

Reviewing the Difficulties International Students Encounter in their Social and Academic Lives in India

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Abstract

In recent decades, the number of foreign students enrolled in Indian colleges has increased significantly. The All-India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) (2021–2022) reports that there were around 47,000 international students enrolled in Indian colleges overall in 2021–2022, a 2% decrease from the year before. Of the 170 nations that sent students, Nepal sent the most (29%), followed by Afghanistan (8%), the United States (7%), Bangladesh (5%), the United Arab Emirates (4%), and Bhutan (2%). Approximately 75% of international students are enrolled in undergraduate programs, with business administration, science, engineering, and technology being the most popular disciplines for this demographic. Given the number of international students studying in the India, 15.5% of them are Africans, with the majority hailing from Nigeria, Tanzania Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Sudan. This study aims to investigate how overseas students, particularly African students, perceive the republic of India, which is sometimes referred to as the country of opportunity abroad. Many people think that local Indian company owners who wish to widen their horizons in the world, especially in Africa, can do so through African international students. Using auto-ethnographic research, this study examined the various academic and social difficulties encountered by international students in Indian universities in order to identify potential solutions. In order to identify and classify some of the difficulties faced by international students, this qualitative research approach employed the author's sequential auto ethnographic experience as a research tool. The researcher hopes that the research's conclusions will serve as a manual for future generations of foreign students hoping to study in India.

Introduction

International students are defined by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics as anyone who enters a country through a border or territory and enrolls in a school. Global demand for international students has resulted in a sharp increase in their numbers. According to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics [UIS], 2022, there were more than 6.4 million international students worldwide in 2020. Because of the diversity, cultural awareness, and economic advancement they provide to their host nations, these students are hosted by many nations (Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2019).

Fakunle (2022) asserts that educational, aspirational, experiential, and financial factors are the main drivers of international students' decision to study overseas. Personal goals and the desire for better opportunities are major factors in the decision of many foreign students to study abroad. Others attribute it to the poor level of education in their nation (Bhandari et al., 2020).

Furthermore, cultural, technological, and economic aspects have a big influence on international education and make it more accessible to students from other countries ((OECD, 2022) Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development.). Despite of the reasons behind their study abroad decision, these students may require assistance adjusting to academic life and settling into a new nation because of unforeseen challenges. Almost every

stage of the journey from their home country to their destination and after graduation presents difficulties for these students (Khanal & Gaulee, 2022).

Foreign students may experience poor levels of life satisfaction and become disinterested in their studies. endeavors if these issues are not resolved. For example, a study conducted in Germany found that overseas students pursuing higher education degrees had a higher dropout rate. International students reported dropping out for a variety of reasons in the study, including financial difficulties, language hurdles, and academic requirements (Pineda et al., 2023). Thus, examining these issues to gain a deeper comprehension of them might enhance their education and experience of foreign students.

Many scholarly and social scholars have studied the difficulties faced by international students in many nations and locations over the years. But in order to apply these difficulties to all international students worldwide, it must be explained. Consequently, it's critical to review the body of research on this subject in order to pinpoint the advancements and patterns in these difficulties. The particular goals of this study are to review social and difficulties international students encounter in their social and academic lives in India. This Research sheds light on how to recognize, comprehend, and maybe resolve these issues.

Literature Review

My quest for literacy and academic knowledge began like a dream. Actually, it appears that every well-known African figure began their path to greatness with a dream. Nelson Mandela has been discussed extensively. He began his dream of releasing South Africans from the colonial overlords of apartheid while incarcerated. Dreaming is a common trait among Kofi Annan, Trevor Noah, the first black African to become secretary general of the United Nations, Wole Shoyinka, and Black African who won the Nobel Prize in Literature and the first African immigrant to host a major talk show program in America. When I was a child, i used to joke with our mother that God had sent me to Africa by accident.

"Where do you think God intended to send you to in the first place?" she would ask, laughing. I would invariably reply, "To the white man land," with unfathomable glee. Like all African children brought up in the dusty streets and foul-smelling swamps of Africa, i have lofty aspirations, most of which are much larger than our actual selves. My parents had conflicting emotions when i told them I wanted to study abroad.

I saw a father's joy when his kid aspired to achieve greatness in life, but I instantly saw his deepest worry; anxiety about how he would pay for tuition and the expense of moving from Liberia to India. After completing secondary school, i sent applications to as many India universities as i could. I eventually had to face the fact that my family would have to sell all we had fought so hard to accumulate in order for me to be able to study abroad. I couldn't tolerate the thought of a family returning to extreme years of poverty of battling to make a better salary. I had no choice but to enroll in the institutions in my nation, where I ultimately obtained a bachelor's degree. I ultimately made the decision to pursue graduate studies in India following years of gaining undergraduate-level academic understanding.

When i arrived in India as international students from Africa, i discovered that schools and universities greatly depend on foreign students as a source of funding and as a source of cultural diversity Academic and intellectual variety. Man has journeyed to far locations to satisfy his desire for understanding and knowledge since the dawn of civilization. The quantity of foreign pupils seeking education in other nations, such as India, has increased dramatically since the development of airplanes and high-speed trains, which have made travel so simple. International students' primary objective is to finish their postsecondary education abroad, which usually provides a greater caliber of education than what is available in their home country. According to the Immigration Control and

Refugee Recognition Act, foreign students are considered intellectual and knowledge-seeking citizens who go across international borders to attend any India college or university on a "student" visa. The India' economy has benefited greatly from the ongoing increase in foreign students traveling here for higher education. Over time, more and more foreign students have traveled to the India to study. Asian students currently make up 28% of all overseas students in India, compared to 14.5% of African students. All-India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) (2021-2022), states that the quantity of international students studying in India drop by 2% during the 2021–2022 academic year.

A large number of foreign students view India as a place of good education, full with opportunities. Nigeria, Kenya, and other Nations within the sub-Saharan area of Africa account for the bulk of foreign students from Africa, according to the 2022 report of All-India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE) poll. I am aware of the numerous challenges faced by African international students because I am an African student from a small Liberian town and one of the dusty streets of Africa. In search of a better living and academic knowledge, many African students go to India. Research has shown that, in spite of the challenges and barriers they face, African international students are among the most educated immigrants in India.

The goal of this study is to review and categorize the various social and academic difficulties that this particular subset of overseas African students faces. Finding potential answers and recommendations for the social and academic issues those African overseas students in Indian colleges experience is another goal of this research project. Although a lot of study has been done on international students, little to no attempt has been made to offer tangible and significant answers to the significant problems experienced by African international students because these issues are not frequently discussed in academic literature. African international students in India encounter a variety of social and academic obstacles, including **racism**, stereotyping, Culture Shock, Disparities in Academic programs, Language barriers, and many more. This study aims to offer ideas that support African international students' academic and social integration in their new Indian environment.

Due to the additional strain of acclimating to a new culture, language, and academic setting, the majority of the academic and social difficulties that every foreign student encounters are now facing is distinct and severe. Despite these obstacles, African students broaden the student body, contribute fresh viewpoints to class debates, foster a greater understanding and respect for different nations and cultures, and bring expertise, particularly in the sciences. One of the main causes of the current scholastic difficulties faced by African overseas students is colonization. Bessong and Traore found that colonization has a negative impact on the career and occupational choices of African students abroad in a study on the impact of colonialism on these people' professional choices.

Language is a vital tool for conveying instructions or information from a teacher to a student. Most African academic institutions use the colonizer's language, which is frequently not English, for education and academic structures. Since they must deal with English as a second language and need additional academic support, this has a significant impact on African international students studying in India. However, the many benefits of having African students at Indian colleges and universities offset this drawback.

"The number of international students attending Indian universities has grown over the past few decades, and they should receive extra consideration to meet their academic and social needs," claim (Contreras-Aguirre & Gonzalez). Alongside the rise in international student enrollment, more African foreign students are studying in India. These students enhance the environment of colleges and universities, contribute to diversity, and demand greater understanding from Indian students, staff, and faculty because of the distinctive qualities that international and African students bring to India. International students are also a significant financial and economic value to the Indian economy and to Indian universities. Over time, African international students have demonstrated that their

intellectual variety has benefited the Indian economy. According to All-India Survey of Higher Education (AISHE), international students from Africa are thought to be the most well educated immigrants in the US. Additionally, according to AISHE statistical research, almost 30% of African immigrants including students who are refugees or immigrants have at least a bachelor's degree. This implies that Indian schools and universities benefit greatly from the cultural and intellectual contributions of African overseas students.

For any African international student studying in India, social and academic challenges have been two of the biggest worries. International students encounter academic difficulties due to cultural variations in classroom dynamics and faculty student relationships, language proficiency, and educational system discrepancies. The majority of African pupils have been taught to listen in class rather than speak or engage in unapproved conversation. In contrast to Indian academic learning, which values inquiry and classroom engagement, African foreign students are raised learning by imitation and instructions. In contrast to the Indian educational system, which frequently uses essay, online discussion boards, class participation, and short essay exams to assess students' critical thinking skills in a brief amount of time, the majority of At the end of the semester, most academic examinations and exams I've taken in Africa consist of multiple-choice and essay questions. These differences in test-taking techniques, course design, course content, and academic standards have caused unpleasant academic experiences for African overseas students.

International students from Africa face significant personal and professional academic hurdles due to cultural differences. Due to language barriers, it can be challenging for an African international student to participate in class discussions and completely comprehend what the professors say or need of his or her tasks. International students' workload may also be indirectly increased by the language barrier. If a student from Indian can read a book in an hour, it might take hours for An African overseas student whose mother language is not English. It can be difficult for some African overseas students who excel academically in their native country to lose their position as top students at a foreign university. Actually, when international students are unable to maintain the grades they are accustomed to receiving, it is simple for them to become depressed.

International students from Africa struggle socially to fit in with their new surroundings and culture. African students frequently have specific expectations and dreams for their social lives when they first arrive in India, but they soon learn that there are differences between their expectations and life's actual reality. Upon arriving in India, African international students frequently experience a deep sense of loneliness, alienation, loss, and separation as a result of the discrepancy between their social expectations and reality.

This, in turn, causes them to lose confidence, become tenser, work harder and take a time off for leisure. African students frequently encounter numbers of societal obstacles. Discrimination is one of the social obstacles that African overseas students frequently experience in their intellectual pursuits. Some local students, who feel that international students are stealing their opportunities, treat African international students like uninvited visitors. African international students frequently experience racism, discrimination, and stereotyping, which is a societal issue that only a tiny percentage of them encounter.

It is challenging for most African international students to adjust to being a minority once they arrive in India because they belong to a majority group in their home countries. Evivie pointed out that when instructors, advisors, or members of the local society make disparaging African international students also face verbal discrimination and segregation in the form of comments about their home countries or cultures. It is nearly hard for recently African students, refugees or immigrants, to fulfill their aspirations of receiving a quality education because of the pervasive unfavorable preconceptions about Africans in Indian schools and the media, claims (Traoré 2015).

African students face social barriers as soon as they arrive, which manifest as unfavorable preconceptions, beliefs, and misconceptions that Indian hold about Africans. Using data they obtain from their local news source or other media, local students occasionally make assumptions about international African students. Children first see familiar scenes like Tarzan swinging across the forest between trees and the Lion King. Some of the media representations that influence Indian students' perceptions of African international students include wild animal poaching, conflicts, illness, and AIDS-related starvation. These myths, stereotypes, and misconceptions are reinforced by the media (such as televised charities like Save the Children and Christian Children's Fund, as well as the Discovery Channel and National Geographic, the school curriculum, and the homes of their classmates, according to Evivie (2015). Additionally, these African immigrant and refugee pupils experience the same legacy of discrimination that other Indian do because of the color of their skin.

"Auto-ethnography is a research and writing methodology that aims to characterize and methodically examine (graphic) individual experiences (auto) in order to comprehend cultural experiences (ethno)." As the research tool for this study, auto-ethnography allows me to reflect on the range of experiences I have had since coming to the India in 2023 up until the present. Both social and academic lives have been significantly impacted by these events in one way or another. An interesting and promising qualitative research technique is auto-ethnography. "Auto-ethnography is an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural," according to Ellis and Buchner (2015). Everything about this study seemed to me to be a personal experience that i went through.

I chose to embrace subjectivity and talk to the reader in my own voice since I'm unable to disassociate myself from the events i had lived for more than a year. A qualitative research technique called auto ethnography makes use of information about the self and its surroundings to comprehend how connected one is to others in the same setting. Additionally, this research approach differs from others in three respects: it is context conscious, self-focused, and qualitative. "The researcher can gain an understanding of the outside world by using auto ethnographic data, Gathering, evaluating, and interpreting data regarding social and academic issues pertaining to my own academic journey. Different auto-ethnographers focus differently on autobiographical data processing and interpretation as well as narrative and description.

In order to determine whether experiences were unique, i personally chose to use a hybrid strategy I offered to share my participant observations with other international African students, drawing from my auto ethnographic experience (a self-reflection tool). Through participant research, I sought to identify the typical academic and social challenges faced by African international students in India. observers share their own lived experiences.

Observation of Participants

In cultural anthropology, participant observation is considered a "strategic" approach. Participant observation is spending time with the study participants and getting a firsthand look at their life. The few international students from Africa Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Cameroon, Liberia, Tanzania south Sudan, Malawi, Lesotho, and South Africa voluntarily offered to proofread this paper, contributed that their voices, and help ensure the research findings are of high quality. In addition to the informants in the real-world scenarios documented in this study, the researcher's ongoing personal observation allows for the collection of more and better quality data by mitigating the problem of reactivity of people changing their behavior when they know they are being studied. Conquer Good reminded us that "the embodied researcher is the instrument" of "auto-ethnography, which is an embodied practice." In this regard, it's critical to acknowledge that, while i didn't know at the time, i have been gathering data for informally ever since i got off the plane that brought me to India. I have been experiencing what it has been like to be an African overseas student in an Indian college or university since September of 2023. In order to establish credibility

that transcends individual truth and reaches a more inclusive and collective truth regarding research findings that i have chosen to employ the participant observations in this study.

Lastly, i collated recommendations from other attendees regarding the academic and social difficulties that African student's encounter. A collection of potential solutions that could enhance student academic performance and their social experience. African international students were given a voice by this study, which offered information that improved comprehension of the obstacles to academic and social success as well as potential ways to get past them. Students, instructors, the larger college community, foreign organizations interested in the condition of higher education in Africa. The academic and social obstacles that African international students face in India can take many different forms. I know from experience that the obstacles i encountered in India started long before i left Africa and still persist now.

Visas and Immigration

I applied for immigration and a visa before starting my academic career in India. As Lee and Rice (2016) indicated, we encountered difficulties in obtaining an F1 international student visa and navigating the immigration system. Among the challenges I encountered as an African international students was immigration. The fight to obtain an Indian student visa begins in the home nation of each individual African student, not in India. This includes legal matters such as immigration and obtaining an F1 visa.

One of the difficulties we faced as African international students was immigration. The fight to obtain an American student visa begins in the home nation of each individual African student; legal concerns such as immigration and obtaining an F1 visa do not begin in India. Prior prerequisites and conditions must be fulfilled before a visa applicant like us can walk in the Indian Consulate office to submit a student visa application. Before being admitted into any Indian institution, African students would need to demonstrate not only their academic aptitude and motivation, Getting accepted to a university does not guarantee a visa at the embassy. When i applied for a student visa, i was forced to comprehend this idea. In order to increase my chances of receiving a visa, i was required to submit supporting documentation during the immigration procedure, including proof of financial support.

Academic standards and expectations

When i first started my academic careers in India are thrilled about the possibility of learning chances to acquire knowledge and develop pertinent skills through the use of technology (like computers, libraries books and research tools). But after i arrived in India as international student, i realized that the academic support services were insufficient to address my difficulties with registration, admission, and living in the country. Due to a rule and regulation requiring all international students hoping to pursue master's-level studies to have a review of their transcript of a bachelor's degree, unless it comes from an accredited Indians college academic beginnings experienced a setback during the first semester.

I frequently argued with my college's cultural diversity officer that my academic transcripts contained all the information the school required, and that I was by no means the first Africans to travel to India to study at Rayat-Bahra University. This made the situation peculiar for me. It was difficult for me to have to wait an entire semester for my transcripts to be reviewed while i observed other Master's students, as i was wasting money and time on non-educational pursuits.

Some college courses required online coursework after being admitted into the Master's program, which presented an instant academic challenge for African student like me who have never taken an online lecture. Online learning might best be described as mysterious to the majority of African students. I inquired, "What is an online class?" I

pondered how to access these enigmatic classes online. In an online course, how do i react? I bombarded the graduate program coordinator, the college diversity officer, and other on-campus teachers with these standard inquiries. In actuality, I had never studied online because my previous schooling in Africa lacked the necessary technology infrastructure.

The only way i was taught to complete assignments for my bachelor's degree was to Google the question, add my thoughts to any online response, and then submit it back to the lecturer who gave it. The game was straightforward: you gave me something as the teacher, and I gave you something in return. I quickly discovered that Indian academics appreciated the idea of critical thinking, which is not taught to African pupils when it comes to completing homework. I also had to take a non-credit course called "Blackboard" because I had to take program classes online, which presented another difficulty. I've never heard a better joke in Indian than Blackboard on a computer screen. I was used to using the actual blackboards that are typically placed within a classroom's four walls as overseas African students. In contrast to the regimented approach i was immediately introduced to an Indian. International students like me are accustomed to the demands and expectations of the classroom that involve autonomous learning and long lectures devoid of visual aids or handouts. Language barriers, pedagogical approaches, and disparities in classroom culture and faculty-student relationships were the main causes of the academic difficulties we African international students faced.

Financial strain

The foundation of almost every academic success and accomplishment is money. Numerous pricey colleges and universities throughout the world are located in abroad, and tuition costs can range from \$1500 annually to any maximum amount based on the kind and length of degree being sought. Our largest obstacle as African foreign students was figuring discovered how to cover tuition and other costs prior to our arrival, considering the type of profit margin that helps Indian domestic students. I vividly remember how startled my father was when I showed him my F1 student visa and the total cost of my master's degree.

In addition to my father's pension and retirement payout, my family planned to sell everything that was valuable in order to pay for my education. Due to the ongoing increase in the dollar's value relative to my home currency, the current economic downturn in my nation, and the worldwide financial crises that have affected our economy, it can be challenging for African international students to have a payment schedule from their nation of origin to pay for their education in India. I discovered that i was a little lucky after speaking with another African foreign female student in Kharar Punjab. Her father obtained funds by using their family land as collateral, which was subsequently used to fund her schooling in India. Discovered, as we shared our life stories, the pressure and stress her family in Africa was putting on her was equivalent to the pressure we were receiving at our home to land a decent job. But in order to pay off the price tag on the family land, she must begin sending money back to Africa, and this tremendous personal burden is sufficient justification for her to fail some of her classes.

Local students, also known as homegrown students, are entitled to government financial aid, which is an incredible luxury that African international students like me don't have. Even though our parents have put in place various improvised plans to cover our tuition, the worrying dollar exchange rate, deflation in our domestic currency, and the ongoing economic downturn in our nation always leave us in a precarious situation where we are unable to pay for our tuition in full. The high expense of health insurance which was mandated by laws for all Indian, including international students from Africa, adds to our financial difficulties in school. Focusing on academics and school activities often seems challenging when one is under financial strain.

Language barrier

Communication problems are inevitable when students from various cultural backgrounds are placed together in a foreign nation like India where the conventions and traditions are different from their own. One of the biggest obstacles i encounter in our daily academic lives, in my experience, is language. Due to the fact that some local students and academic teachers believe that I and other African students have a "strong accent," i have frequently struggled to communicate effectively in class. According to the book "Born a Crime," which was published by American talk show personality Trevor Noah, this experience is not unusual. "Speaking other people's language (like English or French) with one's own cultural rules and norms" is how he defined accent in his book. Some African students who are currently studying in India have learned Arabic throughout their lives, while others have studied French.

I have seen that African students from Arabic and francophone nations find it difficult to speak in English in the classroom since it seems like a foreign language to them. While it is true that English is spoken in India, it is not the same as the English i was taught in school. Due to America's colonization of Liberia, I was raised using the American English was used to codify the American curriculum. When I speak in class, sometimes how i pronounce something sounds different or conveys a different message to our fellow students. According to Dr. Ferguson, who was speaking to the cohort, Humans write the same way we think and speak. This implies that when we compose papers or articles, we frequently rely on concepts from our culture, which can be very different in India. This can occasionally lead to issues with how we express ourselves in writing and presentations. Additionally, i have observed that when i turn in my research papers, certain teachers frequently severely criticize my spelling and grammar.

Living conditions and climate change

Due to Additional academic hurdles for me as an African include adjusting to new living circumstances in India, time zones, and weather that differ from those in our home country. There are numerous time zones that vary from one state to another in the India. The time difference between region of Assam, a region in India with different time zones, weather patterns, and climates, is a prime example. As African students studying in India, we found it difficult to acclimate to the rising and setting of the sun, which can lead to emotions of uncertainty, disorientation, and perhaps spiritual dislocation. It takes roughly a year to become used to the Indian climate and lifestyle, and it might take longer for some other international African students. As an African student from a climate with limited variety, I find it extremely difficult to adjust to wearing suitable attire in a state like Punjab with Four distinct seasons: winter, summer, Monsoon and Post Monsoon.

We usually consider conversion rates while buying clothes, and since the seasons change frequently, it might occasionally seem challenging to choose the right outfit. In academia, cultural variations in the teaching-learning process pose serious psychological and professional difficulties. Language and pronunciation problems are usually an urgent concern for us because India teaching and learning culture requires classroom engagement and discussion.

I find it difficult to participate in class discussions and completely understand what the teachers are saying and intending because of the language limitations. Indirectly, this increases our workload as well. If an Indian student finishes a book in an hour, for instance, an African international student who does not speak English at home could need to spend many more hours finishing. But for us, it goes beyond only language skills; the adaptation of our study habits to the new Indian teaching-learning process also tests our emotional and cerebral abilities. The dynamic changes in the teaching-learning culture here in India compared to what we were used to make it easy for us to become depressed when we are unable to retain the grades we were used to receiving back home.

Furthermore, different African nations have different educational cultures in India. For instance, India institutions place a greater emphasis on student participation than do those in Liberia.

Because of the culture in which we were raised, which prohibits African youngsters from speaking back to their elders unless authorized to do so, For some African international students, such as myself, the teaching learning process usually consists of a one-way monologue between the teacher and the pupils. The teaching-learning approach in India is completely different from this culture. I expected more direction and assistance from teachers and were used to seeing them do more of the talking through of instructions, so the Indian educational system always seemed weird and foreign to me.

Social difficulties

According to Traore, "negative stereotypes about Africa abound in Indian schools and in the media, making it virtually impossible for newly arrived African students, whether immigrants or refugees, to accomplish their goals of getting a quality education." Stereotyping and segregation are a result of our own academic experiences. Instead of viewing Africa as a continent on which we all reside and are somehow acquainted to one another, some domestic students in India view it as a single, enormous nation. . I'm still shocked to this day when college students from Punjab ask me if i use tree vines to get around Africa or if i even have cars there. A college student asked me if we in Africa consume fruits and bananas on a daily basis, which shocked me. Such inquiries reveal that some Indian know very little or nothing about the second-oldest continent in the world

As African students, we came to India with strong aspirations that our Indian education would surpass our wildest dreams because education is the only way to escape poverty and the only hope. Many overseas students from Africa believe that the only way to obtain the best education and a better life is to travel to India, a country we believe to be well-informed. But when they get there, they discover that most Indians, especially the students I frequently work with at my several educational institutions, have little to no knowledge about Africa or Africans. I found that similar assumptions were present in my experience with a fellow Cameroonian African international student. They could all talk about the movie Lion King, a safari in the desert, Tarzan hanging from vines in the jungle, lions and other deadly animals, and starving people when he asked his Indian classmates what they knew about Africa. Stereotyping is rapidly becoming a major societal concern for international African students studying in India.

Discrimination based on race

As African students studying in India, racism has been and continues to be a problem for us. For an African foreign student, it was only the ordinary to grow up surrounded by kids who shared our skin tone. In Liberia, children that have light skin and speak the same language as we are considered Albinos, and they are extremely uncommon. When I was a child, i frequently teased Albinos. Being an African foreign student in India allowed me to fully understand how terrible life has been for my Albino friends. I now comprehend how people are treated differently because of their skin tone and how we differ from the other Black children. According to Trevor Noah's Daily Show aired on Comedy Central, racism is an illness that has to be treated as such. For African international students like us, racial prejudice is a serious issue we face on a daily basis in India.

We have encountered racism from certain kids who ridicule us by using a litany of derogatory terms, which can be disheartening and have an impact on our social and academic lives. Even though we come from an English-speaking nation, we are nonetheless frequently insulted by outsiders who assume we don't understand English and ask if we live in trees or cottages. When we went to a megastore in the summer of 2023 to purchase a home cooling device, racism turned into a hard pill for me to swallow. We were on a tight spending budget as African students with little left over after tuition, so finding the greatest bargain on anything is always at the top of our mind. We

constantly exchange every dollar into our native dollars before making any purchases. This implies that we spend more time in stores browsing the aisles in search of a cheap product that will produce the desired outcome. One of the store employees was accompanying us everywhere while we were taking our time to decide what to buy, feigning to count the number of stored things.

This continued for over half an hour until we eventually decided what to buy and headed to the register to make our payment. We left the store after paying at the register, but two security guards approached us and insisted they wanted to confirm our purchase. When we insisted on knowing why we were the only ones chosen for a search, he explained that they had to search us to make sure we have not stolen something from the store because they thought it was strange that I had been on camera spending more time in one spot than another and that the store camera couldn't capture all angles. We were the only Africans in the store at the time, and we were really upset that we were portrayed as thieves based just on the way we spoke and looked. I agree with Constantine et al. that, apart from Black South Africans, Black African students have typically grown up in racially homogeneous cultures where being Black is the norm as a result of this awful experience. However, race subsequently becomes a significant element influencing how easily African students adapt to their new culture once they arrive in India, which is a largely white society.

Detachment and separation

African students in India engage in identity creation and negotiation based on their social, economic, racial, and class backgrounds. Due to differences in intelligence, age, or race, we have never had to go through the procedure of being separated from the other students. Even at the secondary level, where students can choose to enroll in scientific, business (sometimes called commercial) or art programs, we still take general classes in English, arithmetic and many other disciplines as a single cohort. And the bank representatives requested a number of identity proving documents. We are required to provide them with our paperwork in order to create a bank account because identity theft is a widespread problem in India that we have never had to deal with. We came across the phrase "indicate if you are White, black Indians, Native Indians, Hispanic, or Latino" when completing the account opening form. Since we didn't fit any of these descriptions, we went to the account officer to inform them of the printing error or mistake on the form he provided. We saw ourselves as unwanted strangers in the wrong place as we couldn't find a term that described us as African. Immediately, a sense of alienation and separation from other people occupied my thoughts. After we submitted the paperwork anticipating an account to be opened, the account officer informed us that they were unable to do so because we are international students and they presume that we will eventually return home. As a result, the account establishing process was a waste of the bank's time and resources. When someone of a different race tells us this, it immediately makes us feel unwelcome.

Laws, regulations, and rules

When I first arrived in India as international students, i was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of laws we had to follow. One of the main obstacles faced by African international students in India is the profusion of laws, and regulations, at the federal, state, county, and borough levels. Unless there is an accident, drunk driving has never been a problem in some African nations, such as the one from which I am from. People who are intoxicated and manage to drive their automobile safely back home are praised and applauded by society because they are believed to be self-assured and adept at maintaining their focus on the road. When i first arrived in India, we had this pessimistic mindset, bad ideas, and damning attitude, thinking that a nation that promotes drinking through many alcohol advertisements would be similar to home. However, I later discovered that intoxicated driving, or DUI, is strongly discouraged in India.

It was unexpected to learn that in this country, a prescription from a doctor is required in order to get ordinary prescriptions like antibiotics, which are readily available at any pharmacy or chemist on the street. Additionally, In India, cannabis, often known as marijuana, a prevalent medical and healing plant that thrives in most West African nations, is subject to rigorous regulations at both the federal and state levels of government. African students may find it odd to drive in India at MPH as we were raised with KMH (kilometers per hour) as the speed limit and frequently receive speeding citations and fines due to our inability to translate information quickly.

As African international students, we were also astounded to discover that state laws and regulations vary from one another, State laws are different from county laws, and federal laws are different from state laws. The federal law is the only law that controls the business of all states in Liberia, where i from, and it is also the highest rule of law. When trying to follow the law yet inadvertently breaking another while driving, we always observe a sense of confusion and bewilderment. In the state of Punjab alone, there are numerous laws that many citizens are unaware of. Social norms were frequently misunderstood in relation to laws. When the Romeo and Juliet Law, which has effect in the state of Punjab, this brought up in a movie scene during our free time at the theater, we started laughing aloud. Since the only Romeo and Juliet we are familiar with are from a book by William Shakespeare, more people around us were amused to observe laughing. Some African students have frequently found themselves in precarious situations where, depending on the statute they violate, both the county and state laws are applied to them concurrently. In a conversation with a friend from the Gambia, she mentioned her worry about receiving a penalty from campus security at her own school. I was aware of her frustration because she struggled to comply with school regulations and policies despite her best efforts to maintain compliance with federal, state, county, and district legislation.

International students serve as both cultural ambassadors and intellectual capital between their home countries and their home countries because of the importance of the global community. Particularly, international students from Africa come from countries that are enduring a number of social, political, and economic challenges. These issues are the root cause of Africa's present relative poverty and underdevelopment. Above all, these problems have negatively impacted the standard of education in our beautiful continent, Africa. To turn around Africa's predicament, the continent needs academically skilled manpower.

By enhancing infrastructure, technology, and the curriculum to better suit our societies' requirements, international students from Africa have the potential to support the continent's economic growth. The results of this investigation of the social and intellectual obstacles encountered by an African foreign student highlight the many difficulties we encounter in India due to cultural norms and transition. Using my personal experiences as a lens or academic instrument to examine these issues, i found that some of them affect both individuals and the African students as a whole, as stated.

Pressure from family and the process of transitioning

More African students' families' view them as their chance for survive. The pressure of carrying such a heavy burden in their minds and being fully aware that family members had sell all they had in order to afford to migrate to India was enough to have an impact on our social and academic lives. Sometimes, one African kid holds the promise of a whole family, community, or generation.

My challenging struggle was founded on this problem more than other difficulties faced by African students in India. Traoré & Lukens believe that the emotional breakdown of some African students experience as a result of being the academic and social survival of many African international students in India is seriously threatened by being away from their families, experiencing homesickness, and above all the arduous and seemingly never-ending immigration process. Another major problem that African international students in India have is the procedure of

moving from Africa to India. Many African international students have never had to leave their home or family until it comes time to travel abroad for school. My personal experience has shown me that changing processes provide a feeling of bewilderment that affects both social interactions and academic achievement.

The complexity of this problem stems from the fact that many African international students lack the necessary skills to handle the different stages of relocating to an Indian college, which often start with immigration procedures, long flights, a new language, housing, cultural identity, and teaching-learning practices that differ from those we are used to in the classroom. As African international students, we came from communities that were beset by a variety of complex issues, including poverty, poor governance, conflicts, etc. During the new transition and adjustment phase, these problems had a significant impact on the learning environment.

A financial issue

Many self-sponsored African international students are not financially stable enough to pay for accommodation, food, new clothes, tuition, and many other costs that are essential for an African international student to survive and adapt in India as a result of the financial crisis that is ravaging many African nations. Due to the poor value of their own home currency (Liberian Dollars) as compared to the Indian rupees, African international students constantly suffer from the deflation of many African countries' exchange rates. Some African international students find their academic and social lives severely hampered by this financial issue, so they frequently turn to other sources of support, such as academic institution scholarships, or occasionally deliberately engage in "under-table jobs," which is a clear violation of our immigration status. The biggest challenges faced by overseas students from Africa frequently face is financial ones, which typically lead to a great deal of psychological stress and uncertainty. Financial challenges related to housing and school expenses and food are mentioned as a major obstacle for overseas students from Africa. And foods are mentioned as a major obstacle for overseas students from Africa.

Cultural disparity

For African international students, cultural differences and adjusting to the new and unpredictable weather in India are additional challenges that frequently result in a state of confusion and poor focus in class. As an African foreign student, it was frequently challenging to communicate and express ourselves due to the cultural differences between our own African culture and the Indian westernized one, as well as the alleged "heavy African accent." Cultural differences are a significant issue in the social and academic life of African overseas students.

Academic challenges

Adjustment is often a challenge for international students to a new westernized culture in India because of the cultural contrasts. African overseas students are accustomed to a teaching learning process structure that is markedly different from the Indian educational system. African international students view the American teaching learning method as undermining the authority of the teacher since it involves students in group discussions, classroom discussions, question presentations, and critical thinking.

Table no 1: Methods and Academic Challenges

NO.	Academic challenges	Methods:
1.	Teaching and Learning	The education system in India emphasizes theoretical knowledge and rote learning, which may differ from the practical-oriented systems in other countries. Students may struggle with understanding professors' accents or the pace of lectures.
2.	Recognition of Prior Education:	Difficulty getting previous qualifications recognized or valued in India's academic system
3.	Technology and Infrastructure:	Students from developed countries may find the technological facilities in some institutions lacking
4.	Lack of Academic Support:	Limited counseling or academic resources tailored for international students.
5.	Heavy Coursework:	The volume of assignments, projects, and examinations can feel overwhelming for newcomers.

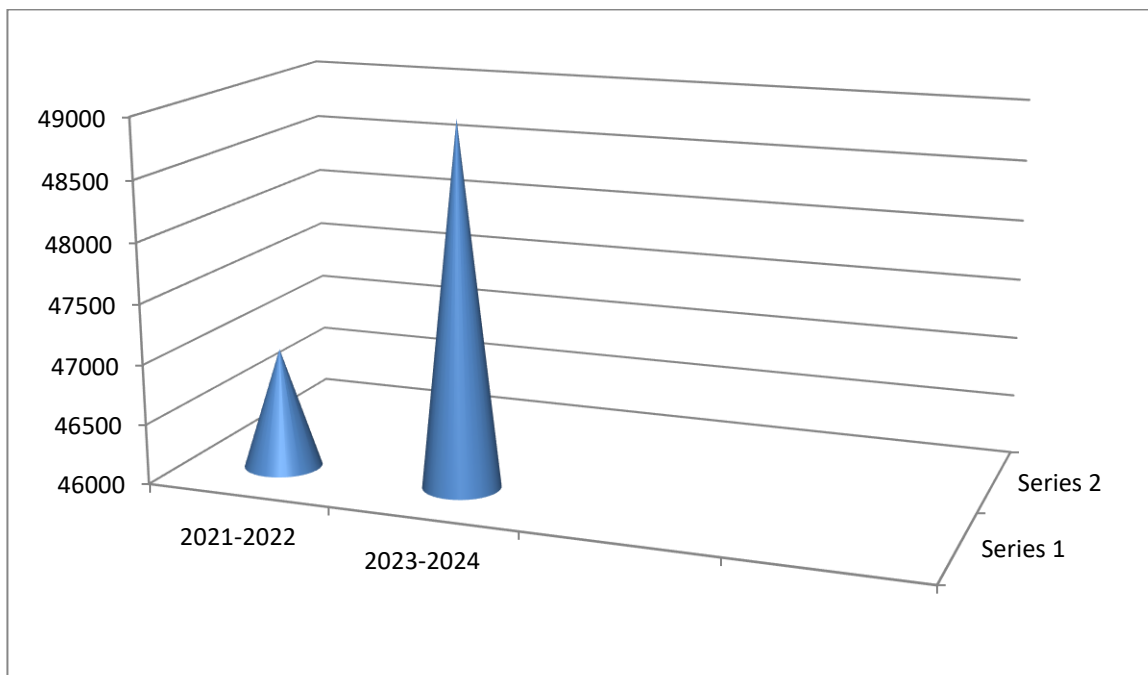
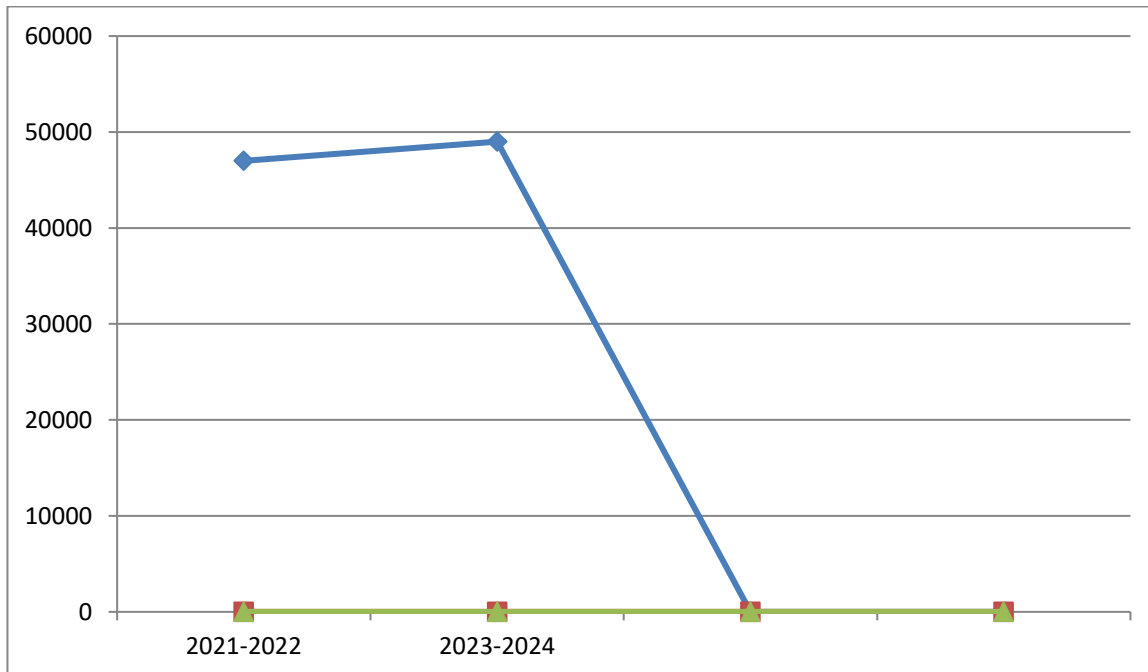
Social challenges

Many rules from the federal, state, county, and borough governments have caused our vibrant African social life to disappear for African international students after they arrive in India. The laws in India are completely different from those in African nations, where they are united and essentially. Many African international students frequently disregard the dozens of laws, norms, and procedures that exist in the India. Since ignorance is not an excuse in legal proceedings, African students who purposefully or unintentionally violate the law are subject to consequences that cause them to become emotionally and psychologically disoriented and unable to concentrate on their main goal in India. While some African international students are making an effort to follow certain regulations, Evivie proposed that they frequently inadvertently breach other laws.

Table No 2: Methods of Social Challenges

NO	Social challenges	Methods:
1.	Language Barrier	Hindi and regional languages dominate in social settings, making it challenging for students unfamiliar with them. Although English is widely used in academics, daily communication can be a struggle.
2.	Cultural Differences:	Adjusting to different customs, traditions, and food habits can be overwhelming. Social norms, such as gender interactions, may differ significantly from their home countries
3.	Racism and Discrimination:	Students, especially from Africa and other minority backgrounds, sometimes face prejudice and stereotyping.
4.	1. Isolation and Loneliness: ○	Difficulty forming close friendships due to cultural misunderstandings or being part of a smaller international student community
5.	Housing and Accommodation: .	Finding affordable and safe housing can be a challenge, especially when landlords are hesitant to rent to foreigners
6.	Food and Lifestyle Adjustments:	Indian food may be too spicy for some, and finding familiar cuisine might be expensive or unavailable.

Enrolment of students' from 2020-2024 by country represented by percentage



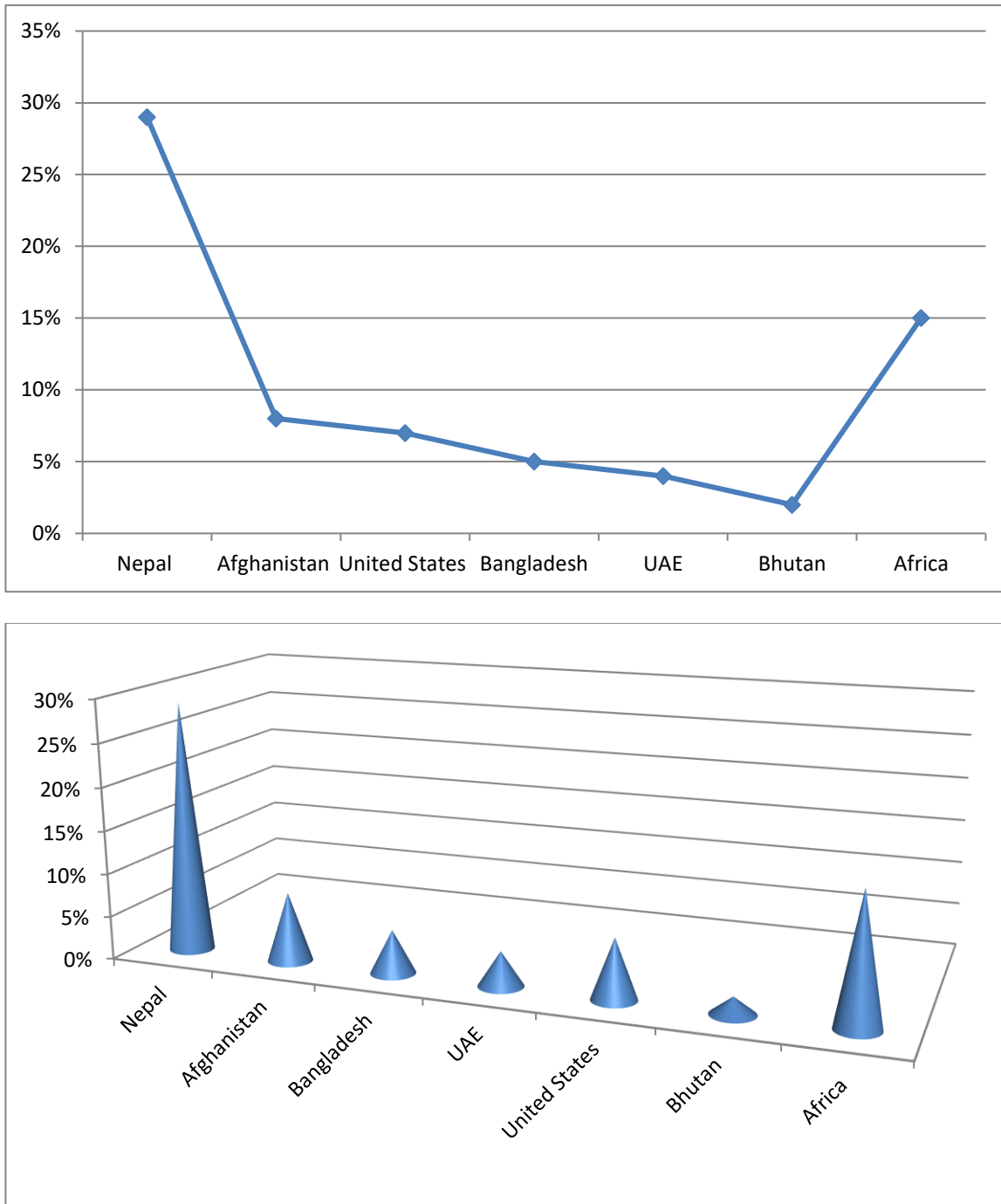


Figure No 1: Enrolment of students' from 2020-2024 by country represented by percentage

Recommendation

Racism, shifting immigration laws, stereotyping, and adjusting to a new educational system are just a few of the difficulties International students from Africa come across in India. Educational institutions that accept foreign students from Africa can help create a support structure that will be in place to help international students before they need it. This can be lessened or restricted. A thorough orientation program should be established for African students arriving in India in order to educate and assist them in adjusting to their new surroundings and community.

Furthermore, as many Indian universities quickly discontinue courses or expel international African students from campus due to tuition-related financial concerns, educational institutions ought to be more focused on their students than on policies. It is hoped that these experiences and this research will help academics and students alike comprehend the difficulties they will encounter.

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