

University Administrators Serving International Students During Social and Organizational Change

Luda Patokina, Ed.D.

Hofstra University

#LEADCC21
February 18 & 19, 2021

LEADING  VIRTUAL
CHANGE CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY 
SCHOOL OF
Strategic Leadership Studies
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to examine how institutional administrators provided and communicated about services with international students at a private, nonprofit, four-year university in the Northeast United States during a period of social and organizational change.

Top Social Changes Impacting Higher Education

- Declining birthrate
- Declining overall student enrollment
- Decreased state funding
- Rising cost of education
- Declining completion rates
- Changing federal/immigration policies
- Declining international student enrollment



International Students in the United States

School Year	Total Int'l Students	Annual % Change
2014/15	974,926	10.0
2015/16	1,043,839	7.1
2016/17	1,078,822	3.4
2017/18	1,094,792	1.5
2018/19	1,095,299	0.05
2019/20	1,075,496	-1.8

(IIE, 2020)

#LEADCC21
February 18 & 19, 2021

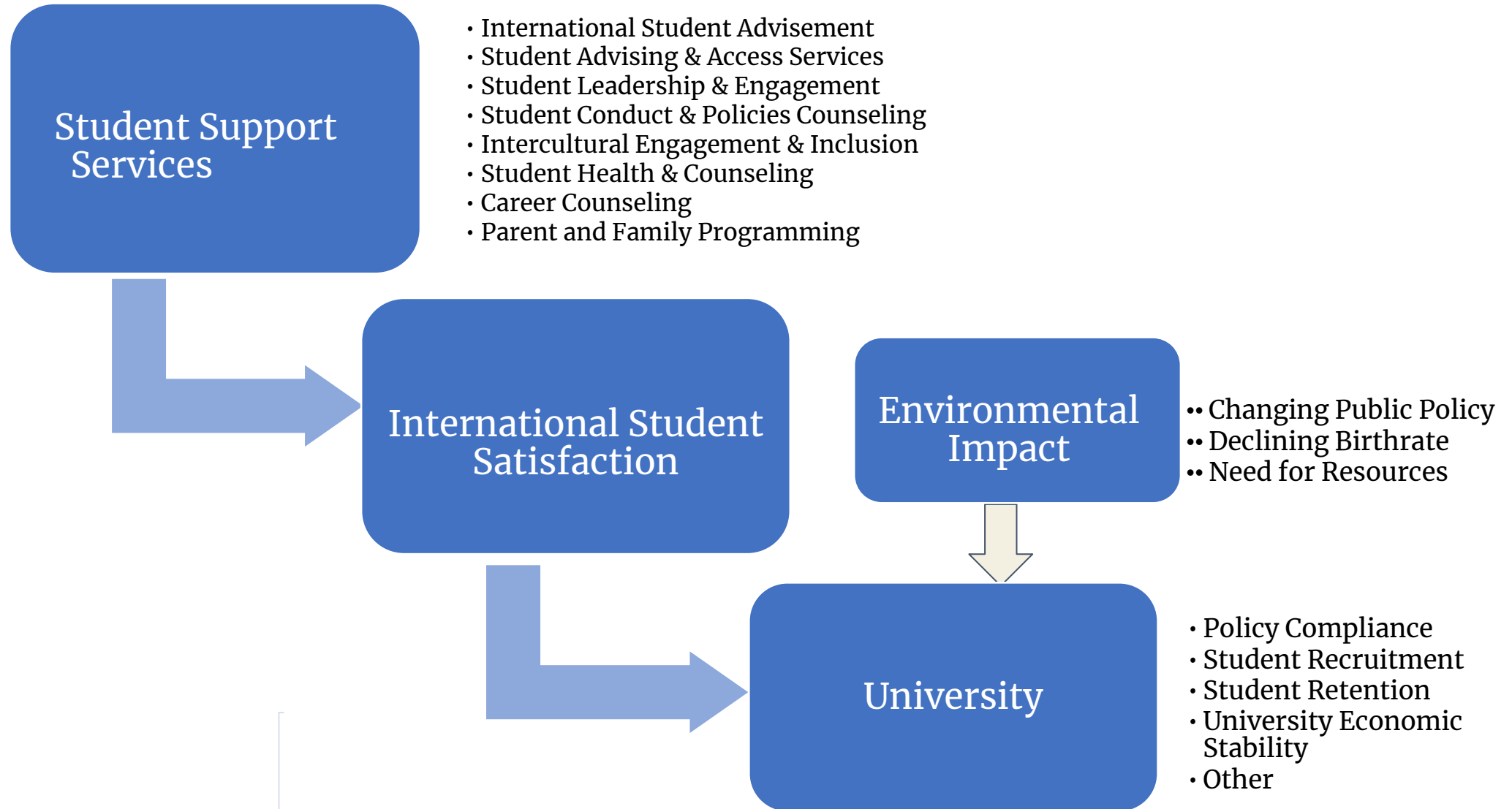
LEADING
CHANGE  VIRTUAL
CONFERENCE

HOSTED
BY 
SCHOOL OF
Strategic Leadership Studies
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY.

Gap in the Literature

- There was very limited previous literature on the challenges college administrators faced in providing services to international students.
- The topic of how support services available for international students communicated by institutional administrators during a time of social and organizational change has not been studied as extensively.

Conceptual Framework



Research Questions

1. How have institutional administrators adapted the provision of support services for international students in a context of social and organizational change?
2. What challenges have institutional administrators faced in providing services to international students?
3. How have institutional administrators communicated with international students regarding support services available to them?

Field Setting

A private non-profit four-year university in the Northeast United States hosting an international student population of approximately 1,000 students (8.4 % of the student body, 67 % - students from China), which was experiencing change with regard to international students



Participants

Twelve university administrators in a leadership position, who provided services for international students, and one administrator from a partner institution

Thirteen international students over the age of eighteen studying at a private non-profit four-year university in the Northeast United States, who have been at the case-study institution for at least one semester



#LEADCC21
February 18 & 19, 2021

LEADING
CHANGE  VIRTUAL
CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY 
SCHOOL OF
Strategic Leadership Studies
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Data Collection Methods

- Three focus group interviews with international students (two groups of five participants and one group of three participants)
- Thirteen in-depth interviews with administrators in a leadership position, who provided services for international students
- Observation of five information sessions/events related to international students
- Analysis of twelve documents and artifacts relevant to this study

Data Analysis

- Data analysis was primarily inductive while guided by the literature, theoretical framework, and participants' responses.
- Focus groups, interviews, and events were audio recorded, transcribed, and reviewed.
- Transcripts, documents, and field notes were coded through a process of open coding, and emerged themes were analyzed individually as well as across all documents.

Findings

RQ 1: Adaptation of Support Services for International Students

- International Student Office (in collaboration with other offices):
 - immigration support
 - transition programs and services
 - culture-related programming
 - academic support and advising
- Deportation Defense Clinic (assist, educate, value)
- Partnership with an External Organization
- Professional Development

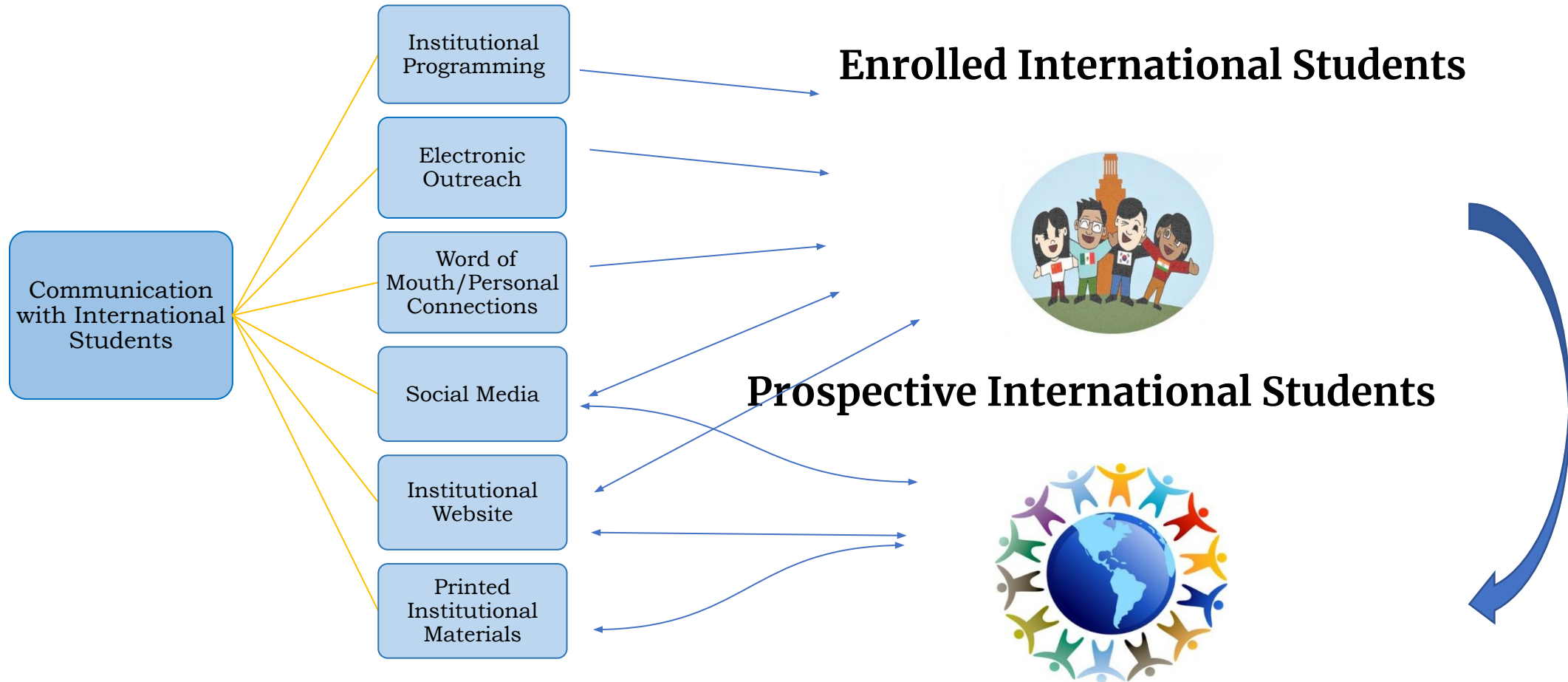
Findings

RQ 2: Challenges Institutional Administrators Faced

- Changes in Political Climate and Immigration Services
- Growing Options for International Students:
 - World Competition
 - Local Competition
- Limited Resources:
 - Limited Funding
 - Limited Staffing
- Information Distribution and Access
- English Language Barrier
- Cultural Differences

Findings

RQ 3: Institutional Communications with International Students



Limitations

- Researcher's familiarity with the case-study institution
- Bias of the researcher and participants
- Location, time and specific group of participants
- Self-reported data
- Limited access to some institutional reports and documents
- No execution of focus group questions in other languages

Importance of the Study

- The findings of this study contribute to institutional strategic planning.
- They might lead higher education administrators
 - to revise student services as needed,
 - to adjust resource allocation,
 - to improve marketing strategies to raise institutions' visibility locally and overseas,
 - to attract and retain the best international student and scholar talent,
 - to raise an institution's reputation on the world market.

All of these matters are important in time of globalization, shifting immigration policies, and the need for more student enrollments.

Future Research

- Comparative analysis of international students' perceptions from different subgroups
- Combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches
- Qualitative research on experiences and perspectives of administrators from different institutions, who partnered with the same (or similar) external organization

References

Institute of International Education (IIE). (2020). *Fast Facts*.

#LEADCC21
February 18 & 19, 2021

LEADING  VIRTUAL
CHANGE CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY 
SCHOOL OF
Strategic Leadership Studies
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Q & A

Thank you

Corresponding author: paluda@gmail.com

LinkedIn URL: www.linkedin.com/in/liudmila-patokina-89b7ba18b

#LEADCC21
February 18 & 19, 2021

LEADING
CHANGE  VIRTUAL
CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY

SCHOOL OF
Strategic Leadership Studies
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY