

Motivations for International Higher Education; A Qualitative Evidence from Scholarship Beneficiaries in Ghana

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Abstract

As globalisation continues to reshape the world, international higher education has emerged as a prominent force in shaping the future of education. International Higher education has become indispensable because it offers a multicultural learning experience. Few studies have examined why scholarship beneficiaries from Ghana want to study abroad, particularly in the UK. This study examines motivations for international higher education by Ghanaian scholars. The study adopts a qualitative methodological approach to gather data from 30 respondents from Ghana with international higher education experience in the UK. It further draws on postcolonial theory and critical discourse analysis to examine the experiences of scholars. The study found that i. Access to quality education, ii. Prestige, iii. The desire to travel, iv. Course unavailability and iv. Colonial ties influenced the respondents' decision to study abroad. The study argues that whilst some motivations for studying outside Ghana such as access to quality education, prestige, colonial ties and travelling have undertones of postcolonial mentality and the chase for Western education, which reproduces the UK's hegemony, other reasons that were cited like course unavailability are not necessarily postcolonial. This study concludes that a direct balance must be struck between the pursuit of international and local higher education as it places a lot of cost implications on especially developing countries. The paper recommends that efforts must be made to improve the quality of domestic higher education institutions by investing in state-of-the-art infrastructure, research funding, faculty development and industry-demand courses.

Keywords: globalization, hegemony, postcolonial, prestige, scholars