society	Category	Number (percent)	Number (cumulative percent)	Mean	Standard deviation
5a	My university engages in industry-related projects	SD	00 (00)	07 (3.6)	4.08	0.71
		D	07 (3.6)			
		N	21 (10.8)	21 (10.8)		
		A	117 (60)			
		SA	50 (25.6)	167 (85.6)		
5b	My university engages in international cooperation projects	SD	00 (00)	02 (1.0)	4.22	0.63
		D	02 (1.0)			
		N	16 (8.2)	27 (8.2)		
		A	114 (58.5)			
		SA	63 (32.3)	177 (90.8)		
5c	My university collaborates with other peer institutions	SD	00(00)	07 (3.6)	4.17	0.65
		D	07 (3.6)			
		N	06 (3.1)	06 (3.1)		
		A	128 (65.6)	182 (93.3)		
		SA	54 (27.7)			
5d	The university awards students with scholarships	SD	05 (2.6)	46 (23.6)	3.36	1.00
		D	41 (21.0)			
		N	46 (23.6)	46 (23.6)		
		A	84 (43.1)	103 (52.8)		
		SA	19 (9.7)			

Four indicators of links between universities and the society are shown in Table 7.7, providing a picture of how international students perceive such links. Other indicators of links between the university and the community rated by respondents (though not shown in the table) include opportunities for internships, courses for continuing education, and engagement in scientific events (Appendix 1). All the items shown in Table 7.7 have mean values greater than three (i.e., ranging from 3.36 to 4.22). This suggests that the chosen universities have satisfactory links with the society. However, the indicator about providing financial scholarships to students shows a comparatively lower mean value (3.36) than the other three indicators. This suggests that international students are less satisfied with the provision of scholarships at their selected universities.

Respondents' views regarding links between the community and the university are crowded around the mean, as shown by low values for the standard deviation (ranging from 0.63 to 1.00). This suggests that students' responses about the links between their university and the society are fairly similar. Notably, the values of the mean and standard deviation show that links between the society and the selected universities are to the respondents' satisfaction.

The cumulative percentages present a view similar to that depicted by the means; they all lie on the agreement end of the scale, which suggests existence of links between the sampled universities and the society. Three indicators shown in Table 7.7 (engagement in industry-related projects (5a), engagement in international cooperation projects (5b), and collaboration with peer institutions (5c) have very high cumulative percent values (i.e., 85.6%, 90.8%, and 93.3% respectively). These values indicate that respondents agree that such links exist between their university and other actors in society. However, no respondent strongly agreed (i.e., score 5) with any of the three stated indicators. This may suggest that much as the indicators show agreement, they are yet to attain respondents' utmost satisfaction level.

Further, the cumulative percentages on the indicator about financial scholarships (Item 5d) are low, but above average (52.8%). This suggests a minimum commitment by the sampled universities to develop financial scholarships. Such differences notwithstanding, the findings suggest that the links between the university and society are satisfactory, thus contributing to the quality of university education in Uganda.

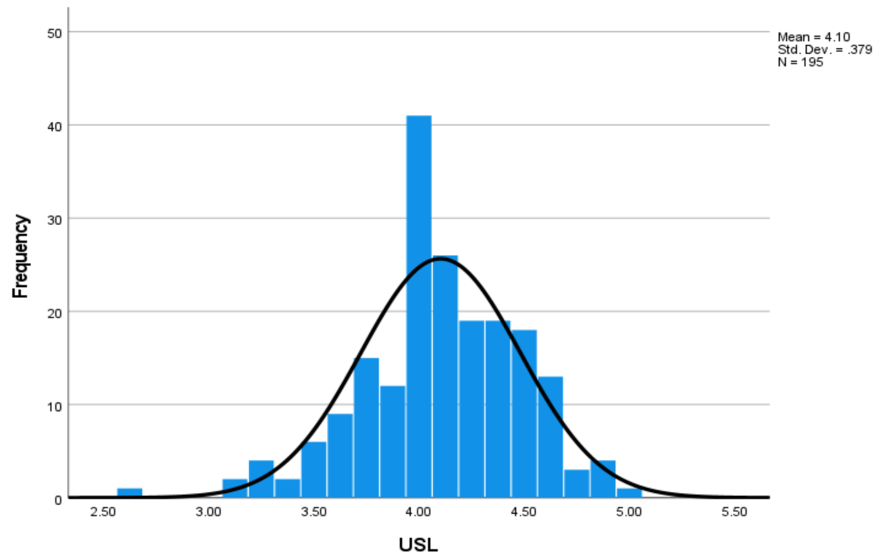
All the items about links between society and the selected university (Appendix 1, Question 5,) were aggregated into one aggregate index, USL (University and Society Links) to obtain an overall view of the links between the sampled universities in Uganda and the society from the perspective of international students. The aggregate index was computed by summing up responses to items 5a to 5i (section B in Appendix 1) and dividing the total by the number of items (i.e., 9). Table 7.8 presents the descriptive statistics.

Table 7.8: Overall descriptive statistics on links between the university and the society (USL).

Statistic		Value
Mean		4.10
95% confidence interval	Upper	4.16
	Lower	4.05
Median		4.13
Standard deviation		0.38
Range		2.38
Skewness		-0.45

Table 7.8 shows the international students' mean perception of the links between society and the sampled universities in Uganda. The high mean value of 4.10 shows that the respondents interpreted the links between society and their universities as satisfactory. The mean values of their opinions range from 4.05 to 4.16 at the 95% significance level, and are concentrated around the mean (since the standard deviation and range values are low, i.e., 0.38 and 2.38, respectively). Furthermore, international students' views regarding the quality of university – society links are slightly negatively skewed (slightly heaped towards a high quality of university-society links), as indicated by the negative skewness value (-0.45). All these values suggest existence of links between universities and the society. Figure 7.5 illustrates the distribution of this data.

Figure 7.5: *Distribution of international students' views on links between the sampled university and society in Uganda.*



The findings discussed above are confirmed by the testimonies of the interviewed students. A Kenyan student at KIU explained as follows:

> KIU has several NGOs through which the university gives back to the neighboring community. The students usually offer volunteer services or perform their internship activities in these NGOs. The university has also offered business engagements with private entrepreneurs, especially those involved in accommodation and hospitality. I would say that the university and the neighboring community enjoy a strong symbiotic relationship which is important for students' social and intellectual growth…. (Interview with a Kenyan national studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The respondent's comment indicates a close link that is characterized by interdependency between his university and its local community. The university depends on the immediate society for its input, while university 'products' (graduates and knowledge) are used by the society. Therefore, the two entities need to relate to each other for mutual benefit and smooth operation. Links between universities and society reflect an important role played by the university in society; the strength and nature of these links are essential in assessing the quality of a university. Maassen et al. (2019) hold that with current political changes, increased social crises, and the advent of the knowledge-based economy, universities are urged to contribute more directly and effectively to economic growth, social inclusion, and cultural diversity. In order to establish, operationalize, implement, and show their links with society – or their 'third purpose,'– universities must become more

strategic, proactive, and explicit. This is even more important for their role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Steele & Rickards, 2021).

With an overall mean of 4.10 for respondents' assessment of university links with the immediate society, it is suggested that these links are in existence. However, the role played by such links remains something that can be explored further. For example, if these links are that strong, it could be expected that the teaching and research in these universities would have a more significant impact on society. Contrary to this expectation, communities around the sampled universities still face poverty, hunger, and disease (Adebisi et al., 2019). While there may be gaps between the knowledge developed in the university and the application of that knowledge to achieve desired goals, universities may need to intensify their efforts to make a difference in their neighboring societies.

Further, considering today's trends to admit international students, the university environment should extend beyond national borders. Therefore, with internationalization, universities should be globally inclusive, relevant, and accessible (Jones et al., 2021). As the HE landscape changes under the influence of various global trends – such as internationalization and globalization – the role of universities as enablers of change must be emphasized. As Africa wishes to develop solutions to their challenges without being influenced by the global North (Guvamombe, 2020), such intentions should be reflected in the activities of local universities. For a long time, attempts to decolonize university education have not yielded satisfactory results, making many think that decolonization is merely a buzzword (Khan, 2021). Therefore, the links explored in this study need to be structured so that they are in tandem with the overall goal of development, not only locally, but also beyond the borders of East Africa.

Strengthening the links between a university and society calls for cooperation between those two actors, and between institutions themselves (Ritzen, 2020). Much can be achieved through cooperation. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed that the processes of knowledge production and dissemination can become easier only through cooperation (Igwe et al., 2021). An institution that does not cooperate with others may not realize any impact within society. However, institutions in the global South prefer to partner with those in the global North, instead of with other local institutions (Nawangwe et al., 2021). While partnering with the global North is not inadvisable, it sustains European patronage, as several scholars have argued (Kumi & Copestake, 2021;

Magalhães, 2014; Scherer, 2019). Granted, partnering with the global North allows institutions in the global South to access resources they do not have, but more often than not, such partnerships have been used to exploit the South rather than to benefit it (Dodsworth, 2019). In most of these research collaborations, researchers from African universities are relegated to collecting the data, while the global North partners analyze the data (Munung & Mayosi, 2017). Such an arrangement does not bring about capacity building for partners in the South, yet this is what the South desires and needs (Cummings et al., 2021). The following section, section VII.6, presents and discusses data on research activities in the selected universities as an indicator of HE quality in Uganda.

VII.6. Research in Uganda's universities

International students in this study were asked to answer eight questions about how their universities engage in research as a factor that affects the quality of university education. Respondents were asked to rate their experience of eight possible parameters to assess research activities in universities, based on a five-point Likert scale. The Likert scale included five options, namely strong disagreement (SD) (1), disagreement (D) (2), neutral (N) (3), agreement (A) (4), and strong agreement (SA) (5) (Question 6, Appendix 1). The total score for each item was determined and then divided by the total number of responses for that item to obtain the mean. Since the items are positively phrased, a mean value of greater than 3 represents satisfaction regarding the parameter used to assess university research activities; a mean value of less than 3 represents dissatisfaction; and a mean value of 3 represents neutrality. Table 7.9 presents the pertinent descriptive statistics.

Table 7.9: Descriptive statistics on respondents' self-rating of research engagement in universities in Uganda.

Item No.	Indicator of research engagement	Category	Number (percent)	Number (cumulative percent)	Mean	Standard deviation
6a	My university runs many doctoral programs	SD	02 (01)	04 (2)	4.78	0.64
		D	02 (01)			
		N	05 (2.6)	05 (2.6)		
		A	19 (9.7)			
		SA	167 (85.6)	186 (95.3)		
6b	The university engages in research projects that have multidisciplinary teams	SD	42 (21.5)	70 (35.9)	3.0	1.40
		D	28 (14.4)			
		N	45 (23.1)	45 (23.1)		
		A	44 (22.6)			
		SA	36 (18.4)	80 (41)		
6c	University staff engage in research projects that address challenges in the local community	SD	00(00)	05 (2.6)	3.94	0.73
		D	05 (2.6)			
		N	43 (22.1)	43 (22.1)		
		A	105 (53.8)	147 (75.3)		
		SA	42 (21.5)			
6d	The university has many publications in high-impact journals	SD	54 (27.7)	110 (56.4)	2.40	1.16
		D	56 (28.7)			
		N	43 (22.1)	43 (22.1)		
		A	36 (18.5)	42 (21.6)		
		SA	6 (3.1)			

Four indicators for university research engagement are shown in Table 7.9 in line with APA guidelines that require all table items to fit on a single page (APA, 2020) to provide a picture of how international students interpret research activities in their respective universities in Uganda. Other indicators of research engagements which respondents rated (though not shown in the table), include the number of publications with a high number of citations, research results that local companies adopt, the number of research projects completed annually, and the number of externally financed research projects (Question 6, Appendix 1).

As shown in Table 7.9, two items (items 6a &6c) have mean values higher than 3, one item (6b) has a mean of 3 while one other item (item 6d) has a mean value less than 3. In particular, respondents reported that the selected universities run many doctoral programs (mean = 4.78), which suggests that the chosen universities demonstrate satisfactory research engagements. The respondents were undecided on the existence of multidisciplinary research teams in their universities (mean = 3.0), and indicated that few publications from their universities appear in

high-impact journals (mean = 2.40). This suggests that the publications may appear in local journals, or are never published. This shows that respondents were not able to rate the extent of publication of research findings by their universities.

Further, respondents' views regarding university research engagements are slightly dispersed from the mean, as shown by the standard deviation values between 0.64 and 1.40 (Table 7.8). That is, the respondents' views are not clustered around the mean value. Notably, the findings shown by the mean and standard deviation values indicate that research engagements are high in indicators 6a &6c but low in indicator 6b. Respondents showed that they were undecided in indicator 6d. This yields mixed findings.

The cumulative percentages regarding university research engagements further clarify these findings. Some indicators demonstrate higher cumulative percentages, indicating high levels of university research engagement. For example, 95.3% of the sampled international students agreed that their universities run several doctoral programs (item 6a). This suggests that several students and their supervisors have an opportunity to engage in research projects at any particular time. However, as already indicated, only about 21.6% of the respondents suggested that publications from their university appear in high-impact journals (item 6d). Therefore, aspects of university research engagements have been developed to some extent, while others are still being developed, or are unclear.

Interviewees also echoed these findings. For example, this is what the Higher Education Officer at Uganda's National Council for Higher Education declared:

> The research and publication capacity in Uganda's universities is low since the universities are underfunded. Only a few researchers can attract foreign funders, yet such funds usually come with limitations, e.g., they are never consistent and focus only on a few specific research domains. University staff concentrate on teaching with a narrow focus on research. Some staff that conduct research do it for promotional purposes, while others stop researching after completing their doctorates. Further, the private universities do not promote research since they have no funds for this expensive activity. (Interview with NCHE official, December 15th, 2022).

This view indicates the limited research capacity in universities in Uganda, as confirmed by Hyuha (2017), namely that research in Uganda is limited since the sector is badly underfunded. According

to that author, most universities in Uganda are teaching universities, with only MU playing a visible research role.

All the items under question six (Appendix 1) were aggregated into an average index, URE (University Research Engagement) to give a comprehensive picture of how respondents interpreted the university research engagements in universities in Uganda. The aggregate index was computed by summing up responses to items 6a to 6h (section B in Appendix 1) and dividing the total by the number of items (i.e., 8). Table 7.10 presents the descriptive statistics for this question.

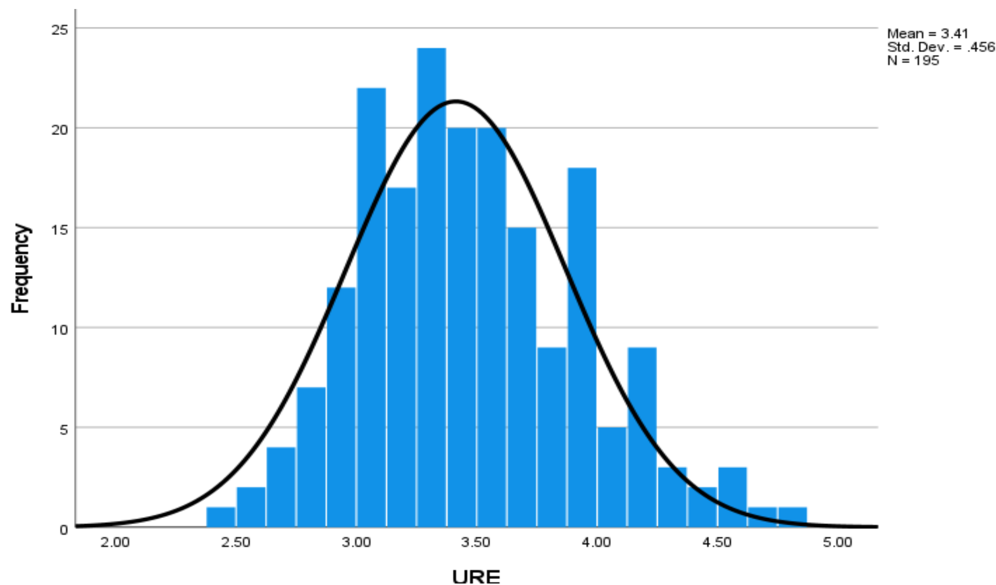
Table 7.10: Overall descriptive statistics on university research engagements (URE) in Uganda.

Statistic		**Value**
Mean		3.45
95% confidence interval	Upper	3.50
	Lower	3.40
Median		3.38
Standard deviation		0.46
Range		2.38
Skewness		0.41

Table 7.10 shows the international students' mean perception of research engagements in the sampled universities in Uganda. As noted earlier, research engagements were rated high for some indicators and low for others; the overall mean value is slightly above three (mean = 3.45). Although slightly above three (the midpoint of the scale used in this study) and hence suggesting a fair engagement in research, there was a tendency towards indecision. The mean value has a lower limit of 3.40 and an upper limit of 3.50 at the 95% significance level, further pointing to the tendencies towards existence of research engagement, although with a degree of indecision.

These opinions are concentrated around the mean (since the standard deviation values are low). However, the value of the range (2.38) is high, indicating that respondents have a wide range of opinions regarding the aspects of research engagement in their selected universities. Furthermore, international students' views on research engagement are almost normally distributed with a slight positive skew (skewness = 0.41). These findings indicate the existence of some degree of research engagements within the studied universities, but with some inadequacies regarding specific research engagements. The distribution of this data is illustrated in Figure 7.6.

Figure 7.6: *Distribution of international students' views on research engagements in universities in Uganda.*



Research is one of the three primary missions of university education (Altbach, 2008); its role in knowledge creation through data collection, analysis, and reporting has also been recognized (Nonaka et al., 2001). The centrality of research in HE is that it influences the other two missions of universities – teaching and outreach. In the former, research generates knowledge that can be incorporated into teaching methods and content (Thorsten, 2017). Additionally, research findings can be applied to solve social problems (Baimyrzaeva, 2018). However, achieving these purposes depends on disseminating research through appropriate means such as publications and presentations. Therefore, research activities and publishing often work together and depend on each other.

This study reports a fair evaluation of research capacity in the sampled universities in Uganda, with the institutions scoring highly on the number of doctoral programs offered, but poorly on the number of publications in high-impact journals. These findings seem to suggest that the doctoral students from the many doctoral programs implied in this study seldom publish, or they publish in low-quality journals. Publications in low-impact journals have a limited readership and carry low academic value. Therefore, such researchers and their findings do not achieve deserved levels of academic recognition. However, such a criterion should be rethought, since the imperative to publish in high-impact journals originates in the global North, ignoring the realities in African universities, and can be considered as another example of academic colonialism (Amutuhaire,

2022b). Universities in the global South should consider developing context-specific criteria for promoting research and the publication of work by local academics and graduates. This may involve the establishment of research publishing houses for such a purpose.

Richardson (2015) holds that mobile students – especially those involved in research – enjoy meeting fellow students to exchange ideas and learn about research perspectives. Although students may access resources for research that exist in their home countries, they tend to become mobile when such research amenities are perceived as lacking or insufficient. This view points to the likelihood of a better research environment in Uganda, compared to that in the sending countries of the international students. However, this contradicts the report of Uganda's National Council for Higher Education (2018), which states that while the number of universities in Uganda has been increasing, research capacity has not increased significantly. This has been attributed, among other things, to the lack of research funds, which in turn, limits the choice and implementation of research projects (Fosci et al., 2019). Considering the NCHE standards, every university in Uganda should commit at least 10% of their total expenditure to research activities. However, this requirement remains unmet by most universities, which is why many HEIs in Uganda (mainly public universities) depend on donor funds to facilitate research activities.

The research situation in the sampled universities reflects the research environment in Uganda as a country. Uganda's gross expenditure on research and development is 0.17% of GDP (Fosci et al., 2019), which is way below the recommended 1% (Economic Commission for Africa, 2018). In comparison, the average spending on research and development for the African continent is 0.42% of GDP (OECD, 2015), suggesting that Uganda's commitment to improving research output is questionable. This is reflected by the weak economic capacity of the country, and the failure to prioritize knowledge creation. It is clear that the future of every country now lies in investment in knowledge creation and dissemination (Ifeanyi, 2021; Kefela, 2010).

Considering the above issues, Uganda's low level of research capacity may not be sufficient to explain the flow of students into the country. However, other factors associated with the research environment may provide a clearer picture, such as the language used in the arena of research and publication – which is predominantly English. Uganda's language policy has prioritized English as the only language to be used in educational institutions (Nankindu et al., 2015), which gives

Uganda's universities a comparative advantage in research and publication opportunities, compared to other regional universities that use other languages. This factor is likely to influence mobility decisions by students from Rwanda (Tilak, 2015), which recently changed from French to English as a medium of instruction in educational institutions (Samuelson & Freedman, 2010; Trines, 2019). A similar claim is valid for Burundi, where the language of instruction in educational institutions remains French, yet the desire of Burundians to learn English remains high (Nizonkiza, 2005).

Vavrus and Pekol (2015) explain that universities that use English as the primary language are better positioned to become leaders in terms of research and publications. This is because the research environment in universities globally is unequal, and is conducted primarily in Anglo-American English (Marginson & Xu, 2021). This has created centers and peripheries in terms of knowledge production and consumption (Rodriguez, 2013). In effect, the knowledge production contributions of scholars from universities and economies in the global South are marginalized and minimized (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015), besides the fact that indigenous knowledge production is excluded (Marginson & Xu, 2021). This deficit demonstrates the limitations of the Eurocentric model of university education that has been implemented in many parts of the world and has left no room for 'other knowledge' to thrive. As Altbach (1987) argues, knowledge must be produced and disseminated globally, and every area of the world should play a part in the global knowledge network. While it is understandable that having strong research universities in the weaker economies is less likely (Altbach, 2007) – at least for now – it is desirable to develop research capacities for these parts of the world, in order for them to participate in the world's knowledge systems. East Africa, for example, could be encouraged to form regional research and academic collaborations to build sufficient competencies in specific fields and promote participation in global science endeavors. This understanding negates the existing internationalization strategy that emphasizes neoliberal dimensions (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2021a).

The historical aspect of MU as the oldest university in East Africa (Ricart-Huguet, 2022) coupled with its position in university rankings (Times Higher Education's World University Rankings, 2022) demonstrates that MU is a reputable institution. With a good reputation, MU is positioned to attract more international students, research funding, and international research collaborations compared to any younger, upcoming university. Therefore, universities like the University of

Burundi and the National University of Rwanda, established in 1964 and 1963, may not exhibit comparable research capacity. On the other hand, younger institutions in Uganda have more outstanding 'linguistic capital' (O'Regan, 2022) because they conduct their teaching and research activities in English, which has been accepted as the language of science, research, and publication (Altbach, 2013; Márquez & Porras, 2020). This reveals an inequality in which Uganda is favored by historical factors more than other East African partners.

VII.7. Resources for universities in Uganda

According to Cadena et al. (2018), resources such as internet speed, availability of computers, and play and recreational facilities affect the quality of HE. The present study therefore explored the availability of university resources that influence the quality of HE in Uganda. Respondents were asked to rate their experience of four possible parameters to assess the availability of resources in the university based on a five-point Likert scale. The Likert scale included five options, namely strong disagreement (SD) (1), disagreement (D) (2), neutral (N) (3), agreement (A) (4), and strong agreement (SA) (5) (Question 7, Appendix 1). The mean score was computed by adding the results for each item and dividing the total by the number of responses. A mean score of 3 demonstrated the objectivity of the metric used to assess resource availability in the sampled universities in Uganda. Since the items are positively phrased, a mean value of greater than 3 represents satisfaction with the level of availability of the resources in the university; a mean value of less than 3 represents dissatisfaction with the availability of the resources; and a mean value of 3 represents neutrality. Table 7.11 presents the descriptive statistics that were obtained.

Table 7.11: Descriptive statistics on respondents' self-rating of resources availability in the sampled universities in Uganda.

Item No.	Indicator of research resources	Category	Number (percent)	Number (cumulative percent)	Mean	Standard deviation
7a	My university has enough play and recreational facilities	SD	01 (0.5)	12 (5.6)	4.05	0.75
		D	10 (5.1)			
		N	14 (7.2)	14 (7.2)		
		A	124 (63.6)			
		SA	46 (23.6)	170 (87.2)		
7b	The university has satisfactory institutional security policies	SD	02 (1.0)	07 (3.6)	4.12	0.74
		D	05 (2.6)			
		N	16 (8.2)	16 (8.2)		
		A	117 (60)			
		SA	55 (28.2)	172 (88.2)		
7c	The university has many digitized operational processes	SD	08(4.1)	79 (40.5)	2.87	0.97
		D	71 (36.4)			
		N	64 (32.8)	64 (32.8)		
		A	42 (21.5)	52 (26.6)		
		SA	10 (5.1)			
7d	There are enough computers in the computer labs for students at my university	SD	164 (84.1)	183 (93.8)	1.28	0.77
		D	19 (9.7)			
		N	5 (2.6)	5 (2.6)		
		A	3 (1.5)	07 (3.6)		
		SA	4 (2.1)			

Table 7.11 shows only four indicators of those used to assess the resources available in the sampled universities in Uganda (Question 7, Appendix 1). Other indicators of university resources that were considered in this study (although not included in Table 7.11), are internet speed, enough lecture theatres, workshops, and laboratories.

Table 7.11 gives a mixed view regarding university resources, showing that some resources are available and others are not. For example, in items 7a and 7b (i.e., play and recreational facilities, and institutional security policies, respectively), the mean values obtained are above three (i.e., 4.05 and 4.12, respectively). Thus, respondents agreed that these resources are available in their universities. On the other hand, in items 7c and 7d (i.e., digitization of university process and availability of computers), the mean values are less than 3 (i.e., 2.87 and 1.28) and suggest that the availability of such facilities has not attained the desired level. Further, respondents' views regarding the availability of resources in universities are concentrated around the mean values, as shown by low standard deviation values, which are all less than one (between 0.74 and 0.97). This

suggests that international students in the sample perceive the availability of resources to a similar extent. Thus, based on mean and standard deviation values, the findings indicate that some resources are available while others are not, and in some cases, the respondents were undecided.

The cumulative percentages regarding the availability of resources in universities in Uganda provide a picture similar to that obtained from the mean values. For example, the mean values indicate that there are enough play and recreational facilities in universities in Uganda (item 7a), and 87.2% of the sampled respondents agree (or strongly agree) that their university has enough of these resources. For the item on the digitization of university operational processes (item 7c), the mean values suggest that many university processes still need to be digitized. The same picture is shown by the cumulative percentage, in which 79% of the respondents disagreed (or strongly disagreed) with the statement that the university operational processes in their universities are sufficiently digital. A similar view was reported by the Higher Education Officer at the National Council for Higher Education:

> Universities in Uganda, especially the public ones, have poor infrastructure. The buildings are dilapidated, and there is limited accommodation and lecture space in some of the universities. The ICT infrastructure in public and private universities, e.g., e-libraries and digital resources, is still underdeveloped. (Interview with NCHE official, December 15th, 2022).

The state of infrastructure, especially in the older public universities, relates to the effect of the SAPs, which diverted government focus from HE to primary and secondary levels of education in Africa, as explained by Schattock (2010). Additionally, Rivers et al. (2015) describe the various factors that have limited progress concerning the adoption of ICTs in African universities. The availability of such facilities is essential for the smooth operation of the university, but is also likely to influence international students' choice of host institution. The quality and quantity of facilities in a university, as shown in this study, can influence institutional capacity to attract international students.

The items under question seven (Appendix 1) were aggregated into an average index, RAiU (Resource Availability in Universities) to present a comprehensive picture regarding the availability of resources in the sampled universities in Uganda. The aggregate index was computed by summing up responses to items 7a to 7h (section B in Appendix 1) and dividing the total by the number of items (i.e., 8). This statistic provides a generalized view of how respondents interpreted

resource availability in their university. Table 7.12 presents the descriptive statistics for this question.

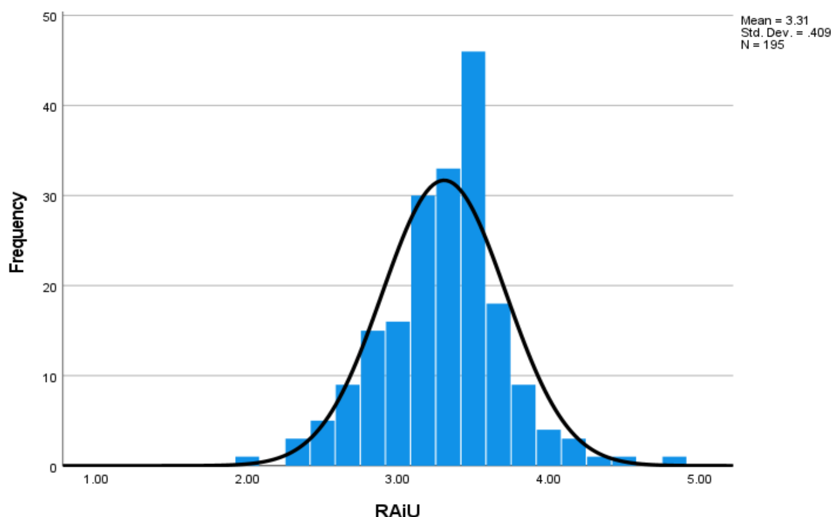
Table 7.12: Overall descriptive statistics on university resources in Uganda.

Statistic		Value
Mean		3.30
95% confidence interval	Upper	3.36
	Lower	3.25
Median		3.33
Standard deviation		0.40
Range		2.83
Skewness		0.001

Table 7.12 shows some overall descriptive statistics about resource availability in sampled universities. As noted earlier, some resources have been made available to the satisfaction of the respondents, while others are not yet available. This explains why the overall mean value for this question is only slightly greater than 3 (mean = 3.30), suggesting that respondents were mainly undecided about resource availability, although there is some tendency towards agreement that some of the stated resources have been developed. The mean has a lower limit of 3.25 and an upper limit of 3.36 at the 95% significance level, further suggesting the tendency towards availability of resources, although with a degree of indecision.

These opinions are concentrated around the mean (since the standard deviation is low, i.e., 0.40). This same finding is shown by the value of the range (2.83), which is also low, indicating that respondents' views are not so different from each other. Furthermore, respondents' views on resource availability are normally distributed with a negligible positive skew (skewness = 0.001). These findings indicate almost equal tendencies regarding the availability or absence of the stated resources in the sampled universities. The distribution of this data is shown in Figure 7.7.

Figure 7.7: *Distribution of international students' views on resources available in universities in Uganda.*



This mixed interpretation can be clarified by the views obtained through interviews. A Rwandan international student, for example, commended the provision for sports and recreational activities at KIU, as stated below:

> My university supports us to do sports activities, offering us opportunities to develop our talents. I am on the basketball team of the university. Many student associations unite students with shared interests. For international students, this is very important; it allows international students to feel at home while eliminating the risk of loneliness and homesickness… (Interview with a Rwandan national studying at KIU, November 14th, 2022).

Allen and Lyons (2018) support this idea, arguing that sports facilities are vital for international students because they enable them to gain a sense of belonging. A strong sense of belonging makes international students feel secure and comfortable, and contributes to their positive functioning in society (Chervonsky & Hunt, 2019). Allen and Lyons (2018) contend that participation in sports allows international students to maintain their physical fitness and retain a sense of their heritage by engaging in everyday recreational activities that are particulate to their cultures. The same authors further explain that sports activities allow international students to socialize, providing a pathway to help them in adapting to the new environment and culture. Students also know that academic studies should be supplemented with extracurricular activities, including a variety of options (Brooks & Everett, 2009). Therefore, institutions with enough facilities through which students can socialize, express their cultural heritage, and maintain physical health are better recruiters of international students (Yoh et al., 2008). Further, existing competition in the labor

market requires students to do more in order to 'stand out from the crowd' (Hall & Appleyard, 2011). Therefore, an institution that offers opportunities to stand out attracts more students, from both domestic and international backgrounds.

Respondents in this study rated resources related to students' security, and play and recreational facilities as high in Uganda's universities. According to the standards stipulated by Uganda's NCHE, a university should have sports facilities, including sports fields that meet the standards for different sports. There should also be a spacious conference hall, a functional library, and facilities for disabled students and a students' union organization (NCHE, 2014). According to the NCHE (2018) report, there has been a general improvement in the quality of HE resources in Uganda, although specific issues deserve attention. The NCHE (2018) report indicates the need for improving library and laboratory spaces, as well as student accommodation facilities. The report notes that many universities are withdrawing from the provision of student welfare services such as accommodation, feeding, and health, and leaving these services to the private sector. However, such facilities are usually crowded and located in noisy places, which are not conducive to student wellbeing.

An informant from MU's international student office claimed that the university's resources are still insufficient. He declared that:

> ..The university buildings are dilapidated, and lecture rooms for some academic units are not enough, which forces students to scramble for the available space. There are also no accommodation facilities dedicated to international students, and this exposes international students to non-secure public spaces. It is usually challenging for an international student to secure accommodation amidst stiff competition from the domestic students…. (Interview with official from the international students officer at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The quality of a university is affected by resources directly linked to teaching and research, as well as other resources to support students' academic and overall personal growth and career development (ICEF Monitor, 2018a). Zereza (2021) asserts that student resources in African universities are substandard and do not always match growth in enrollments and the number of academic programs offered. One of the issues pointed out by that author is the low investment in ICT infrastructure that seriously hampered the delivery of services, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. This claim reflects the findings of the present study, where the majority of

respondents indicated the absence of computers in universities in Uganda, and the low level of digitization of operational processes.

According to the 2018/19 NCHE report, there is only one computer for every ten students in HEIs in Uganda (NCHE, 2018). While this level may be acceptable according to Ugandan standards, it is inappropriate based on global computer usage recommendations, which indicate that there should be a computer for every five students (Woldegiorgis & Amutuhaire, 2023). In addition, there is a poorly developed ICT infrastructure, high bandwidth costs, unreliable electricity supply, and limited internet connectivity, all of which limit the usage of ICTs in education (Woldegiorgis & Amutuhaire, 2022). Further, flimsy ICT policies and guidelines in universities do not support the desired improvement of student access to computers. As a result, the access of university students to computers and their usage thereof have not reached satisfactory levels. At the same time, many university educators in Uganda have limited computer and internet-enabled knowledge regarding their pedagogical practice (Kamya & Otim, 2019).

While this study reports that the respondents are satisfied with security arrangements, the NCHE (2018) report indicates that accommodation facilities are sometimes in insecure localities. This further contradicts the claims of Hermann (2013) that the peaceful environment in Uganda has helped its universities to attract international students. Perhaps, the type of security being referred to in that study is national security, in which Uganda is 'safer' compared to the home countries of the international students, for example, Somalia, South Sudan, and the DRC. National security is one of the factors that shape inbound mobility in Egypt (Marei, 2021), and it has comparable contributions in East Africa.

According to the ICEF Monitor (2018c), in addition to the quality of education, availability of employment opportunities, and networking, mobile students consider where they need to live, the cost of transport and accommodation, and security. Such non-academic issues are important, since they influence students' decisions and welfare as they study in various institutions. The same report indicates that IT services, social life facilities, and study facilities influence student decisions when choosing where to study. Based on the findings of this study, it seems probable that universities in Uganda need to improve the quality of their services, especially concerning resource provision. This finding, however, should not be viewed as trivializing institutional differences and existing

capacity in some HEIs in Uganda. For example, KIU has modern lecture halls and there is a good library at MU, among other facilities.

The study findings indicate that, contrary to popular perceptions that the quality of HE in Africa is 'the worst' globally (Aina, 2010), strides are being taken towards enabling institutions to provide quality HE (Acan, 2023). Based on the responses of the international students in this study, their mobility is influenced by, among other things, a university's reputation which is influenced by resource availability in such universities. Universities in the East African region are represented among the top-ranked universities worldwide, according to the Times Higher Education's World University Rankings (2022). The existence of these institutions is what drives intra-African student mobility. It brings the realization that students do not have to migrate to the global North in order to obtain quality HE, but could rather consider mobility within Africa. Stakeholders can and should develop the existing institutions further in order to accommodate students in search of international education in Africa.

VII.8. Conclusion

This chapter has explored Uganda's HE system and how it influences student flows within the region. Different aspects of university education were considered. As discussed in this chapter, teaching in the sampled universities in Uganda attracts significant numbers of international students to the country. This is complemented by universities with a high reputation at the continental level. The sampled universities have a high research output, a high proportion of academics qualified to the doctoral level, and a variety of academic programs for international students to choose from. A considerable percentage of the student respondents in this study indicated satisfaction with the HE services available in their chosen universities in Uganda.

Further, the historical factors associated with Uganda as a center for HE in East and Central Africa during the colonial period continue to draw international students into Uganda. This underscores the historical and colonial dynamics that influence ISM in Africa, which cannot be perfectly explained by borrowing lessons from the abundant studies on South–to–North ISM. Although Uganda has made efforts to improve its HE systems, there is room for improvement regarding services in Uganda's universities. For example, the study found that international students did not precisely perceive university resources as being satisfactory.

Respondents in this study are satisfied with the quality of HE provided by the selected universities in Uganda, and the links the universities have with the society. Thus, while there are weaknesses associated with Uganda's HE systems, there are also strengths that can be exploited to further develop education, particularly in the East African region. The next chapter presents and discusses East Africa's levels of student mobility in the light of social class. The chapter explores the extent to which households of high social class tend to reproduce their status by facilitating their children to become internationally mobile.

CHAPTER EIGHT: INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MOBILITY AND SOCIAL CLASS REPRODUCTION IN EAST AFRICA

VIII.0. Introduction

Social class used to be defined based on one's relationship to the means of production, in that a person either *owned* the means of production (bourgeoisie), or *sold* their labor (proletariat) (Manstead, 2018). That definition uses Marxist terms and is based on Western societies; it was later abandoned as traditional occupations continued to shrink and were replaced with new occupations, such as middle-class managers and professionals (Savage et al., 2013). Today, social class divisions are based on wealth, or social and cultural capital (Manstead, 2018). These three issues are related, and one leads to the other. For example, wealth depends on household income, and measures how many material resources are available in a given household (Kaiser et al., 2017). The distribution of such materials creates some 'cultural identity', such that the acquisition of specified materials is associated with specific classes (social capital) (Klaus et al., 2011).

The present chapter examines the influence of the social class of international students on their mobility, by considering some of the concepts that influence the social class of international students in Uganda. This goal was achieved by exploring the education level of the parents, their employment status, and the household income. The chapter also discusses the findings of some earlier studies on social class and compares them to the findings of this study. For example, Stankovic et al. (2016) report that ISM depends on their social class, and Brooks and Waters (2009) suggest that the intention to reproduce social class is the incentive behind ISM. With increasing participation rates in HE globally – whereby even students from lower social classes are able to seek a university education, it is anticipated that the percentage of lower social class students among the mobile ones would increase. The chapter presents each aspect of the topic in turn.

VIII.1. Parents' education level

International students participants in this study were asked to report on their parents' education level, as this could help to determine their social class. While acknowledging that education systems differ for different countries, the following classifications were used:

- Did not go to school

- Did not finish high school
- Did not finish high school but completed a technical/vocational program
- Is a high school graduate
- Completed high school and a technical/vocational program
- Finished less than two years of college
- Finished a two-year college program or more/ including an associate degree or equivalent
- College graduate (4- or 5-year program)
- Master's degree (or other postgraduate training)
- Doctoral degree (PhD, MD, EdD, or DVM)

Respondents could also specify their parents' qualifications if the particular level was not included in the list provided. Table 8.1 summarizes the level of education of the respondents' parents.

Table 8.1: Education level of parents of international students in Uganda.

Level of education	Father		Mother	
	Number	%	Number	%
Did not go to school	00	00	03	1.5
Did not finish high school	03	1.5	06	3.1
Did not finish high school; completed a vocational program	03	1.5	03	1.5
High school graduate	04	2.1	08	4.1
Completed high school and a technical/vocational program	13	6.7	07	3.6
Finished less than two years of college	07	3.6	20	10.3
Two-year college graduate, or more (e.g. Associate degree)	31	15.9	43	22.1
College graduate (4- or 5-year program)	90	46.2	96	49.2
Master's degree (or other postgraduate training)	36	18.5	06	3.1
Doctoral degree (PhD, MD, EdD, DVM, DDS, JD)	08	4.1	03	1.5
Total	**195**	**100.0**	**195**	**100.0**

A close look at Table 8.1 reveals that no international students reported a father who never went to school, while 1.5% reported a mother who never attended school. Further, 3.1% of international students revealed that their mothers do not hold a high school completion certificate, and 2.1% of the fathers are in the same category. This suggests that the mothers of the sampled international students are more likely to lack school education than the fathers. However, more mothers (10.3%) than fathers (3.6%) had completed college education of less than two years. A similar picture is obtained for two-year college qualifications, in which more mothers (22.1%) than fathers (15.9%) had attained such a qualification.

The bachelor's qualification (college graduate from a four- or five-year program) is the most popular qualification among both parents, with slightly more mothers (49.2%) holding this qualification than fathers (46.2%). Considering postgraduate qualifications, 18.5% and 4.1% of fathers hold master's and doctoral degrees, respectively, compared to 3.1% and 1.5% of mothers who have attained similar qualifications. These results indicate that while more mothers than fathers have lower educational qualifications, the situation is reversed as one ascends the qualification hierarchy. The bar graphs in the following figures sum up these results for both fathers and mothers of the participating international students.

Figure 8.1: *Level of education of fathers of international students in Uganda.*

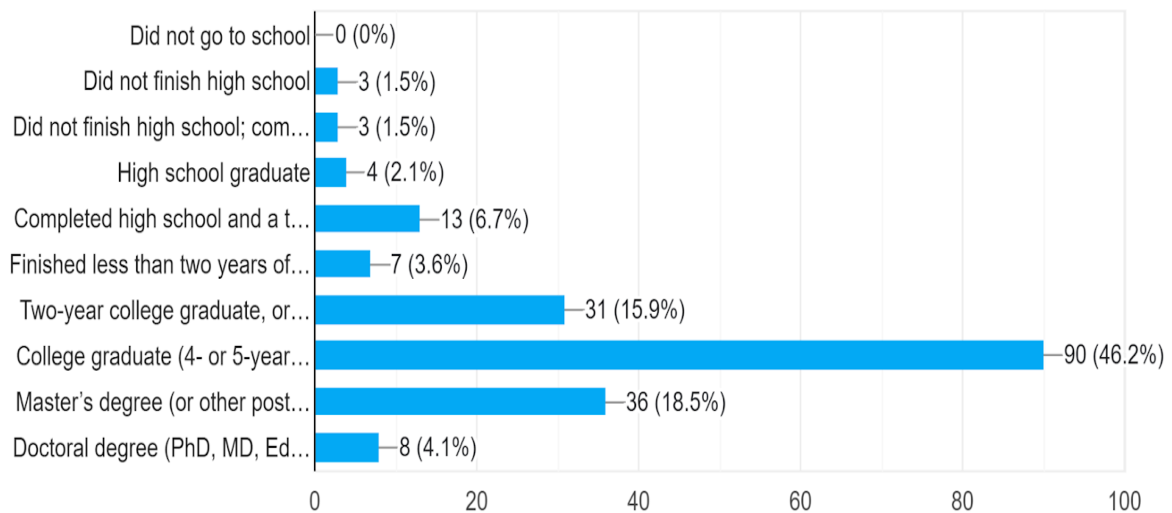
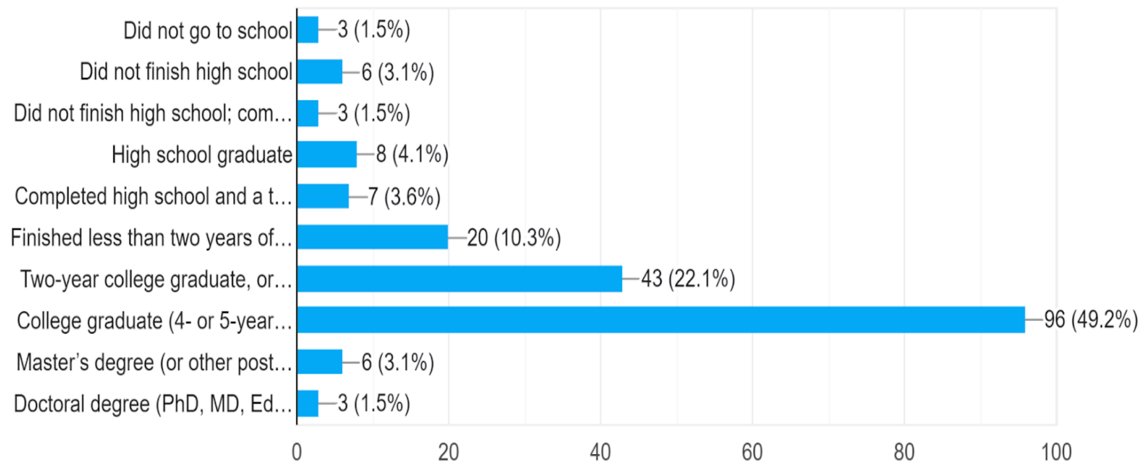


Figure 8.2: *Level of education for mothers of international students in Uganda.*



The figures show that the international students' parents (both mothers and fathers) have a college undergraduate degree – almost half the sample for both genders. Based on Hardy and Marcotte's (2020) assertion, individuals who never finished high school belong to the lower social class, those who attained a HE qualification (undergraduate or postgraduate degree) are in the high social class, and those who lie between the two classes constitute the middle class. Using the parents' educational background as a determinant of social class, the international students sample comprises students from all social classes: lower, middle and high social classes. In this study, 3.0% and 6.1% of respondents have fathers and mothers (respectively) in the lower social class (the first three rows in Table 8.1); 28.3% and 40.1% of the respondents have fathers and mothers in the middle social class, and 68.8% and 53.8% of the respondents indicated that their fathers and mothers are in the higher social class.

In this study, the average of the parents' level of education (PLoE) was computed by summing up the responses to questions 8a and 8b i.e., the father's and mother's highest level of education, respectively (section D in Appendix 1), and dividing them by two. The values obtained were used to plot a bar graph in Figure 8.3.

Figure 8.3: *Average level of education of parents of international students.*

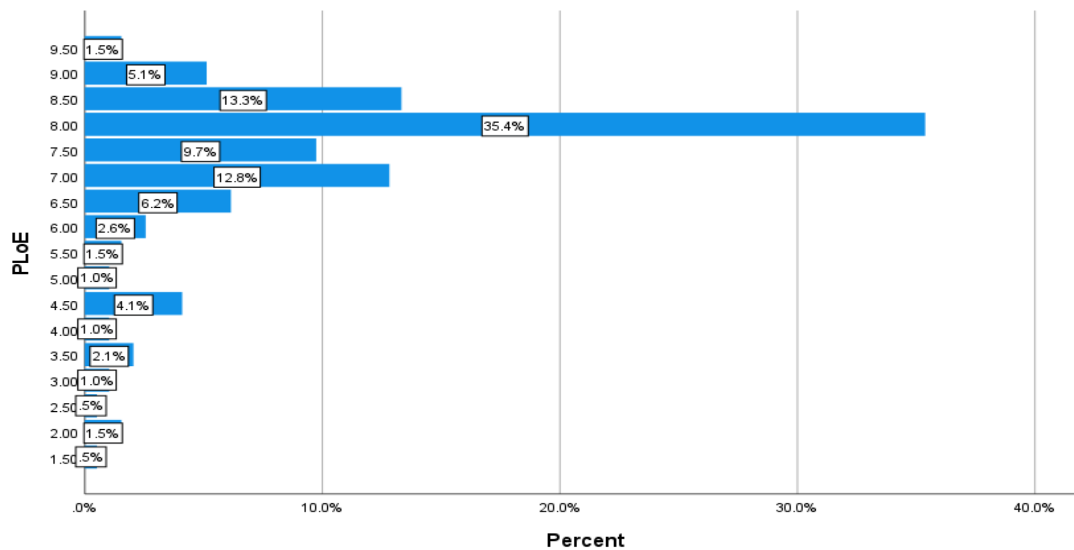


Figure 8.3 shows the average educational level of the parents of international students (PloE) and the corresponding percentages. According to the classification of educational level in VIII.I, an educational level at Bachelor level and above is coded as 8, while an educational level below high school graduation is coded as 3. The educational levels between high school certificate and bachelor's level have codes greater than three but less than 8. Based on these criteria and considering Figure 8.3, 55.3% (108) of respondents have parents whose educational level is at least a bachelor's degree, indicating that they belong to the high social class, as Hardy and Marcotte (2020) suggested. At the same time, 41.2% (80) of respondents belong to the middle class, with parents having an education level of at least a high school certificate but not beyond a two-year college certificate. Only 3.5% (07) of these international students have parents whose education level is lower than a high school certificate, thus being classified in the lower social class.

Darin-Mattsson et al. (2017) also argue that a student's social class can be determined based on the parents' level of education – that is, parents who attain a high level of education belong to a high social class, and so do their children. The present study reports that most of the parents of the international students' considered in the study have a level of education that classifies them as belonging to the middle or higher social class. With the understanding based on Darin-Mattsson et al. (2017), it can be deduced that most of the international students involved in the study belong to the middle or high social class.

This finding is congruent with previous studies on parents' level of education and student mobility. According to OECD (2012), a maximum of 20% of students whose parents have low education levels can navigate the education system and attain a degree. Around 60% of students with at least one highly educated parent succeed in attaining a degree. Similar findings are reported by Stankovic et al.'s (2016) study on the social dimensions of studying in Montenegro. Those authors report that the parents' level of education influences student mobility, arguing that students with highly educated parents are more likely to study abroad than those with less educated parents. This likelihood is associated with high levels of motivation and supportive plans to study in foreign countries. In particular, parents who hold HE qualifications value education more, compared to less educated parents (Lamar University, 2021). Furthermore, students with less educated (employed) parents tend to believe that HE qualifications are not worth the cost, and some believe that they do not need HE qualifications. These factors would undoubtedly limit students' motivations to enter HE at all or, later, to contemplate HE mobility. On the other hand, some recent studies (Brooks & Waters, 2022; Lipura & Collins, 2020; Yang, 2018b) have shown that ISM opportunities have opened up to students from many backgrounds, and that ISM is no longer the preserve of the upper and middle classes. Students with a lower social class from countries in the global South are sometimes internationally mobile (Yang, 2018b).

Parents play a significant role in students' mobility decisions (ICEF Monitor, 2019b), and indeed, the appropriateness of such a decision depends, among other things, on their own level of education. They act as role models for their children (Eldegwy et al., 2022), participate in the application process, and also meet the costs of education for their children, most of the time (ICEF Monitor, 2019b). However, their participation and effectiveness depends on how well-educated they are. A highly educated parent is better positioned to influence their child's decision to study abroad, as well as being able to meet the high costs of attaining education in a foreign country. Consider the following response from a Rwandan student belonging to the high social class, studying at MU:

> My original intention was to study at the University of Toronto in Canada, where my father had his university education. However, the admission procedures were complicated, and I could not secure admission to the University of Toronto. That is how I ended up applying for admission to Makerere. (Interview with a Rwandan international student at MU, November 16th, 2022).

This response reveals the enduring attraction of the global North to people from the global South. It is because of such sentiments that African students tend to flock to HEIs in the global North (section IV.I). While North Africa exhibits a great deal of outbound ISM with students destined for universities in the global North (ICEF Monitor, 2023; Warden, 2022), the situation is not any different for East Africa based on this study's findings. Thus, while intra-African ISM is growing, it is implicitly shaped by the attractiveness of the global North. The student's response quoted above shows that the relationship between his father and his alma mater – the University of Toronto, influenced the student's first choice of a university abroad. The student would have been studying in Canada, had the admission procedures not proven to be challenging. Deep in this response is a belief that only institutions in the global North provide high quality HE (Gbenga, 2017), which should be sought by Africans of high social class. Enrolling in an international educational institution shows that one has developed 'good taste' (Bourdieu, 1984) in all attributes that differentiate social classes. Therefore, high-class families use their children's international education status to accentuate and propagate their own social strata and positions.

To explain the influence of social class on ISM trends, Vavrus and Pekol (2015) argue that qualifications from highly ranked institutions offer more outstanding symbolic capital that can easily be converted into more outstanding economic capital, since employers prefer such qualifications. Therefore, ISM in East Africa demonstrates a case of class reproduction by affluent families, where children educated in foreign institutions are meant to carry the family legacy forward. Such students tend to be enrolled in the best African universities (even though there may be few on the continent).

Further, the above response by the student from Rwanda suggests that ISM can be motivated by an 'escape response' (Brooks & Waters, 2009). Students sometimes fail to gain admission to the desired institution or program in their home country (Waters, 2010) or a foreign country, as with this student. Rather than opt for alternative academic programs and home institutions, such students try their chances in foreign countries with comparable institutions and quality educational offerings. By doing so, Brooks and Waters (2009) hold that international education gives students a second chance to obtain the desired qualifications. However, contrary to Brooks and Waters' (2009) report – where international students were escaping from 'failure' experienced in their home country – the 'failure' in this study was experienced with an institution in a foreign country.

However, in both cases, it is indicated that the 'failure' does not lead to a 'downward' shift, but rather encourages students to 'search sideways' in seeking an institution comparable to their first choice.

These findings also echo the 'othering' that is present in international education, with the global North at the center and the global South at the periphery. African institutions are selected only as the last resort, when other factors limit the possibilities of studying in the global North. Implicitly, the unequal terrain between Africa and the global North militates against intra-African ISM. This is because the global North has universities that encompass more outstanding symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1984) than most of those in Africa. According to Vavrus and Pekol (2015), studying in the elite universities of the global North positions students strategically in society, and hence influences their social class. The same authors claim that most universities that have assumed world-class positions in the global North have better funding and facilities than those in the global South. They further argue that the chances to study, do research and publish are more likely when one studies in the global North, than anywhere else. Thus, studying in such universities brings the student more economic and social benefits than a qualification from a home institution is likely to bring. Considering that only students from the higher social class have opportunities to study in this way, it perpetuates a legacy of an unequal society. The concern should be about expanding the benefits of ISM to disadvantaged students, in order to transcend social class reproduction.

Furthermore, the response of the Rwandan student quoted above raises thoughts about the influence of the global political economy on HE pointed out by Vavrus and Pekol (2015). This view marginally recognizes the few high-quality institutions that exist in East Africa. It shows that African institutions continue to be subordinated to those in the global North, even when they can contribute to the continent's growth. This view may partly be attributed to the feeling that Africans need to depend on foreign countries in order to develop their own capacities (Badawi, 2017). Further, the situation suggests that institutions in the global South can be only 'substitute' international study destinations, and not priority destination institutions. Mohamedbhai (2018) explains that this opinion will most likely continue to be witnessed in cases of intra-African mobility. Concerns should, therefore, be about whether intra-African mobility should replicate the features, or whether it should rectify the issues witnessed in south-to-north student mobility.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2021b) holds that the educational changes in Africa since the 1960s constitute a struggle for "inclusion in the European game" (p. 884). For example, the marginalization of Africa and its institutions – as was the case during colonial times (Allman, 2019) – is well indicated in the student's response being considered. Such perceptions continue to ignore the contribution of African institutions as players in knowledge production and global development. In effect, epistemic freedom becomes limited, and without it, Africa may not achieve political, cultural, and economic freedoms (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2021b). Further, according to Zeleza (2012), the struggle for Africa's 'weak' institutions to become world class is counterproductive. These institutions are likely to dedicate all their efforts to achieving the 'world-class' status at the expense of consolidating their roles in national and intellectual development, as Zeleza (2012) explains.

The response of the Rwandan student also suggests that parents whose education was attained in a foreign country are more likely to influence their children to attain education abroad; besides the fact that the student may want to follow the parents' example (Eldegwy et al., 2022; Saarikallio-Torp & Wiers-Jenssen, 2010). According to Saarikallio-Torp and Wiers-Jenssen (2010), a parent's prior experience abroad is vital for the student's accumulation of 'mobility capital', and like any other alumni, the parents serve as brand ambassadors for their alma mater (ICEF Monitor, 2018b). Mobility capital, a term coined by Cobbett (2007), is accumulated by students starting early – in the form of vacations with parents, or when the parents are themselves mobile. Therefore, a parent's experience abroad as a student or as an employee, influences a child's decision as a future mobile student. A student's prior exposure to a mobility experience lowers the threshold for them to undertake HE studies abroad (Saarikallio-Torp & Wiers-Jenssen, 2010).

The present study reports similar results as those found by Saarikallio-Torp and Wiers-Jenssen (2010) in their investigation of ISM patterns, student support systems, and labor market outcomes in the Nordic countries. Their study reports that mobile students from Norway, Denmark, Iceland and Sweden are more likely to have more educated parents. However, the connection was even more pronounced for people in Finland and the Faroe Islands. The authors report a higher relative difference between the parents of mobile and non-mobile students among Finnish and Faroese students, than in other Nordic countries. The scenario was explained in terms of financial insecurities arising from Finland's support scheme for HE students. There are no extra forms of support for mobile students regarding tuition fees or travelling costs in Finland, as is the case in

other Nordic countries. The high costs associated with mobility in Finland are therefore only affordable to highly educated parents, with well-paying jobs

While there are minimal support systems for mobile students in East Africa, the present study concludes that mobility is related to the parents' level of education, suggesting that broader national contextual factors are important determinants for mobility decisions. In the case of the Faroe Islands, the level of education pursued by a student and the type of study programs offered abroad versus at home, account for the observed difference in mobility for students with educated and less educated parents. Few study programs are provided in the Faroe Islands, especially at the bachelor's degree level and in fields dominated by students from a lower social class. At the same time, few master's degree programs are available in specified fields. Therefore, highly educated parents are the only ones positioned to send their children to foreign countries to attain the desired qualifications that are not available at home.

An important issue that could be raised from these findings relates to Waters' (2010) claim that international students are sometimes associated with "failure at the start of their international study, but they become successful on returning to their home country" (p. 4). In other words, international education can offer students from the lower social class opportunities to improve their social status. After their education abroad, such students return home with higher chances of attaining well-paying jobs and higher earnings (Sisavath, 2021) that can enable their families to transcend social stratification. Therefore, ISM is not entirely about social class reproduction (Di Petrio, 2020) but also about resistance to social class positioning (Frigotto, 2010; Iorio & Pereira, 2018).

Considering the assumptions of social class reproduction theory (Bourdieu 1986), this new insight can impact future generations. International education experiences enable students to accumulate enough symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) to influence their family members' lives, both in the present and in the future. Therefore, to improve the quality of life for many people in an ongoing way, lower-class students should be supported in accessing international education opportunities, e.g. through scholarships.

However, Hardy and Marcotte's (2020) position on educational attainment as an indicator of social class is based on the US context, which differs from the African one. In the economies of the global North, high levels of education lead to higher employment outcomes (Hajdari & Feta, 2022), which

means higher incomes, material possessions, and social class. However, this pattern remains questionable in most African countries, which face high levels of underemployment and graduate unemployment (ILO, 2021). Thus, besides the parent's education level, other indicators, i.e., the parent's employment status (section VIII.2) and household income (section VIII.3), are relevant for assessing international students' socioeconomic status.

VIII.2. Parents' employment status

Another variable investigated in the present study is the parents' employment status. Respondents were asked to select the term that best describes the employment situation of their father and mother (separately). While responses to these questions were close-ended (Appendix 1, questions 9a & 9b), respondents could insert additional information (in the 'Other' option) that was not included among the available options. Table 8.2 provides an overview of the employment situation of parents of international students in the sampled universities in Uganda basing on Goldthorpe's (1980) class schema.

Table 8.2: Employment situation of parents of international students in Uganda.

Category	Father		Mother	
	Number	%	Number	%
Service class employee (company manager, professional, supervisors etc.)	118	60.5	71	36.4
Routine non-manual class employee (administrator, sales person etc.)	24	12.3	22	11.3
Business/ shop owner with or without employees	86	44.1	35	17.9
Commercial or subsistence farmer	19	9.7	20	10.3
Skilled or unskilled manual workers	00	00	00	00
Homemaker	2	1	96	49.2
Not currently employed, looking for work	5	2.6	08	4.1
Disabled (not working because of disability)	2	1	00	00
Retired	27	13.8	13	6.7
Other (please specify):	03	1.5	00	00

A close examination of the data in Table 8.2 reveals that most parents have some form of occupation, both in the formal and informal sectors. Only 2.6% and 4.1% of the respondents' fathers and mothers (respectively) are unemployed and looking for jobs. Very few (1% of fathers) cannot work due to disabilities (permanent or temporary), while an insignificant number (13.8% of fathers and 6.7% of mothers) have retired.

Notably, almost half of the mothers are not in paid occupations – a total of 49.2% are homemakers, whereas this figure is only 1% of the fathers. This scenario affects the total household income, since the mother's labor usually goes without remuneration when it is committed to homemaking. The other important occupation for both fathers and mothers is in the business world (without or without employees). Over 44% of the respondents' fathers are businessmen, compared to 17.9% of the mothers in the same occupation. For some parents, these occupations complement formal employment. Further, 60.5% of the respondents stated that their fathers worked in the service sector, while 36.4 % of the respondents stated that their mothers worked in the service sector. The field of farming (agriculture), which is viewed as a business for some African households, employs 9.7% of the fathers and 10.3% of the mothers of international students sampled in this study.

The data shows that the international student population in the sampled universities comprises mainly students with parents who are formally employed. Employment status influences the social class of both parents and students, since employment influences household incomes, which is an essential determinant of social class. Ferjan and Jereb (2008) claim that the lower social class usually comprises unemployed individuals and manual laborers. They also argue that business owners constitute the middle class, while the service class employees (lower and high-grade professionals such as administrators, officials and managers) constitute the high social class. This understanding however leaves out home makers. As shown in Table 8.2, I% and 49.2% of the international students in the sample have fathers and mothers that are homemakers. Further, Table 8.2 shows that 72.8% of the fathers and 47.7% of the mothers of students in this study belong in the high social class, based on their employment status. Furthermore, 53.8% of the fathers and 28.2% of the mothers are in the business sector (including farming); hence they are in the middle class. However, people employed in the service sector can also own businesses. Therefore, some people may belong in both the high and middle social classes, based on their employment status. The study also reports that 17.4% of the fathers and 10% of the mothers of students in this study belong to the lower social class basing on their employment status.

An aggregate index i.e., average employment status (QoHES) was computed by summing up the response codes to questions 9a and 9b i.e., the father's and mother's employment status, respectively (section D in Appendix 1), and dividing them by two to obtain an overall picture of the employment status of international students' parents. The findings are presented in Table 8.3.

Table 8.3: Overall employment status of parents of international students.

Category	Number	%
Service class employee	94.5	48.5
Routine non-manual class employee	23	11.8
Business/ shop owner with or without employees	60.5	31
Commercial or subsistence farmer	19.5	10
Skilled or unskilled manual workers	00	00
Homemaker	49	25.1
Not currently employed, looking for work	6.5	3.4
Disabled (not working because of disability)	01	0.5
Retired	20	10.3
Other (please specify):	1.5	0.8

Table 8.3 shows that almost half of the international students' parents (i.e. 48.5%) are employed in the service sector; this category, together with the routine non-manual class employees (11.8%) constitute the higher social class. The rest of the students have parents in the business (31%) or farming (10%) sectors, which constitute the middle class. The least represented are students whose parents are in the lower social class, i.e. skilled or unskilled manual workers (0%), unemployed (3.4%), not working because of disability (0.5%), and retired (10.3%).

In analyzing the factors that limit student mobility, Beerkens et al. (2015) identify financial concerns as one of the main factors. Employment status – as a component of a parent's social class – plays a significant role in the academic life of any student, especially for those whose education costs must be met by the household. Their parents' economic standing (as a result of their employment status) determines the amount of funds that can be committed to education abroad, and thus influences mobility opportunities. A student who is encouraged by a parent to seek international education or to gain employment (like their parent) is banking on building up their 'social capital' (Bourdieu, 1986). Social capital describes the family's social status and positional advantage that are accessible to the potentially mobile student (Tran, 2015). This form of capital increases as one transcends the social class ladder. That is, students in the lower social class have less (or none) of such a form of capital, while those in the higher social class have it aplenty. This implies that ISM will not be accessible to students from the lower social class in equal measure, compared to those in the higher social class.

According to Brand (2015), some effects on the children of unemployed parents include lower self-esteem, poorer health, higher rates of school dropouts, lower academic expectations, and lower performance in school. While such factors do not constitute or determine mobility trends, they may indirectly influence whether or not a student will consider participating in a mobility program. Eldegwy et al. (2022) hold that students usually tend to reproduce their parents' employment status in many professions, including celebrities, artists, sportspeople, engineers, and doctors. Considering the significant role of ISM in influencing future employment opportunities, students also participate in mobility opportunities in order to position themselves in a way that can reproduce their parents' employment types. In this way, mobility is used to reproduce class or status, as opined in the notion of social reproduction theory (Bourdieu 1986).

Similarly, parents 'transfer' their social class to their children (Holmstrom et al., 2011) by enrolling them in academic programs that lead to similar employment opportunities to their own. This happens as students socialize with their parents, acquiring knowledge, experiences and values that influence their educational choices. Therefore, parents' employment status is an essential determinant for a student's educational choices, whether as a mobile student or not. In this study, a student at MU from South Sudan declared:

> My father is a leader in the ruling government, and I would say we are part of the high socioeconomic status. I have never experienced financial challenges associated with my education since my family can afford to pay all the fees for educating me in any country. My family had the funds to educate me in the US, but I preferred studying in Uganda which is cheaper and near home. I want to join politics after my studies and with a degree from MU, I will beat my home trained competitors… (Interview with an international student from South Sudan studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The informant insinuated that his family could have afforded to educate him in the US had it not been that other factors were considered. The response displays the fact that intra-African mobility provides cheaper alternatives for international education than destinations in the global North. However, irrespective of the location, qualifications obtained from prestigious foreign universities have several benefits, ranging from a higher status on return to the home country, to more desirable employment options with domestic and international organizations (Bourdieu, 1986; Waters, 2005). This is a strategy used by families to reproduce social class (as clearly implied in the above response) by educating their children in foreign countries to obtain qualifications that are more valuable in the eyes of employers, compared to similar qualifications offered by home country

institutions (Vavrus & Pekol (2015). For this reason, when African students fail to gain admission to institutions in the global North (see the response from the Rwandan student previously quoted), they continue to pursue international education in African countries, rather than studying at institutions in their home country. However, only students with stable financing (especially from parents with sustainable employment) can afford such an education in a foreign country; thus many potentially internationally mobile students from less affluent backgrounds are excluded.

Even intra-African mobility mirrors inequalities similar to those experienced in south-to-north student mobility, in which students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are disadvantaged (Iorio & Pereira, 2018). Nevertheless, there are some strategies for 'internationalization at home' that can be adopted to minimize these inequalities. Internationalization at home has been defined by Beelen and Jones (2015) as "the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments" (p. 69). Internationalization at home democratizes international education, making it available to all students, not only the few who can afford mobility (Amutuhaire, 2023). It also allows inbound students to promote the internationalization of teaching and learning, and informs practices in incorporating local intercultural learning opportunities into curriculum internationalization (Leask, 2015).

The South Sudanese student's response quoted above reveals another factor influencing ISM, i.e. the geographical distance between the home country and the study destination. These findings agree with previous studies (e.g. Beine et al., 2014; Rodríguez et al., 2011; Sá et al., 2004) which report that distance negatively affects student mobility decisions. In particular, Rodríguez et al. (2011) explain that distance is a proxy indicator for the transportation costs that students consider while choosing study locations, in that distant study destinations are more costly to travel to (Perkins & Neumayer, 2014). The same reason was used to explain the increased flow of Nigerian students into Ghana (Kamran et al., 2019). However, the consideration of distance may be influenced by other factors. As revealed by the informant from South Sudan, his intentions to become a politician require him to maintain contact with his home country. Indeed, he often travels from Uganda to nurture his political ambitions. Therefore, transportation costs become an essential consideration for a study destination.

In addition to students whose study costs are met by their parents, there are others, especially postgraduate students, who are self-funding; such students are not necessarily from affluent families, but those who can find personal ways of funding their HE. While paying for their HE in a foreign country may be challenging, they still opt for it in order to rise out of their current social class to a better one, i.e. students consider ISM as a pathway through which they can transcend social class positioning. Consider the following response from a Tanzanian student at MU:

> I come from a humble family, and my parents struggled to pay for my first degree. I had a job before I left Tanzania, but the salary was low so that I could not afford to buy a car or build a house for my parents, and people continued looking down upon us. I kept applying for scholarships since I had no money for further education. I finally landed a scholarship to study in Uganda […]. Since I will return with a master's acquired in a foreign country, I will get a job with better pay when I return home. Perhaps, I will have a better life after that. (Interview a Tanzanian international student at MU, November 16th, 2022).

This response brings into view an issue that has been ignored in many previous studies (Dias, 2020; Findlay et al., 2006; Waters et al., 2011), which tend to recognize students from advantaged social backgrounds as being the only participants in ISM. Waters et al. (2011) argue that internationally mobile students either have financial security and better social support, or originate from a family that values formal education and credentials. However, the response above indicates that some international students from disadvantaged backgrounds are supported to participate in ISM, e.g. through scholarships. The student quoted above has been exposed to financial insecurities and believes his participation in ISM – thanks to a scholarship – to be redemptive. Therefore, ISM can sometimes serve as a transformative agent to liberate disadvantaged students from the snares of the lower social class. A similar view is expressed by Deuchar (2022) and Xu (2017) who argue that ISM is no longer the preserve of the higher social class in society but is increasingly sought by students from broader social classes and geographical areas. For example, as stated by this informant, participation in ISM was motivated by the desire to transcend his existing social class positioning. This implies that the reasons for participation in ISM are as diverse as the students' social classes and where they hail from.

On the whole, most respondents in the present study demonstrated a higher socioeconomic status (Table 8.3), which confirms Waters et al.'s (2012) claim that ISM tends to retain and reproduce privilege, rather than being a way of "contesting or challenging social hierarchies" (p. 128).

However, as suggested by CST, the voices of all those present and represented must be heard, rather than suppressed (Buckner & Stein, 2020). Therefore, new ways of looking at ISM are needed as the number of students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds continues to grow. For example, as access to lower levels of education has increased in Africa, so the number of HE entrants has also increased (Mohamedbhai, 2014), which equally has implications for ISM.

Irrespective of their social class, students always seek ways in which to make themselves 'stand out from the crowd', and ISM is one such way. All students should be supported in realizing their full potential and have their needs addressed. Consider the view expressed by the former head of Cooperation and Internationalization at the University of Burundi:

> Faculty members who study abroad have a competitive advantage in the job market. They all get employed in well-paying positions or get promoted when they return, improving their earnings. (Interview with the former head of the Cooperation and Internationalization Unit at the University of Burundi, December 2nd, 2022).

The above view contradicts Waters' (2007) and Rizvi's (2000) findings for their studies conducted in Hong Kong and Australia respectively. Those two researchers reported that ISM does not offer a competitive advantage to a graduate upon return to their home country. They attributed this outcome to the employment infrastructure in Hong Kong and Australia. In situations where the job market in a country requires skills that are not obtained from international education, international education is likely not to make any difference. In other words, the job market in the home country may emphasize local competencies over international ones. Additionally, there have been concerns about the low number of adult learners and students with jobs who are involved in ISM programs (Academic Cooperation Association, 2019). Such students experience numerous barriers, such as family and job commitments, that limit their participation in ISM. Since it may be challenging to have such students engaging directly in ISM, bringing the benefits of internationalization to them, e.g. through internationalization at home (Beelen & Jones, 2015), can make a significant difference in their student lives.

As a consequence of stratified remuneration plans and unemployment risks, social class – which depends on employment status – predicts people's levels of wealth, as well as their income stability, security, and prospects (Bukodi & Goldthorpe, 2018). Most of the international students in this study belong to the higher and middle social classes, as their parents are employed in full-time

placements in the formal sector – suggested by Ferjan and Jereb (2008) as an indicator of social class. In line with the tenets of social class reproduction theory (Bourdieu 1986), the rationale for intra-African ISM may be to reproduce status in the society, as in the global North or south-to-north mobility. In other words, members of the higher social class seek foreign qualifications to maintain their status and that of their children. This does not however rule out the fact that some lower social class students use ISM to transcend and improve their social class. Whether accidental or by design, the trend of high social class families using ISM to propagate their status challenges the ethical nature of international education advocated for by CST.

The results of this study support the claims made by other researchers who have demonstrated how social class affects student mobility (Brooks & Waters, 2009; Brooks & Waters, 2011; Findlay et al., 2010; Waters, 2012). For instance, according to Waters (2012), "internationally mobile students are financially secure; have the emotional and material support of family and friends, i.e., they have a lot of 'social capital'; have been raised in a setting that places a high value on formal education and credentials; have highly educated parents; and have travelled abroad as children" (p. 128). In particular, the parent's employment status directly or indirectly affects such opportunities for the student. Current trends in intra-African ISM favor students from advantaged backgrounds, as is the case in many other parts of the world. Stakeholders should focus on improving the inclusion of disadvantaged students in ISM for purposes of equity and diversity which are the core elements of SDG #4 (Tonegwa, 2023).

As opportunities tend to be transferred from parents to their children, the benefits of ISM will remain out of reach for the underprivileged through generations, as long as ISM benefits mainly upper-class students. Social divisions can result if only a few members of society are able to participate in ISM and become successful in their future lives. Those deemed 'not eligible' for ISM will miss benefits, such as better employment opportunities and improved skills, thus possibly transferring conditions of poverty to future generations. The 'inheritance' of poverty threatens the pursuit of equity and leads to economic inefficiencies. Interventions for identifying and mitigating the determinants that reinforce the inheritance of opportunity and poverty for upper and lower social classes (respectively) across generations can lead to enhanced take up of ISM opportunities. Such interventions could take the form of developing more robust policies to reduce the legacy of

poverty. Otherwise, achieving SDG #4 and all other goals directly impacted by education will be limited.

In the face of increasing 'educational inflation' (credentialism) (Nhemachena & Mawere, 2022) and the concomitant devaluation of educational credentials (Araki & Kariya, 2022), workers are increasingly expected to acquire higher qualifications for jobs that were previously performed by people with lower qualifications. As a result, lower-class families are mobilizing resources – with difficulty – to find international education opportunities for their children to stand out and beat the competition for jobs. However, there is no guarantee that foreign educational qualifications will lead to a move up the social ladder, as the employment situation in developing countries appears poor (ILO, 2021). Therefore, more than high symbolic capital (associated with attending an international education) is required to achieve a better future, given the prevailing circumstances in the global South.

VIII.3. Household income level

The present study also explored household income as a determinant of the social class of international students. Since it would be challenging to determine exact dollar amounts, the participating students selected the category or range that best described their family's gross annual household income. This included all income from employment, social security, and support from children or other families, bank interest, retirement accounts, rental property, or investments, all before tax. Figure 8.4 presents the findings obtained.

Figure 8.4: *Household income range for international students in Uganda.*

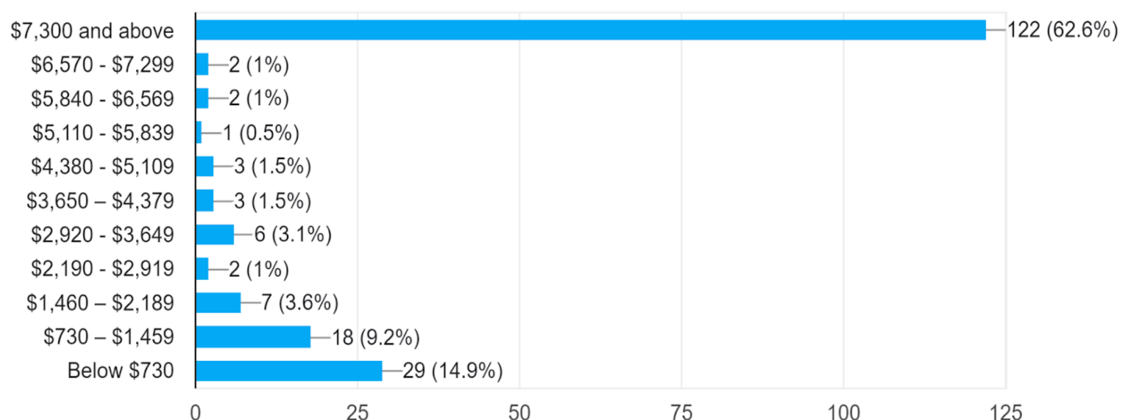
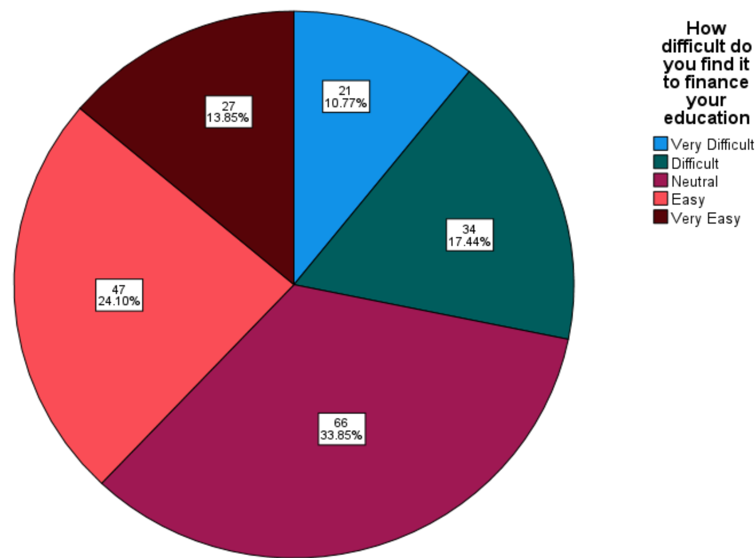


Figure 8.4 shows that most households (62.6%) have an annual household income of above $7,300. According to the African Development Bank [AfDB] (2011), the middle class earns between $2 and $20 per person daily. This translates to an annual income between $730 and $7,300. Therefore, an annual income of less than $730 per person puts one into a lower social class, while an annual income beyond $7,300 puts one into the higher social class. According to this classification, most international students in the sample (62.6%) come from high-class families. These are followed by the middle social class (22.5%); the least represented category are students from families in the lower social class (14.9%). The influence of household income on ISM starts with how household incomes influence enrolment in tertiary education in general. According to the British Council (2014), an increase in household incomes leads to an increase in enrolments in HE. This may have broader effects on ISM in situations where drivers of mobility (such as the search for better quality education or national capacity to provide education) come into play. Therefore, when considering household income (which determines one's social class) as a driver for ISM, one must consider how it interacts with other mobility drivers, for it is the combination with several other factors that inform the ISM trend.

To further clarify financial considerations, participating students were asked to comment about the ease with which they can fund their education. The pie chart in Figure 8.5 shows how students' responses are distributed.

Figure 8.5: *Students' views regarding the ease with which they fund their education.*



The pie chart indicates that about 38% of the respondents found it easy (or very easy) to fund their education, while over 28% found it difficult (or very difficult) to do so. Those who found it easy to finance their education have parents with stable employment (section VIII.2) and belong to a high social class. This is because lower levels of education need to be financed before HE, which is easy for middle and high-class families. In addition, affluent families can enroll their children in high-fee-paying private schools in preparation for study-abroad opportunities later (Brooks & Waters, 2009). This shows that the household income impacts entry into high school and HE and ISM. Families that are able to finance all levels of education belong to the high social class.

This idea corresponds with the information provided by the informant from Burundi's National Commission for Higher Education, who explained as follows:

> …students from rich families in Burundi attend international schools (of which there are many in Bujumbura), which prepares them to study abroad for their education. International schools charge higher fees that are only affordable to high-class families. For the same reason, students who attend foreign institutions for their HE will be from the higher social class. (Interview with official from National Commission for HE in Burundi, December 1st, 2022).

The above testimony shows that ISM is a planned experience, nurtured with the help of the student's family over time, in order to reproduce their social class, as advanced by Waters (2012). This underscores the significance of social and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986) in determining ISM trends. Murphy-Lejeune (2002) explains that the difference between mobile and non-mobile

students is the extent of accumulating these various forms of capital, which are then converted into mobility capital. Mobility capital – i.e., the accumulation of mobility experiences acquired through a family history of mobility, previous personal experiences, and contacts abroad (King et al., 2011) – enables ISM. Mobile students have more mobility capital than their non-mobile counterparts. However, accumulating such capital depends on social status, such that students from high socioeconomic backgrounds have more mobility capital than those from disadvantaged backgrounds (Waters, 2012). This explains this study's low number of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Although intra-African mobility is increasing (Sehoole & Lee, 2021), it has not reduced the divide between high and low socioeconomic backgrounds. In advancing this point of view, this study recommends that the voices of students from lower and middle socioeconomic backgrounds should be heard, as advanced by CST (Bukner & Stein, 2019). For example, an international student studying at KIU confessed:

> I think I belong to the middle class. Though my family has been able to fund my education, I sometimes fail to complete tuition payments in time. The university demands that international students pay tuition fees in US dollars. The exchange rate while converting Kenyan Shillings is unpredictable; we usually lose money while exchanging money into dollars…. (Interview with a Kenyan national studying at KIU, November 18th, 2022).

The requirement that international students in Uganda need to pay tuition fees in US dollars (yet the local currency in Uganda is the Ugandan Shilling) aims at maximizing profit-making in these institutions; this also signifies the neoliberal orientations of south-to-north ISM (Fakunle, 2021) that characterize intra-African ISM (Brown, 2022). In affirmation, the Dean of Students at KIU explained as follows:

> As you know, this is a private institution, and we rely on students' tuition fees for our operations. Most international students are self-sponsored, or their families fund them. The tuition paid by international students is higher than that paid by national students. While some students may encounter financial difficulties, university education in Uganda is comparatively cheaper than in any other East African country; they eventually complete making the required payments. Not all international students are from affluent families. (Interview with Dean of Students at KIU, November17th, 2022).

These findings point to the profit-making intentions that surround ISM, and they substantiate Stein's (2019) position that although "some institutions have deepened their consideration of the

ethical dimensions of internationalization, in a purely material sense, the model of profit-maximization remains in place" (p. 5). Further, considering the home countries of international students in this study (see Table 5.1 in chapter five), and the views from previous studies (ICEF Monitor, 2017; Itaaga et al., 2013), the primary sources of international students in Uganda are the initial members of the East Africa Community (i.e. Kenya and Tanzania). These three countries are linked together through colonial ties as former British colonies, the profit-making intentions of ISM in this region notwithstanding. This shows that internationalization sustains the "former imperial and political connections that have evolved into financially beneficial markets and sources of income" (Bolsmann & Miller, 2008, p. 80). Clearly, former colonial relationships should not be reproduced as intra-African ISM develops. This is a time to fully account for colonial history and transform the colonial dimensions that shape internationalization (Stein, 2019).

As indicated (Figure 8.4), all three social classes are represented among the international students in this study. For instance, a participant from South Sudan studying at MU declared:

> The population of international students from South Sudan is diverse regarding their socioeconomic status. Some are self-funded and are from high and middle socioeconomic statuses. There are also those from the lower socioeconomic status on government scholarships, or they are funded by philanthropic bodies. The funding from entities other than households supports the needy students to study abroad. (Interview with an international student from South Sudan studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

This view shows that although the proportion of high social class members among international students is likely to be high, those from the lower social class are also represented. Further, the international students officer at MU explained as follows:

> Many international students come from rich families; however, some are from a lower socioeconomic background and usually experience financial constraints. Some students come to me expressing their worries: 'I do not know how to survive this semester. Can you get me a job in a supermarket or restaurant?' One cannot falsely generalize that all international students are rich. (Interview with official from the international students officer at MU, November 15th, 2022).

A Rwandan national studying at KIU agrees that, indeed, there are international students from families with a lower socioeconomic status:

> I think my family belongs to the middle social class, and that is where I get all the financial support needed for my studies here. However, I know of some colleagues from Burundi who were financially challenged for some time. They had to relocate to a cheaper hostel in the slum of Nabutiti, and about

> four of them shared a small room. The economic challenges they are experiencing may be related to the level of their family socioeconomic status. (Interview with a Rwandan international student at KIU, November 14th, 2022).

The above testimony shows that some international students (see household income data in Table 8) have no option but to seek low-end accommodation facilities, in order to minimize expenses. Presumably, students from affluent families would opt for the more acceptable accommodation facilities located in the university neighborhood, and not in the slum, as explained by the informant. This issue was further explained by the Dean of Students at KIU as follows:

> The costs associated with international education are many, but it also has many advantages. This forces many families to invest in their children's education abroad, irrespective of their social or economic status. That is why we have international students from families that struggle financially at our university. That is very okay since we are meant to serve all students irrespective of their background. At one time, we had a student from Eritrea whose whole extended family was involved in raising his tuition fees. The nuclear family could not raise the necessary amount of tuition. (Interview with Dean of Students at KIU, November17th, 2022).

The preceding responses illustrate the diversity of international students studying in the sampled universities in Uganda, concerning their socioeconomic backgrounds. However, as explained by Saarikallio-Torp and Wiers-Jenssen (2010), the pursuit and attainment of foreign qualifications is a behavior pattern or cultural identity of the rich – those with high household incomes. While this view may apply to the Western world, its relevance to African societies is questionable. Given its level of development and colonial past, Africa needs to address ongoing social inequalities. Participation in ISM should become more open to students, irrespective of their social positioning, so that many of them can reap its benefits as the continent strives to achieve the SDGs.

Contrary to the understanding that ISM is the preserve of affluent families, the present study shows that there are students from families with low household income levels and, hence, a low socioeconomic background. The participation of such students in ISM is a form of 'resistance' to social class positioning (Iorio & Pereira, 2018), a struggle for inclusion, and a belief in hard work and perseverance. However, Yang (2018b) analyzes this scenario in his study about mobile Indian students in China and claims that even though ISM has expanded to include students from lower-income households, such students usually end up in low-grade courses (for which they can afford

to pay) that do not offer better employment outcomes. Therefore, in such cases, ISM is less likely to provide opportunities for low-income households to transition up the social class ladder.

The present study highlights the significant role played by scholarship funds to enable students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to attain education abroad. Consider the following view from a student from South Sudan studying at MU:

> My family background is not financially strong, but I have scholarship funding. Without this scholarship, I would not have been able to study here since my family cannot afford to pay all the required fees. Perhaps I would not even have been able to continue with education... (Interview with an international student from South Sudan studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

On a related note, the international students officer at MU explained that international students in their university are from mixed social classes but mainly from the middle social class. However, the number of those from the lower social class is increasing compared to previous years (World Bank, 2010). Students of lower socioeconomic status are the primary recipients of scholarships usually offered by the home government. Without scholarship funding, those with lower socioeconomic status would not have been able to afford studies abroad. Clearly, international education is not equally affordable to students from all socioeconomic backgrounds. The HE Officer from Uganda's NCHE declared that:

> Some international students voluntarily choose to study in a foreign country. These are mainly students from rich families who can afford to pay all the education costs in a foreign country. There should be scholarships in specific study programs to enable lower social class students to access international education and make it more inclusive. (Interview with NCHE official, December 15th, 2022).

In another response, the informant from Burundi's National Commission for Higher Education explained how external funding has facilitated students' participation in ISM:

> While there are no available statistics on international student mobility in Burundi, we are having collaborations such as the one within the East African Community, and another between Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC. These collaborations have facilitated students from Burundi to study in these other African countries. This enables the lower social class students to participate in mobility programs. Further, Burundi has partnerships and memoranda of understanding with Earsmus+, the University of Tübingen, Senegal and other Francophone countries which have facilitated outbound ISM from Burundi. At the same time, some students get funding from other sources to facilitate their

> education in foreign countries. (Interview with official from National Commission for HE in Burundi, December 1st, 2022).

Kang et al. (2019) explain that the availability of scholarships is a critical determinant of student mobility. This need relates to the achievement of SDG 4b: *substantially expand the number of scholarships available to developing countries globally, in particular least developed countries, Small Island developing states and African countries, for enrolment in higher education….* However, scholarships have remained marginal in East Africa (Adima, 2021), and the most available ones target students who flow out of Africa (Kigotho, 2020). Only a few scholarships, e.g. the Nyerere Scholarship Scheme (Knight & Woldegiorgis, 2017), target students intending to remain on the continent. Thus, the marginal number of lower social class students among Uganda's international students in this study is due to the limited availability of scholarships that target intra-African mobility. Scholarships are essential for increasing chances for students from the lower social class to access international education (Campbell, 2016).

Income inequalities translate into social inequalities and hindrances towards accumulating social capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Consequently, bright students from lower social classes have lower chances of attaining higher levels of education. From a social justice perspective, one's situation at birth should not be the sole determinant of a person's future; at least personal attributes such as effort and motivation should be given a chance to prevail. Therefore, interventions to help capable but needy students (such as scholarships) should be considered to enable those from the lower social class to improve their chances of participation in HE (Laajaj et al., 2022) – and most especially ISM. Such scholarships not only allow students to experience social mobility, but also expand labor market outcomes for them (Wright, 2021). While there are some student support programs in most East African countries, such as government sponsorship schemes and student loans for HE, these interventions rarely focus on study in foreign countries.

Concerns about study abroad scholarship programs for African students have been expressed, in the sense that this could exacerbate brain drain (Krstic, 2012; Mittelmeier et al., 2022; Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015) – especially when the study destination is in Europe or America. Brain drain can cause severe human resource shortages in home countries, since the graduates rarely return. However, such concerns oversimplify the issue, allocating blame where it

is not due. For example, in Rwanda, most holders of the presidential scholarship return home to develop their country, compared to other scholarship beneficiaries elsewhere (Ngabonziza, 2015).

Therefore, the problem leading to brain drain is not the availability of study abroad scholarships, but rather how such programs are managed. Furthermore, funding African students to study in Africa may not have a similar brain drain effect – as is the case was with south-to-north mobility – especially if it is well managed. Admittedly, some students facilitate their own study abroad activities, and it would be challenging to dictate where they work or stay after completion of their studies. The fundamental focus should be on the content and implementation of existing policies for study abroad scholarships.

The claims of Woldegiorgis and Doevenspeck (2015) that the African continent has been exposed to severe human resource shortages due to brain drain resulting from ISM need to be revisited. While the effects of brain drain cannot be underestimated, their effects are variable, depending on the countries involved, and the field of work under consideration. It is now a common practice for many graduates from Uganda and Kenya to migrate to the Middle East for housekeeping jobs, because they cannot find jobs commensurate with their qualifications in their home countries (Malit & Youha, 2016; Nakawesi, 2021). The graduates who stay in their home countries often have to resort to employment as casual laborers. This phenomenon leads one to think there are more professionals in the home countries than available jobs. In that case, the problem can be perceived to be high underemployment and unemployment (ILO, 2021), and not a shortage of human resources.

Tackling the issue of brain drain may entail addressing challenges to providing quality HE in Africa, including unaffordable educational costs. Providing support in the form of scholarships to international students who sometimes face financial difficulties is one way to improve the situation. In particular, as bodies engaged in facilitating ISM, the East African Community and the Inter-University Council for East Africa should consider establishing an international students' loan scheme to support mobile students who face financial challenges. The advantage of such an intervention is that not only will it address some of the financial challenges that mobile students face thus enabling them to engage in ISM, but it will also make ISM more inclusive.

VIII.4. Social class of international students; a general discussion

To obtain an overall social class of the international students in the study, the number of international students in each of the social classes (high, middle, and low social class), as determined by the parents' education level (Figure 8.3) and the level of household income (Figure 8.4), was added together and then divided by two to obtain an average number of international students in each social class. Parents' employment status was left out since it presented individuals belonging to more than one social class simultaneously. Table 8.4 presents the number of international students in each social class based on the average index of their parents' level of education and the annual household income.

Table 8.4: Overall social class of international students.

Indicator of social class	International students in the high social class	International students in the middle social class	International students in the lower social class	Total
Parents' education level	108(55.3%)	80(41.2%)	07(3.5%)	195(100%)
Household income level	122(62.6%)	44(22.5%)	29(14.9%)	195(100%)
Average	**115(59%)**	**62(31.8)**	**18(9.2%)**	**195(100%)**

Table 8.4 indicates that most of the international students (59%) considered in this study are in the high social class, followed by those in the middle social class (31.8%). The least represented are international students in lower social class (9.2%). This is because, as explained by Iorio and Pereira's (2018), ISM depends on the student's social class. Education abroad is costly and thus requires extensive symbolic capital, usually affordable only to families from the high social class. Indeed, for high social-class families, ISM is a strategy for reproducing class or status (Bourdieu, 1986). However, the study also recognizes the lower social class students, who consider ISM a means to transcend their social class positioning. Thus, there are as many reasons for participation in ISM as students' social classes and localities.

This study also suggests that great value is attached to qualifications earned from foreign institutions. However, even people who have attained qualifications from abroad may yet be unable to transition upwards on the socioeconomic status ladder (Yang, 2018b). For example, Kahn and MacGarvie's (2011) study shows that on returning to a developing home country, PhD holders who have graduated from foreign universities have fewer opportunities to do cutting-edge research, since their home countries have limited funding for research and scientific infrastructure.

Therefore, they fail to establish themselves as revered scholars, which stagnates their career paths and social class. Similarly, Yang (2018b) explains that lower social class students usually specialize in professions with poor employment outcomes and rarely transcend social stratification. Therefore, the efficacy formerly attached to international education has reduced to the point at which Hillman and Cowan (2021) suggest that international students now seek job placements from which they can develop international work experience. The acquired work experience, not the foreign qualification, offers them a competitive advantage. Therefore, social class reproduction theory may have minimal applicability in situations where the work environment is yet to fully become supportive.

Even so, Oxfam (2019) explains that there is no way in which members of the lower social class can transition into higher social classes if better quality education remains a preserve of the rich. Without better quality education, poverty will be inherited by the offspring of the poor, over and over again. This weakens social systems by dividing the rich and the poor, creates segregationist social systems based on social class, and perpetuates a situation similar to that in some African countries during colonial times. In some countries, the colonialists established distinct schools for Africans, which were of lower quality compared than those meant for Europeans (Malisa & Missedja, 2019). In such a situation, students from advantaged families are denied a chance to mix with those from disadvantaged families and vice versa. For both social groups, this limits their field of view of themselves and their societies. While many actors globally are working for the world to consider the sustainable development of every individual, there is a need for affirmative action discourse to include the democratization of ISM. The barriers experienced by students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds should enjoy a central focus in discussing student mobility, especially in the global South. Such are the tenets of critical social theory discussed in section II.3.

Further, the idea of 'universities without walls' expressed by the European University Association (EUA) in their 2030 vision for universities (EUA, 2021) should serve as a reminder for action. That vision calls upon universities to be open and cooperative institutions, linking cultures, sectors, and nations. This is related to the purpose of international education as a mechanism for preparing students to be resilient global citizens, capable of establishing peaceful and sustainable societies, and managing social problems (Ghosh & Jing, 2020). The world faces various challenges ranging from adverse climate change, terrorism, Xenophobia, and hate speech (Brandenburg et al., 2019).

As global citizens, students must be trained to become more open-minded to people of different cultures and social backgrounds, in order to confront social challenges collectively.

To this end, universities need to eliminate barriers for anyone to access their services, and limit classification of students into opposed subclasses. For example, the different fees that restrict students' access to international education must be addressed, to enable lower-class students to access international education. Indeed, this idea is behind the East African universities' yet-to-be-implemented tuition reform policy. The reforms seek to establish identical tuition fees for national students and East African students in regional universities (Rwothungeyo, 2016). However, more alternative thoughts such as internationalization of the curriculum are possible based on the concept of a 'university without walls', in order to promote equitable and socially responsible internationalization.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020) explains that a fully internationalized HE system should aim at confronting and subverting perennial injustices based on hierarchies of gender, social class, ethnicity, religion, and race, in order to develop just social systems, re-constitute and re-humanize people. Therefore, the underrepresentation of lower social class students among international students indicates a failed attempt at internationalization. This may be attributable to the tendency to reproduce a Eurocentric form of internationalization in the global South. However, Africa should approach internationalization differently compared to what has been done by the North. With a significant portion of the African population experiencing difficult economic situations (Bolhuis & Kovacs, 2022), continuing to develop education provisions driven by economic gains may be destructive instead of liberating. In articulating that thought, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2021a) suggests the notion of de-colonial IHE, which he describes as recognizing how people view and interpret the world around them. Therefore, a closer look at the social class of the African population may be essential in developing an inclusive internationalization agenda in Africa.

Further, African universities need to be clear about the ISM and internationalization strategies that can bring about development, given the continent's economic capacity and social challenges. According to Ndofirepi et al. (2017), there is a conceptual overlap between the Africanization, regionalization, and internationalization of African universities, and many strategies pass for all three processes. Whereas the three processes can achieve development goals, they must be

approached with clarity of purpose, and none should be pursued under the guise of the other. So, which one is the most appropriate to deliver the desired development goals? Answering this question demands that actors should stop borrowing and applying European internationalization strategies without adapting them to African realities (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018).

The findings of this study further indicate that mobility in East Africa is still a classed endeavor. However, this finding should not be evaluated only at 'face value', since it offers new perspectives regarding the mobility of students that have previously been ignored by south-to-north student mobility studies. The presence of students from other African countries in Uganda indicates that African countries have appreciated the benefits of intra-African internationalization, while trying to undo the colonial injustices of the past. While the proportion of students from the lower social class is still marginal, the fact that there are some lower-class international students is noticeable. This indicates that some lower-class families view international education as a mechanism for bettering their situation and their future prospects. At the same time, the few lower-class students among the many middle- to high social class international students should be treated as a minority group that deserves special treatment. Institutions must be prepared to offer services that make lower social class students feel comfortable and enable them to pursue their goals. This should be done with the realization that international students are generally a minority group in foreign institutions (Sehoole & Lee, 2021). There should be provision for their integration and settlement in their new environments. In particular, the social class of international students needs to be considered, so that all students are accommodated.

Courtois (2018) raises an important issue regarding the treatment of international students. According to him, international students are often viewed as coming from a flawed education system, as strangers, or as individuals lacking in some way, which exposes them to a risk of being associated with a lower social class. At the same time, with increasing commercialization, international students are often viewed as a source of revenue, in that they are charged higher fees than nationals. Such a practice reduces international students to 'objects', and is a dehumanizing trend that may lead to 'neoliberal multiculturalism' (Melamed, 2011). These issues constitute a risk of increasing segregation and racism tendencies and must be appropriately handled in order to increase the value of mobility practices.

Apart from other barriers, barriers which may be termed 'cultural' characterize student mobility within the East African region; these barriers must be minimized in order to enhance the prospect of mobility to more students. As Upenyu and Susanne (2018) advanced, HE systems need to be reformed to widen access for historically underrepresented groups. Such may entail establishing inclusive support systems for study abroad opportunities, irrespective of students' family backgrounds. Equal access to international education opportunities requires the development of strategies and policies that focus on improving the enrolment of underrepresented groups.

There have been arguments that public economic support for internationally mobile students is inadequate to support student groups with limited mobility capital, and originating from disadvantaged backgrounds (Schnepf & Colagrossi, 2020). However, Saarikallio-Torp and Wiers-Jenssen (2010) argue that since studying abroad is closely linked to many other factors, such as family standards, customs, and international orientation, changing public policy may be of little help. However, this depends on the context; for instance, universities in Uganda often charge lower tuition fees than those in Kenya and Rwanda, which allows students (including the disadvantaged ones) from the East African region to access foreign education at a lower cost than studying in the global North. Reviewing tuition fee policies at East African regional universities can improve chances of disadvantaged students accessing international HE.

VIII.5. Conclusion

The present chapter has explored the extent to which ISM in East Africa tends to reproduce social classes. The study assessed this phenomenon by considering the parents' level of education, employment status, and household income. The findings reveal that most of the international student respondents belong to the higher social class, followed by those who belong to the middle social class. The least represented are those international students who are in the lower social class. Considering the potential benefits of international education (at least in theory), the high social class students are destined for excellent employment opportunities and high earnings. Such benefits would maintain them in the high social class, hence social class reproduction.

The most common qualification type (Table 8.1) among both parents of the international students in the sample is a bachelor's qualification (college graduate, with a 4- or five-year degree program), although more mothers (49.2%) hold this qualification than fathers (46.2%). Also common among

the fathers are postgraduate degrees, with 18.5% and 4.1% of fathers holding a Master's and PhD degree respectively, compared to only 3.1% and 1.5% of mothers with similar qualifications. These results indicate that while more mothers than fathers have lower qualifications, their numbers reduce as one ascends the qualification hierarchy. Using the parents' education level as an indicator of social class (Figure 8.3), 55.3% of the students in this study are in the high social class, 41.2% in the middle class, and only 3.5% in the lower social class.

The level of employment of parents of international students in the sample reveals similar results. Most international students (60.3%) have parents employed in the service sector or are daily non-manual employees from the high social class. The second largest group of respondents have parents engaged in the business and farming sectors, and these constitute the middle class. The least represented are students whose parents are in the lower social class, i.e., skilled or unskilled manual workers, homemakers, unemployed, not working because of disability, and retired. Additionally, based on household income levels (Figure 8.3), most students (62.6%) belong to the high class. These are followed by the middle social class students (22.5%); and students from lower social class families are the least represented, with only 14.9%.

While the numbers of students from the privileged social class (high and middle classes) are prominent, the number of lower-class students is also noticeable. Their proportion among internationally mobile students continues to grow, as has been reported by previous studies (Deuchar, 2022). Such a change can be described as an attempt for lower social class students to resist social class positioning, using ISM to transcend social classes. It can also be attributed to the demographic change due to high population growth and African birth rates (Kigotho, 2020).

Overall (Table 8.4), the study reports that 59% of international students are in the high social class, while 31.8% are in the middle class, trailed by 9.2% in the lower class. Therefore, ISM in Uganda is a class-based endeavor aimed at reproducing the privileged classes since the majority of students come from the privileged social class. These findings indicate that social class predicts ISM, in that the higher the social class, the better the chances for one to participate in ISM.

The following chapter, chapter nine, is dedicated to a discussion of ISM and immigration policies in Uganda. It considers the residence titles for international students, together with the liberties and limitations associated with such titles.

CHAPTER NINE: INTERNATIONALIZATION, STUDENT MOBILITY, AND IMMIGRATION POLICIES IN EAST AFRICA

IX.0. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore the immigration policy provisions for international students in Uganda. It presents and discusses different residence titles in Ugandan law for international students and how these influence their work and stay as international students in Uganda. The chapter introduces provisions for crossborder movements and residence in the Ugandan law, residence titles for international students in particular, the challenges international students face in relation to the various residence titles, and the employment situation for international students. All this information is provided in order to investigate current migration laws and prepare the ground for the analysis that follows. The chapter then provides an analysis of the state of internationalization and student mobility in East Africa and draws some conclusions about the situation. The chapter concludes by restating the key ideas and the main findings for this research question.

IX.1. Cross-border mobility and the Ugandan law

The Ugandan law on immigration is better understood in the light of the broader laws that govern the movement of humans across the world. International migration can be described as "the movement of persons away from their usual residence and across an international border to a country of which they are not nationals" (Sironi et al., 2019, p. 113). The same authors further refer to the person who exercises the said movement as a 'migrant', that is, one "who is outside a State of which he or she is a citizen or national, or, in the case of a stateless person, his or her State of birth or habitual residence" (p. 112). Such definitions may make one wonder about the causes of migration, its categories, and possible migration pathways. While these questions are beyond the scope of this thesis, the fact is that people migrate for different reasons (Czaika & Reinprecht, 2022), and this forms the basis for different categories of migration (Talleraas, 2022). For example, migrants may intend to move permanently or temporarily (Górny & Kindler, 2016). Their movement may also be documented (i.e., *regular* migration) (Triandafyllidou et al., 2019) or undocumented, giving rise to *irregular* migration (Spencer & Triandafyllidou, 2022).

Sironi et al. (2019) define *irregular migration* as the "movement of persons which takes place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination" (p. 116). Thus, individuals become illegal immigrants if their migration occurs outside regular migration channels. It should, however, be noted that the only possible migration pathway available to migrants such as refugees, asylum seekers fleeing persecution, conflicts or generalized violence, victims of trafficking, or unaccompanied migrant children is the irregular one (Vespe et al., 2017). While it is possible to regularize their stay in the host country at a later time (IOM, 2022), the distinction is not always clear-cut at the time of entry.

Further, a clear distinction between regular and irregular immigrants rarely exists at a particular point in time, since individuals can move in and out of irregularity. A person could enter the host country as a regular immigrant and later become irregular due to an administrative overstay (Könönen, 2020). In most situations, this may not be the immigrant's fault, but rather the result of discrimination, convoluted or overly bureaucratic immigration procedures, or practical obstacles, including expensive visa renewal fees, difficulty communicating in the target language, and difficulty accessing legal aid (Könönen, 2020). As suggested by IOM (2022), irregularity relates to the status of the migrant at a given time but not to the migrant as a person.

Derogatory terminology such as 'clandestine' and 'illegal' are often used to refer to irregular (undocumented) immigrants (Spencer & Triandafyllidou, 2022), but no *human person* is illegal (Ambrosini, 2013). However, the status of irregular immigrants is against the law due to illegal entry into a country, exceeding the permitted period of residence, residing there without a residence permit, or engaging in other immigration violations that subject them to expulsion (Provera, 2015). Considering this position, the phrase 'not legal' can be used to characterize activities which contravene the law, such as unauthorized border crossing (Spencer & Triandafyllidou, 2022).

Irregular migration has dominated political debate in the European Union since the 2015 'migration crisis' outbreak, which according to Spencer and Triandafyllidou (2022), has been blown out of proportion. Concern has been expressed about migrant-receiving countries in the global North being burdened with dealing with the influx of migrants, and this in turn, has influenced migration and immigration policies globally (Khan, 2020). As argued by Khan (2020), migration and border control policies are dominated by the global North's discourse on how to manage migration *into*

such countries, to the extent that the global North controls the discourse and policy actions on migration control *within* sending countries in the global South.

On the other hand, a regular or documented migrant is one who is "authorized to enter and to stay according to the law of that State or to international agreements to which that State is a party and who owns documents necessary to prove his or her regular status in the country" (Sironi et al., 2019, p. 56). Thus, regular migrants are in a position to follow recognized, authorized immigration procedures. This relates to 'orderly migration' which is defined as:

> …the movement of persons in keeping both with the laws and regulations governing exit from, entry and return to and stay in States and with States' international law obligations, in a manner in which the human dignity and well-being of migrants are upheld, their rights are respected, protected and fulfilled, and the challenges associated with the movement of people are acknowledged and mitigated (Sironi et al., 2019, p. 191).

This view underscores the role of the State in regulating entry to ensure the proper treatment of migrants, granting rights, enforcing the law, and managing relationships with host communities (IOM, 2017). However, considering that regularity is time-bound, regular immigrants may become irregular at a certain point, depending on the laws regulating their stay in the host country (IOM, 2022).

In the Ugandan context, progressive policies exist that are designed to support and regulate immigrants. These are pursued through border management processes, the issuance of visas, the processing of citizenship applications, and deportations (IOM, 2018). Uganda's border management has since 2016 been enhanced with technological improvements, including an electronic visa and permit application system that allows immigrants seeking residence in Uganda to apply online. These activities are controlled by the National Citizenship and Immigration Board and the Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control (DCIC) in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. With these operational bodies, Uganda has attained more advanced and comprehensive migration policies than other East African countries (Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, MGSoG, 2017). Several pieces of migration legislation have been promulgated, the most important being the Citizenship and Immigration Control Act of 1999. The Act regulates the entry and residence of immigrants in Uganda and the issuance of citizenship (Integral Human Development, 2021).

However, the Act has been criticized for being silent about emigration or return migration, and it has also not been revised since Uganda ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (IOM, 2015). Further, the Act allows temporary legal residents to obtain permanent residence. For example, legal and voluntary migrants in Uganda are eligible to apply for citizenship if they have lived there for at least ten years. On the other hand, refugees must wait much longer before applying for citizenship by naturalization, i.e., they must have resided in Uganda for at least 20 years and have an intention to reside there permanently (IOM, 2018).

Generally, Ugandan laws and policies relating to migrant groups (other than refugees or asylum seekers) are disconnected and do not address all aspects of migration (Integral Human Development, 2021). In particular, the country lacks a comprehensive migration governance framework, law, or migration policy that establishes or defines the rights of migrants concerning access to public social services, including health care and education. This situation may be interpreted as part of the recent comeback of nationalism on the one hand, and the emergence of transnational solidarity on the other (Triandafyllidou, 2022). While the country is responding to the challenges, the lack of necessary resources limits transparency in terms of migration rules and regulations (IOM, 2018).

It should also be noted that Uganda is a member of the East African Community Common Market Protocol, which facilitates the free movement of persons and labor across the borders of other member states (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). It is this arrangement that facilitates East Africa's intra-regional student mobility. International students are usually left out of discussions about migrant populations, yet by all standards, they are migrants (Alves & King, 2022). This is because their movements involve crossing an international border and living in another country – at times with a different culture and language – for a significant period, e.g., six months, one year, three years, or more (King & Findlay, 2012). International students are required to have a student pass to undertake studies in Uganda (IOM, 2018). However, much as the student pass allows international students to live and study in Uganda, this study reports that this residence title does not offer employment rights to the bearer, and there is no clear path for such students to obtain a work permit after graduation. (Residence title is used in this study to refer to the official documents that allow

people from abroad to enter and live in Uganda). This was revealed by Uganda's senior immigration officer, as indicated in the following response:

> Each international student in Uganda is required by law to have a student pass […]. The pass allows the student to stay and study in Uganda but not to work. An international student who wishes to work must get a work permit... (Interview with Uganda's senior immigration officer, November 15th, 2022).

Uganda's Employment Act of 2006 advocates for equal employment opportunities for Ugandans, immigrants, and their family members legally residing in Uganda (Integral Human Development, 2021). Migrants must apply for and obtain appropriate residence titles to invest or seek employment in the country. However, such migrants must be assessed for suitability of skills and capabilities before being admitted and offered visas to enable them to work or invest in Uganda (IOM, 2018). Visa categories include those for investments in agriculture, mining, manufacturing, and business and trade, as well as other categories for volunteers, NGO workers and missionaries, and other employees and professionals. A student pass is the relevant legal document for international students and, when necessary, the National Council for Higher Education determines the equivalence of academic or professional qualifications gained abroad (IOM, 2018). The emphasis on assessing immigrants confirms the view held by Czaika and Reinprecht (2022) that since there are wanted and unwanted immigrants, there must be policies to deter unwanted immigrants. Notably, there is a contradiction between the provisions for international students and the Employment Act. If international students are indeed immigrants, as advanced by Alves and King (2022), why should there be a limitation regarding their work rights, when the Employment Act provides for such?

Some of the international students in this study identified themselves as refugees (Figure 9.1). Uganda is one of the major refugee-hosting countries in Africa, with about 1.4 million refugees, mainly from South Sudan and the DRC (UNHCR, 2023). It therefore has policies designed to facilitate the integration of refugees and asylum seekers (IOM, 2018). The relevant pieces of legislation regarding refugees and asylum seekers are the Refugees Act of 2006 (Republic of Uganda, 2006) and the Refuge Regulations of 2010 (Republic of Uganda, 2010), in which the rights to freedom of movement for refugees within Uganda, and access to social services – including health care and education for both refugees and members of their families – are enshrined. Uganda's Refugees Act of 2006 provides refugees' rights to self-employment under the

same conditions as nationals. The Act also provides for refugees to apply to the Refugee Eligibility Committee for permission for a family member to enter and reside in Uganda (Republic of Uganda, 2006).

Uganda's pursuit of refugees' rights is according to the several international conventions and frameworks guarding the rights of migrants, to which Uganda is a party. These include the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, Supplementary Provisions of the ILO Migrant Workers Convention, and the Conventions on Statelessness (IOM, 2018). While access for refugees in Uganda to lower levels of education has been addressed by establishing primary and secondary schools, provisions for refugee students to transition into Uganda's HE system are not evident.

IX.2. Residence titles for international students

The present study investigated which residence titles ISM students in Uganda were able to obtain. International student respondents were asked to specify the type of residence title they obtained upon application to enter and stay in Uganda, based on the checklist provided in the questionnaire. Data analysis revealed different types of residence titles, as shown in Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1: *Number of international students possessing different residence titles in Uganda.*

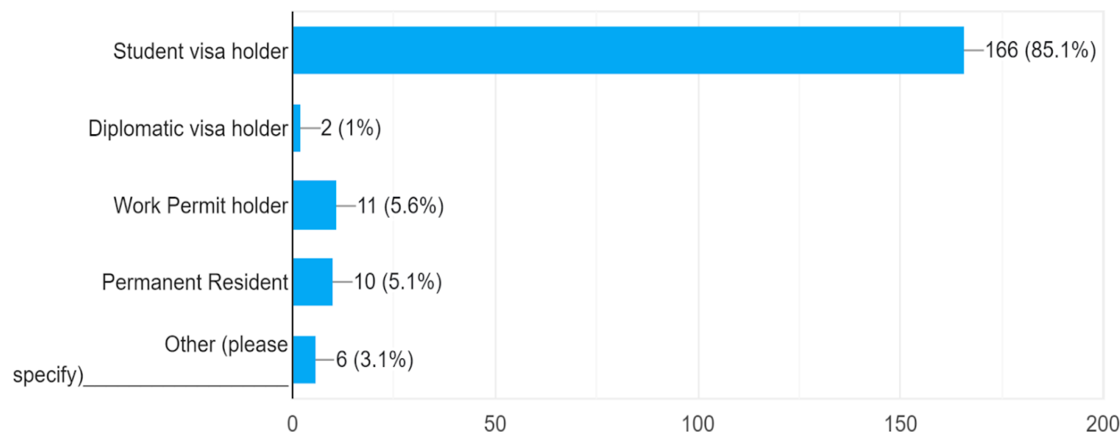


Figure 9.1 indicates that most international students in Uganda (85.1%) hold a student visa, or what is known as the 'student pass'. The other categories of residence titles possessed by international students in this study include diplomatic visas (1%), work permits (5.6%), and

permanent residents (5.1%). Furthermore, three students indicated they were refugees and asylum seekers. These findings show that most international students in the sample possess legal documents to study in Uganda. However, analysis of the 'Other' category revealed that two international students among the contacted respondents (1%) indicated they do not own officially recognized residential titles. It should be noted that the country's Internal Affairs Ministry has threatened to penalize any international student found without a legal residence title (Kazibwe, 2022).

The present study displays similar findings to those reported by Lomer (2018) about recruiting HE students in the UK, which identified many classifications for international students. While the categories differ from the ones found in this study, the common idea in both studies is that there is no homogeneity regarding the residential status of international students. Importantly, most international students in this study were documented or regular migrants, which concurs with Flahaux and De Haas's (2016) who identified comparable residential statuses in their study about trends, patterns, drivers of migration in Africa. On the other hand, this finding (that the majority of the international students in this study were documented) is contrary to that in Yendaw's (2022) study on cross-border migration in Ghana. Yendaw (2022) reports that migrants from African countries are mainly undocumented and not in possession of official travel documents. International students in the present study were documented, and hence can be referred to as 'legal' or 'documented' migrants.

An international student in Uganda possesses a student visa (or student pass). However, according to Jones (2017), this practice disregards the heterogeneity of "international students and creates a false dichotomy" (p. 934) between international and domestic students. According to Buckner and Stein (2020), the effect of the focus on international students, as defined by their visa status, is that nationality comes to define diversity, i.e. one may be tempted to believe that the student population is diverse since different nationalities are included. Consequently, all other forms of difference among international students, including class, ethnicity, and linguistic skills, are often downplayed (Buckner & Stein, 2020). This is potentially counterproductive, since it limits institutional capacity in developing relevant and targeted approaches to support all students adequately. Hudzik (2011) explains that internationalization should improve students' understanding of the world's many countries, societies, languages and cultures; provide exposure to diverse perspectives; and prepare

students to work closely with those from different linguistic or cultural backgrounds. This cannot be appropriately addressed if the focus is on a student's nationality. Classifying international students according to their nationalities suggests that international students are the primary resources for internationalizing HEIs. Although the number and diversity of international students' countries of origin are vital indicators of internationalization (Buckner & Stein, 2020), they are not the only ones. Therefore, HEIs should be more articulate by going beyond residence titles to include perspectives that relate to other aspects of student diversity. This would enable stakeholders to understand how to address the challenges to better outcomes regarding IHE.

Nganga (2018) explains that harmonization of the tuition fee structure for universities in East Africa – which will enable East African students to pay the same amount of tuition fees as domestic students in regional universities – is being considered. In this way, international students will be broadly characterized as East African or non-East African for purposes of fee determination, with non-East African students being charged higher fees. This segregates international East African students from non-East African international ones and communicates to them that they are studying in a country where they are unwanted. In other words, the intention to seek economic gains from international education drives discrimination and conflicts with the principles of global justice and educational equality (Yang, 2020). Whereas it is widely accepted that education is now a tradable item, it should be recalled that HE is a public good (Knight, 2009). Stakeholders should therefore remain humanistic in pursuit of the international dimension of HE (Streitwieser et al., 2019). Importantly, since most of the international students in Uganda are from within the region (ICEF Monitor, 2017; NCHE, 2022a), this study confirms the social-cultural rationales (section IV.2.3) of internationalization explained by Knight (2004). However, socio-cultural rationales contest economic rationales (i.e. the classification of international students for purposes of determining fees) and political rationales (i.e. the enforcement of migration laws).

This study holds that Africa needs to go beyond economic, political and socio-cultural rationales for student mobility, in order to underline its interdependence and interconnectedness of the African people. Therefore, irrespective of the conceived rationale for student mobility, the critical thing is to focus on improving quality of life and future prospects through international education. Such an understanding should guide policies on both tuition fees and migration regulation. For example, if it is impossible not to charge international students higher tuition fees, the profits

realized can be invested in improving the participation of lower social class students in ISM, or opportunities for applied research (Liu, 2021), in order to contribute to a better world.

Classifying Uganda's international students as East African or non–East African brings in the issue of borders and border control. The existence of modern international borders in Africa came about as a result of colonialism (Hirsch, 2021; Hyde, 2016). The aim was to facilitate the colonial project, and thus the establishment of international borders did not cater for the geographical, historical, and ethnic composition of the continent (Gashaw, 2017). As the result, some ethnic groups were split between two colonial states, and this has continued to impact current independent African states today. Some established colonial states were small and weak (Hirsch, 2021), and such weaknesses have persisted to modern times. Therefore, enforcing border controls and migration laws in Africa in a strict sense intensifies the challenges that characterized the establishment of such borders. This is not to say that international borders are inherently wrong; they are necessarily in place to serve political, economic or territorial intentions.

Considering the history of international borders, they are currently being emphasized more than they once were (Sarantaki, 2023). For much of Africa, there was minimum interest in territories and strict borders, with borders often being described as porous and undefended (Moya, 2020). This, therefore, raises questions regarding the emphasis given to the differentiation of international students as being East African or not. Such an emphasis could be an attempt to replicate the migrant restrictions seen elsewhere. For example, EU migration policies have been enacted to deter migration into that region (Oxfam, 2020), and the same reason may be applicable in the African context. As shown in this study, rather than facilitating ISM, migration control is overtly preoccupied with limiting the liberty of international students (section IX.3).

Further, this study reveals an anomaly regarding Uganda's migration policies where some mobile students (who are also migrants) are more accepted than others, i.e. international students from the East African region are prioritized over other nationalities. This is similar to the scenario in Ireland described by O'Connor (2017), whose study shows that migration policy in that country is only structured to guarantee access to some 'worthy' categories of migrants. While all international students in Uganda are treated equally regarding access to employment, those from East Africa have the advantage of no visa fees, and a proposal for no tuition fee differential is being considered

(Nganga, 2018). This reduces the likelihood of East African students experiencing financial challenges during their study period. Therefore, the immigration policies in Uganda need to be harmonized to limit the contradiction. The desire to open up access for international students while being restrictive as exhibited makes the process exclusionary, and is paradoxical.

Lomer (2018) characterizes international students in the UK as ambassadors, educational resources in cultural deficit, financial resources, and migrants. That author further offers varied reasons for the different characterizations, which may not strictly relate to the East African context. However, the characterization of international students in terms of 'cultural deficit' deserves particular attention. Brooks and Water (2022) attributed passivity in class to cultural deficit. Although this does not resonate with any category in the present study, it highlights the possible 'unwanted person' attribute of international students. Importantly, Lomer (2018) categorizes international students as a financial resource or as migrants, while the present study identifies them rather on the basis of the visa category they hold (which may or may not include a work permit). As migrants, it is possible that mobile students can transition from being entirely students to becoming employees. This could be an important resource for countries with labor shortages (Robertson, 2013), but it presents a challenge for countries with a shortage of employment opportunities, especially those with emerging economies.

IX.3. Challenges with residence titles

The study examined the issue of ease of obtaining the various residence titles in order to study in Uganda. Respondents were asked to rate the acquisition process of the various residence titles (Appendix 1, section E, question 10b). The question had options on a Likert scale of five possibilities, namely Very difficult (VD) (1), Difficult (D) (2), Neutral (N) (3), Easy (E) (4), and Very easy (VE) (5). A high rating (5) indicates the visa acquisition process is easy, and a low rating (1) indicates that the visa acquisition process is difficult. The pie chart in Figure 9.2 presents the findings of this analysis.

Figure 9.2: *Respondents' self-rating on the ease of acquiring residence titles for study in Uganda.*

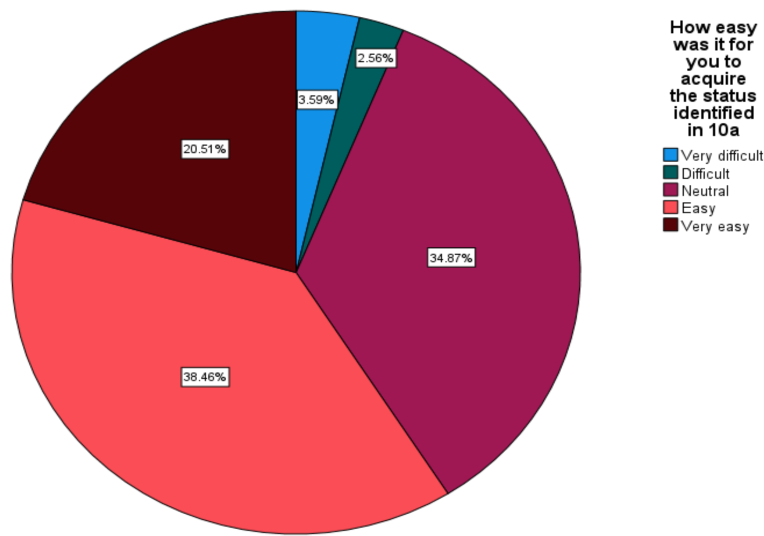


Figure 9.2 shows that about 59.0% of the international students indicated that acquiring the residence title was easy (sum of easy and very easy category), as opposed to only 6.2% of the respondents who experienced difficulties in doing so. These findings were confirmed by the testimonies received during the interviews. Consider the view of a Kenyan international student at KIU:

> The student pass for East African students in Uganda is free. With the help of the international student office, the process was smooth, and I obtained the student pass within 14 days after submitting the forms. My biggest concern is that the maximum period I can use this pass is one year, yet my course ends in five years under normal progress. That means that I have to keep renewing it every year…. (Interview with a Kenyan national studying at KIU, November 18th, 2022).

A Nigerian student at MU expressed similar views:

> The application process is done online, which is not stressful for those comfortable with the computer. I paid a fee of $100, and I did not find it challenging. Most students intending to study in the US always find the visa application process challenging. I am glad this was not the case when coming here. (Interview with a Nigerian international student at MU, November 15th, 2022).

However, a respondent from South Sudan expressed dissatisfaction with the process because the security guards at the visa handling office asked for money to help him get his file processed quickly. These are his words:

> A student pass for East African students in Uganda is free, but that office has corrupt officials. One asked for money to make me 'cut the line' during the submission and biometric capturing. The line was long, and I did not want to wait long. I gave him 20,000 Ugandan Shillings, and my file was processed in a short time… (Interview with an international student from South Sudan studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The above testimonies reveal that an unequal geopolitical environment shapes ISM in this region, assigning privileges to some students more than others (Buckner & Stein, 2020). East African students in Uganda are classified as 'domestic', hence they are eligible for the student pass without having to pay fees. They are consequently privileged over international students from the rest of the world who must pay for such passes. Students from East African countries are also favored by the closeness between their home countries and their study destination, which reduces transportation costs (Perkins & Neumayer, 2014) and cultural distance (Bethel et al., 2020). Cultural distance refers to the gap between the international students' cultural heritage and the culture in their destination country (Babiker et al., 1980). East African students share common cultural attributes since they are from the same geographical region; this allows them to quickly adapt when admitted to a university in Uganda, without having to lead 'parallel lives'. The smaller the cultural distance, the easier it is for the student to adapt to the new environment and the fewer social difficulties they will experience (Furukawa, 1997).

In addition to the above findings, a chi-square test of independence was carried out to clarify whether the difficulty in acquiring the desired status comes with the type of residential title. Tables 9.1provides the relevant statistics.

Table 9.1: Cross-tabulation for the different residence titles for international students in Uganda and the ease of acquiring such titles.

		Residence titles for international students					Total
		Student pass	Diplomatic visa	Work permit	Permanent resident	Other	
The ease of acquiring a residence title	Very difficult	5	0	0	1	1	7(3.6%)
	Difficult	4	0	1	0	0	5(2.6%)
	Neutral	60	0	1	4	3	68(34.9%)
	Easy	69	1	1	3	1	75(38.4%)
	Very easy	28	1	8	2	1	40(20.5%)
Total		**166(85.1%)**	**2(1.0%)**	**11(5.6%)**	**10(5.1%)**	**6(3.1%)**	**195 (100%)**

Table 9.1 shows a cross-tabulation for the residence titles and the ease with which such titles were obtained. Most student pass holders, i.e., 97 (58.4%) (Sum of easy and very easy category), reported that acquiring such residence titles was easy. Only 5.6% of the international students possessed work permits, with 81.8% indicating that doing so was easy. In agreement with these findings, when asked about the process for obtaining a student visa, the senior immigration officer in Uganda's Internal Affairs Ministry declared as follows:

> We recently adjusted the visa application process electronically. This has made it more flexible, allowing international students to start the application process while still in their home countries. It also reduces the chances of human interference that would compromise the process. I can say that the application process has improved but there are other areas where we can make further improvements. For example, borrowing on the experience in some European countries, international students can work for a specified number of hours to gain work experience and enrich their CVs besides having the experience of the country they studied in beyond the lecture halls….(Interview with Uganda's senior immigration officer, November 15th, 2022).

However, the same officer quickly acknowledged that implementing such provisions is challenging, since not all East African Community member states are on the same footing. Hirsch (2021) argues that the implementation of free movement in East Africa has been impacted by "regional economic inequalities and by variations in domestic laws and attitudes" (p. 18). This shows that the implementation of the East African Community Common Markets Protocol is

surrounded by skepticism and fear that it may lead to uncontrolled immigration. These perceptions limit the extent of application and benefits of such a protocol.

Making visa regulations easier promotes ISM (European Commission, 2013), as revealed by the qualitative and quantitative data collected for the present study. This certainly explains the sizeable number of international students in Uganda, as reported by NCHE (2022a). However, the purpose of making the visa process less cumbersome for international students is not aimed at improving ISM levels for the philosophical or humanitarian benefits. Instead, it is a strategy for the Ugandan Government to increase revenues from educational services, since education is among the export commodities in the country (Othieno & Nampewo, 2012). As is the case elsewhere, this constitutes a response to the imperatives of the GATS (Shields, 2013). The whole exercise is driven by commercialization and market-driven tendencies that emphasize the economic benefits of ISM (Kirchhoff, 2017). As advanced by Knight (2014a), the continued pursuit of these intentions has caused internationalization to lose sight of its original goals and become less efficient. This research study posits that, rather than the over-emphasized pursuit of economic gains, internationalization should be less economically motivated and aim instead to improve the caliber of teaching and research in HEIs and contribute meaningfully to the development of society (de Wit et al., 2015).

Further, the previous testimony by the senior immigration officer can be interpreted in the light of existing policies on East Africa's economic integration, which have influenced ISM. He further declared:

> There is an existing cooperation treaty among East African member states. The treaty strives to promote, among other things, the free movement of students. Article 11 of this treaty stipulates that the East African member states will mutually recognize the academic and professional qualifications obtained in partner states. While this article focused on streamlining the labor movement, it has also promoted student mobility within the region since students are assured of recognition of their certificates when they return to their home countries. This positively affects the number of East African students that come to Uganda considering its other attributes. (Interview with Uganda's senior immigration officer, November 15th, 2022).

This response underscores the relevance of regional efforts in facilitating ISM. In fact, according to Lee and Sehoole (2021), intra-African student mobility has a well-pronounced regional dimension. In the context of this study, the regional body spearheading ISM activities is the Inter-

University Council for East Africa, as a regional initiative of the East African Community. However, other bodies such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) exist in Africa, and all promote intra-African ISM. This position relates to the significant contribution of ISM towards development and geopolitical goals (Majee & Ress, 2020). Studies have indicated that these regional efforts enable disadvantaged students to navigate challenges that would ordinarily limit their chances of attaining international education (Lee & Sehoole, 2021).

However, while such regional efforts are appreciated, Knight (2017) contends that the resulting benefits fail to be maximized when only leading universities, more established organizations, and developed national systems engage in regional collaborations and exchanges. According to Knight (2017), some regional networks are exploited for status building among elite institutions, rather than capacity building and sharing among all types of universities. Engaging only some institutions and organizations is a challenge in terms of success and sustainability, and contradicts the overall intention of regionalization in HE. Similarly, as highlighted earlier, having universities from Kenya and Uganda as the only leading regional institutions participating in ISM (ICEF Monitor, 2017) limits its benefits to a relatively small number of individuals. This, indeed, calls for a review of efforts to optimize the benefits of intra-African ISM.

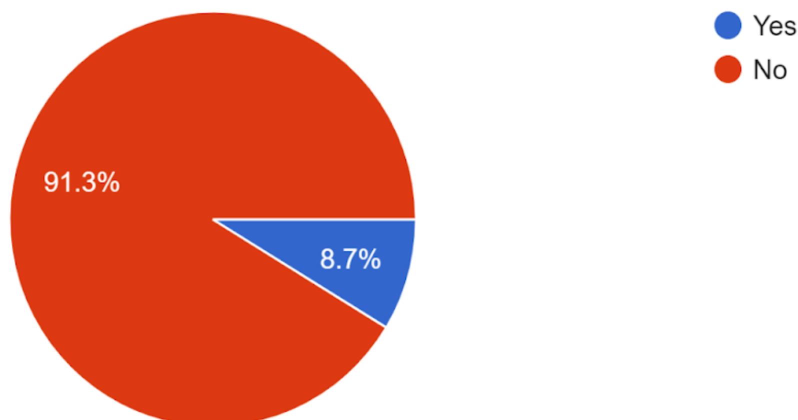
Mobility in East Africa is primarily informed by policies on East Africa's regional integration which seek to strengthen relationships between East African partner states (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018). This conforms to the idea expressed by Rudge (2016) that developing countries often use ISM to supercharge international relationships and reputation. It also explains why there are considerations to make tuition fees paid by East African international students in regional universities equivalent to those paid by home students. This idea is part of broader economic integration initiatives in the East African region. The practice should be supplemented by providing scholarships to students to enhance their mobility opportunities. The East African Community currently offers scholarships through the Inter-University Council for East Africa, but these serve only a few students. At the same time, such scholarship could be supplemented with grants and loans to intending students.

Schinkel (2018) explains that in some cases, migrants must undergo 'integration' – although this does not apply to migrants of all nationalities. *Integration* refers to "the process by which immigrants become accepted into society, both as individuals and as groups" (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, 2018, p.16). Some migrants are fit for integration while others qualify for 'integration dispensation'. The same author further explains that this scenario promotes racist tendencies and a form of neo-colonialism. The practice of integration separates citizens from non-citizens – delineating who should or should not be part of the society. While that discussion relates to a situation in Eastern Europe, the same effects have been witnessed elsewhere, since discrimination tendencies associated with migration constitute a broader social problem (Backman et al., 2020; Rashid, 2018; Senthanar et al., 2020). The present study argues that while migration laws need to be in place to regulate entry and exit at a country's border points, humans and their needs should be put before systems. A deeper understanding of the purpose of an individual's migration movements should inform the broader immigration laws that are formulated. Universities need to make their voices heard to influence the policy environment in which they operate. This may entail demonstrating the humanitarian, development, economic and diplomatic values associated with ISM at local, regional and international levels. In this way, they can persuade governments to formulate favorable policies, with minimum visa requirements.

IX.4. Employment of international students

Another issues the present study investigated was employment of international students in Uganda. The participating international students were asked to characterize themselves as employed or unemployed while in Uganda. The pie chart in Figure 9.2 presents the findings of this analysis.

Figure 9.3: *Distribution of international students regarding whether they are employed or unemployed in Uganda.*



The results show that over 91% of the contacted international students were not employed, while only 8.7% of them were employed. In line with this, the participants were also asked to comment on the ease with which they might obtain jobs in Uganda (Appendix 1, section E, question 10e). The question had options on a Likert scale of five possibilities, namely Very difficult (VD) (1), Difficult (D) (2), Neutral (N) (3), Easy (E) (4), and Very easy (VE) (5). A high rating (5) indicates the job acquisition process is easy, and a low rating (1) indicates that the job acquisition process is difficult. Figure 9.4 shows the respondents' opinions regarding the ease with which they can obtain jobs.

Figure 9.4: *Distribution of international students' opinions regarding the ease of acquiring a job in Uganda.*

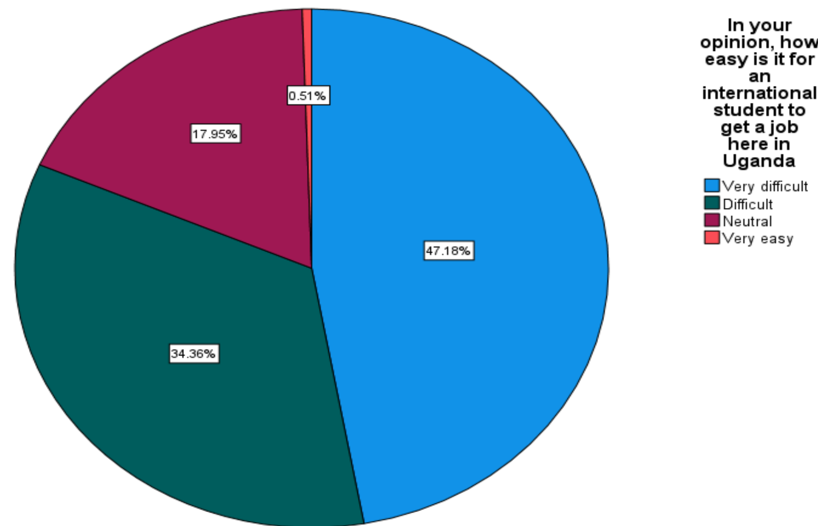


Figure 9.4 shows that most of the participating international students (81.54%) opined that it is difficult for them to obtain jobs in Uganda. This explains why most (i.e. 91%) indicated they were not employed (Figure 9.3). Only one respondent indicated that getting jobs in Uganda was very easy, but none of the respondents stated that it was easy to get employment in Uganda. That is why only four categories out of five are shown in Figure 9.4.

The participants were also asked to point out the factors that prevent international students from obtaining jobs in Uganda. The responses to this question are summarized in Figure 9.5.

Figure 9.5: Distribution of students' views regarding limitations for international students in obtaining jobs.

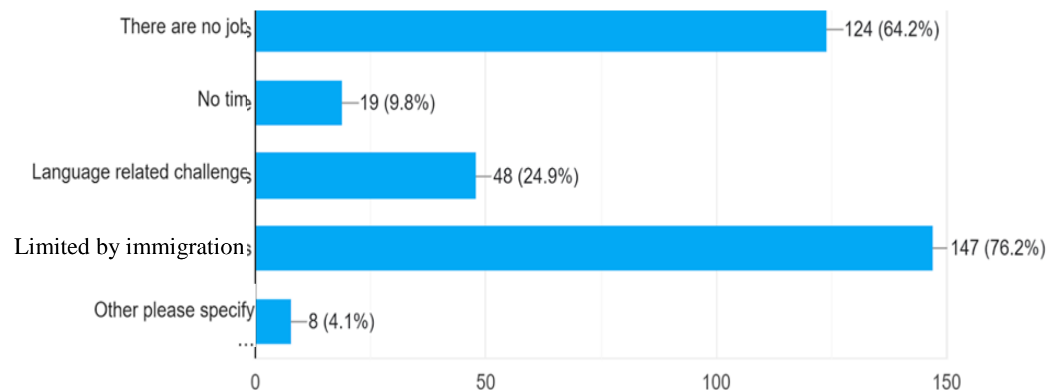


Figure 9.5 indicates that most respondents believe that the main factors that constrain international students in seeking employment are immigration laws (76.2%), and the scarcity of job opportunities in the country (64.2%). This suggests that immigration laws are configured to reserve available jobs for local citizens. As argued by O'Connor (2017), immigration controls often serve as practical measures to regulate ISM by controlling student mobility and limiting access to only the 'desired' type of student. In the context of this study, the 'desired' students are those who will enhance the economic gains and student diversity of the university, without compromising the employment situation in the country. The International Students Officer at MU agreed with this view, as illustrated in his response captured hereunder:

> There is high competition for the few jobs available in the country, and they are not enough for Ugandans. Further, the university also has fewer occupations that international students would take up; in most cases, these are volunteer and internships positions which are ideally not paid jobs….(Interview with the International Students Officer at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The above response illustrates what Riaño et al. (2018) call the "paradox of contemporary states" (p. 286), characterized by the desire to become open and inclusive to entrants, while remaining restrictive and exclusive at the same time (Hampshire, 2013). The present study supports the argument of those authors that "although policies on international students may have been liberalized in several national contexts, they are still prone to conflicts" (p. 286) – as in the case of the highlighted paradox, in which international students are desired, yet rejected at the same time (King, 2012). The view of Makerere University's International Students Officer was supported by the senior immigration officer at the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Uganda who declared:

> Each international student in Uganda is required by law to have a student pass which must be paid for in case the student is not from the East African region. The pass is free for East Africans. The pass allows the student to stay and study in Uganda but not to work. An international student who wishes to work must get a work permit that offers rights to work. (Interview with Uganda's senior immigration officer, November 15th, 2022).

Brooks and Waters (2022) hold that ISM is increasingly becoming a policy issue for governments worldwide, and it is essential to understand the implications of such policies for mobile students. Raghuram (2013) explains that international students might have intentions beyond academic ones, including employment-related desires. All international students need to comply not only with existing educational policies in the host country, but also those that govern foreign nationals.

Although such policies are desirable, this study raises concerns about restrictive migration policies that exclude international students from jobs, and also communicate to some that they are unwanted in the host country. Internationalization aims to improve students' competencies to interact with people from different backgrounds, and to work and live in diverse 'worlds of work' (Hudzik, 2011). Such competencies are well inculcated when there is diversity within the student population. It is therefore necessary that immigration policies should become less restrictive. This study suggests that international students could be allowed some working hours as the experience has been in countries such as Germany (Germany Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2015), US, UK, Canada, and Australia (Tran & Soejatminah, 2018)

Various researchers (Anderson, 2019; Favell, 2019; Schinkel, 2018) have analyzed mobile students as a component of the migrant population. What emerges is that while mobile students are desirable on the one hand (Bound et al., 2021), they are still part of a group of people whose "movement or presence is considered a problem" (Anderson, 2019, p. 2). Therefore, as Brooks and Waters (2022) explain, from the policy perspective there are desirable and undesirable international students. It therefore goes without saying that the acceptable movements of these students is always regulated, and often treated with skepticism. Unfortunately, such skepticism breeds discrimination, which is itself an injustice.

ISM and associated policies in East Africa are structured in response to the region's broader socioeconomic issues. The significant issue raised in this study is the likely influence of brain drain due to ISM. This is explained in a response from the Senior Migration Officer at the Migration Control Head Office in Kampala:

> Student mobility as an aspect of human migration must be handled properly; otherwise, it can destabilize nations and undo their development efforts. For example, the brain drain challenges in developing nations result from the mismanagement of migration and ISM. Thus, while we promote the free movement of students across the Ugandan borders, we have to ensure that the movement does not become counterproductive for Uganda as a country and the countries from which the students come. (Interview with Uganda's senior immigration officer, November 15th, 2022).

From this view, it is evident that while Uganda intends to benefit from hosting international students, it remains careful to maintain the employment situation for its own citizens. For some countries in the global North, attracting more international students through favorable employment

policies (Brooks & Water, 2009; Knight, 2009) can be viewed as a better policy strategy. Such a strategy would not reduce the benefits of ISM (Courtois, 2018), but could instead solve labor shortages in such countries. For countries with limited employment opportunities, ISM can aggravate the situation if not regulated properly as suggested in the informant from Uganda's immigration office.

Knight (2017) submits that new trends (such as internationalization) are necessary since they may contribute positively towards national development, although we must always be mindful of their unintended consequences. In particular, as indicated in the above response, brain drain is an unintended consequence of ISM and internationalization in general. Some scholars (Alemu et al., 2022; Amutuhaire, 2020; Johnstone & Lee, 2014) have confirmed that ISM encourages brain drain, especially if it involves mobility from the South to the North (Maharaj, 2014). Existing human resource challenges that are being experienced – especially in African universities – may be attributed to the exodus of African professionals to the outside world (Mittelmeier et al., 2022). Based on the same view, Jowi and Mbwette (2017) express concerns about the prolonged experience of brain drain from Africa, which has led to the loss of qualified youthful staff to the global North. As a result, the available pool of academics are those who are aging, and replacement by younger scholars would be beneficial. In the regional context, the situation should not be exacerbated by 'intra-African brain drain' in which one African country 'loses' its qualified citizens to another African country. This is particularly relevant in the light of the significant strides made by African countries towards improving human resource capacities by investing in HE (Jowi et al., 2013). To achieve development goals, it is desirable for trained personnel to remain in their home countries, in order to perform development activities. Therefore, the limitation imposed upon international students to obtain jobs while in Uganda is intended to discourage them from staying in Uganda after their studies, encouraging them to return home instead. This approach may contribute to stabilizing East African economies regarding human resource distribution.

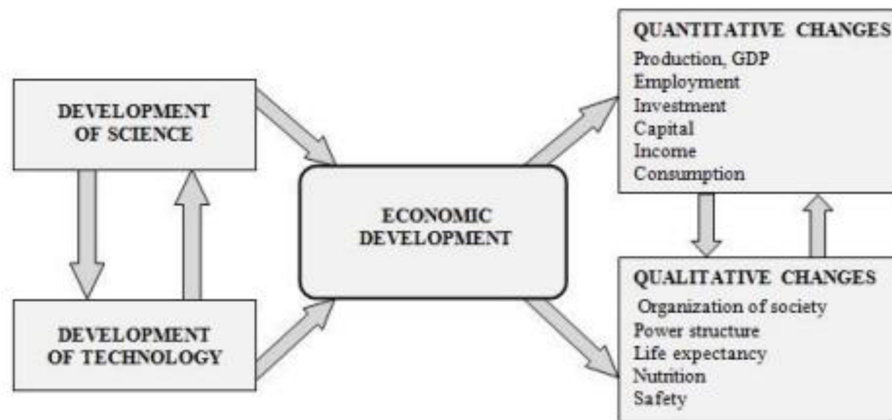
However, investing in HE highlighted by Jowi et al. (2013) is not enough to end the brain drain from Africa; it must be accompanied by actions tailored towards addressing the quality of academic programs and the employment situation in African countries. According to Beneitone and El-Gohany (2017), for example, the quality of academic programs in some African universities does not meet local labor market demands. This continues to motivate students to study in other

countries, and facilitates brain drain since the graduates may not return home after their studies in a foreign country. Brain drain in Africa today appears to be less of a problem than it was in the early 1960s, when many African countries attained independence. During that time, the African scholars who studied abroad did not return, representing a human resource loss (Woldegiorgis & Doevenspeck, 2015).

The most severe problem in Africa is unemployment and underemployment (ILO, 2021) rather than brain drain. The high underemployment rates suggest that there are more qualified individuals than jobs available in some sectors of the economy. As a result, skilled workers and graduates often have no option but to opt for jobs in which they are overqualified, or to leave their home countries as a result of unfavorable job environments. In other words, unemployment and underemployment rates can be attributed to a mismatch between the skills possessed by graduates and those required in the job market (section VIII.3).

Further, there is an existing 'brain race' whereby countries in the global North invest in attracting the best talent to study and work in their institutions, in order to maximize the brain power required for research and innovation (Knight, 2009). This has undermined the original goal of helping students from developing countries to study in other countries so as to complete a degree and return home. Countries, especially those in the global North, are now in competition with each other to train and retain human resources in order to meet their own needs. If the employment situation in Africa does not improve, students trained abroad may not return, and even those trained in African institutions may have to leave the continent to find employment elsewhere. Continued investment in science and technology will improve the employment situation in Africa for both graduates and students (regardless of nationality) seeking work. Investments in these areas can facilitate economic development through qualitative and quantitative changes that can improve the national employment structure and quality of life for many residents (Tytyk & Mrugalska, 2018). This is illustrated in Figure 9.6.

Figure 9.6: *Effect of investment in science and technology on economic development.*



Adapted from Tytyk and Mrugalska (2018).

Besides brain drain, the phenomenon of 'brain train' (William & Balaz, 2005) has also emerged. Brain train refers to serial mobility for individuals seeking to obtain education and training upgrades and enhancements (Adekola, 2017). Under this phenomenon, Knight (2009) explains that students enroll for degrees in one country, followed by a second degree or an internship in another country, and are then employed in one or more countries, before finally returning to their home country. This can encompass over eight years of international study and work experience. In such a scenario, countries without sound HE systems are not positioned to attract mobile students and professionals, or to benefit from their mobility. However, the same countries are exposed to chronic human resource challenges as their own trained nationals spend much time outside their home country. Therefore, inequalities between national HE systems must be addressed in unison, together with appropriate emigration policies, in order to realize benefits offered by ISM.

International students have been described as 'economic agents,' which is happening amidst a global scramble for talent (Riaño et al., 2018). According to Menz (2016), countries with restrictive laws on migration will lose out on attracting international students who would otherwise serve as a source of desired talent. Thus, while we have already argued that human resource loss due to brain drain is felt only in specific areas of the job sector (Figure 8.6), it may be felt in all sectors soon, if the nations concerned do not harmonize their immigration laws with their employment situations. Contextual factors may force international students to reverse the observed

trend of south–south mobility in favor of migrating to the North. Some countries in the North face labor shortages, and many consider international students a source of locally trained international labor (Chiou, 2017). This study shows that contextual differences between the global North and the global South influence the nature of migration policies. Considering that there are a significant number of international students in Uganda (NCHE, 2022a), most of whom are not employed (Figure 9.3), this study holds that employment opportunities are not an apparent rationale for intra-African ISM.

As discussed earlier, and contrary to the UK situation described by Lomer (2018), international students in Uganda who intend to work must substitute the students pass with a work permit, which is expensive. Yet having a job is essential in order to gain practical skills for future employment opportunities (Tran & Soejatminah, 2018), and to meet part of the high education costs of studying in a foreign country (Kigotho, 2023b). This is a technical way of excluding international students from obtaining employment, as has been the case in the US and Australia (Tran & Soejatminah, 2018). Such a scenario depicts international students as migrants whose value is doubtable (Riaño et al., 2018). In this way, international students are portrayed as 'other' – a scenario which requires further evaluation. If handled poorly, it may reinforce the perception that internationalization is similar to neocolonialism (Zuchowski et al., 2017). The worst effect is that in the context of the present study, such 'colonial' transgressions are being carried out by fellow Africans.

The situation described above is no surprise, since ideologies developed in the North have always found their way into the South. As Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2021a) observes, this results from the historical self-positioning of the global North as the world's teacher and as the only site of rationality and reason. With such a perception, the rest of the world is expected to learn from, and apply what the global North does. This suppresses the possibility of the emergence of 'alternatives to knowing', thus raising ethical questions. For example, if East African students from partner states are treated as home students, why has such consideration not been applied to the employment of such students? According to the argument by Hillman and Cowan (2021), lower fees for national students are due to the taxes paid by their parents, but the case is different for international students, and therefore their fees should be higher. In any case, the fact that students from the East African region who study in Uganda are treated as home students has not affected ISM qualitatively. This

implies that it is possible to provide an international education at a fee comparable to that charged to domestic students.

However, the effect of charging the same tuition fees for international students and domestic ones may require further analysis, particularly if it is based on the quality of service provision. While this issue raises ethical questions, it also depicts the politics that surround ISM. In other words, ethics are constructed within a political space that we cannot ignore. Stein (2016) rightly clarifies this view, claiming that:

> …ethical frameworks are not articulated or enacted in political vacuums; ethics are formulated, situated, and negotiated within and between particular socio-historical contexts, collectivities, subjectivities, and power relations. Thus, politics are not supplemental to ethics, but instead centrally inform the context, content, and framing of any particular ethical approach or engagement (p. 6).

Besides the number of available jobs in Uganda being very limited, participants in this study indicated that the employment environment is not supportive of international students. One participant explained that international students experience discrimination when searching for jobs. He declared as follows:

> I tried to get a job on several occasions without success, even when I was sure that there was a vacant position. By mere physical appearance, they could say that they had no vacancies. Sometimes they would promise to call me back when they get vacant positions, but they never did… (Interview with an international student from South Sudan studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The study also found that under rare circumstances – especially when specific skills are required – an international student can successfully obtain a job. Consider the example given by an international student at MU from South Sudan:

> After several attempts, I recently got temporary employment with the International Organization for Migration (IOM). This was because I am fluent in Arabic, which is not spoken here. I would not have got the job if I was not fluent in Arabic. (Interview with an international student from South Sudan studying at MU, November 15th, 2022).

The above student responses are indicative of racism and discrimination, practices which complicate the search for employment opportunities by international students in Uganda; the issue deserves attention from both HEIs and the host nation. Schinkel (2018) advises that nations should aim to eliminate social divisions whose existence is linked to power asymmetries and colonial perceptions. According to the same author, racism and movements against immigration are

prominent in Europe and the United States. Considering that the global South usually replicates practices that are evident in the global North (de Wit & Jooste, 2014), perhaps that is why we are witnessing similar practices in East Africa. This thought, however, is not meant to blame the global North for all systemic failures in the global South. Nations need to take responsibility for their own actions, and in this case, the racist tendencies identified should be tackled with the precision they deserve. Racism, as shown in the above responses, directly contradicts the ethical aspirations of ISM. Commenting on the exclusion of international students in the US, Lee and Rice (2007) refer to this attitude as 'neo-racism'.

Considering the unstable employment situation in Uganda, it is challenging to develop policy guidelines that allow international students to obtain jobs. While it may be acknowledged that CST advocates for fairness, how possible is it to provide employment opportunities to students (be they international or home students) in situations where even graduates are unemployed? Would increasing the access of international students to jobs not improve their situation? These are questions whose answers are not common knowledge, yet they remain essential for fair and ethical operationalization of internationalization. The conception of the employment policies should be founded on whether the intended outcomes aim to improve human life now and in the future. In the context of this study, the question should be about how immigration laws can help to shape a better world for international students.

The ethical dimension of internationalization has been approached from the perspective of the uneven power relations between the global North and the global South (Stein, 2016). However, this same power imbalance is reproduced when considering south–south student mobility. Coincidentally, this is happening at a time when privatization and commercialization, coupled with budget cuts for HE, have made a deep impact everywhere around the world. In some cases, HEIs consider international students as alternative sources of income (Choudaha, 2017), which has been termed a 'marketization approach' to international education (Findlay, et al., 2017). With such an approach, high standards need to be maintained so that the consumers (international students) receive quality services that match the amount of money invested. For example, in the context of the present study, policies that govern the assessment of the quality of education in East Africa would be necessary. East African countries must develop their own quality measures for education

systems and not replicate those developed in the North. This may entail having a proper definition of what quality international education in the context of East Africa entails.

As much as this study indicates that work-related provisions for international students in Uganda are missing, alternative voices were obtained from some of the participants. Interestingly, one informant reported that international students might not even be interested in work because they get the money they need from supportive families. This points to the social class of international students explored earlier, with many belonging to the high and middle social classes. Admittedly, international students' needs differ from one student to another.

This study indicates that international students in Uganda operate in an immigration environment that is unsupportive and unwelcoming to them, especially regarding the work search. Similar concerns are raised by Brown (2021) and Courtois (2018), who advance that immigration laws that regulate the employment life of international students in the host country – as well as their access to health facilities – often pose significant challenges for them. Such difficulties often expose international students to economic, social and psychological problems and should be factored in when formulating mobility policies.

Contrary to the findings of the present study, Riaño et al. (2018) hold that international students are a source of expert labor in some countries, especially those in the global North that have a high proportion of senior citizens. This study shows that due to the shortage of available jobs in Uganda, international students are expected to pursue only one interest: furthering their education. The population growth rate in the country is high, while the number of available jobs is low, resulting in an unemployment rate of 5.3% for youths (World Bank, 2020). Close to 700,000 youths attain working age annually, yet they cannot be absorbed into the existing job market, which has caused a mismatch between job supply and demand. While over half of Uganda's youth are self-employed, a sizeable number are engaged in unpaid labor and low-quality jobs. Thus, jobs cannot be offered to international students; and if they were available, they would be of low quality – and clearly not a desirable option for university students or graduates.

The findings of this study suggest that the sampled universities in Uganda need to invest in providing career support services to international students (section VII.4). The current lack of such services is undoubtedly related to a fear of censure in light of the legal restrictions on the

employment of international students. Nevertheless, career support services can be provided in a way that focuses on the employment of these students later, in their home countries. This idea ties in nicely with the views expressed by Wen and Shen (2016) (section IV.3.2) that internationally mobile students should be encouraged to return home after graduation. Gribble (2008) explains that the returnees can contribute to the home country's development goals by participating in its economic growth. However, home countries need to take responsibility for creating jobs for returning graduates; otherwise, graduates will likely seek opportunities in other countries that do have a supportive job environment. Rudge (2016) advises universities to make time for trade trips and state visits, and to work with the embassies of the international students' home countries. Such opportunities enhance the support that can be provided to international students, and create avenues for strengthening diplomatic ties and increasing recruitment in suitable catchment areas.

Career support services tailored towards international students are common in countries in the global North. Morris-Lange and Brands (2015) report on the importance of these services in influencing the employability of international students, and enabling them to overcome challenges associated with poor language skills, low exposure to the host country's labor market, and lack of professional networks. While understanding that contextual differences influence how career support services lead to desired outcomes, such services can be adapted to Africa's local context, in order to bring about comparable benefits. Most universities in the global South rely on general career support services for all students. However, such services need to be customized to accommodate the unique needs of international students, which clearly differ from those of national students.

In other countries, such as Germany, international students are allowed to work for a limited number of hours (Germany Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, 2015). While this concession still puts citizens before migrants (Anderson, 2019) (as would be expected), it is better for international students compared to the East African context of this study. Providing international students with job opportunities in their host country enriches their work experience and based on this view, several commentators have encouraged US, UK, Canadian, and Australian institutions to provide work experience for international students in order to enhance their employability (Tran & Soejatminah, 2018). In those countries, improving work opportunities for international students during and after their studies is a focal issue. Governments and institutions

have actively used this provision to advertise themselves as better study destinations for international students. For a country that has positioned itself to attract more international students within the region, Uganda needs to consider how to exploit such avenues. This remains a dilemma however, considering the country's unemployment situation.

According to the views of Tran and Soejatminah (2018), issues of work experience and employability among international students have yet to attract the desired attention, and they are equally under-theorized. The situation worsens in the global South, where knowledge production is limited and mistrusted (Demeter, 2020). Of interest to this study is research into international students' *rights* to work experience and employment opportunities in their host countries, which is virtually missing in the literature. The international students who participated in this study expressed interest in finding jobs, but they cited limitations of Uganda's employment policies as the main barrier to obtaining work. However, it was not in the scope of this study to explore further by bringing out the students' voices, especially regarding what they feel should be done about it. This situation suggests that internationalization in the global South is unresponsive to some of the needs of the people it purports to serve.

Hillman and Cowan (2021) cite situations where international students are offered placement in areas that are unrelated to their areas of study. While such placements are a source of livelihood for the students and can enable them to solve their financial challenges, they do not complement their international educational experience. Under ideal situations, the student should be offered opportunities that reinforce the acquisition of skills relevant to their future employment prospects. However, in situations where relevant job placements are unobtainable, international students should be allowed to work, doing whatever jobs they can find. This still offers them opportunities to develop soft skills, such as negotiation and communication skills, that may not be taught in school. This increases their employment chances and the quality of the services they could provide in the future.

For international students, more than studying in a foreign university is required – the candidate should be equipped with the other competencies needed to gain employment. This becomes even more relevant in Africa, where fewer jobs exist than graduates. Further, Binsaeed et al. (2017) explain that, when selecting employees, employers are now more interested than ever in the soft

skills possessed by a candidate. One of the avenues through which university students can acquire soft skills is through internships or job placements. Such skills enable graduates to navigate the gap between their institutions and the world of work. This is where universities need to focus as they provide education to international students.

Further, this study has indicated that some international students experience financial challenges while studying in their host country (response from international student from South Sudan studying at MU, November 15th, 2022 quoted earlier). The severity of such challenges could be minimized if international students are able to access some form of paid employment. While one can argue that Uganda adopted such employment policies given its contextual conditions (i.e., lack of employment opportunities), applying such policies contradicts human rights principles. It also challenges the ethics and equity perspectives that national systems should address before adopting any internationalization strategies. Therefore, a common understanding between the sending and receiving countries of international students could provide an avenue for uplifting their experiences, particularly regarding employment prospects. This ties in very well with the hospitality and reciprocity approach raised by Yang (2020), where the host and receiving countries have a mutual responsibility to meet the expectations of international students.

According to Abura (2022), over 16 million refugees in East Africa are school-going children. As for all potential university students in East Africa, they are positioned to benefit from international education through intra-African mobility, which is cheaper (especially in terms of transport), compared to study abroad programs out of Africa. Among the respondents in this study, only a few (1%) indicated that they are refugees, which is a lower percentage than the 5% of refugees who can access HE globally (UNHCR, 2022). At the same time, this scenario clarifies how HE for refugees has yet to become of interest to the world, although global HE enrolment for refugees stands at over 36% (Mittal & Pani, 2020). The situation will likely continue unless Uganda, one of the primary hosts for refugees in Africa, prioritizes education for refugees.

From the point of view of migration infrastructuralization, one of the tactics used by HE institutions to recruit international students is to work with specialized recruiters or agents (James, 2022). According to Denisova-Schmidt et al. (2020), this tactic has been popular in western countries, and its use increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this study did not find

anything to suggest that external recruiters influence student mobility in East Africa. The international students' choice of institution was based on institutional reputation (see the response from a Kenyan student at MU quoted in section VII.1) or referrals (see response from Nigerian student quoted in section VI.1.7). Hence, the selected universities in Uganda appear to lack a focus on the infrastructuralization of mobility. Even the immigration laws are not considered part of the ISM infrastructure; otherwise, they would have been structured to facilitate ISM and the employment prospects of internationally mobile students.

Furthermore, while Uganda seeks to provide education to international students, its policies about the employment of international students limit progress in that direction. This points to the broader ambiguity that surrounds globalization and internationalization. For example, while globalization strives to build a global economy, it still operates within states demarcated by borders. On the one hand, nations need to confront challenges concerning the regulation of migration amidst global forces that encourage greater openness (Riaño et al., 2018), and on the other hand, they need to consider the tendency towards closure based on political, security and economic concerns. All policies governing mobility must therefore factor in such contextual issues. The following section, section IX.5, summarizes the discussion on ISM and immigration policies.

IX.5. Internationalization and student mobility in East Africa: discussion and concluding remarks

This study indicates that the long-existing phenomenon of student mobility in East Africa (Oanda & Matiang'I, 2018; Tabaire & Okao, 2010) not only continues to manifest itself, but does so on an increasing scale. Further, the mobility of students to the North continues, since some respondents indicated that institutions in the global North had been their first choice (e.g., response from a Rwandan student at MU quoted in section VIII.1). To such students, opting for an African institution was purely circumstantial. This situation exists in other parts of Africa (ICEF Monitor, 2021; ICEF Monitor, 2023), and it represents the persistent core–periphery dynamics that characterize ISM. According to Glass and Cruz (2023), the core–periphery dynamics are shifting, with the emergence of education hubs in different parts of the world bringing about *multipolarity*. This is a "phenomenon in which a more diverse set of countries exert more significant influence in the overall network that shapes ISM" (Glass & Cruz, 2023, p. 431). The increased flow of African students to study destinations in South Africa, Egypt, Ghana, or Uganda illustrates a case

of multipolarity. This does not however negate the market orientation and profit motives of ISM in Africa (ICE Monitor, 2017; The PIE News, 2019), and how such factors make international education more unaffordable and less inclusive (Van Mol & Pérez-Encinas, 2022).

The foregoing views indicate that intra-African mobility is yet to change the exploitative nature of internationalization. Perhaps this form of student mobility represents African struggles to join the 'European game' to exploit fellow Africans, since in the provision of services, profit making intentions supersede equity, ethics, and social justice aspirations (Stein, 2019; Vavrus & Pekol, 2015). While the economic rationales of internationalization cannot be avoided, the profits made by admitting international students can, for example, be re-invested into host institutions for the purpose of quality improvement. Providing substandard education in the name of international education – for example, as was once reported regarding KIU (Ngalomba & Bacwayo, 2015) – is a disservice to the students and Africa as a continent, and challenges the ethics of international education.

As has been explained by various researchers (Alves & King, 2022; Raghuram, 2013), international students sometimes take on part-time jobs to support themselves, while others may be refugees and asylum seekers (Alves & King, 2022). These are possibilities in East Africa in particular, where several countries have experienced war and conflicts. The refugees freed from the war-affected countries are usually hosted in neighboring countries (Abura, 2022), and may constitute part of the international student body in the host country. While there have been interventions to educate refugees in Uganda at the lower levels of education (Schulte & Kasirye, 2019), there are not yet any known interventions targeting the tertiary education of refugees at HEIs in Uganda. Further, denying employment to international students in Uganda – while the country's Employment Act provides for their employment (Integral Human Development, 2021) – is a contradiction. Involving a wide range of stakeholders to assess the employment situation for international students and the country's graduates can help to improve the situation. Even so, it is acknowledged that it is challenging for a nation whose graduates are either unemployed or underemployed (Kempner, 2020) to adopt strategies for employing in-bound international students.

Education systems in Africa need to inculcate skills required on the job market, since there has been an outcry about the mismatch between graduate skills and the availability of suitable jobs (Morsey & Mukasa, 2019). The education programs delivered in African universities should reflect the skills required in African societies. Therefore, HEIs need to upgrade their links with society so that they can work together to reduce unemployment levels among graduates. Academic programs based on colonial norms must be replaced by those that meet Africa's development needs. While benchmarking with international institutions may be relevant, it can only be made effective by adapting academic programs to local contexts.

Globalization has increased levels of worldwide competition, and graduates need to strategically position themselves within the global economy where intercultural skills and a cosmopolitan outlook are highly valued (Bolay & Rey, 2020). One possible way to achieve such skills is through international education. Based on this point of view, students' motivations to become internationally mobile relate more to strategic economic possibilities, rather than the moral and political dimensions of global interconnectivity (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015). Understanding who is represented and who is excluded can make internationalization practices more inclusive.

This study indicates that students' motives to become internationally mobile are diverse and conform to different theoretical frameworks (e.g., see Table 6.1). Theoretical frameworks that explain ISM in East Africa may relate to macro structural forces, e.g., inequalities in HE provision (Glass & Cruz, 2023), or micro (individualistic) motivations at a family or student level (Lesjak et al., 2015; Yue & Lu, 2022). An intermediate (meso) level is also noted, in which a student's social networks and attributes of the host institution play a central role in shaping mobility (Fakunle, 2021). Alves and King (2022) argue that, considering the supply and demand sides of ISM, Human Capital Theory spans all the frameworks mentioned. The same authors argue that ISM is an investment in prestigious human and cultural capital, in which the benefits exceed the costs, over the medium to long term.

Considering the 'supply' side, Alves and King (2022) cite a scenario in which knowledge-based economies support continuous self-improvement in knowledge and skills that can result in a 'promising' professional career for an individual, with higher income and life satisfaction rewards. This approach applies in the East African context, where ambitious students are motivated to move

to countries with better and more prestigious university systems (Alemu, 2014; OECD, 2019; Shields, 2013), considering that partner states in East Africa face HE quality challenges regarding infrastructure and opportunities (Ngalomba & Bacwayo, 2015). Considering that international education costs in travel, tuition, and upkeep are usually high, attending HE in a neighboring country is a cheaper alternative than moving further away. Alves and King (2022) argue that "other things being equal, students will choose destination countries which are close at hand, yet still 'different,' in order to minimize travel costs and time, and perhaps also to study in a culture which is not too far removed from their own" (p. 182). This explains the growth in intra-African ISM and its associated regional approach.

The 'demand' perspective clearly explains the investment side of international education, since it promises greater returns in the future (Alves & King, 2022). In addition to anticipated future returns on investment, international students also have short-term motivations for becoming internationally mobile. Acquiring a foreign qualification shows that one has developed 'good taste' in art, food, music, and other cultural forms by which class distinctions are marked (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015). Alves et al. (2022) explain that international students also seek adventure, cultural experiences, and emancipation from their families. Therefore, the short-term benefits of ISM are not self-standing intentions, but rather indicators of symbolic capital – "the acquisition of a reputation for competence and an image of respectability and honorability that are easily converted into political positions" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 281). Symbolic capital depends on social class which implies that mainly students from the high social class have the capital necessary to pursue ISM.

The above views portray only the superficial aspects of internationalization, without clarifying the underlying forces that shape student flows. Examining the social class of international students, for example, indicates that the beneficiaries of ISM are mainly students from the high social class (Vavrus & Pekol, 2015). This is because these students have the symbolic capital required to participate in international education. Considering the advantages of international education, these students are then better positioned to reproduce their social class in society.

Further, considering the intra-regional mobility of students in East Africa, a binary split regarding participation is revealed, with leaders and followers. The main participating countries in ISM in East Africa (call them 'beneficiaries') are Kenya and Uganda (ICEF Monitor, 2017), while the

other countries seem to 'follow.' However, this positioning of Kenya and Uganda is not inherent, but has colonial roots that determined how HE was established and came to develop in the region. Uganda and Kenya benefited from the colonial administration that established high-quality HEIs in those countries. The institutions in these countries enjoy good regional reputations and are well-positioned in global university rankings (Times Higher Education, 2022). Such attributes shape ISM such that nations without such historically reputable institutions act mainly as senders of international students, rather than as host nations.

The forces shaping current internationalization trends go beyond the confines of African countries. The question is, why engage in an activity that has minimum benefits? African HEIs have demonstrated a kind of 'survival response' in order to 'fit in'; otherwise, they continuously risk being pushed to the margins. For example, as English becomes the world's language of science and technology, African countries like Rwanda and Morocco – formally dominated by other languages – are being forced to adopt English in order to 'survive.' Thus, as Teferra (2019) explains, participation of Africa in internationalization results from coercion rather than from deliberate choice.

Furthermore, the 'playground' is unleveled; it is tilted towards those with a long history of using the English language in their education systems. Thus, internationalization and ISM in East Africa are driven by structures and processes that appear to deepen social inequalities, rather than minimize them. As argued by Alves and King (2022), the mobility of students is usually from a less to a more developed country, and rarely in the opposite direction. While this study did not investigate the relationship between the level of economic growth and student mobility among countries in East Africa, the literature shows that Kenya is the region's economic powerhouse (Ho, 2019). The same country also hosts many international students (ICEF Monitor, 2017). Thus, without genuine cooperation, the strong economies will benefit from ISM and grow stronger while the weak ones will continue growing weaker.

Using English as the medium of communication for academic publications, conference presentations, or teaching suggests that one must conform to the methodologies and paradigms that represent Western traditions and values (Cruz & Luke, 2020). One wonders whether the imperative to use the English language does not represent 'academic neocolonialism', since

educational systems – especially those in the global South – are under pressure to conform to the norms and values of the metropolitan academic systems that use English (Zeng et al., 2023). To Alves and King (2022), international student flows exemplify "enduring post-colonial relations" (p. 182). That idea explains why this study reports (Table 5.2) significant numbers of Tanzanian and Kenyan students studying in Uganda, since the three countries share a colonial heritage.

IX.6. Conclusion

The present chapter has explored provisions of Uganda's immigration policy, as it pertains to international students studying in the country. It examines the various residence titles possessed by the participating international students, and the associated freedoms and restrictions. The chapter points out that international students are considered to be part of the host country's migrant population, regulated by the migration laws of that country. Contrary to previous studies that indicate that African migrants are usually undocumented, the participating students in this study reported that they hold legal residence titles. The most common residence title among the participating international students is the student pass, which is free for East African students (international students from countries beyond the East African Community need to pay a fee to acquire the student pass). Thus, regarding the student pass, the existing migration law in Uganda offers preferential treatment to East African students, compared to those from outside the region.

Whereas all the residence titles possessed by international students give them a right to stay in Uganda, they carry various freedoms and restrictions. While the student pass allows students to stay and study in Uganda, it offers the bearer no right to employment. A work permit must replace the student pass if the international student intends to work in Uganda. However, the work permit is expensive, thus posing a limitation for international students in trying to obtain jobs. Therefore, on the one hand, international students experience discrimination concerning the right to employment, while on the other, they are valued and sought after. This situation is paradoxical in that Uganda strives to be open and inclusive to the international community, but in terms of employment, it has remained restrictive and less inclusive. Much as it is a paradox for Uganda and other countries in a similar situation, countries should seek to eliminate social divisions linked to power asymmetries and colonial perceptions.

The restriction of employment opportunities for international students is motivated by Uganda's limited employment opportunities. Thus, the immigration laws are structured to safeguard the few available jobs for local citizens. This situation differs from that in many countries of the global North, which consider international students as a source of skilled labor. International students in some global North countries are allowed to seek jobs while they are studying, and even to transition into the job market after graduation.

While this study reports that immigration laws in Uganda appear to have been structured to discourage (rather than exacerbate) Africa's brain drain problem, this challenge may not be solved until Africa moves towards solving the employment situation. Many graduates are unemployed, while others must accept jobs for which they are overqualified (underemployment). In other words, in some employment sectors, the continent has more qualified individuals than available jobs. Indeed, unemployment and underemployment are more severe problems than brain drain.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Internationalization has become not only a choice, but also an obligation for improving teaching and learning processes, and the quality of higher education (HE) in general. International education is becoming the norm for preparing future generations for a global world. According to delegates gathered at the third UNESCO World Higher Education Conference, cooperation between universities in the global South is growing (UNESCO, 2022b). However, there is also an overrated sense of the benefits of internationalization that often ignores the inequalities and injustices that shape internationalization and thrive through it.

This study investigated international student mobility (ISM), a common aspect of the internationalization of HE. Few studies have investigated ISM from an African perspective; the present study was conducted to contribute to the narrowing of this knowledge gap. The study's main objective was to examine the rationales for ISM in East Africa and to contribute to the understanding of this concept from a non-European perspective. The study (1) investigated the influence of the quality of the HE systems in East African sending and receiving countries regarding ISM; (2) tried to determine how ISM benefits East Africa's privileged classes; and (3) attempted to investigate the immigration policy provisions for international students in East Africa.

Previous studies (Kritz, 2015; Mulvey, 2020; Schulmann, 2017) about South–North mobility have indicated that the search for better educational opportunities is the primary force that drives ISM. However, South–North ISM involves students moving from a peripheral to a core country, as opposed to the mobility depicted in this study, in which both the origin and destination countries are peripheral. This study investigated how HE systems in East Africa's sampled peripheral countries shape ISM.

Studies (Kang et al., 2019; Stein, 2019; Vavrus & Pekol, 2015) have also indicated that ISM tends to be less inclusive as it favors students from privileged families and thus enables privileged families to reproduce their social status. Indeed, the costs associated with participation in ISM are usually unaffordable for students from the lower echelons of society. Since only a few studies have investigated ISM in Africa, little is known about the interaction between ISM and class

reproduction in East Africa. This study investigated the extent to which ISM in the sampled East African countries pursues social class reproduction.

Past studies also indicate that international students are part of the host country's migrant population and are a source of skilled labor in some countries, particularly in the global North where labor shortages are experienced. However, Africa's employment situation, and the associated immigration provisions for international students in Africa, differ from those in countries in the global North. This study investigated the policy provisions for international students, especially regarding employment in Uganda.

Internationalization and student mobility have been explored mainly from a European perspective, such that perspectives other than the Western one are marginally represented in conversations about this subject. This study provides perspectives on internationalization and ISM from East Africa, in order to enrich scholarly conversations on the topic. This study considered HE systems, the social class of international students, and immigration policies as factors that regulate ISM, in order to highlight the general rationales that inform ISM in East Africa.

This study approached intra-African mobility from the perspective of Critical Social Theory, to point out some of the issues previously ignored by past studies on internationalization. The dominant discourses have emphasized the positive attributes of internationalization and suggested that HE systems worldwide should pursue this goal; however, they have tended to ignore its associated contradictory socio-political and ethical issues. This study examines how the fundamental values of international education, such as inclusivity, equity, ethics, and social responsibility, shape ISM in East Africa.

The first research question of the study was how HE systems in the sending do and receiving countries of international students affect ISM in East Africa? The study found that education systems in the sending countries are characterized by:

- High tuition fees and other education costs
- Universities with a low international reputation
- Universities with a small number of academic programs
- Low-quality teaching in universities
- Limited opportunities for students to develop employable skills

- Limited research opportunities.

Further, the study reports that high-quality teaching in universities in the receiving country (Uganda) increases the extent of inbound ISM. This trend is complemented by the high continental and global reputations of Makerere University (MU) and Kampala International University (KIU), as indicated by the 2024 Webometrics World Ranking of Universities (Osigwe, 2024). The high reputation is linked to the high research output in these universities, a comparatively high proportion of academics qualified to the doctoral level, and many academic program options for international students. In particular, some international students desired to be associated with the historically prestigious MU. This attribute is not enjoyed by Uganda's recently established universities such as KIU.

The study's findings on the first objective also reveal the less apparent realities that inform ISM in this region when subjected to the considerations of critical internationalization scholarship. The historical factors associated with Uganda as a center of HE for East and Central Africa during the colonial period continue to draw international students into Ugandan HEIs. Such historical and colonial factors that shape ISM in Africa do not fit perfectly into the common frameworks (e.g., the push and pull factors model) that analyze south-to-north ISM. A new framework for the interpretation of intra-African ISM is desirable. Advocating for the internationalization of higher education in Africa and intra-Africa ISM without taking into account the historical inequalities may only deepen such disparities.

While the study reveals that the search for HE systems with desirable qualities is the reason behind country-specific outbound mobility, it also indicates that East Africa has potentially productive education systems that can be strengthened to maximize development, national differences notwithstanding. The question is how to enable international students to benefit from differences in their country without exploitation and exacerbating existing inequalities. Rather than compete, East African countries should cooperate, collaborate, and benefit from their historical differences to maximize ISM gains for all partners, as advocated for by the critical perspectives on internationalization.

The present study contradicts many reports that have described HE institutions in Africa only in terms of their weaknesses, their limited teaching and research capacity, and dilapidated

infrastructure. While Africa's HE systems are associated with weaknesses, there are also some strengths that can be exploited to enhance development efforts on the continent. Admittedly, the number of high-quality institutions in Africa is low, but such institutions have been instrumental in shaping intra-African mobility. This view is not a recipe for complacency, but a call for further action. For example, while the study reports that many international students are satisfied with the quality of services provided by Uganda's universities and their links with neighboring communities, they do not authoritatively perceive student services and resources in those universities as being satisfactory. There is, therefore, room for improvement regarding such services and resources. Further, intra-African ISM could be increased if existing institutions were to collaborate and benchmark best practices, and so develop 'homemade' approaches to internationalization.

This study contributes to the critical internationalization scholarship by revealing the commercial orientations that inform ISM in East Africa, i.e., ISM is influenced by competition to attract international students as a source of institutional revenues, as has always been the case with south-to-north ISM. The lower tuition fees charged by KIU and MU in Uganda compared to other East African regional universities is a strategy to attract more international students and increase revenue. However, even after East African member states agreed to harmonize tuition fees for international students across the region in 2014, that initiative is yet to be applied; some universities still charge East African students the same fees as other international students from beyond the region. In any event, tuition fees remain high, thus limiting the participation of students from less affluent backgrounds. Therefore, ISM in East Africa is yet to become more equitable, inclusive, or socially just, and it contradicts the principles of critical internationalization. Indeed, the intra-Africa ISM does not siginificantly differ from South-North mobility in qualitative terms. HEIs in Africa, especially those in East Africa, must rethink the ethics of ISM. HEIs in East Africa should also avoid copying and applying processes from the global North without adapting them to the local context. It is high time that Africa adopted Teferra's (2020a) 'smart internationalization' strategies instead of unquestioningly adopting Eurocentric examples.

The study cautions that pursuing ISM only as a response to market forces may undo current development progress in Africa. Whether or not charging lower fees for international students within the East African region ever materializes, the income generated from the admission of

international students can be used creatively to support research activities and democratize education. For example, the incoming funds could be used to provide scholarships for students from less privileged backgrounds, so that they have the opportunity to become productive members of society, capable of contributing to global sustainable development. This is what critical internationalization aims to achieve. However, such intentions remain out of reach, given that the East African countries considered in this study do not have specific internationalization policies at the institutional and national levels, with the result that internationalization initiatives are not well planned or coordinated.

The study's second research question was how does social class privilege influence ISM in East Africa? In relation to this question, the study reports that:

- More mothers have lower qualifications than fathers, but their proportion reduces up the qualification hierarchy, indicating that fewer mothers in the sampled East African countries pursue post-graduate qualifications.
- Based on the average index for the parents' level of education and household income, 59% and 31.8% of the international students in the sample were in the high and middle social classes respectively, and only 9.2% were in the lower social class.

These findings indicate that social class influences ISM trends in East Africa such that the higher one's social class, the better the chances for one to participate in ISM. Therefore, current approaches to intra-African mobility limit the benefits of internationalization to privileged students and risk further entrenching social inequalities, as explained within critical internationalization. There is a need for Africa to make international education more equitable and accessible to all students, irrespective of their socioeconomic backgrounds. Aid in terms of scholarships that target students from the lower social class can increase their participation in ISM, making the practice more equitable and inclusive. Internationalization at home and hybrid mobility are additional options that would enable lower social class students to benefit from internationalization at lower costs.

The study findings also reveal that while the numbers of privileged social class students are dominant in both MU and KIU, the number of lower social class students cannot be ignored, and their proportion among internationally mobile students continues to grow, as reported in previous studies. This corresponds to the interview findings in this study, which indicate that students

participate in ISM to resist social class positioning and to transcend social classes. The increasing number of international students from the lower social class also relates to the changed demographics resulting from the high population growth and birth rates in Africa (Kigotho, 2020). However, in line with the theoretical debates of critical internationalization, African countries need to focus on expanding the chances for participation in ISM for these lower social class students.

In line with the third research question and contrary to previous studies that characterize African migrants as essentially being undocumented, majority of the contacted international students in Uganda hold legal residence titles, the most common one being the student pass. The student pass is free for East African international students, but not for those from other countries. Thus, there is segregation between East African and non-East African international students in Uganda concerning the fees associated with cross-border mobility.

The study further reports that students can stay and study in Uganda with a student pass, but this offers them no rights to employment. International students intending to work must acquire expensive work permits, thus restricting them from seeking jobs. In this way, the immigration laws protect available jobs for local citizens, which relates to the country's unemployment situation in which many graduates cannot secure jobs. This scenario reflects the job-related discrimination experienced by international students in Uganda; thus, international students in Uganda are sought after and shunned simultaneously. This challenges the *ethical and social justice* dimensions, essential considerations in critical internationalization. Wouldn't it improve the lives of international students if access to jobs were made less challenging? Yet, how feasible is such an undertaking in a country with high unemployment rates? Such questions cannot be addressed based on studies on south-to-north ISM. The available labor in many countries in the global North cannot saturate the job market, thus making international students a source of sought-after, skilled labor in some countries. Therefore, Africa can only address this challenge by developing contextually relevant interventions rather than borrowing experiences from the global North. Further investment in innovation and technology can enable African countries to create more jobs that can absorb graduates and also international students needing appropriate employment.

Regarding the phenomenon of brain drain out of Africa, the study has contributed to the understanding that, in part, immigration policies in Uganda were structured to mitigate the problem

by encouraging international students to return to their home countries. However, approaching brain drain in this way limits the potential benefits of international education for students in their host country. Other options, such as bonding arrangements (as seen in Rwanda), could be explored to enable students to maximize the benefits of participating in ISM, but still return to their home country and contribute to its economic development. Further, controlling brain drain calls for interventions that go beyond immigration policies that are intended to address the rampant unemployment and underemployment rates on the continent. Isn't it more beneficial to facilitate graduates to earn a livelihood by obtaining jobs in foreign countries, rather than keeping them unemployed or underemployed in their home country?

Thus, while the study appreciates the potential benefits of intra-African ISM, it contributes to the understanding that intra-African ISM is yet to meet its expectations. Current practices are based on and reflect the inequalities seen in south-to-north ISM. Moreover, African universities have yet to adapt internationalization practices to African realities fully. Copying and applying practices from elsewhere without due diligence can only exclude the people they are intended to serve.

The study acknowledges that various limitations could have affected the findings. The major limitation is the small number of informants, due to some people's unwillingness to participate in the study – in particular the continued lack of response from the target informant in Rwanda, after all the procedures for conducting studies in Rwanda had been fulfilled. Other limitations concern the low response rate for the quantitative part of the study, due to incomplete information about international students in the chosen universities' databases. The particulars for some international students obtained from the university registry were lacking valid email addresses, which were essential in order to contact them for this study.

The study recommends that future studies should examine how other discriminating factors, such as ethnic belonging, shape intra-African ISM. Further, studies can also consider how intra-African or intra-regional student mobility contributes to development in the students' home countries. Clearly, education is vital for human development at both individual and national levels. Investigating how international education contributes to the overall aim of education in terms of development is essential, especially for African countries. Lastly, the possibilities of hybrid student mobility, considering the restrictions associated with COVID-19, can also be explored.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

This questionnaire is part of a doctoral research about the international students' mobility in Uganda. As one of the international students studying in Uganda, you are conversant with the issues surrounding the students' mobility in Uganda. You have, thus, been selected to participate in the study by answering the attached questionnaire. Please complete the questionnaire by providing the most appropriate answer in your own opinion by selecting the appropriate option or writing in the space provided. The information you provide will be used only for the present scientific research. The questionnaire is anonymous and your responses will be kept confidential. Please endeavor to fill the questionnaire within two weeks and return it to the sender. Thank you.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND VARIABLES

Please provide the following information by selecting the relevant option as appropriate.

A1. Your gender *

○ Male
○ Female
○ Transgender
○ Prefer not to say

A2. Your Age*

○ 21 – 30 years
○ 31 - 40 years
○ 41-50 years
○ 51 years & above

A3. Academic qualification being sought *

○ Bachelor's degree
○ Masters
○ PhD
○ Other qualification

State your qualification here in case you have selected 'other'

____

A4. Course Name (e.g. Bachelor of Science etc.) *

____

A5. Home country *

○ Kenya
○ Rwanda
○ Burundi
○ Tanzania
○ Democratic Republic of Congo
○ South Sudan
○ Other country

State your nationality here if not on the list above

____

SECTION B: QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN HOME COUNTRY

1.Please state whether you agree or disagree to the following statements regarding the higher education system in your home country

1a. The tuition fees and other education costs in my country are very high

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

1b The quality of teaching in universities at home is low

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

1c I was not admitted to the programme of my program of choice in universities at home

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

1d There are fewer chances for improving competences in English Language in my home country universities

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

1e. There are few reputable universities in my country (in terms of global university ranking)

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

1f. The quality of university programmes in my home country is low

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

1g Universities in my country are unattractive

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

1h Universities in my country offer few study programmes

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

1i Higher education policies in my home country are poor

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

1j The higher education system in my home country encourages development of few soft skills among students

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

1k There are few research opportunities in my home country universities

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

1l How likely is it that your choice to study in Uganda was influenced by the quality of higher education system in your home country?

◯ Highly unlikely ◯ Unlikely ◯ Neutral ◯ Likely ◯ Highly likely

SECTION C: HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN UGANDA

2. Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following possible statements regarding management in your host university in Uganda.

2a Administrators are kind and professional in handling students' issues

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

2b Administrators interact openly and honestly with students

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

2c The university has stable sources of finance

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

2d My lecturers have a normal workload

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

3.Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following possible statements regarding quality of teaching in your university in Uganda.

3a The academic staff have a high masterly of their course units

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

3b Teaching in my university is interdisciplinary

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

3c My university has many study programs (certificates, diplomas, degree or Ph.D. 's)

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

3d My University offers several joint degree programmes

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

3e My University prioritize teaching expenses

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

3f My University provides enough equipment for teaching (learning aids, laboratory apparatus, computers etc.)

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

3g I am satisfied with course assessment and evaluation in my university

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

3h I am satisfied with student-teacher interactions at my university

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

4. Please state whether you agree or disagree to the following possible statements regarding services for students of your university.

4a The university provides excellent healthcare services

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

4b My University has an intercultural environment

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

4c I am satisfied with the counseling services in my university

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

4d My University offers me opportunities to learn foreign languages

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

4e My University offers me opportunities to engage with the local community

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

4f The entry requirements at my university are fair

○ Strongly Disagree ○ Disagree ○ Neutral ○ Agree ○ Strongly Agree

5. Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following possible statements regarding the links between your university and the society

5a My University engages in industry-related projects

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

5b My University engages in international cooperation projects

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

5c My University collaborates with other peer institutions

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

5d The University awards students with scholarships

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

5e My University runs continuing education courses

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

5f My University engages in technical and scientific events

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

5g The University engages students in projects with companies during internships

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

5h The University awards students with scholarships

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

5i My university has agreements with other institutions for student internships

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

6. Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following possible statements regarding research activities in your university

6a My University runs many doctoral programs

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

6b The University engages in research projects that have a multidisciplinary team

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

6c The University staff engages in research projects that address challenges in the local society

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

6d The university has many publications in high impact journals

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

6e My university has publications with a high number of citations

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

6f Research results from my university are adopted by companies

◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

6g My University completes many research projects annually
◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

6h The University has many externally financed research projects
◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

7. Please state whether you agree or disagree with the following possible statements regarding resources in your university

7a My university has enough play and recreational facilities
◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

7b The university has satisfactory institutional security policies
◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

7c The university has many digitized operational processes
◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

7d There are enough computers in the computer labs for students at my university
◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

7e The internet speed in this university is high
◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

7f The university has enough lecture theatres, workshops and laboratories
◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

7g The University has a well-stocked and spacious library
◯ Strongly Disagree ◯ Disagree ◯ Neutral ◯ Agree ◯ Strongly Agree

7h To what extent are you satisfied with your university education in Uganda *
◯ Very dissatisfied ◯ Dissatisfied ◯ Neutral ◯ Satisfied ◯ Very dissatisfied

SECTION D: SOCIAL ECONOMIC STATUS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

8a. Select the statement that best describes your father's highest level of education

◯ Didn't go to school
◯ Didn't Finish High School
◯ Didn't Finish High School, but completed a technical/vocational program
◯ High School Graduate General Education Diploma
◯ Completed High School and a technical/vocational program
◯ Less than 2 Years of College
◯ 2 Years of College or more/ including associate degree or equivalent
◯ Bachelor's degree (3 - 5 year program)
◯ Master's or other post-graduate level
◯ Doctoral degree (PhD., MD, EdD, etc.)
◯ Other ________________________________

8b. Select the statement that best describes your mother's highest level of education

◯ Didn't go to school
◯ Didn't Finish High School
◯ Didn't Finish High School, but completed a technical/vocational program
◯ High School Graduate or General Education Diploma

- Completed High School and a technical/vocational program
- Less than 2 Years of College
- 2 Years of College or more/ including associate degree or equivalent
- Bachelor's degree (3 - 5 year program)
- Master's or other post-graduate level
- Doctoral degree (PhD., MD, EdD, etc.)
- Other ____

9a. What is your Father's current employment status? Check ALL that apply.

- Service Class employee e.g. company manage, professionals, supervisors etc.
- Routine non-manual class employee e.g. administrator, sales, services, commerce etc.
- Not currently employed, looking for work
- Retired
- Homemaker
- Disabled (not working because of permanent or temporary disability)
- Business/ shop owner owners with or without employees (self-employed workers)
- Commercial and subsistence farmer
- Skilled or unskilled manual worker e.g. Technician or supervisor of manual workers
- Other (please specify): _____________

9a. What is your Mother's current employment status? Check ALL that apply.

- Service Class employee e.g. company manage, professionals, supervisors etc.
- Routine non-manual class employee e.g. administrator, sales, services, commerce etc.
- Not currently employed, looking for work
- Retired
- Homemaker
- Disabled (not working because of permanent or temporary disability)
- Business/ shop owner owners with or without employees (self-employed workers)
- Commercial and subsistence farmer
- Skilled or unskilled manual worker e.g. Technician or supervisor of manual workers
- Other (please specify): _____________

9c. Which category best describes your yearly household income before taxes? Do not give the dollar amount, just give the category. Include all income received from employment, social security, support from children or other family, welfare, bank interest, retirement accounts, rental property, investments, etc.

- Below $730
- $730 - $1,459
- $1,460 - $2,189
- $2,190 - $3,469
- $3,650 - $4,379
- $4,380 - $5,109
- $5,110 - $5,839
- $5,840 - $6,569
- $6,570 - $7,299
- $7,300 and above

9d. How is your education in Uganda funded?

◯ Self-finance /Family
◯ Scholarship and other award
◯ Employer
◯ Home government
◯ Loan
◯ Others specify___________________

9e. How difficult do you find it to finance your education?
◯Very easy ◯Easy ◯Neutral ◯Difficult ◯Very difficult

SECTION E: POLICY REGULATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

10a. Which of the following best describes your current status in Uganda?
◯ Student pass holder
◯ Diplomatic visa holder
◯ Work Permit holder
◯ Permanent Resident
◯ Other (specify) ________________
10b. How easy was it for you to acquire the status identified in 10a?
◯Very easy ◯Easy ◯Neutral ◯Difficult ◯Very difficult
10c. Are you employment here in Uganda? ◯ Yes ◯No

10d. Does the university or Ugandan government support international students to obtain jobs?
Yes ◯ ◯No

10e. In your opinion, how easy is it for an international student to get a job here in Uganda?
◯Very easy ◯Easy ◯Neutral ◯Difficult ◯Very difficult

10f. What limits international students from obtaining jobs in Uganda?
◯ There are no jobs
◯ No time
◯ Language related challenges
◯ Limited by emigration laws
◯ Other please specify ___________________________Please type here your email contact and phone number if you would like to be contacted for an interview:

Phone number_________________________Emailcontact__________________________

Thank you very much for your assistance

I still have questions for you. I will call you to check with you directly.

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN UGANDA

1. How did you make your way to study in Uganda? What happened? How did you manage?
2. Can you give me your opinion about the quality of the higher education system in your home country? [probe for details after the first round of questions, e.g. if the low quality in the home country was the main reason or trigger for going abroad]
3. What is your view on the quality of Uganda's higher education system?
4. What would you say about the social class of most international students in your university? What kind of social background do they have?
5. How is the employment situation for international students in Uganda? Have you made some personal experiences? If yes, can you tell me about them?
6. Anything that you think is important, but what we haven't touched until now?

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' OFFICE STAFF

1. Please introduce yourself. What is your position in this office? What is your level of education, When did you join the office? Describe your daily tasks, what are the challenges you have faced?
2. What are your primary responsibilities as a person and as a unit? What are the main issues of concern for international students that you attend to? How does your unit ensure that international students comply with immigration laws? How do you support international students searching for jobs?
3. What is your opinion concerning the declining numbers of international students in Uganda. Would you say that immigration laws (students' visa regulations) have contributed to the reduction of the number of international students in your university? Can you please explain?
4. What is your university doing to attract more international students?
5. How do you compare the quality of education in Uganda with that of the countries from which most of the international students come?
6. What would you say about the social class of most international students in your university? What kind of social background do they have? How has social class influenced mobility of students into your university?
7. How is the employment situation for international students in Uganda? Please tell me some students' experiences that you know (if any)
8. Is there anything else that you would wish to share in relation to the issues we have discussed?

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR UGANDA'S NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION OFFICER

1. Can you please introduce yourself, level of education, how long you have been in the Council (When did you start work)? What has been your tasks at the Council, what does it do exactly? Please talk about your experience so far, how do you assess it?
2. What are your primary responsibilities as a person and as a unit?
3. What is your opinion about the higher education system in Uganda in terms of policies and institutional quality?
4. Why, in your opinion, do international students choose to come to Uganda? It seems that the number of international students in Uganda has declined; what are the reasons behind this?
5. What is your view about the research capacity in higher education institutions in Uganda? Can you please give examples and details?
6. How do you compare the quality of teaching in Uganda's universities with the universities in the rest of East Africa? Please highlight the strengths and opportunities of Uganda's universities? Can you also explain the weaknesses and threats?
7. How do you compare the quality of education in Uganda with that of the countries from which most of the international students come? Please highlight the weaknesses of higher education in the students' home countries.
8. What is your opinion about the following attributes on Uganda's higher education:
    a. Availability of economic scholarships
    b. Publication capacity of universities in Uganda
    c. ICT development and digitization
    d. Quality of teaching and learning
    e. Expertise and qualifications of your teaching staff
    f. Leadership and governance
    g. Quality Assurance
9. Is there anything else that you would wish to share in relation to the issues we have discussed?

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR OFFICIALS FROM BURUNDI'S COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Please introduce yourself, level of education, how long have worked with this commission? Please talk about your experience so far, how do you assess it?
2. Please tell me your primary responsibilities as a person and as a unit
3. What do you think are the reasons that lead to the mobility of higher education student mobility in and out of Burundi?
4. What would you say about the state of higher education in Burundi?
   a. Educational costs and availability of economic scholarships
   b. Publication and research capacity of universities
   c. Quality of teaching and learning and expertise of staff
   d. ICT development and digitization
   e. Management, leadership and governance of institutions
   f. Quality Assurance
5. How do you compare the quality of teaching in universities in Burundi with the other regional universities? Can you please highlight the strengths and opportunities of your universities? Please also refer to the weaknesses and threats.
6. Please share anything of your choice in relation to the issues we have discussed

APPENDIX VI: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR THE SENIOR IMMIGRATION OFFICER

1. Can you please introduce yourself, level of education, how long you have been in the immigration office (When did you start work?), what has been your tasks, what do you do exactly? Please talk about your experience so far, what are some of the challenges you face? How do you assess the experience?
2. What are your primary responsibilities as a person and as a unit?
3. Can you please give an overview of the immigration policies that govern international students in Uganda?
4. How are these policies in harmony with those in the sister East African countries? Please compare and give examples to illustrate the differences.
5. In your opinion, have these policies influenced the mobility of students into Uganda? How? Please explain and give concrete examples.
6. What are some of the main issues that hinder the visa procedure and delivery for an international student? Does this depend on the country of origin, or is it the same for all countries?
7. Do you feel, based on your experience, that there is a need for reconsidering some of these policies to make them more flexible to encourage the students' mobility and more international students to come to Uganda? Please give examples.
8. Is there anything else that you would wish to share in relation to the issues we have discussed?

APPENDIX VII: CONSENT FORM

Principal Investigator: Tibelius Amutuhaire, PhD Candidate, University of Bayreuth.

Research: The purpose of this research is to examine the rationale that underlies International Student Mobility in the East Africa, particularly Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. The choice to study in Uganda is a result of several considerations made by the international student. Such considerations depend on the student as a person, the contextual factors in the home country and enabling policies in the host country. Thus, this study looks at higher education system in students' home countries, the social class of international students and the employment related policies for international students.

Participation/Process: Participation consists of one interview, lasting up to 30 minutes. The interview will be audio led, unless otherwise requested by the participant. There may be additional follow-up/clarification through email or by phone, unless otherwise requested by participant. Privacy will be ensured through confidentiality. Participation is voluntary and the interviewee has the right to terminate the interview at any time. A summary of the results will be available to participants upon request.

Participant's Understanding

- I agree to participate in this study that I understand will be submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Higher Education Studies at the University of Bayreuth.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary.
- I understand that all data collected will be limited to this use or other research related usage as authorized by the University of Bayreuth.
- I understand that I will not be identified by name in the final product.
- I am aware that all records will be kept confidential in the secure possession of the researcher.

__________________________ __________________________________

Place, Date Signature of Interviewee

APPENDIX VIII: PERMISSION FROM MAKERERE UNIVERRSITY

MAKERERE **UNIVERSITY**

P.O. Box 7062
Kampala, Uganda
Website www.mak.ac.ug

Tel: +256-414-532045
Fax: +256-414-533640
Email: dvcaa@mak.ac.ug

OFFICE OF THE FIRST DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR
(Academic Affairs)

MAK/DVCAA/085/2022

Friday, May 6, 2022

Tibelius Amutuhaire
Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies
Germany

Re: Approval to Conduct PhD Research on the Topic *"Internationalisation & Student Mobility: Exploring the Mobility of Higher Education Students in Uganda"*

This is in response to your letter addressed to the Vice Chancellor, through which you seek consent to conduct PhD research at Makerere University.

Permission is hereby granted to undertake your PhD research at Makerere, particularly targeting the International Office and international students.

By copy, the Head of International Office, Ms. Martha L. Muwanguzi, is requested to accord you the necessary support.

We look forward to receiving a copy of your completed thesis as stated in your request letter.

Yours sincerely,

Umar Kakumba (PhD)
DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR (ACADEMIC AFFAIRS)

Cc: Vice Chancellor, Makerere University
Ms. Martha L. Muwanguzi, Head International Office

In future correspondence please quote the reference number above

APPENDIX IX: PERMISSION FROM UGANDA'S MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS

Telegram: "EDUCATION"
Telephone 234451/8
Fax: 234920

Ministry of Education and Sports.
Embassy House
P.O. Box 7063
E-mail: permasec@education.go.ug
Website: www.education.go.ug
Kampala, Uganda

In any correspondence on this subject please quote No. ADM/137/174/01

26th May 2022

The Vice Chancellor
Makerere University
KAMPALA

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION BY TIBELIUS AMUTUHAIRE TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

Reference is made to the subject above.

Mr. Tibelius Amutuhaire, a PhD student at the University of Bayreuth (Germany) has written to this Ministry requesting for permission to conduct research in Makerere University for his PhD thesis. As a ministry responsible for Education, we have no objection to his request. However Makerere University being an autonomous institution, I refer him to you for consideration.

The purpose of this letter therefore is to introduce him to you and request you for all the necessary support to him.

JEgau
Dr. Jane Egau Okou
FOR: PERMANENT SECRETARY

APPENDIX X: PERMISSION FROM KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION, CONSULTANCY AND EXTENSION (DRICE)

Prof. C. J. Diji. PhD; MNSE. MNES. M.ARSCP R. Eng (COREN)
Personal: (Mobile) +256752364067; +256775615754
Email: chukwuemeka.diji@kiu.ac.ug ; chuksdiji@gmail.com ; dvcrice@kiu.ac.ug

27th April 2022

The Supervisor,
Professor Dr. Iris Clemens
University of Bayreuth, Germany.
D-95440,
Bayreuth-Germany

Dear Madam,

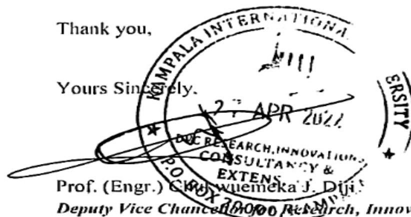
Re: Assistance for Research for Tibelius Amutuhair

With due respect, I wish to convey our approval to formally allow your student **Tibelius Amutuhaire** to conduct his research titled "***Exploring the mobility of higher education students in Uganda***"

This approval is subject to his signing the Confidentiality Agreement for Researcher attached to this letter.

Thank you,

Yours Sincerely,



Prof. (Engr.) Chukwuemeka J. Diji
Deputy Vice Chancellor Research, Innovation, Consultancy and Extension

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APPENDIX XI: RESEARCH AFFILIATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA

UNIVERSITY of RWANDA

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND RESEARCH

Kigali, 03/10/2022
Ref: DVC AAR [illegible]/2022

To: Tibelius Amutuhaire
PhD Student
University of Bayreuth, Germany
Re: Research Affiliation

Reference is made to your application letter to the Directorate of Research and Innovation requesting for Affiliation to the University of Rwanda. On behalf of the UR, I am pleased to inform you that you are accepted to UR as research affiliates to enable you to conduct a study entitled: **"Internationalization and student mobility: exploring the mobility of higher education students in the Global South".**
The affiliation will be from 10th September 2022 to 31st December 2022. Your supervisor will be Dr. Irenée Ndayambaje from the College of Education, University of Rwanda (email: irenee.ndayambaje@gmail.com, Tel: +25 0 788 609 810.

At the end of your study, you will deposit two copies of research results to the UR Directorate of Research and Innovation.

The University of Rwanda wishes you successful research undertaking in Rwanda

Prof. Nosa O. Egiebor
Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research
University of Rwanda

Cc:

- Vice Chancellor, University of Rwanda
- Principal, College of Education
- University Director of Research and Innovation

P.O Box 4285 Kigali, Rwanda | dvc.aar@ur.ac.rw | www.ur.ac.rw

APPENDIX XII: RESEARCH PERMIT FROM THE RWANDA GOVERNMENT

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Kigali, November 7th, 2022
N°: NCST/482/365/2022

Mr. AMUTUHAIRE Tibelius
ID Nº: CM8306110090LL

Dear Mr. Tibelius,

RE: Approval to Conduct Research in Rwanda

I am pleased to inform you that your request to conduct research in Rwanda entitled: **"Internationalization and student mobility: exploring the mobility of higher education students in the Global South"**, has been approved under research permit **No: NCST/482/365/2022**.

This permission covers research activities specifically related to the provided research project title, and project proposal submitted to the National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) for the period from **07th November 2022** to 06th **November 2023**.

The research will be carried out under the affiliation of **University of Rwanda (UR)** under the supervision of **Dr. Irénée Ndayambaje (+250788609810)**, Senior Lecture at the University of Rwanda, and will take place in Kigali City.

As a requirement, you will **be required to prepare a power point presentation of your results, and present at NCST Stakeholders Scientific Conference and submit both the progress and final reports** after completion of your research activities to the NCST, UR and Kigali City.

I wish you success in your research.

Dr. Eugene MUTIMURA
Executive Secretary

CC:

- Hon. Lord Mayor of Kigali City
- Vice Chancellor of UR
- Dr. Irénée Ndayambaje, Supervisor of the study

Grand Pension Plaza Building, 13th Floor, P.O. Box 2285 Kigali-Rwanda,
E-Mail: info@ncst.gov.rw Web Site:www.ncst.gov.rw