

Navigating Futures: Student Perspectives Between Germany and Jordan

Norina Eliane Fischer

Fulda University of Applied Sciences

ABSTRACT

Research on higher education and the future is increasingly gaining attention, particularly in light of current crises and times of uncertainty. This is where my work begins, exploring the imagined futures of students at the German Jordanian University (GJU). The opportunity to participate in *the German Year*—a semester abroad followed by a semester-long internship in Germany—opens new horizons for students as transnational learners. Against this backdrop, my qualitative research investigates how GJU students shape and negotiate their imagined futures.

Through a case study with a multi-sited ethnographic approach and a longitudinal element, I follow students' imagined futures. In my presentation, I will first explore students' transnational biographies and lived experiences in both Jordan and Germany. Secondly, I aim to uncover how these place-based experiences influence the formation of students' imagined futures, and how they choose places either to escape from or to find new social and structural conditions. Various promises and expectations are collectively and individually navigated in order to find a place, here, there or anywhere. Ultimately, my research aims to reveal the future-place nexus and its impact on students' trajectories.

Keywords: aspirations, higher education, mobility, qualitative social research, transnationalism