

# International students and social exclusion in the age of social media

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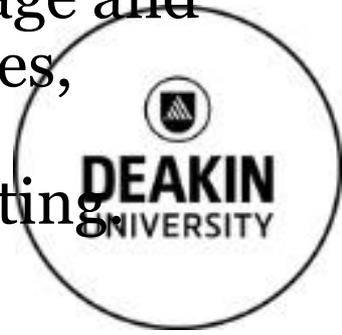
# Outline

- Introduction
- Living with social exclusion
- The complexities of social ex/inclusion
- Everyday practices of social media
- Methodological considerations
- Concluding thoughts



# Introduction

- ‘transient migrants’ (Gomes et al. 2014)
  - vulnerable to different forms of exploitation
  - blurring boundaries between international students and skilled migrants
- Unable to fully engage in all aspects of Australian life
- ‘enclave society’ (Turner 2007)
- how these ‘vulnerable’ and ‘excluded’ international students interpret their experiences of disadvantage and how they subsequently cope with these experiences, especially in an age of proliferated use of digital technologies and social media in the everyday setting



# Living with social exclusion

- **Employment**
  - ‘in the lowest strata of student employment’ (Marginson et al. 2010)
  - ‘working in illegal or working legally in unregulated low-wage jobs that are often dangerous and typified by exploitation’ (Kell & Vogl 2012)
- **Housing**
  - ‘university managers have turned away from the subsidized accommodation traditional in university colleges in favor of profit making housing partnerships’
  - spatial segregation and high-rise apartment buildings (Fincher 2011)
- **Social networks and discrimination**
  - ‘often have more friends who are fellow citizens from the home country living in the same host country’ (Gomes 2015)
  - racist assaults and attacks



# Living with social exclusion

- Promoting social inclusion?
  - Fincher (2011): ‘right to the city’ and ‘encounter as a social norm about interaction’
  - responsibility of the local governments (Paltridge et al. 2012)
- What do international students do?



## Complexities of social exclusion and inclusion

- ‘extend the focus beyond poverty by focusing on the relation between the individual and the society’ (Fangen 2010)
- unemployment, ghettoization, fundamental changes in family life, exclusion from financial services and lack of political participation
- the possibility that ‘exclusion from one arena at the same time is followed by inclusion in another arena’ (Fangen 2010)
- “the excluded”?



# Complexities of social exclusion and inclusion

- Problematic ‘social inclusion’
  - ‘moral meta-narrative’ (Hickey & du Toit 2007)
  - top-down perspective
  - adverse incorporation?
  - human agency
  - contexts of inclusion



# Everyday practices of social media

- Fostering social inclusion?
  - access everyday information
  - ‘have the sense of connectivity’ (Binsahl et al. 2015)
  - ‘virtual home-based support networks’ (Gomes et al. 2014)
  - aspiration for transnational mobility
  - symbolic function of Facebook
  - navigating the city
- Leading to social exclusion?
  - prefer home country social media platforms to those in the host country
  - ‘parallel society’
  - ‘perceived self-identity, social roles and the social networks they belong to’ (Chang et al. 2012)



# Methodological considerations

- Digital ethnography
- Five-step framework for doing social media ethnography (Postill and Pink 2012):
  - Catching up
  - Sharing
  - Exploring
  - Interacting
  - Archiving



## Concluding thoughts

- Alternative approaches towards international students' experiences of social exclusion
- Situate future empirical studies in the conceptual complexities of 'social exclusion' and 'social inclusion'
- Negotiating social exclusion in the sites of everyday life
  - Social media as everyday practice
- 'Evidence-based practice in international education services'



Thank you.

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