

Exploring international school students' agency in their career planning

Rebecca Ryan, MSc Career Guidance and Development, University of the West of Scotland

Introduction

International schools differ from the local school context, which is interwoven in the national landscape, raising questions of how these young people position themselves in relation to their futures.

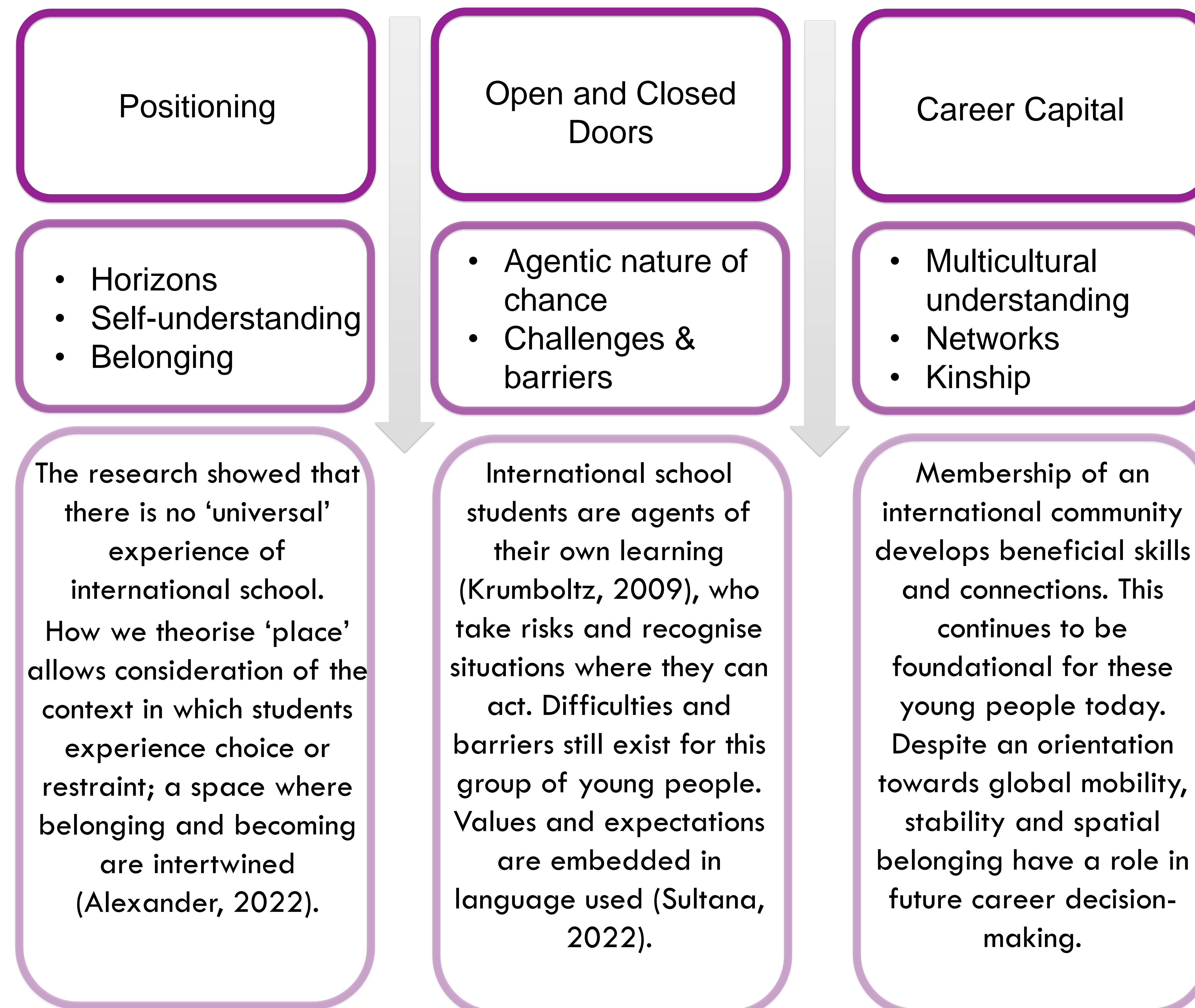
The project explores international students' agency in their career planning by considering aspirations, as well as who and what influences student career decision-making.

Methods

A qualitative research design using semi-structured interviews. These were conducted online with six alumni from an international school in Germany. The researcher followed the steps for thematic analysis based on the work of Braun and Clarke (2006).

Findings

Following the thematic analysis, the researcher constructed three main themes and eight sub-themes from the data.



Conclusions

International school students are not a homogeneous group. The development of their aspirations emerged over time as they reflected on and learned from decisions, created meaning, and considered their suitability for where they might fit in the future. Whilst sample size limits the wider conclusions in this research, these findings wish to contribute a strengthening of the support for careers education and the work of guidance practitioners in international schools.

Literature cited

- Alexander, R. (2022) 'Spatialising careership: towards a spatio-relational model of career development', *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 44(2), pp. 291–311.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) 'Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), pp. 77–101.
- Krumboltz, J.D. (2009) 'The Happenstance Learning Theory', *Journal of Career Assessment*, 17(2), pp. 135–154.
- Sultana, R.G. (2022) 'Four "dirty words" in career guidance: from common sense to good sense', *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*