

ALL STUDENTS MATTER

UNRAVELING SOCIAL INCLUSION PRACTISES IN DUTCH HIGHER EDUCATION



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Bachelor Thesis

by

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Abstract

Background: The Netherlands is a popular study destination for international students all around the world. Hence, more Dutch educational institutions are today relatively diverse. Diversity and inclusion, for that matter, have become highly relevant. Research indicates that too little research is conducted on implementing inclusion policies for the international student body in western societies. Furthermore, a comprehensive understanding of social inclusion is lacking. More precisely, the University of Twente, a Dutch public University, lacks institutionalized diversity and inclusion practices. Thus, this study explores the inclusion policies and strategies, including challenges and opportunities. Additionally, it reviews the understanding of inclusion through the lenses of students and professionals. The focus is laid on the international student body.

Methods: Through purposive sampling, seven board members and six professionals from the University of Twente participated in this study. The resulting qualitative data was transcribed using 'Amberscript' and analysed using a 'Atlas.ti'.

Results: Findings report on participants' social inclusion elements, including a sense of welcoming, embracing diversity, social support, equity, integration, collective effort, and belonging. Elements were combined, and policies and strategies were accordingly discussed. The combination of feeling welcome and embracing diversity addresses, for example, the English language policy or the Kick-In. Continuously social support addresses e.g., confidential advisors or module coordinators. Conversely, equity highlighted, for example, the international advisory group or attracting the International job market. Finally, integration and collective effort practices include, for example, the housing policy, organizing events and language Courses. Notably, for each practice, the strengths and challenges were explained. Besides various instrumental policies (financial instruments, mobility, etc.) social inclusion policies were discovered.

Conclusions: Despite not having clear institutionalized policies, this paper successfully identified policies on various levels. It is proposed to review challenges and address them accordingly. The disadvantage of a split perception of inclusion is that inclusion processes are unequally distributed among the campus environment, making it difficult to detect them. To put it differently, the absence of a shared understanding of inclusion leads to taking a different approach to reinforce inclusion. However, a sense of belonging is a result of strategically addressing the other six elements of social inclusion. The more policies and strategies are proactively enforced, the more profound the sense of belonging. Therefore, policies are indeed in order to trigger change and set directions. However, the processes that follow largely depend on the teamwork of all parties involved. In other words, inclusion demands both policies and manpower. As each pillar is equally essential, reviewing challenges and addressing them heads up will ultimately improve the social inclusion process at large. A framework for improvement is provided in the practical implications can immensely support the UT in its vision. Finally, the values that result from pillars of social inclusion are that the UT recognizes the uniqueness of its students, supports interactivity, enforces equity, and empowers students' sense of belonging. After all, in any educational setting, all students matter.

Key words: social inclusion, international students, policies and strategies, challenges, opportunities, definition, the university of twente

1. Introduction

In modern society, studying outside of one's own home country is becoming increasingly popular. Collecting intercultural experience and individuals' professional and personal development are known drivers to study abroad (Sherry et al., 2009). Especially the Netherlands—as a non-anglophone country—is a well-known study destination for international students around the globe. In 2008, over 39 thousand international students enrolled in Dutch universities. A decade later, the number doubled to nearly 86 thousand international students (Statista, 2020). Even the Dutch Ministry for Culture and Sciences (Office of education) reports that the number of international students increased by around 6,163 for 2016-2017 compared to the former years. In 2017 alone, this amounts to 81,392 international students in the Netherlands (Editor, 2020). The numbers are not surprising, as the Netherlands provides over 2,000 education programs offered in English (educations.com, 2021). Consequently, the resulting diversity of globalization has benefited the Western education sphere greatly. Professor Michael Murphy, President of the European University Association (EUA), highlights the merits of diversity as "a key concern for nearly all dutch universities. It is a condition for excellence and for facing competition in various parts of universities' missions. Universities that want to retain their high levels of excellence need to be able to attract talent at all levels, and in a globalized world, this means being open to diversity" (Claeys-Kulik et al., 2019, p.5). On top of the benefits mentioned, universities widely benefit from the influx of international students on campus regarding financial well-being and the formation of a vibrant personality (Hegarty, 2014).

Nevertheless, from the perspective of international students, leaving one's home to study abroad is a rocky journey. More precisely, papers name some challenges that international students face ranging from cultural barriers, academic issues, financial difficulties, interpersonal problems, racial discrimination, loss of social support, alienation, nostalgia to housing (Akanwa, 2015; Beukema et al., 2020; Sengupta, 2017; Thurber, & Walton, 2012; Yeh & Inose 2003). Despite their academic preparedness, adapting to the Dutch culture could continue to be complicated. In this respect, Murphy rightly pointed out the notion of 'inclusion', which means making all students a part of the university

environment. However, Dutch institutions are still predominantly white. Thus, the question arises: if more Dutch campuses become diverse, do they (universities) as well become more inclusive?

Followingly, in the pursuit of more inclusion, the Netherlands endorsed a new National Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. By 2024, the Netherlands supports Dutch research universities by strengthening institutional diversity and inclusion processes with guidelines and frameworks (National Diversity & Inclusion plan, 2020). The primary purpose of this action plan is to build a stronger, inclusive and diverse research sector of the Dutch education system. Continuously, the aspiration is to create a common ground in which "people from different backgrounds with a diversity of perspectives are both willing and able to contribute, will enable us to maintain our position at the international forefront of research and education, helping to address global challenges such as climate change, sustainable development and the welfare of the population." (p.7).

However, realizing inclusion in higher education systems unveils many challenges and barriers. According to Chisholm-Burns (2008), one of the most significant challenges in realizing inclusion is the lack of institutional leadership that overlaps with poor strategy implementation. Meaning, institutional strategies sometimes miss the 'point' of addressing the needs of minority groups. An example of such a predicament is the absence of implemented changes such as funding to support policies (Karimi & Matous, 2018 & Porter, 2019). Consequently, institutions inadequately execute policies. Ultimately, students mark universities with statements such as they 'don't walk the talk' (Carrington et al., 2010).

Another barrier is that of a non-diverse staff faculty, which means that there is an imbalance of diverse faculty members failing to mirror the diversity of the student population. Students benefit from a diverse faculty as teachers can build strong relationships based on commonalities and act as role models. In this sense, students become instinctively aware that higher academic and social positions can be accessible to everyone (Abdul-Raheem, 2016; Williams et al., 2005). Considering the above mentioned, many universities worldwide may have missed the opportunity to develop inclusive strategies to improve their campus climates by mistakenly perceiving the increase of international enrolment as a sole indicator for diversity (Hernandez, 2013 & Sharma, 2019). Bluntly speaking, this alone may not improve the feeling of inclusiveness for international students. A university lacking

social inclusion and diversity systems could harvest results of racism, exclusion, and isolation (Sengupta, 2017). On that note, the notion of the lack of strategies needs further exploration.

Research approaches on inclusion in education have two different angles. First, some studies investigate the perceptions and experiences of inclusion directly from marginalized groups in their respective environments (Armstrong & Cairnduff, 2011; Dare & Nowicki, 2018; Tang et al., 2014). Koutsouris, Anglin-Jaffe, and Stentiford (2019) support this research approach, claiming that a 'top-down' approach of instructional leaders on promoting social inclusion is ineffective. They argue that inclusion processes occur at the essential day-to-day interaction where policies have far less control. Thereby, the direct interaction with units on the bottom level, such as students in universities or employees in the workplace, discloses authentic insights into inclusion processes.

Secondly, other papers investigate inclusion policies through instructional professionals such as policy departments or educational (Crawford & Tindal, 2006). In other words, they are targeting the professionals who formulate policies for inclusion on the central level. A majority of these scholars attempt to make recommendations to improve and revise policies (Templeton et al., 2016). Unfortunately, to our knowledge, no research has combined these two approaches in the Dutch sector.

What becomes evident is that the majority of inclusion studies focus on the teacher relationship with students with disabilities or special educational needs (SEN), while far less research pays attention to international students (Hernandez, 2016; Wilkins & Huisman, 2015). On top of that, the research bases at large do not provide sufficient insights into inclusion strategies, particularly in western societies. Understandably, inclusion could be seen as a sensitive issue to discuss openly due to discomfort regarding its social and political aspects (Chisholm-Burns et al., 2008).

In conclusion, researchers have called for a better understanding of diversity issues in higher education, especially concerning the problematic path towards implementing inclusion policies and practices (Templeton et al., 2016).

To unravel the understudied and yet relevant social inclusion practices, we adopt an explorative approach in a Dutch public university. These are the central questions asked:

1. What are the policies and strategies of social inclusion at the University of Twente for the international student body?

- a. What are their resulting challenges and opportunities?
- b. How do students and professionals of the University of Twente understand and define social inclusion in higher education?

The following sections are divided as follows: Firstly, we shall provide the relevance and the aim of this study. Next, the theoretical framework is outlined. Keeping in mind the central research question, it appeared logical to reverse the order of the information presented in the theoretical framework. First we outline the complex terminology of social inclusion and its characteristics. Further on we shed light on examples of social inclusion practices in higher education. The chapter background context of the case study. The preceding chapters consist of the methodology, the results, discussion and conclusion. Both results and discussion are based on the order presented in the theoretical framework

1.1 Research relevance and research aim

As noted before, there is a gap in research on implementing social inclusion policies in Dutch higher education. Hence, this paper is of utmost relevance as it fills the gap followingly:

Firstly, we shall further the cause of social inclusion in research shedding light on international students. Secondly, the inclusion process is a dynamic, open system of policies formed and implemented. Richer and authentic insights are provided when addressing both bottom (students) and central (professionals) units. Thirdly, understanding inclusion generally is fundamentally relevant to contrast alignment of perception and actions (Tang et al., 2014) Thereby, this paper adds theoretical and practical input for the interpretation of social tangled phenomena. Understandably, investigating understudied social phenomena raises awareness of complex predicaments (Cutcliffe & Ramcharan, 2002). Therefore, solutions can be formed, benefiting both students' study life and institutional educators.

On a final note, to our knowledge, this study is the first of its kind in investigating the inclusion practices in a Dutch public university. Therefore, the results will support the newly established systems within the university moving forward in the right direction. More precisely, we shall provide authentic insights from its pupils and recommendations for future practices.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Inclusion and Diversity

The term inclusion in its fundamental nature is borrowed from the Latin word *include* meaning to embrace (Karten, 2009). The act of embracing does not discriminate between individuals. Earlier definitions mainly shed light on students with disabilities. However, recent definitions are considered to embrace all students irrespective of their vulnerabilities. In the educational sphere, literature recognizes that inclusion transcends the idea of physically attending the same university (Juvonen et al., 2019). Based on this line of thought, UNESCO (2011) views inclusion as an educational reform that welcomes, embraces, and assists diversity among all learners to eliminate the social exclusion resulting from discrimination. Equally relevant is the term of diversity. In social sciences, diversity refers to "the collective mixture of differences and similarities that include, for example, individual and organizational characteristics, values, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds, preferences, and behaviors." (the Society for Human Resource Management). Thereby, the relationship between diversity and inclusion can be illustrated as being invited to a party (diversity) and being asked to dance (inclusion). Diversity and inclusion are inseparable and synergistic to each other. Ultimately, inclusion creates a sense of involvement, respect, value, and connectivity among all learners.

Reviewing current literature, two facets of inclusion emerged: academic and social inclusion. Academic inclusion refers to the educational practices which support students' access to core curricula (Fisher & Frey, 2001) through interactions with peers as "part of the life of the classroom" (Katz, et al., 2012, p. 3). Due to the nature of the study, the next section elaborates primarily on the terminology of social inclusion and its characteristics.

2.1.1 Defining social inclusion

Social inclusion is a widely anticipated construct, however, various definitions falsely comprehend its practicality. Take for example the European Unions' working definition of social inclusion. In their definition, the mere access to the university supporting students to complete their studies and equality, are at focus. Bluntly, this definition lacks centering the individual's experience in the process of inclusion (Erten Savage, 2012). In contrast, the definition provided by the Council of Europe (Youth Partnership) emphasizes the individual him- or herself. According to their policy sheet for social inclusion policies, social inclusion denotes the following:

From a youth perspective social inclusion is the process of individual's self-realisation within a society, acceptance and recognition of one's potential by social institutions, integration (through study, employment, volunteer work or other forms of participation) in the web of social relations in a community. (p.2)

It becomes apparent that the psychological process of being part of a system accounts for social inclusion. When combining UNESCO's and the European Councils' definitions together, three levels emerge: The numeric level, the social level and the psychological level (Qvortrup & Qvortrup, 2017). According to the authors, a comprehensive definition answers 1. whether students are physically included in the community in terms of diversity? (numeric), 2. whether the students are socially active in the community? (social), 3. whether the students are recognized by other community members? Do students have a sense of campus belonging? (psychological level). It becomes apparent that various elements merged together define social inclusion. Irrespective of what elements are noted, as long as belonging is centered, the definition goes in the right direction.

Additionally, Qvortrup and Qvortrup, (2017) emphasize on the concept of belonging, which is equivalent to '*recognition of one's potential*'. A sense of belonging has been widely considered fundamental to social inclusion. Many papers explain that belonging is attained through healthy relationships with peers, participation in group activities, and acceptance by class members (Hughes, 2015; Peters & Besley, 2014; Pierson, 2002; Rawal, 2008). Attaining healthy relationships presupposes the absence of barriers. To illustrate, take the example of language. In line with recent studies, language plays a significant value in building social relationships (Qui et al., 2018). Language is predominantly a form of communication. Sharing the same language thereby can be considered as a 'given' to build trust and confidence. All this combined leads to the establishment of fruitful relationships, and hence a strong sense of belonging.

Furthermore, building fruitful relationships and belonging is best attained through social presence. According to the Media Richness Theory, a social presence elevates in face-to-face interactions (Kuyath & Winter, 2006). Thus, Sacco and Ismail (2014) confirm that 'face-to-face interactions facilitate greater feelings of social belonging.' (p. 12-15). Facilitating students' sense of belonging through social presence will be challenging for institutions, especially in the Corona Pandemic. Therefore, creative and innovative alternatives will be in order to combat possible feelings of loneliness and depression.

Based on the aforementioned, one could ask whether social inclusion is as straightforward as presented. The answer is no. The complexity of social inclusion lies in its characteristics. In the following subsection, an elaboration of social inclusion characteristics is presented.

2.2 Social and inclusion and its characteristics

Social inclusion is seen as a *process* that is *multi-dimensional* and requires *collective engagement* (McMahon et al., 2016). Firstly, social inclusion as a process indicates its

dynamic nature. It is a never-ending process of providing equity and support for students in pursuit of reducing social exclusion. Briefly explained, social exclusion is as well a process that hinders students or discriminated students from participating in various social dimensions (Barnes, 2005). This is why social inclusion policies aim to prevent students from being potentially excluded from campus society. In alignment with the former, social inclusion is vastly multi-dimensional. Students thus are socially included or excluded economically, socially, politically, and culturally (Barnes, 2005). In an ideal state, a society comprises an environment of open doors allowing participation.

Finally, social inclusion calls for a collective engagement of all parties involved. An emphasis is laid between the 'excluded' and the 'excluders.' On the one hand, the excluded should —have a voice and participate fully" for the sake of their inclusion. To obtain representation and fight for their benefits, they need to embody an active role in that process. Universities, for instance, allow students to be part of the University council. Thereby, students can represent the minority voices and go against unfavorable decisions restricting their educational and social freedom on campus. On the other side, the excluders, at times, internationally or unconsciously, refrain from being inclusive. These are unfavorable results of social bubbles (Beukma et al., 2020). Social bubbles are formed when students group with their kind. For instance, Dutch people assemble with similar social identities, and internationals tend to do the same. As a result, solid synergetic groups discriminate and reject others from joining their groups. Hence, the goal is to reduce forms separation to make inclusion work. This is only possible through a collective and instinstic drive for inclusion, of all parties involved. Unquestionably, inclusion is the desired condition in a diverse or heterogeneous environment despite its rather challenging characteristics. How is social inclusion practically manifested in higher education? The next part reviews social inclusion practices in the campus environment.

Table 1 Summary of social inclusion

Definitions	Levels	Characteristics
<p>“Inclusion is an educational reform that welcomes, embraces and assists diversity among all learners to eliminate the social exclusion resulting from discrimination.” (UNESCO, 2011)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Numeric: Is the student physically included in the campus community, in terms of diversity? 2. Social: Is the student actively participating in the campus community? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Process, 2. Multi-dimensional 3. Collective engagement <p>(McMahon, et al., 2016-</p>
<p>“From a youth perspective social inclusion is the process of individual’s self-realisation within a society, acceptance and recognition of one’s potential by social institutions, integration (through study, employment, volunteer work or other forms of participation) in the web of social relations in a community (European Council)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Psychological: Is students recognized by the campus community and has a sense of belonging Do students have a sense of campus belonging? (Qvortrup & Qvortrup, 2017) 	

2.3 Social inclusion in higher education

Researchers consistently argue that the process of inclusive practice is a complex and highly challenging phenomenon (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2004; Carrington & Robinson, 2006). Achieving social inclusion in any educational setting is even a far more difficult task. Especially when working definitions fail to address the multi-dimensional and psychological role of individuals. For instance, the EU commission has conducted extensive research on social inclusion policies in the European Union. The report reviews policies and practices from EU countries that promote admission to higher education, participation, and completion by students from under-represented groups. However, their definition used for social inclusion disregards the social and psychological level. How do EU countries foster positive interaction between a diverse student population within higher education? How are students recognized, and how is a sense of belonging measured? The report does not provide answers

to these questions. This explains why policies explored in this report are rather instrumental than social. Table 2 summarizes the instrumental policies that address social inclusion.

Table 2 Summary of instrumental policies from EU Countries

Type of policy levels	Explanation	Examples Policies
Regulation	Policy explicitly proceed access and social inclusion in higher education.	Change in admission rules for specific groups of students
Funding	Policies target all forms instruments allowing students to finance their studies	Need/Merit-based grants Need-based grants Scholarships
Organizational	Policies target degree structures, types of higher education providers or the provision of higher education.	Organisational services to better prepare students from disadvantaged groups regarding academic competencies
Information	Policies address means to support students in higher education	Informing students about studying in higher education from the lenses of under-represented groups

Despite providing a relatively incorrect interpretation of social inclusion, some policies can be regarded as social inclusion policies. In line with UNESCO's definition, information policies are of *an assisting* nature. They have the advantage of supporting students on/off-campus. Without proper support, underrepresented groups risk being excluded. For instance, the report notes that various countries, including the Netherlands and Germany, provide mentoring systems. Mentors are known to provide various information and assistance about the host university and educational and social procedures upon arrival (Lee & Bush, 2003). Thus, this policy can be correctly regarded as a social inclusion policy, as the process of integration to the education environment is provided through the support of information.

Too little is researched on institutionalized social inclusion practises in higher education. As mentioned, social inclusion deals with participation in interpersonal relationships,

decision-making processes, and feelings of belonging to a community. For diversity to work and obtain positive personal, societal, and educational excellence, the diverse groups must establish meaningful connections (Gurin et al; 2002) and mutual engagement. Therefore, social inclusion policies ought to address interactivity on the bottom level: from student to student.

Most commonly, in universities, students find interactions and acceptance in extracurricular activities such as student clubs, student associations, and more. Thus, students on the bottom level play a central role in the social inclusion process. Frequently, instructional leaders view social acceptance by peers as a 'bonus' and less as a 'must' (Juvonen et al., 2019). This notion appears to be a blind spot for institutional leaders. Many universities do not sufficiently apprehend the multi-dimensional nature of social inclusion (Armstrong & Cairnduff, 2011).

Due to humans' instinctive demand for social interactivity, inclusion does not occur impulsively. Hence, one could argue that universities can provide or may not provide the assistance needed in fostering interconnected relationships. This can be explained by Koutsouris, Anglin-Jaffe, and Stentiford (2019), who insist on the ineffectiveness of inclusion interventions on a social basis. Thus, Karimi and Matous (2018) partly agree, as universities cannot, for instance, directly influence students' networks or their means of communication on social media platforms striving to improve inclusion. However, they provide countering arguments suggesting how universities can analyze interaction and barriers in student events: "Societies are led by students, but they usually receive considerable subsidies from their universities for the activities and events they organize (Karimi & Matous, 2018, p.8)". This solution implies that universities can assist events and activities financially to intentionally accelerate interactivity among a diverse student population. With the establishment of a supportive surrounding, it is possible to allow diverse groups to interconnect through multiple

opportunities (Karimi & Matous, 2018). Clearly, this is an example of social inclusion policies enforced from a central level.

Teachers and school administrators are vital drivers that can influence the integration of student networks and activities. In agreement with the latest studies on cross-border students' experience of loneliness and isolation suggest that the universities' assistance in the structuring of social activities and their support for student clubs and networks can counterbalance unfavorable encounters (Sawir et al., 2008). All in all, this type of practice directly targets interactivity amongst students. After elaborating on social inclusion definitions, levels, and practices in higher education, we are going to zoom into the case institutions used in this study.

2.3 Social inclusion in public Dutch university: A case of the University of Twente

The University of Twente (UT) is a Dutch public research university located in Enschede. It is widely known for its first-class educational programs, research activities, and flourishing campus. When reflecting on the last two years, the concept of inclusion has become a prominent topic. For instance, a UT survey conducted around two years ago revealed that students from underrepresented groups do not feel welcomed in the school (De Kiewit, 2020). Many of the respondents reported feelings of loneliness, exclusion from social activities, issues of discrimination, and racism. This is in line with papers that suggest instructional leaders be aware of minority students having problems adjusting to the dominant culture, resulting in frustration and isolation on campus (Wicheng, 2003). One might assume that a university with such an international identity must have institutional inclusion systems in place that provide educational and social support for under-represented students. Nevertheless, no official diversity and inclusion statements or inclusion and diversity policies

for international students are currently documented at the University of Twente. This might explain the mental issues faced by international students of the UT.

The social inclusion predicament is closely related to the background history. For around 50 years, the UT was predominantly white and Dutch. The transition from a Dutch to an international university is less than ten years ago. In essence, the UT strived to fully internationalize its institution in terms of a diverse student and staff population, introducing English-taught education programs by 2018, having English as its primary communication language, etc. Their ambition for internationalization can be seen as they noted in their strategy document “ we have set our bar high, as we strive to create an environment that facilitates students to become global citizens.” (Strategy paper, 2015, p.10) elaborate)

Despite the competition with popular study places like Amsterdam and Utrecht, the number of enrolled students rose tremendously in the last decades. According to its statistics, international student enrollment in 2018 depicts a total number of 11.777 of which 8,129 are Dutch, 1,357 are German, 371 are Indian, 197 are Chinese, 197 are Romanian 176, 110 are Bulgarian, 105 are Italian, 103 are Greek, 87 are Indonesia, 69 are Ecuadorian and 1,073 are other of other nationalities. In addition, the campus is coloured with various student organizations. The variety ranges from sports-, culture-, world, and study associations. Today the UT inclusion processes are finally set in motion. The following section reviews the newly established inclusion systems, including its—UT Shaping 2030 Inclusion vision.

2.4 UT Shaping 2030

On a positive note, creating a more inclusive environment is one of UT's new significant goals for 2030. In Shaping 2030, the following goals are formulated regarding inclusion: "Putting 'people first' includes all people. We will do whatever is necessary to eliminate societal divides that bar certain individuals, or groups, from access to new

technologies, the skills to use them, equality of opportunity, Inclusiveness, health, and well-being" (Shaping 2030 UT Mission - Vision - Strategy, p.13). Subsequently, the UT employed a Diversity and Inclusion officer (D & I) in 2019. This change aims to support minorities and create a mutually inclusive environment for all students. For the upcoming five years, she will create programs to contribute to UT's vision of inclusiveness.

On top of employing a D & I Officer: the Shaping Expert Groups (SEG) were formed. Since 2020 the university has created 5 Shaping Expert groups that aim to contribute to the Shaping 2030 initiative. The SEG inclusion for minorities is divided into subgroups: first-generation students, students with disabilities, students with ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds, LGBT students, and students with different sexual identities. At this moment, a small number of active SEG Inclusion groups are confidently forming plans to combat the inclusion issues at the University of Twente. In this regard, SEG inclusion for the international student group will benefit from the results as they are currently in the beginning stage of their research.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

For this research, we employed an explorative-qualitative case study to examine UT's inclusion procedures. That is because "exploratory research where little is known is useful in describing complex social issues, such as those surrounding inclusion" (Dare et al., 2017, p.20). Consequently, researchers are allowed to delve into the realm of the study population to find an answer to societal problems at the most immediate level (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003).

On top of the exploratory nature of this research, a case study is used. According to Van Thiel ", a case study is a research strategy, in which one or several cases of the subject of study are

examined in an everyday, real-life setting. A case can be almost anything: a group, an organization, a country, a city or neighborhood, an event, a relationship, a project or process – it can even be a law or decision" (Van Thiel, 2014, p.2). Thus, a case study is doing field research to solve societal phenomena or issues. Both methods combined facilitate the exploration of the complex topic. In agreement with Van Zijverden (2019), a combination of qualitative research and case study results enables the recombination and adjustment of data collection methods to respond to new arising insights. Furthermore, to be successful in understanding and identifying inclusion policies, the characteristics of this research enable the researchers' involvement with the UT's local stakeholders. Concluding, this type of research is most suitable to answer this papers' central research question.

In this study, interviews were conducted. Common in conducting interviews, a scheme of pre-fixed questions allows covering essential topics of interest. However, structured interviews disrupt the interactive nature of communication (Opdenakker, 2006). Therefore, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the preferred method of data collection. Two primary considerations influenced this choice. First, due to its flexible nature, open-ended or probing questions can be posed to clarify misconceptions and ask for further explanations if deemed necessary (Charmaz, 2002). Second, interviewees are granted a degree of freedom to express their opinions, thoughts, and perceptions to highlight specific areas of individual interest (Horton, Macve, & Struyven, 2004). This research was approved by the ethics committee of the University of Twente and complied with the ethical guidelines provided by the host university.

3.2.1 Interview guide

In order to obtain comprehensive information, all interview scripts were divided into four phases:

1. **General information and introduction:** To break the ice at the beginning of the interview, both parties introduced themselves. Additionally, we asked the interviewee to elaborate on his/her line of work and working experience or board position.
2. **Understanding of inclusion:** To answer the second research question, each participant provided his/her definition of social inclusion.
3. **Practises of inclusion management:** Utilizing the critical incidents technique (CIT), interviewees were asked to elaborate on details of inclusion management such as policies, practices, and strategies (from central/bottom level). We asked about their experiences, challenges, problems, and opportunities they have faced with these strategies. Participants were free to elaborate on strategies that were missing in practice. As soon as policies were mentioned CIT influenced questions were asked.
4. **Recommendations:** Finally, we asked for suggestions and recommendations to help the University of Twente move forward to a more inclusive and diverse community.

Tang et al. (2014) partly influenced these phases and interview questions who investigated inclusion management in Chinese organizations. Furthermore, for each policy mentioned, a standardized set of questions were asked that are common in research adopting the critical incident technique (CIT) (Zwijze-Koning, De Jong, & Van Vuuren, 2015). This method, initially invented by Flanagan (1954), 'is used to gather observations of human behavior and determine the competencies required of members from a specific profession or group' (Zwijze-Koning et al., 2015, p.48). Researchers asked participants to elaborate on policies mentioned by reflecting on the negative, favorable implication and the parties involved. Subsequently, this method enables researchers to gain rich insights into implemented policies.

Two slightly different interview guides were developed to interview the professional and student groups (Tillery et al., 2010). The interview script of the student group had a strong focus on their interaction with students on a bottom level. At the same time, the professional group had a strong focus on policies from a central level. See Appendix II for interview scripts.

3.2 Procedure

All participants were invited via e-mail to participate in this study. Once participants agreed to participate in this study, a reminder email with the link to the interview was sent 1-2 days in advance. Additionally, we asked interviewees to fill in a short questionnaire beforehand. The survey asked for demographic information: name, age, gender, occupation, and working experience. This form cannot be seen as a pre-test. Dimitrov and Rumrill (2003) define a pre-test as an element of the pretest-posttest-research design used to compare measurements before and after an intervention. This form was exclusively sent to save significant time during the actual interview. Additionally, before starting the online interviews, each participant filled in a consent form and the introduction to the research that informed them about their rights and its purpose.

Once the participants read the documents, agreed to the terms, and signed, the interview began. Due to the ongoing Corona pandemic, the interviews were conducted in an online setting via Microsoft Teams. This was to ensure both researchers' and participants' safety. Within each group, the researcher followed the phases explained under the interview guide. After each party introduced themselves, social definitions were provided by the participants. Afterward, UT policies and strategies were revealed. As soon as policies were mentioned, researchers asked CT-influenced follow-up questions for the richness of data. Finally, participants shared suggestions for future social inclusion processes at the UT. Before the researcher ended the interview, participants were asked if they remembered any further

details. If that was not the case, the Interviews would have ended. All conducted interviews last between 45 min - 60 min. Adams (2015) deems 1 hour as a reasonable limit of the optimal interview length for conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews. See consent form, introduction to the research document, and the questionnaire in Appendix II.

3.3 Participants

In order to identify the participants of interest and collect qualitative data, purposive sampling was used. This means that participants were chosen based on certain conditions (Patton, 2002). The Diversity & Inclusion Officer and the Shaping Expert Group Inclusion leader assisted in searching for individuals who could fit the nature of this study. Purposive sampling was chosen over random sampling as participants with specific characteristics are essential in providing rich information for the success of this research (Taşdoğan, 2020). In order to participate in this study, individuals within each group met the following criteria:

1. Language: Participants must speak English.
2. Participants are knowledgeable in the potential strategies and policies of the UT.
3. Participants play vital roles in facilitating/initiating inclusion processes at the University of Twente
4. Participants can share personal experience and suggestions for future inclusion processes at UT and its international student body

Therefore, two groups of interest emerged: Board members of study associations and professionals:

Board members: As noted, interactivity and forming relationships are observed in student organizations. For that matter, board members of study associations were chosen to provide insights into how international students are included in the social sphere within their field of study. Students that participated were internal affairs officers, chairs, portfolio holders of

internationalization or internationalization commissioners. Thereby, this group provided valuable insights into the social inclusion aspect from the bottom level of the UT. The aim is to foster the integration of international students in their studies. The goal was to grasp how internationals are included in the association's social climate through strategies or other management practices.

Professionals: The term professionals covers a broad spectrum of professionals at the UT. Participants were chosen due to their occupation and expertise in internationalization. For instance, these individuals have direct experience with policies and strategies suitable for social inclusion processes at UT. Participants recruited were either policy advisors, educational consultants, or international coordinators.

In qualitative research, a predetermined number of interviews are not given (Marshall et al., 2013). However, in agreement with several researchers, "interviews should continue until theoretical saturation is reached" (Nissen, 2005, p. 235). Thus, for this study, six in-depth interviews with the student group and seven interviews with the professional group, comprising 13 interviews, were conducted.

The participants' working experience ranged from 5 months and 20 years. Eight participants were female, and 5 were male and the age of the participants ranged from 19 years old to 47 years old. See table 3 for the general characteristics of the participants.

Table 3: General information about participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Current employment	Experience (years)
1	Female	29	Policy Advisor	3
2	Male	19	Board Member, ATLANTIS (Chair)	2

3	Female	22	Board Member, Student Union (Internationalization & Wellbeing)	3
4	Male	21	Board Member, Concept (Chair)	1
5	Male	20	Board member, Communique (Internal Officer)	2
6	Female	25	Student Assessor (ITC)	1
7	Male	19	Board member (Chair, Internationalization Commissioner)	1
8	Male	23	Board member, Faculty Rep of BMS (OS)	2
9	Female	49	Senior Policy Advisor	20
10	Female	36	Policy Advisor (International Affairs)	11
11	Female	47	Faculty Board Secretary, Project Leader	21
12	Female	24	International Coordinator	1,5
13	Female	40	Educational Consultant (ET)	19

3.4 Data analysis

3.4.1 Coding and reliability

Followingly the data was transcribed using the software ‘Amberscript.’ Subsequently, the transcriptions were sent back to the participants for content verification. After interviews were transcribed and verified by participants, the data was inserted into a software program called ‘ATLAS.ti.’ The qualitative data analysis comprised three steps: preparing the data,

coding the data, and creating the codebook. The preparation phase involved uploading the raw data to a Google Drive folder to which the research had exclusive access. Followingly, the data was transcribed. During this process, all sensitive information that may identify individuals was removed and anonymized. Afterward, the data was coded with Atlas.ti. Coding is a method of analysis that is necessary to identify patterns in data. Researchers segmented the data in order to facilitate the coding process. First, researchers coded the data as suggested by Boeije (2009). Researchers scan the segmented text and assign particular parts of the text with labels (open coding). After open coding we restricted the codes and labelled them into new categories that aim to answer the research question. For instance, all social inclusion subcodes were assigned to the main category of definition of social inclusion. Afterwards, subcodes were combined into 3 major categories (welcome and embracing diversity, social support and equality, integration and collective effort. The policies and practises were assigned respectfully to either of the categories. For each combined element, two main categories (challenges and opportunities) were formed and elaborated. This step is also called axial coding. Categories are reviewed, split up, or put into new codes together (axial coding). The last step of coding is selective coding. The list of labels that emerges is also called a coding scheme. During the last phase, coding schemes with their meaning and examples were put in a codebook. The codebook can be seen in appendix III.

All in all, using an inductive coding strategy allowed us to look for emerging themes to form a theoretical framework without being influenced by other data (Barriball & While, 1994). In addition, assessing the reliability of the coding helps establish the credibility of qualitative findings” (MacPhail et al., 2015, p.1). Thus, the coding scheme got handed over to an independent party familiar with this research, coding approximately 10% of the segment. After differences and disagreements were discussed, the resulting code scheme was used to

code the rest of the data. All categories reached a value above 0.65, indicating the agreement between raters and, followingly, the reliability of the codes.

4. Results

4.1 Elements of social inclusion

As noted before, we first explain what participants defined as social inclusion. The elements will be explored individually and are based on both students' and professionals' perspectives. The section ends with a combination of elements. Followingly for each combined concept, the respective policies will be explained, and their resulting challenges and opportunities presented. These are the subcodes participants noted: 'Welcome,' 'Embracing Diversity,' 'Support Systems,' 'Integration,' 'Equality' and 'Collective Effort' and 'Belonging' (table 4).

Table 4 Combined elements of social inclusion

Social inclusion	Explanation
Welcome and Embracing Diversity	Social inclusion addresses a sense of welcome which is incentives through celebration and recognition of individual differences.
Social Support and Equity	Social inclusion incorporates various forms of personal assistance (informal or formal) covering individual needs and the reduction of discrimination and injustices.
Integration and Collective Effort	Social inclusion provides systems to be part of a community that demands the mutual and intrinsic engagement of all students.
Belonging	Feeling at home

4.1.1 Welcome and embracing Diversity

The first essential element in inclusion is being and feeling 'welcomed' in the dominant campus environment. Being welcoming follows the principles of making a first positive impression by being friendly and inviting upon arrival. Essentially the student group views the first encounter as a crucial indicator of inclusiveness. In other words, 'the first impression

counts. Data suggest that a new and unknown environment can be frightening. Students from different cultures are confronted with feelings of insecurity in a foreign environment. Thereby, incoming students are presented with various welcoming and fun/informative activities to transition smoothly into a new living environment. Thus, participants explained that feeling welcome diminishes feelings of uncertainty as the environment makes an active effort to combat the negative emotions.

“We all remember how excited we were when we began our study years. But students coming from abroad are likely to be more excited or even insecure of the new environment. This is why introductory programs like the Kick-In are so important.”

(Participant 11)

In agreement with various participants, diversity plays an active role in inclusion. However, in social inclusion, it goes a step further than just being diverse:

"Inclusion means respecting other people's differences and recognizing that they are different from you." (Participant 8)

This statement presupposes a sensitivity towards the differences of others and ourselves. The premise of respecting diversity encompasses the ability to understand and appreciate the uniqueness of individuals. It is appreciated to celebrate these differences in forms of events, activities, and open discussions with diversity in place. Ultimately, being aware of what differentiates us from each other is the first step to embracing diversity and thus facilitating inclusion. In essence, social inclusion calls for embracing the uniqueness of a diverse population.

These two elements can be linked together (Welcome and embracing Diversity). The combination is based on the premise of providing welcoming systems that accommodate the uniqueness of diverse groups. Being welcoming presupposes the acknowledgment of other

cultures. Thus a sense of welcoming is incentivized when students are appreciated and encouraged to come as they are.

“Social inclusion would be that every student, employee, visitor would feel welcome to come as they are.” (Participant 7)

4.1.2 Social support and Equity

In regards to living and studying in an educational setting, the system must be aware of the individual needs of its students. Students that come from abroad require different ‘Social Support’ that comply with their needs. In most cases, these needs differ from those of the native students. ‘Social Support’ takes various forms from simply providing information or personal assistance. Thus, having assistance in formal and informal inquiries matters highly in feeling included. Participant 1 demonstrated the importance of support systems as they state:

“Dutch students, I guess, they have their support system also from home so they can go to their parents and then they can discuss it there. They can have this very safe environment where they can be vulnerable and say that they have problems. But then for an international student very far away from home, they have to do that towards their friends or to somebody from the university in order for us to help them”.

(Participant 1)

Participants regarded ‘equality’ as having the same opportunities and chances. After all, in education, various forms of opportunities shall be granted to all. The data suggest that equality is associated with being treated in the same matter in the classroom and outside the classroom. Notably, equality and inclusion were highly emphasized in the professional group and less in the student group. Degrading boundaries through equality at all levels,

participants note that this leads to the perceptions of inclusion. For international students, being equally treated is initially valuable, as illustrated followingly:

“I haven't been in a country where I feel like I'm actually a minority. So when I do feel like a minority and I feel like I'm not being included, I feel very disadvantaged. I feel like I'm not going to be able to step up or move up in life and therefore inclusivity means a lot to me because now that means: OK, I'm actually being considered as equal to other people.” (Participant 6)

Notably, exclusion leads to unequal perceptions of opportunities and resources.

Thus ‘Social Support and Equality’ can be paired up. Social support systems are a direct means to reduce inequalities. Take for example, the differently designed provision of information about living in the Netherlands as an international student. If students are not aware of the processes within the Netherlands, this ultimately hinders the individual from social participation and thus faces unequal access.

4.1.3 Integration and Collective effort

Participants related ‘Integration’ in inclusion as an active process to build relationships and friendships. Thus, the element ‘Integration’ refers to embodying individuals into existing facilities and the living culture. This means making facilities available in order to let internationals participate in the campus activities. These activities can range from participating/organizing in career-related events or social events with other students. Furthermore, it also indicates pursuing elective board positions in student-run associations. Both participants and students regarded integration as equally important.

Interestingly, participants explain that absolute inclusion requires both internal and external drivers to adapt to the culture fully. This indicates that inclusion requires collective and active engagement from all parties involved. The internal drivers can be seen both as international students actively pursuing to be included and the internal motivation of individuals to embrace inclusion. External drivers are seen as the system that incorporates inclusion structures to facilitate adapting to the culture. Clearly, these elements connect well with integration. Integration shall be actively pursued by those seeking to be included and those providing means for inclusion. Participants note that it is not required to change people's identities for the sake of the dominant culture. Showing an internal urge to learn from each other is seen as sufficient and appreciated. Henceforth, inclusion requires all hands to find common ground.

“For example, if I'm here, as a Dutch student and an international would come up to me and he just starts a conversation with “Hi, Hoe gaat het met je.” You know, just the basics. That's already enough. And I would already feel like: OK, you put an effort for us to get to know me too.” (Participant 3)

Both concepts (Integration and collective effort) are closely related. On the one hand, integration calls for systems to allow integration. On the other hand, integration demands an internal drive to participate in those systems actively. Hence all dimensions within universities must open the doors and make integration possible, and insist on the active participation of those at risk of being excluded. Thereby it becomes clear that social inclusion is a two-way route.

4.1.4 Belonging

As suggested in this paper, belonging to the community is a central ingredient in social inclusion. Likewise, participants associated a sense of belonging strongly with social inclusion. Belonging was seen as equivalent to a sense of home. Irrespective of being far from an individual's home country, when feeling like a part of a community, people ultimately feel at home. It shares the premise of being one's self-accepted and valued.

“Even though the university is a Dutch university, I still don't feel like a foreigner. It's like feeling at home somewhere else”. (Participant 5)

The element of 'Belonging' can be seen as a synergistic outcome of the former elements. Thus, belonging is not seen as a favourable outcome. The following part elaborates on policies and strategies that correspond with these elements of inclusion.

4.2 Policies and strategies

Participants confirmed that the UT, indeed, does not provide documented inclusion policies that can be looked up on the website. However, the data indicate that some policies have incorporated inclusive intentions. Thus the following section elaborated on policies and strategies that correspond with the categorization mentioned above.

4.2.1 Policies and Strategies: Welcome and embracing Diversity

As earlier mentioned, the first encounter is essential to feeling welcome. Based on the data, the university has various methods to make students feel welcome when arriving at its campus. Findings revealed that the 'English language policy', the 'Kick-In' and the 'Buddy

Program' are the essential means to warmly welcome international students. These entities can be linked to elements of inclusiveness. The English language policy is an instrumental policy at the University of Twente. When international students arrive at UT, nearly all facilities, communication platforms, organizations, students, teachers, and staff operate in English. Furthermore, Dutch information is gradually translated to English to ensure fairness for English-speaking students and staff. As nearly all bachelor's and master's programs are taught in English, most study associations transitioned to English.

“We always start in English. And our site is in English, our program is English, our Kick-In videos are in English. We want to make sure that everyone in the first place feels welcome. That they can hear or understand or read the documents. Yet, making English as UT’s official language is guided with challenges.” (Participant 2)

“But in general, all our events are English, the vast majority are promoted in English. Let's just make sure that international and Dutch people can all do that together and not worry about not being able to join something”. (Participant 7)

The Kick-In and the Buddy Programm are popular means to introduce incoming students to life at UT. Both are monitored entities from the Student Union (SU). As explained by participants, the Kick-In is the introduction phase of the University of Twente. In this week, incoming students get introduced to the campus, the city, and other students from their programs. In general, the Kick-In has a positive reputation. Students get to make first friends, are introduced to their academic/social surroundings, and actively kick-start their academic journey.

Besides the Kick-In, the 'Buddy Program' is another entity that aims to facilitate the transition to the campus. This program targets mainly international students. Upon arrival, students are voluntarily set up with a 'Buddy' that personally guides them on campus and its surroundings. Most of the buddies are international students. The advantage of pairing incoming international students with current international students is that the student can interact with another student who went through a similar experience. Therefore the individual needs of students can be more effectively targeted and supported. Furthermore, over the academic year, the buddy program organizes diverse events for international students to foster the integration of its members and the Dutch environment after arrival. In this way, the program ensures that internationals continuously strive to adapt to the culture and become part of the campus community by learning about the culture and celebrating its diversity.

4.2.2 Challenges

Speaking English on campus, excitement within the Kick-In, and the Buddy Program are all strategies to foster positive feelings of welcome. The most prevailing issues with speaking English are the 'level of English proficiency', 'english language inconsistency' and 'translation'. The student group interviewed emphasizes insufficient English skills, particularly from both staff members and some teachers. This problem is supposedly common in technical studies (Participant 7). Additionally, not all students are on the same level of English skills. In the classroom, some students strive for excellent marks while others are satisfied with average grades. On professional levels, such as in faculty board meetings, attendees must have high English abilities to discuss complicated topics (Participant 11). On the social level, participants note that not everywhere English is spoken on campus. The UT is still located in a Dutch environment. Therefore, speaking English is regarded as the *rule* and Dutch as the *exception* (Participant 9). The dilemma arises when Dutch students naturally

converse in Dutch but immediately switch to English when internationals are present. Participants note that the Dutch comfort zone is challenged. Subsequently, this makes it difficult to enforce speaking English on all social/professional levels.

The language problem continues as most participants, both from the professional and student groups, mentioned that the Kick-In needs to be more *tailored towards the international community* (Participant 12). Firstly, some areas of the Kick-In actively speak Dutch and only target Dutch students. At this point it becomes questionable, why welcoming activities

“And I think the university should be better at monitoring that because a lot of the times not even unintentionally, but intentionally, those (sports) associations are trying to scare away or demotivate internationals to join them and to join their activities. Or to join their Kick-In Do groups because they don't want internationals to join their association.” (Participant 8)

Secondly, the Kick-In was designed on typical Dutch customs. Participants *warned* internationals of the Kick-In, as experience taught them that internationals are not accustomed to heavy alcohol consumption. As many participants reported, incoming students can expect changes in the Kick-In program and culture for the years to follow.

“So we are putting especially more focus on them during the Kick-In. We are going to think of making an inclusion day before the Kick-In to see if we can address these topics for persons.” (Participant 3)

The final challenge with language is the absence of information in English or the poor translation. Participants note that translated information must be both accurately translated

and relevant for the internationals. In addition, student-related information is at times not available in English but only in Dutch.

“With the corona crisis a lot of information on health care was in Dutch. And now any information is also being translated. For instance, in September, information on quarantine. Even at the national level, it wasn't as elaborate in English as in Dutch”

(Participant 9)

4.2.3 Opportunities

It becomes apparent that language has a great influence on social processes at UT. Notably, participants highlighted the merits of the English language policy. Indeed, language plays a crucial role. Having English as UT's official language can be regarded as an internationally friendly method of communication. Both groups referred to one common language as a strategy to understand each other. This policy opened the doors for social interactivity with the campus. A common communication language contributes to an environment of equal opportunities in learning and living. Despite the challenges mentioned above, the professionals emphasize facilities available on campus that aim to support English skills. For example, the 'Language Center' at UT provides certified English and Dutch courses for students and staff. In fact the University is obliged to provide Dutch courses. Improving English and learning Dutch both take advantage of alleviating the process of adaptation and integration. Participants note that the 'Language Center' mere existence indicates the UT's concern for language support.

As earlier mentioned, the student group emphasizes the relevance of embracing diversity. Embracing diversity is lacking at the Kick-In. The board members that were interviewed recognized that the Kick-In lacks the embodiment of different cultures. Despite this occurrence, these participants revealed some associations at least attempt to address

diversity among their association members. For instance, the representatives of Atlantis and Communiqué either have a ‘Diversity and Integration Committee’ or organize ‘Cultural themed events’ aimed to promote ‘cultural sensitivity.’ Each board can decide for themselves what type of committees are formed and why events are organized. Thus, the organized events either showcased typical cultural-related customs of another culture or customs of the Dutch culture. These are strategies to welcome internationals in their associations by both facilitating the integration process and empowering diversity.

“We also have a committee called the Community Diversity Committee, which also specifically organizes events and does stuff to promote and encourage sort of integration between the community and also celebrates the diversity we have.”

(Participant 3)

Entities on the central level also provide various means to promote intercultural competencies to understand diversity and learn to embrace the differences. For example, the professional group indicated that the Centre of Expertise in Learning and Teaching (CELT) at the UT offers ‘Intercultural workshops’ for students and teachers. Outside the curriculum, these workshops entail guidelines on how to teach an international classroom. Nonetheless, in the former years, either only international teachers attended, or workshops had to be canceled due to insufficient sign-ups. Interestingly, ‘intercultural workshops’ are some programs mandatory for students but not for teachers. For example, at the Faculty Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC), students must take intercultural workshops in their first, second, and third quartile of the first year. Participants note that a few departments at UT incorporated multi-cultural skill workshops in the program. However, teachers have the

free choice to attend intercultural courses—both at UT and the ITC. When asked for the reason for this contradiction, participants noted the following.

“Because the program directors put it in the curriculum and then they can say: Well, everyone should do something like a skills workshop, for instance, like a presentation workshop. And they say you should do that. Then these intercultural workshops are mandatory for all students.” (Participant 13)

Based on the data, some teachers do not regard it as necessary to attend these free workshops as they lack awareness of their cultural biases. If teachers are confident that they are inclusive, why should they partake in such workshops?

4.3 Policies and Strategies: Social support and Equality

Having equal chances was explained with reliable support from the host university. Nonetheless, just as for any other students irrespective of native or international student, there are various support mechanisms at UT. For instance, when students face personal or academic-related issues, the informal procedure is to reach out to the ‘module coordinator’ or ‘study advisor’ for assistance.

Furthermore, the SUN is currently setting up a ‘one trust person per association’ program. According to the representative of the SU, the goal is to ensure that ten associations have a trained trust person who is likely to be a student. Naturally, students are more willing to open up to other students to share pressing personal problems. Moreover, in future time a ‘one-contact center’ will be set up.

“The idea is that students can go there as one point of contact for any type of questions.” (Participant 1)

Yet, being international implies bearing different needs and concerns. Consequently, international students require different support systems. For example, the SU provides a new form of support for the world associations, namely a ‘World Sector Officer’ (WSO). World associations are student-run student associations that share common nationalities and/or ethnicities such as Indian, Romanian, Surinamese, and African. The WSO was not a strategic action point in the SU annual plan. However, World associations continuously reported difficulties setting up their associations due to language barriers or other forms of barriers. Hence, the WSO was set up in order to assist the world association in communicating with Dutch external parties such as the bank or organizations.

Additionally, within study associations, participants offer special moments to catch up with internationals as a way to support them academically and socially. These strategies are manifested by the program defined as ‘coffee breaks,’ ‘Mentor systems,’ and confidential advisors, ‘International support groups.’ These support systems vary from association to association. For example, the representative from ConcepT notes that within ‘coffee breaks,’ board members intentionally seek to have one-on-one conversations with international students providing social and mental support. While in other programs, ‘mentors’ support incoming students from the application process up until the second academic year. Additionally, other entities form groups designed for international students to assist in solving and/or consulting private matters.

On a final note, the student group indicates various methods to ensure fair treatment of equality for Dutch and non-Dutch students. However, these methods are not incorporated

in their policy plan but are regarded as informal strategies to ensure everyone has the same chances of selection.

“We always draw committee members, So if there are more than more people interested than members that can be in the committee. We always hold to draw. So there's no game of politics. People have to write a motivation letter for committees so we know why they want to do it. Upon that we decide.” (Participant 2)

4.3.1 Challenges

It becomes evident that various support systems are available. But not all support systems are the same in each program. Some programs provide the basic social support while others put extra efforts in supporting internationals. However the underlying issue with social support is the unawareness. When asked why students are not fully aware where to find social support participants noted the following

“This information is delivered during the Kick-in. It's very dense. And there was a lot of, of course, social activity going on. So it might be mentioned somewhere, but it is not relevant at that time. (...) you won't remember it. I mean, years ago we handed out folders during the information market off the Kick-In. Many students didn't want to take the folder because it addressed problems. We wanted to provide this information about this structure. But the students didn't want to take the information. And then we had this discussion. Do we want to include the folder in the goody bags. But then someone said, I think someone from communication as well: They'll hardly look at it. They just threw it away. (Participant 9)

Thereby it becomes clear that social support is overlooked by students and that the timing of providing information matters. Also in regards to finding support about issues of discrimination, student would not not know where to report to.

It is worth mentioning that clearly defined strategies to foster equity in social processes were rarely mentioned by students. Findings indicate the core challenges lie in the differences between international students and Dutch students that attempt to explain the reasons for unequal treatment in the social realm at UT. Firstly, the 'Dutch education system' allows students to take gap years and to participate in board positions due to the student loan system. At the same time, international students arrive with a visa or with tight budgets and are in a literal sense forced to complete their studies in the regular study time. Participants regard this as a reason why internationals refrain from pursuing elective board positions. At UT, most boards are either part-time or full-time. Therefore, international students cannot afford to delay their studies.

“With international students coming in and especially the non-EU students (...) they need to do their programm in the nominal duration. But our system is not really adapted to it. So a bit of the social life of students and the way sometimes the program is designed still supposes that the students have the ability to take a bit longer on their program.” (Participant 9)

Additionally, financially speaking, Dutch students are granted diverse options to finance themselves. This option is, in most cases, unavailable to international students. Especially non-EU-students. Their visas and scholarships permit them to find a job. With a tight budget, students prefer to save money everywhere possible. Based on the former mentioned, internationals refrain from utilizing these opportunities that are supposedly available for all students.

An additional area of challenges that questions equality for both Dutch and international students regards the house hunt. Both groups noticed that ‘Housing’ at UT is an all-around problem. The UT offers housing options in various buildings and also for incoming students with visas. History shows that the majority living on campus is accommodated by Dutch students. Due to the *co-optation* culture, student houses select their successors or new roommates by conducting interviews. Participants note that the student houses tend to select interviewees that have cultural similarities, such as speaking Dutch. Though students don’t explicitly discriminate against students directly, the data suggest that internationals are at a disadvantage when applying for these houses. In fact, housing is a crucial factor in fostering building relationships and adapting to the culture. Yet more than 50 % of UT houses are accommodated by Dutch students. One-half of the participants indicated that UT might not have any formal influence on such social phenomena.

However, other participants noted that UT must make facilities available to accommodate international students for a longer time frame than a year. As housing is UT ground, the institution has a legitimate reason to interfere in this social process to ensure equal housing opportunities for all. In fact, there are entities that established fair methods to provide housing for students. For instance, the faculty Geo and earth observation information are all placed in the ITC hotel. Similarly, with the Atlas. Program ‘forces’ first-year students to live together and accommodations.

“Starting this year, all the students live together in one huge house in the old Citadel. That's now converted to a place where all the first years live. So everyone lives together. But also, like in your daily home life, you're also interacting with international and Dutch people together. Which all just sort of comes together to

make sure we have a very strong community and that there aren't really big boundaries between Dutch people and internationals.” (Participant 7)

Participants note that in some areas, UT can provide various possibilities to provide assistance. However, not all problems are known to the UT. Especially with certain blind spots, internationals are urged to voice their concerns to receive support. In the past, problems were kept from the UT and students ‘don’t ask for help’: this dilemma is confirmed by Participant 1, who states

“If a student doesn't come forward and say, I have a problem. We can not help. You know, and then if they fill out a survey saying that they are very stressed and homesick and poor and I don't know what people could possibly answer in such a survey- Then we were like, yeah, but we want to help you. We have all these services in place to help you. But if you don't come forward and and ask for help, then then we cannot help you. You know, so it's it's about what a university can organize, but it's also about the student or the staff member for that, for that matter, to also take the step and say: I need help and I want to be helped”. (Participant 1)

4.3.2 Opportunities

Firstly, at the ITC the confidential advisor makes an oral announcement about support to students.

“For the ITC, the confidential adviser for the last few years, I always do give a talk of 15 minutes at the beginning of the educational year. I also tell them about forms of support but as well the code of conduct. (Participant 11)”

The former mentioned is a direct method of ensuring that support is available. This method was not mentioned for the UT. Moving on the student organizations various means are opted for equality

Firstly all systems within associations are in English. Subsequently, allowing ‘equal opportunities’ for social participation or making use of social support systems.

As many associations still have Dutch elements in their systems, ConceptT added their policy plan to build an international advisory group. This advisory group is instructed to represent the voice of the minority in the association. The board consults with the advisory group and aims to improve matters to attract international students, make them feel at home, and help them level up to social standards equal to Dutch students. In other words, it seeks to empower the international community within the association. The very same association noticed the job opportunities/internship issues internationals face in their association. Due to that, Isaac Newton added in their policy plan to promote ‘the international job market’ actively. The intention is to provide professional opportunities not exclusively to Dutch students but also non-Dutch speaking students. Evidently, this method of allowing equal chances of employment transcends the idea of equality but addresses the notion of equity.

4.4 Policies and Strategies: Integration and Collective effort

Integration and adapting to the campus culture is a desired condition of inclusion for all participants. As mentioned before, all parties involved must make an effort to establish an environment in which students can freely integrate and adapt to the dominant culture. Consequently, policies and strategies that enforced this process are through ‘Housing policy’ ‘Events’ organized by students, ‘Internationalization Guidelines’; ‘Kick-In/Buddy’, and ‘Language Courses’.

As earlier noted, housing plays a crucial role at UT. Housing in fact, facilitates the integration process between students but as well welcomes them on campus. Therefore, participants note that incoming international students coming with a visa are guaranteed to receive housing for the first year.

“Another example would be housing. For incoming students who have a visa, we guarantee the first year of housing after that they need to find their own accommodation because new incoming students need housing that we provide”.

(Participant 9)

This policy is to help internationals upon arrival to have a safe space in a foreign environment.

To continue, Findings reveal that events are of utmost importance on campus. Not only do students acquire professional insights for their working experience, but as well socialize, explore themselves and build networks. Events organized by study associations aim to fuse students and interact on various levels. These levels, formal or informal, forge pathways of vivid interactivity and exciting study life. However, in most cases, the number of participants does not justify the effectiveness of an event. Participants note that the success of events depends on two factors. Firstly the type of event is relevant for the audience, and secondly, the audience actively participates in events.

“So during the eastern we set up the eastern Walk-and-Talk. Which was also distributed by the program to all students. But it was especially aimed at international students that, for example, came living here during the winter. And we didn't have that much response. I spoke with someone from Surinam and it's really nice to just get the stories and see how they are doing right now. So I think that was what for the numbers the activity was not really a success. But for the ones who came there, it was

to me success and also the ones participating said that they found it pleasant to have that kind of walk.” (Participant 2)

Besides organizing events for and with internationals, some boards have internationalization guidelines. For instance, such as ConcepT has documents that assist internationals to integrate into the association culture.

“Like I said, in the previous years, we only had an English study for a bachelor's for four years, so it happened, they made an international guideline on how we can make our association more international.” (Participant 4)

This guideline was created from the former board and passed down to preceding boards with tips and evaluation of methods aiming to ease the internationalization process within ConcepT. For instance, the report advises the use of the English language in various dimensions of the association. Furthermore advises the reader on how to integrate international students inside and outside the classroom. Nevertheless, interestingly, not all associations own such guidelines. Due to that reason, some associations are rather far concerning internationalization while others are behind.

4.4.1 Challenges

The active culture of association is a common notion in the Netherlands. Participants regard association as a ‘Dutch thing.’ Coupled with the common language barriers, internationals are known to be inactive. Not many cultures are acquainted with systems of associations. Therefore, participants note that the inactivity of internationals in association prevents them

from building friendships and networks. However, participating in events varies greatly. For example, the representative of ConcepT noted that the ‘internationals lack of interest’ to join events is problematic. In their association, the ratio of international students participating in social events is below 40%. Participants assume the underlying cause of their inactivity can be linked to ‘differences in culture,’ ‘lack of experience,’ ‘financial barriers,’ and other ‘Priorities’ such as to focus on their studies. At the same time, the representative of Atlantis reports the opposite. In their association, internationals are highly active and engaging in social events. Furthermore, the participants note that integration is facilitated due to the small number of students in the study itself.

Furthermore, students live together in a shared accommodation which eases the formation of unity. It becomes evident that integration processes depend on the willingness of international students. Regardless of the efforts undertaken by board associations and their committees, the integration of international students into the campus culture is restricted when international students lack intrinsic motivation. It is worth noting that the Covid-19 situation has pronounced various challenges for study associations. Connecting to members and organizing events had to be paused or organized in an online setting. This is why related cultural events were not organized online due to the following reasons:

“Doing it online, we thought that it doesn't really respect the tradition or holiday to do it online. So if we want to do it, we want to do it well.” (Participant 5)

Another challenge is that of the ‘Dutch education system that grants students freedom for flexibility. As noted by participant 9

“Dutch students have the Dutch student loan system, which also had part of a gift for students who left. And, well, about 90 to three hundred euros was also a gift to students. Study loan was for the duration of your program. So for communication science, it would be four years. But you also had three more extra years to loan money. So if you didn't do your study in the nominal duration, it wasn't really a problem for you. You had a bit more debt. So doing four years on the Bachelor wasn't really frowned upon. It was even normalized. With international students coming in and especially the non-EU students they have to. They don't have to, but they need to do their program in the nominal duration. But our system is not really adapted to it. So a bit of the social life of students and the way sometimes the program is designed still supposes that the students have the ability to take a bit longer on their program. I mean, if you want to do a board year, for instance. The international students don't have the financial bandwidth to take a whole extra year.”

4.4.2 Opportunities

A high level of interactivity results in strong ties between students. Additionally, it leads to strong communities and ‘building friendships’. Hence, policy plans of boards commit to organizing various events to strengthen the bonds of their members. Additionally, participants note that each study board sends a representative to the International Committee Organization (ICOS), established by the Organization of Study association (OS). The purpose of this committee is

“For boards to exchange how their internationalization of the study association is going, how changing documents are going, how you could brainstorm a bit more about including internationals. And I think this year, last year as well, we've changed

our scope a little bit whilst we still want to discuss or have people discussed between each other how to encourage inclusiveness.” (Participant 8)

The nature of the ICOS committee pursues the aspiration of improving the social climate within the study associations. The more feedback is integrated into the study association, the stronger the ties between the Dutch and international community. In addition, the student group shared various strategies to increase the representation of internationals in committees.

“Yeah, one of our pillars was to increase international representation within study association. First idea was to ask international active students to join and talk about Communique as well to other international students. So they see: OK, that's dope it's not just for the Dutch people.” (Participant 5)

This strategy noted by Participant 5 also influences the misconceptions of international students about the association. Utilizing internationals to attract more international students could increase international activism in study associations, like a domino effect.

Participants note that UT has numerous world associations built by international students that seek to form unity among their kind and interact with other student organizations. Here students also find social support of their kind. Additionally, this indicates that several students are interested in UT activism. Additionally, over recent years, more and more internationals have taken up the initiative to pursue elective board positions within study associations. Advancing to the Kick-In and the Buddy program, it becomes apparent how multi-functional these entities are.

The Kick-In and Buddy program are, as mentioned before, a playground to foster interactivity. In addition, they enable the initial formation of friendship. Consciously and

unconsciously, incoming students that sign up for the Kick-In place themselves to integrate into the campus culture. Thereby, participants get to know each other and form networks relevant to their study life.

4.5 Instrumental Policies: Unexpected findings

The above mentioned policies are practises that directly circulate in the social dimension of the UT. Additionally to them, professionals emphasized on the existence of instrumental policies. By law, the UT has the basic policies covered for internationalization and academic inclusion. Some of these policies noted range from inclusive selection procedures, financial instruments, accreditations (grants, scholarships etc.), student mobility and language. It is worth mentioning that participants are aware that these policies are not direct social inclusion policies. Yet, these policies are necessary to build social inclusion policies upon them.

“You need to have the basics before you can go to the next level, which is social inclusion.”(Participant 9)

Table 6 Summary of social inclusion practises at UT: Key challenges and opportunities

Social inclusion policies	Policies and Strategies	Key Challenges	Key Opportunities
Welcome and Embracing Diversity	English Language policy Kick In Buddy committee Language courses Culturally themed events	Level of English proficiency English language inconsistency Poor translation Absence of translated information Lack of international friendly systems	Language Center as means for improvement Intercultural competencies Internationally friendly method of communication Celebrating Unique UT identity
Social Support and	Module coordinator	Dutch education	Empower international

Equality	Study advisors On contact Center Trust person Confidential advisors Coffee Breaks Confidential advisors International Student Support Group World associations English Language policy International Advisory Group Attracting International Job Market	system? Financial barriers Unawareness of social support Not asking for help Unequal social support systems per program Finding housing	Community Equal/access to opportunities ITC and ATLAS bring all students together shared accomodation
Integration and Collective effort	Housing Policy Organizing events Language Courses Events Internationalization Guidelines Kick-In/Buddy program ICOS	Culture differences Association as a Dutch thing internationals? lack of interest? Priorities Financial barrier/Dutch education system Language barrier Covid 19	Building friendship Collective drive for internationalization World associations

5. Discussion

Reaching a consensus in defining social phenomena is indeed a complex task. Social inclusion is no exception. However, this study successfully explored the comprehension of social inclusion through the eyes of students and professionals. Understanding their definition was needed before exploring policies and strategies. In line with instrumental policies outlined in the theoretical framework of this paper, the UT has such policies covered accordingly. Nevertheless, social inclusion practises were presented and their implications discussed. This chapter explores the elements of inclusion and combination derived from the

data based on the theoretical lens provided in our study. Afterward, an evaluation of practices is given with respect for improvement.

5.1 Social inclusion through the lens of UT

Our second subquestion addresses what UT students and professionals define as social inclusion. In essence, seven elements were mentioned, namely; Welcome, Embracing diversity, Social support, Equality, Integration, Collective effort, and Belonging. These elements are in line with definitions provided by the Council of Europe, UNESCO (2001), and allow the categorization of social inclusion levels provided by Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2018).

As noted before, most papers were attempting to define social inclusion by combining elements synergistically. This confirms the combination of social inclusion elements provided in the results. Hence, a discussion on combined elements is in order. Partly in line with UNESCO's definition, embracing diversity is crucial in participants' perceptions of inclusion and consideration. A sense of welcome is strongly influenced when the uniqueness of diverse groups is 'considered, valued and celebrated. In other words, the university system is culturally inviting. It is worth mentioning that 'welcoming and embracing diversity were appreciated by the student group and less by the professional group. Notably, in universities, frequent interactivity is between students. Due to that, students are more likely to be influenced by the diversity of their peers (Kimmel & Volet,2012). Hence, it makes sense to categorize 'Welcoming and embracing diversity' from a psychological perspective. In this level of social inclusion, international students are invited to be themselves, which is crucial in facilitating a sense of belonging.

The second categorization, 'Social support and Equality,' requires further exploration. Firstly, we believe the way participants explained equality could be considered as equity. The

terms equity and equality are oftentimes used interchangeably (Espinoza, 2008). The profound difference is that 'the equity concept is associated with fairness or justice in the provision of education or other benefits and it takes individual circumstances into consideration, while 'equality' usually connotes sameness in treatment by asserting the fundamental or natural equality of all persons' (Corson, 2001, p.1). Based on that, the correct term to use in this context is equity. Coming back to 'Social support and Equity', Dutch students have their social support, including family members and friends. International students depend on other social support systems provided by the host university. Therefore, equitable means in education are making social support available to provide fair benefits that are naturally available for Dutch students.

Various papers highly emphasized the influence of social support and psychological/mental wellbeing. For example, students who reported greater access to social support showed lower stress levels than those who perceived less available social support, according to research (Wang and Castañeda-Sound, 2008). Similarly, among ethnic minority students, the utilization of informal and formal social support networks has been demonstrated to be an effective buffer in minimizing the harmful consequences of psychological distress. As an institution, it is understandable why professionals are highly concerned about equity for minority students. Education aims to provide top-quality education and produce excellent graduates; therefore, their wellbeing is highly important. Considering the wellbeing aspect of 'Social support and Equity,' this combination of terms fits best in the psychological level of social inclusion. However, the notion of social exclusion or discrimination was hardly addressed. No direct anti-exclusion mechanisms were noted except for making social support equitable for all.

Lastly, the combination of 'Integration and Collective effort' is relatively intertwined. As noted before, social inclusion is meaningless if the host culture and incoming students do

not actively meet in the middle. On the one hand, internationals ought to gather traits of host society and build friendship and network. On the other hand, the host society makes systems available to make internationals accepted. Seeking a common ground only works when systems are internationally welcoming and students intrinsically motivated (Silver, 2012). Both elements can be seen as a two-way street. This combination clearly links up to the social level of inclusion. Students play an active role in this procedure and are crucial in the perception of inclusion. The data is in line with the theory of this paper, suggesting that belonging is fundamental. According to Marasco (2016), the absolute goal in institutions is to move from a sense of welcome to a sense of belonging.. As confirmed by a study conducted by, the process of inclusion has prevailing mental, cognitive and emotional responses that facilitate a sense of belonging (Begen, 2014). This explains why belonging in this paper is an element on its own that results through the interplay of the other elements.

All in all, the seven elements can be regarded as pillars of inclusion. Meaning these elements can be seen as solid components that collectively constitute a monument (see figure 1).



Figure 1:
Inclusion

Pillars of Social

5.2 Social inclusion characteristics through the lens of the UT

After the discussion of the definition of social inclusion, including the seven elements, we shall review the characteristics of social inclusion. Social inclusion is indeed a ‘process’ operating through ‘multidimensional’ scopes. Participants have correctly identified various fields within the university that break down social barriers and allow equal interactivity between students. For instance, inclusion reaches the dimension of housing (cultural), student organizations (social), the job market (economic), governance systems (political), or the classroom (academic). It became apparent that some dimensions are relatively developed in terms of their social inclusion while others are not. For instance, the housing dimension is a critical area. In agreement with various papers on housing in the Netherlands, speaking the Dutch language is a prerequisite for selection (Rienties et al., 2012). Thus, Dutch students are advantaged. Some go that far of displaying a ‘no internationals’ policy upon application. Henceforth, the housing policy that favours Dutch students is a clear barrier dividing international students and Dutch students. Thus social inclusion is not a static and instant phenomenon but is in a constantly, dynamically moving flux.

Interestingly, a strong emphasis was paid on the relationship between Dutch students (excluders) and internationals (excluded). Participants highly believe that social inclusion calls for collective participation of all to meet a middle ground. As Silver (2012) noted, ‘Opening up the door to membership and providing access does not necessarily produce social inclusion. Conversely, just because doors are opened does not mean that outsiders will come in.’ (p.9). Therefore, systems must stress the active participation (collective effort) of internationals but as well encourage Dutch students to be internationally welcoming. Students seeking to be included must make their voices heard by striving for access to the ‘mainstream’ on equal footing. Especially in an open-minded culture such as the Netherlands, proactivity is highly appreciated (Born, 2005). Conversely, the excluders must be aware of

their own behavior. According to Lieber (2009), homogeneous groups tend to be unaware of their implicit biases. Thus, they are oblivious to exclusionary behavior and take for granted the barriers excluders need to overcome.

The findings indicate that each pillar and its characteristics hold relatively pressuring challenges that the UT members are dealing with. The next section provides an evaluation of the challenges and opportunities.

5.3 Evaluation of Pillar 1 Welcome and Embracing Diversity Policies and Strategies

The main research question is too complex to be answered in two sentences. Therefore, the evaluations briefly summarize policies and strategies and evaluate their effectiveness. In essence, the challenges of 'Welcoming and embracing diversity' strategies at the UT are the 'housing policy' language policy, the Kick-In, the Buddy committee, Cultural-themed events, and the Integration and Diversity Committee. Challenges suggest English resistance as a common working language within the social and professional realms and the poor international friendly Kick-In. On a daily basis, it is understandable to converse in the native language. Yet, the language policy is only effective if spoken on all levels. Research suggests that international students have feelings of exclusion on social levels (e.g., in associations, social events, pure Dutch student groups), where Dutch is solely spoken (Zhang & Zhou, 2014). It is understandable to speak Dutch out of convenience and comfort. Nonetheless, the UT cannot pressure English to be spoken at all times. Thus, the debate continues to ensure that English remains a rule and speaking Dutch is an exception. However, all in all, the policy in itself is successfully incorporated in various dimensions in the university. Therefore, it can be expected to attain a more natural state of conversing in English while pursuing an international campus environment.

In light of participants' interest in embracing diversity, organizing cultural-related events is utterly effective. However, there is a mismatch of welcoming and embracing diversity in the Kick-In. Based on the finding, we suggest the undermining reasons for failing to address diversity upon internationals' arrival lie upon two factors. Firstly the lack of cultural awareness of individuals and a tokenistic approach to diversity. According to Quappe and Cantatore (2005), cultural awareness is the ability to understand other cultural values, beliefs, and norms. It encompasses skills of interpretation and evaluation of one's own culture and those of others. The inability to be aware of one's biases ultimately prevents individuals from embracing the differences. Hence, the findings indicate that the Dutch culture, including the Kick-In, has missed recognizing these differences and incorporating strategically cultural-related activities in the introduction phase. As a result, participants have to go through various other channels like the Buddy Committee and/or form World associations to find a sense of appreciation of their own cultures. Thus, as the Kick-In is the first contact point with the UT, future Kick-In organizers must find ways to be culturally aware and hence be open to appreciate the uniqueness of the international groups. Providing culturally friendly systems from the early stages harvest fruits of rapid integration and facilitate the sense of belonging (Rivas et al., 2019).

The data suggest that diversity is little appreciated due to a lack of intrinsic drive of inclusion. Thus there is a thin line between tokenism and inclusion. Tokenism “refers to the practice of making a symbolic action by recruiting a small number of people from underrepresented groups to create an appearance of racial or gender equality (Wijaya, 2020, p.1). For instance, admitting different students from different backgrounds without a clear aim for inclusivity, but to mainly appear diverse. This notion was introduced in the beginning parts of this paper and recognized by participants. As a result, individuals are recruited for the wrong reasons. Inclusion is seen as a PR tool rather than a collective value. How can

institutions make the international feel welcome and recognized when its members do not have an internal commitment for inclusion? A similar issue related to the intercultural workshops.

According to the data, teachers who do not attend intercultural workshops available will remain “ignorant” in light of their own biases. As noted before, underlying reasons for not attending these courses are the lack of awareness and that courses are not obligated nor integrated into the study program. To avoid tokenism, institutions jointly must make mandatory systems for inclusion a norm rather than an obligation.

By providing genuine systems that welcome students for who they are, embody their diversity through cultural sensitivity, and seek to understand each other on a mutual basis,; all this leads to forming one strong pillar of inclusion.

5.4 Evaluation of Pillar 2 Support and Equality Policies and Strategies

When highlighting the support systems and equal opportunities, it becomes evident that the UT makes social support immensely available to all students. Regardless of being international or Dutch, everyone is well supported by countless means. In essence, module coordinators, study advisors, confidential advisors, one-contact-center, study associations, a world sector officer, and a trust person and more are all at the international students' disposal. The question is whether students seize these supports. In the context chapter of this paper, it was mentioned that internationals face various challenges influencing their overall wellbeing. In line with the findings, having all these systems in place does not guarantee that internationals use them. Are internationals aware that the support exists? The One-contact center seems promising, as students can directly pose questions to one entity.

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of policies and strategies regarding social support is based on internationals's readiness to open up and utilize these systems and the awareness of their existence. Moreover, the UT ensures that students are aware of the systems (ITC). Further on, some study associations such as Concept actively attempt to reduce social exclusion by hearing internationals' opinions (international advisory groups). This strategy can be seen as an anti-exclusion policy. In line with the theory, this initiative empowers students to partake in decision-making processes and voice out problems and concerns overlooked by the system. However, not all associations own such an entity. In line with the theory asking for equity as well demands students to be active. Otherwise, blind spots continue to stay hidden.

The most significant challenges regarding fair benefits or access to opportunities circulate around board positions and the issue of housing. At UT, being on the board of study associations is open to all students. Yet, participants themselves regard the concept association as common among Dutch students and unfamiliar to non-Dutch students. This explains why Dutch students generally have a more social life than international students, which can be related to association memberships and living in a Dutch student's house (Rienties et al., 2012). Therefore embracing participation opportunities such as being part of associations goes back to cultural differences.

Interestingly, UT provides various social support and an emphasis on equity on all levels. However, in terms of housing, not much support and fairness is visible. According to various papers, international students frequently report being ethically discriminated against when searching for housing (Kuzman et al., 2017; Silver & Danielowski, 2019). Universities merely provide indirect assistance to find accommodation on their websites (Verhetsel et al., 2017). However, the data indicates the ITC and Atlantis are not part of the housing dilemma. Both facilities actively mix students together in accommodation, resulting in notable benefits

such as mixed social friend groups. According to literature, mixed social circles lead to a high sense of belonging, positive for cross-cultural interactions, favourable for academic performance, and social satisfaction (Severiens & Wolff, 2008; Spencer-Oatey et al., 2014). Ultimately, mixed friends can facilitate participation and integration in study associations, campus environments and attain a more vibrant social study life.

5.5 Evaluation of Pillar 3 Integration and Collective effort Policies and Strategies

The data indicates that study associations commit highly to integrate international students into their social environment. While policies vary from one association to another, all board members had an inherent interest in collaborating with internationals. This has been apparent in their policy plans and informal structures. In essence, practices ranged from Internationalization Guidelines, Kick-In/Buddy, language courses and housing. In agreement with Severiens and Wolff (2008), participation in the social setting is of immense value for reasons such as psychological/emotional stability and overall academic performance. However, the collective effort from international students proposes challenges as it is based on both opportunities to integrate provided by external parties and their active effort in seizing opportunities. Both sides bear barriers such as international characteristics, cultural traits, language, and cultural differences. For instance, internationals may have an interest in being part of associations but are not used to e.g., the drinking culture. In agreement with the data, successful participation in social events must respect international norms and values (Mullick et al., 2014). A mismatch hinders internationals to not consider participating at all.

Nonetheless, other papers note, the majority of international students do not intentionally avoid the other group. A lack of opportunities for participation, information, and

spaces for informal interaction (e.g., housing, non-cultural extracurriculars/events) are attributed to their behavior. Despite the positive efforts of the Dutch student association, currently, university activities, events, and many student (sport) associations, housing, and financial barriers hinder internationals from participating and interacting with Dutch students.

Furthermore, participants called this dilemma a vicious circle that is fed by former internationals' lack of experience with study associations. With little representation of internationals in study association, the perception of study association remains secretive to internationals (Anttiroiko, & de Jong, 2020). Thus, sending international students through the lectures might be an effective strategy to break off this typical predicament or the false perception that associations are exclusively for the 'Dutchies.' Additionally, the difficulty of grasping and comprehending international activity/inactivity among study associations is fueling the debate at hand (Babacan, 2005). Based on the data, international effort in integrating is not the same as in other associations. It appears that evaluation of internationalization processes within associations, having active integration policies, diversity events, buddies and mentors, and a smaller number of students within programs account for a positive inclusion development.

At the same time, a lack of those constitutes challenges with inclusion among international students. Due to different approaches from facilities, it remains challenging to generalize inclusion on campus. This, in turn, weakens the third pillar of inclusion. The UT is covered in various social inclusion practices that were discovered through exploratory methods. However, limitations and implications need to be addressed before a conclusion is given.

5.6 Limitations

Like with every research, this study has limitations that need to be mentioned. The first limitation concerns the sample size. Due to technicalities, only 13 participants took part in this research. We can argue that the sample is thereby limited. Furthermore, qualitative data was mainly collected from a Dutch public institution. Therefore, the outcome can not be generalized for other Dutch institutions.

The second limitation concerns the way data was collected. As noted in the literature, "The idea that a sample is created in the first place relies on the judgment of the researcher. Thus, purposive sampling is highly prone to researcher bias" (Rai & Thapa, 2015, p.10). According to the authors, if researchers recruited other experts to select subjects with different characteristics suitable for the study, the sample, and the outcome might vary considerably. Thus, this study can only be replicated if the same participants were to be recruited. Additionally, with purposive sampling, participants' behavior is more likely to be influenced than random sampling. People may act in favor of the researcher, knowing that they have been chosen intentionally. Hence, participants might provide information the research expects to hear (Rai & Thapa, 2015). Therefore, the behavior is biased, and the validity of the data is questioned. Regardless of the arguments noted, purposive sampling was most suitable for this study. In order to obtain an in-depth comprehension of social inclusion processes, participants were required to be intentionally selected. Flexibility was needed to discover policies and strategies on the bottom and central levels of the UT.

The third limitation concerns the formulation of the definition. A focus was shed on social inclusion perspectives of instructional units from the university (professionals and board members). We could have considered views from students who seek to be included, such as international students (Silver, 2012). Thus, the definitions stated may not be shared by underrepresented groups.

Lastly, all the participants were informed about the general research topic before the interviews without sending out interview questions. This method ensured the obtaining of the authentic output. However, this practice has its shortcomings. First, various participants wish to share many insights but cannot think of many instantly (Tang et al., 2014). Subsequently, researchers had to depend on information shared within the interviews. As a result, valuable information might have been missed out. Finally, although the researcher positions herself as much as possible as a neutral researcher, the results may have been biased.

5.7 Theoretical implications

Despite the limitations noted above, this study represents the first attempt to further investigate social inclusion practices, precisely in Dutch higher education. Therefore, this study is of high theoretical relevance for the discourse of inclusion in academia, specifically for the international student body. Furthermore, our studies highlighted the shortcomings of a split understanding of social inclusion.

We suggested a comprehensive definition for future research. The definition was formed based on the individual understanding of inclusion through the lenses of professionals and students. Thus, conceptualizing inclusion in the forms of a monument with seven pillars is a first of its kind in academia. The significant concept of belonging was considered an outcome of inter-correlated elements of welcoming, embracing diversity, support, equality, collective effort, and integration. This extension transcends the current understanding of belonging. Inclusion for students is relevant concerning their interactivity with peers. Thereby, our definition sets itself apart from literature. A strong focus is paid to the individual within the social dimension. Furthermore, our findings reveal that inclusion is not

a one-way route but requires two-way involvement. The element of collective effort displays the active engagement of students, which is repeatedly overseen in many definitions.

Despite the absence of institutional documents on inclusions, social structure embeds various inclusion practices, especially student associations. In this sense, social inclusion practices are covered beneath layers and must be explored. In retrospect, the study successfully discovered the inclusion processes initiated at the University of Twente. Thus, future research shall utilize explorative and unrestricted research methods to investigate social phenomena.

As an early exploratory study, our intent is to paint an initial picture of the nature and practices of inclusion in higher education and encourage future research to explore this ‘unknown area.’ Below, we point out several promising areas worthy of research attention and make final recommendations directly to the University of Twente.

5.8 Practical implication

Inclusion is a broad field and understudied in the western research sector. This being said, this paper attempts to encourage future researchers to investigate inclusion in various ways.

As social inclusion continues to be complex in the Netherlands, a clear definition is needed. An extensive literature review on the definitions of social inclusion could further our understanding of such phenomena. Then, various social dimensions can adopt the proposed definition and formulate policies effectively.

Additionally, future research may investigate inclusion directly from international students. It is one thing to investigate how institutions enforce inclusion practices but another to understand whether students indeed feel included. Thus, how do international students and

Dutch build a sense of belonging and the barriers to facilitating this process? Do these two groups have a similar understanding of inclusion? Through a longitudinal study, insights can be collected over a specific time frame to see if attitudes remain stable.

Furthermore, we call other Dutch institutions to explore inclusion and diversity among their student population. In 2020, research was conducted to explore the gap between Dutch and international students at the University of Groningen and Hanze. The report seeks to understand problems and issues rising between these two groups. Subsequently, recommendations for improvement were presented. In future times, the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science of the Netherlands could conduct a comparative study of explorative case studies that may reveal differences and similarities among Dutch institutions. In this case, institutions can learn from one another and adapt new institutional policies.

As outlined in this paper, institutions adhere to inclusive education greatly. Thereby, future research shall shed light on the correlation between social inclusion and inclusive education. A sample question that can inspire future researchers can be formulated as follows: To what extent does social inclusion influences the academic performance of students?

A different angle of social inclusion research may shed light on the attributes of the student population. This research did not specify the characteristics of international students. Future research may consider other variables. For example, exchange students study abroad for other reasons such as improving language abilities and exploring foreign cultures. In comparison to degree-seeking students, exchange students have much lower educational or social tension. Hence, it would assume that exchange students' integration process might be different from what ordinary degree-seeking students seek (Tang et al., 2014).

5.8.1 Recommendations

In line with UT's goal of inclusiveness by 2030, we aim to provide recommendations to advance constructively. As they note 'Putting people first, includes all people'. Thereby, we address how policy makers, students, the SEG Team and the D&I Officer can initiate the spirit of inclusion at UT. First and foremost, universalize the concept of social inclusion. As noted before, a splitted definition of inclusion lowers the process of a unified practice. Based on the pillars emerged from the data we put forward the following definition.

Social inclusion is the process of welcoming and embracing the diversity of the campus identity, providing support and equity for all its members, and facilitating integration through collective efforts to achieve a sense of belonging in all multi-dimensional levels.

The above mentioned definition was built from the perspective of the study units. The SEG Group Inclusion and the D&I officer could create a small survey for all units of the UT and ask what is understood under social inclusion. Once results are analyzed and a definition is formulated, ensure that the UT is aware of its terminology.

To continue we propose two recommendations for strengthening a sense of welcoming and embracing diversity. Firstly, if institutions commit to inclusion, they shall educate their students, staff, and teachers through mandatory courses on intercultural competences. In order to reduce bias, people need to build cultural sensitivity. For example program directors of all programs could include at least 2 intercultural skills workshops per semester. Similarly, policy makers could make teachers obliged to take at least one or two intercultural skills workshops at CELT. Understandably, this suggestion rather sounds forced than natural. However, learning to appreciate diversity genuinely, reduces stereotypical biases and enforces international friendly behaviors. In time, we are confident that such processes become a natural habit and policies become reluctant.

This leads to the second recommendation. The Kick-In can improve its program by implementing inclusion days or center internationalization in its core. For instance, invite international students to cook events and let them showcase their international cuisine. In addition, the World associations can collaborate with Dutch student associations and organize inter-cultural performances. In essence, the more diversity is celebrated at UT, the more students feel welcome.

As it stands, the UT can do much more to create awareness of social support and housing. Our recommendation is to emphasize social support and a continuous basis. For instance, UT's confidential advisors can present support in the first and second semesters of each academic year (as similar at the ITC). As many miss the Kick-In days or oversee the information in the goody bags, more innovative approaches are needed. In fact the One-contact center is more than relevant. To our knowledge the one-contact center will mainly address administrative questions. It is recommendable to embody all forms of inquiries. This can range from simple health care questions to reporting issues of discrimination. Students are likely to be uninformed about all social support systems or code of conducts. However, emphasizing on one center point, where students can go to, when needed, is advisable.

For housing, we propose 3 suggestions. First, keep in contact with (visa) students after assigning accommodations in the first year. Make them feel that they are not left alone. Secondly, we suggest UT to be more proactive when students select their new roommates. Rather than abolishing the selection process, it could work to apply the 'first comes first' rule. As the rule implies, the first student who reviews the room automatically receives it. As an alternative, a ratio of how many internationals physically live together with Dutch students may function equally well. For example, the UT shall suggest student housing on campus to ensure 50 % of inmates are Dutch and 60% international. Thus, a notable balance of diversity

is established, allowing cultural interactivity and equal chance for Dutch and international selection. If ratios are not respected the UT would directly interfere and assign students to housings.

It becomes apparent that no clear practices are provided to facilitate the active engagement of international students. Our advice is to directly address this problem head-on. Firstly, invite international students for an open discussion and allow them to explain their perception of board positions/committees. By understanding what their concerns are, measurement can follow. Measurements could address specifically designed workshops for activism. Similar to how the Student Union provides associations with board member training, so can UT provide means to make activism attractive for international students.

We suggest increasing the representation of internationals in social student organizations in general. As noted in the introduction, a diverse staff population is considered exemplary to students. Conversely, international students can function as role models to their peers as well. The more international students are trained to be active/cultural members of the association, the more international students will follow. A domino effect kicks in. As integration between students is nurtured, which leads to an establishment of belonging.

Finally, our recommendations address the instrumental policies for inclusive education. Similar to ensuring gender balance in recruiting staff or admitting students, social inclusion can as well be a criteria. In other words, UT policy makers or student boards shall review current instrumental policies and evaluate to what extent social inclusion is facilitated. For example the language policy. Based on speaking English students can be admitted to various programs at UT. Thus, the campus is diverse (numeric level). Subsequently, due to speaking English, students can actively participate in the community (social level). Lastly, as the community communicates in English, students do not feel left out which facilitates a sense of belonging. Consequently, policies can transcend the instrumental level and

ultimately impact the social sphere at the UT. The framework below can act as guidance to formulate and implement social inclusion practises and action plans at the UT (see table below).

Table 7 framework for Social inclusion at the UT

Type of policy levels	Explanation	Examples Practises	Who is involved
Welcome and Embrace Diversity	Practises shall address the sense of welcome and recognizes students' uniqueness	International Kick-In Student Collaborations Mandatory intercultural workshops	Students, teachers
Social Support and Equity	Policies target all forms of social support relevant to the international students and suggest well defined means	Raise awareness of support systems One-Contact Center Refine housing policies	Students and policy makers
Integration and Collective effort	Practises initiates open doors for integration and but as well stress	Activism workshops for internationals Increase of international Representation	Student Union, Student/study organizations
Instrumental Policies	Practises shall reviews instrumental policies through the lenses of social inclusion	Language policy	Policy makers, Student Boards

*This table can be used by the SEG Team: Inclusion and the D&I Officer for guidance

6. Conclusion

This explorative study has made a first attempt at the University of Twente to explore its comprehension of social inclusion policies, and strategies. We draw insights from actors on the bottom level and at the central/top level. Despite not having clear institutionalized

policies, this paper successfully identified policies on various levels. Notably, the seven pillars (welcome, diversity, support equality, integration, and collective effort, belonging) are not seen as distinct inclusion elements. How inclusion and diversity are synergistic to each other, so are the elements of social inclusion. This explains the combination of elements and their effectiveness when enforced collectively. A sense of belonging is a result of strategically addressing the other six elements of social inclusion. The more policies and strategies are proactively enforced, the more profound the sense of belonging. Therefore, policies are indeed in order to trigger change and set directions. However, the processes that follow largely depend on the teamwork of all parties involved. Challenges naturally follow with a diverse student body. In other words, inclusion demands both policies and manpower. As each pillar is equally important, reviewing challenges and addressing them heads up will ultimately improve the social inclusion process at large.

Notably, not all participants explained each element in their definitions but emphasized those individually essential. The disadvantage of such a split perception of inclusion is that inclusion processes are unequally distributed among the campus environment, making it difficult to detect them. To put it differently, the absence of a shared understanding of inclusion leads to taking a different approach to reinforce inclusion. Subsequently, each international student might have different experiences with inclusion on campus. The underlying issue is grounded in the academic freedom granted to faculties. Faculties at UT are free to use different tools and measures to address internationalization and diversity. It explains why some associations are advanced in inclusiveness while others are yet to follow. Similar to having a shared mission statement in companies, having a shared understanding of inclusion ultimately allows the advancement into the desired direction. Thus, we highly emphasize a shared understanding of social inclusion as presented in our recommendations.

Despite all the concerns, the UT as an institution is covered in vast social inclusion processes. More collaboration between students and policy makers are needed to understand the clear picture in all social dimensions. This could result in policy makers being aware of what is happening in study associations. Conversely, students are aware of policies enforced from executives levels. The dynamics of those defining policies and those implemented policies requires further synergy. Nevertheless, having policies in place resulted in a positive shift. Policies that transcend outside the classroom will continue to meet resistance from the host culture. With this bearing in mind, inclusion can only develop quickly once proper systems are established. UT's Shaping 2030 vision is one step into the right direction. This paper elaborated on the actions currently taken and actions missing visualize its vision. With our recommendations in future time, students and staff will have sensitivity towards other cultures, both embrace diversity and uphold their own identity. Framework for improvement provided in the practical implications can immensely support the UT in its vision.

However, the university can learn a lot by taking smaller enterprises such as ATLAS and the ITC into account. Finally, the values that result from pillars of inclusion are that the UT recognizes the uniqueness of its students, supports interactivity, enforces equity, and empowers students' sense of belonging. After all, in any educational setting, all students matter.

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8. APPENDIX I

Information sheet

We're all in this together: Unravelling Social inclusion policies at the University of Twente

Dear participant,

thank you for finding valuable time to participate in my explorative case study. Your contribution is more than appreciated. This study is conducted from the Communication Science study within the Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences at the University of Twente. To understand the nature of my study I shall shortly explain the context. The University of Twente is known for its international identity. Nevertheless, minority groups like internationals frequently report difficulties adjusting to the social climate. Therefore, the concept of inclusion has become a relevant topic recently. Officially, there are no diversity and inclusion policies at the UT. This where my paper steps in. I am interested what UT's stakeholders such as employees and students do to make internationals feel at home. Thus, semi-structured interviews with professionals and board members of study associations will be conducted to identify inclusion policies and strategies. The goal of the interviews with the board members, is identify how internationals are integrated in the social sphere of their study association. Whereas the professionals shall share insights how the UT as an institution executes inclusion in general. In line with UT's vision of inclusiveness by 2030, the outcome of this paper shall assist the UT in advancing towards a more inclusive environment. Our newly appointed Diversity and Inclusion officer and SEG Inclusion teams will greatly benefit from the outcome, as they will be able to formulate authentic future actions plans for underrepresented groups like internationals. Subsequently, your personal contributions are beneficial for all parties.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntarily. Therefore, please read the following informed consent form carefully. You can tick the statements with either yes or no and digitally sign at the end of this paper.

Thanks in advance.

Kind regards,
Laulinda A. Massunda

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study is exploring and identify current social inclusion practises such as policies and strategies at the University of Twente.

Nature of Participation

You will participate in a semi-structure interview. In this session you will, together with Laulinda as the researcher have a conversation about inclusion practices at UT. The interview will be divided into three phases, all addressing another area of social inclusion at UT.

Possible Risks

The research study has been reviewed and approved by the BMS Ethics Committee. Participants might feel vulnerable speaking about sensitive topic such as inclusion. However, as the goal is to identify inclusion policies, we aspect no direct mental risks.

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

Confidentiality

All personal information that may identify you as a natural person, will be removed and replaced anonymized by addressing a random number to you. All data will be kept in secured files, that are align with the standards of the University of Twente. Only researcher of this paper will have access to a Google Drive folder, that entails the qualitative data collected in this research.

It will be asked to record the session; this recording will be deleted within eight weeks after executing the session. All identifying information will be removed as soon as your participation is complete.

Use of the information in the study

The information the participant will provide, is beneficial for the following discourse of inclusion at the University of Twente: Namely, it will serve as guidance for fostering inclusion processes at the University of Twente. This information will be visualized by the researcher in a form of an infographic and public blog article.

Opportunities to Withdraw at will

If you decide now or at any point to withdraw this consent or stop participating, you are free to do so at no penalty to yourself. You do not have to provide a specific reason for your withdrawal.

Additionally, you are free to skip specific questions or a specific phase of the session and continue participating at no penalty.

Data collection

Data for this study will be collected through semi-structured interviews. The Participant will be audio/video-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Opportunities to be Informed of Results

In all likelihood, the results will be fully available around June 25th. If you wish to be informed about the results of this research, please contact: Laulinda A. Massunda (see contact details below).

Opportunities to question

Any technical questions regarding your rights as a research participant or research-related injuries may be directed to Laulinda A. Massunda (see contact details below).

Kind regards,
Laulinda Antonia Massunda

Contact details:

l.a.massunda@student.utwente.nl

Informed Consent Form for: *We're all in this together: Unravelling Social inclusion policies at the University of Twente*
YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Please tick the appropriate boxes

Yes No

Taking part in the study

I have read and understood the study information dated [11/05/2001], or it has been read to me.
I have been able to ask questions about the study and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.

I understand that taking part in the study involves an audio/video-recorded interview.

I understand that the interview will be transcribed verbatim and after completion of the study destroyed without delay.

Risks associated with participating in the study

I understand that taking part in the study does not involve critical risks.

Use of the information in the study

I understand that information I provide will be used for bachelor thesis, blog article, Infographic.

I understand that that the information I provide contributes to indigenous knowledge.

I understand that personal information collected about me that can identify me, such as [e.g. my name or where I live] will not be shared beyond the study team.

I agree that my information can be quoted in research outputs.

I agree that my real name can be used for quotes.

Consent to be Audio/video Recorded

I agree to be audio/video recorded.

Future use and reuse of the information by others

I give permission for the qualitative data that I provide to be archived in "Google Drive" so it can be used for future research and learning.

I agree that my information may be shared with other researchers for future research studies that may be similar to this study or may be completely different. The information shared with other researchers will not include any information that can directly identify me. Researchers will not contact me for additional permission to use this information.

I give the researchers permission to keep my contact information and to contact me for future research projects.

I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Signatures

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Signature	Date

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant and, to the best of my ability, ensured that the participant understands to what they are freely consenting.

Laulinda A. Massunda	_____	_____
Researcher name	Signature	Date

Study contact details for further information:
[Laulinda A. Massunda, L.a.massunda@student.utwente.nl]

Contact Information for Questions about Your Rights as a Research Participant
 If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the Secretary of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences at the University of Twente by ethicscommittee-bms@utwente.nl

Appendix II

Interview Script: Board Members

Part I General Introduction

1. Please tell me a little bit about yourself
2. What do you study
 - a. What are your functionalities as the x of your board?
 - b. Personal Experience or Challenges as a board member?
3. Do you agree with the need to be an international university? What is the end goal?

Part II

1. Please tell me about your understanding of inclusion.
 - a. Why is social inclusion important to you?

- b. What are the different opinions of inclusion in your surrounding?
 - i. Negative or Positive experiences?
 - ii. Do you know people without any opinion/or indifferences regarding social inclusion? Can you share their experiences?
 - c. Do you feel socially included at the UT?
 - d. In your experience, what are the most challenging aspects of working in an increasingly diverse campus community?
-

Part III Inclusion management

1. How many international students do you have in your association?
 2. What do you believe means inclusion for international students?
 3. What are the steps your study association is undertaking to foster international students feeling at home at UT?
 4. How do you foster interconnected relationships between international students and Dutch students on a daily basis? (provide an example) Are these policies implemented into action?
 - a. Are there many international students actively participating in events? Or active in committees
 - b. → How is the UT or your faculty supporting your ambitions for inclusion?
 5. Have you incorporated inclusion practices in your policy plan?
 6. If yes -> Can you elaborate on a few examples?
 - a. Who exactly is involved in the process of implementing these strategies
 - b. Are these policies implemented into action?
 - c. What are the results/consequences of these policies?
 - d. What are the gaps and challenges?
 - e. If no why not?
 7. How are these strategies formulated? Give me one example.
 8. What are the intentions behind these strategies?
 9. Have you faced issues of discrimination or racism in your association?
 - a. How was this incident dealt with?
 10. In your own opinion does the UT respond well to the challenges international students face?
 - a. Yes (please explain)
 - b. No (please explain)
 11. Why do you believe policies are lacking?
-

Part III Recommendations

1. Based on what we have discussed, what is your recommendation for improving the social inclusion of international students?
 - a. Where can we improve policies and why?
 - b. What should the UT focus on?
2. What support system would you implement to ethically address issues of discrimination?
3. In an ideal university, how do you visualize a campus environment that is welcoming and inclusive for international students?
4. Are there any other policies you just remembered?
 - a. If yes ->Start asking to follow up question like in phase 3

Do you have any further questions?
Thank you, I will end the recording now.

-----END-----

Interview script: Professionals

-----Start recording-----

Part I General Introduction

1. Please tell me a little bit about yourself: Where are you from
2. What is your occupation
 - a. How long have you been working here at the UT?
 - b. How diverse is your working environment
 - c. Why is this job the best fit for you?
3. Do you agree with the need to be an international university? What is the end goal?

Part II Understanding of inclusion

1. Please tell me about your understanding of inclusion.
 - a. Why is social inclusion important to you?
 - b. What do you believe means inclusion for international students?
 - c. What are the different opinions of inclusion in your surrounding?
 - i. Negative or Positive experiences?
 - ii. Do you know people without any opinion/or indifferences regarding social inclusion
 - d. In your experience, what are the most challenging aspects of working in an increasingly diverse campus community?

Part III Inclusion management

1. What are the steps the UT is undertaking to foster international students feeling at home at UT?
2. What are the policies for international students in regards to social inclusion?
 - a. Can you elaborate on a few examples?
 - b. Who exactly is involved in the process of implementing these policies
 - c. What are the results/consequences of these policies?
 - d. What are the gaps and challenges?
3. How are these strategies formulated? Give me one example.
4. What are the intentions behind these policies?
5. Why do you believe policies are lacking?
6. What is the support system for internationals when they face issues of discrimination or racism?
7. What guidelines are there for teachers to ensure inclusive relationships in the classroom setting for international students and Dutch students
 - a. Can you elaborate on a specific example?

8. In your own opinion does the UT respond well to the challenges international students face?
 - a. Yes (please explain)
 - b. No (please explain)
-

Part III

1. Based on what we have discussed. What is your personal recommendation for improving the social inclusion of international students?
 - a. Where can we improve policies and why?
 - b. What should the UT focus on?
2. In an ideal university, how do you visualize a campus environment that is welcoming and inclusive for international students?
3. Are there any other policies you just remembered?
 - a. If yes ->Start asking follow up question like in phase 3

Do you have any further questions?

Thank you, I will end the recording now.

-----END-----

Questionnaire

Following questions were asked prior to the interviews.

1. What is your full name?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your gender
4. Where do you live
5. What is your current occupation?
6. What is your working experience (for professionals)
7. Study year (for students)
8. Do you feel comfortable conducting the interview in English?
9. Any further comments or questions?

Appendix III

Table 5. Codebook

Category	Subcategory	Definition and Example
Social inclusion	Welcome	"Social inclusion would be that every student, employee, visitor would feel welcome to come as they are"
	Diversity	
	Support Systems	
	Equity	
	Integration	
	Collective Effort	
Welcome Policies	Belonging	"An example would be the language policy. That's that's a fairly instrumental example, but it's very clear that English is the working language at all levels of within the university."
	Language policy	
	Kick-In	
	Buddy committee	
Embrace Diversity Policies	Language Courses	"We wanted to lower the bar for internationals in a different way. And we thought if we host events that respect your culture and that respect things that they did like back at home; wait a little this is dope....then we want to do that. Because that might be a lower the bar for them to visit events."
	Culturally themed events	
	Integration and Diversity Committee	
	Intercultural workshops	
Social Support Systems Policies	Module coordinator	We are established an international advice group. How do you say,... an advisory group of international students A lot of things that are in our association are thought out by Dutch people. So we really want their opinion as well." (Participant 4) "So we first tried to warn them (the Kick-In). And then we eat pizza and talk
	Study advisors	
	One-contact Center	
	Trust person	
	Confidential advisors	
	Coffee Breaks	

	<p>Confidential advisors</p> <p>International Student Support Group</p> <p>World associations</p>	<p>about expectations. And then after that, we had two more moments in that year, where...it's called coffee breaks,(..) that is also for the international students to come over. You talk with them and see how it goes if they have any problems or questions”. (Participant 2)</p>
<p>Equality Policies</p>	<p>English Language Policy</p> <p>International Advisory Group</p> <p>Attracting International Job Market</p>	<p>“As well, we try to facilitate or highlight professional opportunities for internationals in newsletters. So, for instance,this vacancy is also for international nationals and then highlight that.” (Participant 8)</p>
<p>Collective Effort Policies</p>	<p>World associations</p>	<p>“For example, if I'm here, as a Dutch student and an international would come up to me and he just starts a conversation with “Hi, Hoe gaat het met je.” You know, just the basics. That's already enough. And I would already feel like: OK, you put an effort for us to get to know me too.” (Participant 3)</p>
<p>Integration Policies</p>	<p>Housing Policy</p> <p>Events</p> <p>Language Courses</p> <p>Internationalization Guidelines</p> <p>Kick-In/Buddy program</p> <p>ICOS</p>	<p>"Especially in the first year we try to host a lot of events for that community for first year students. So people feel welcome.” (Participant 2)</p>
<p>Instrumental Policies</p>	<p>Mobility</p> <p>Accreditations</p> <p>Financial Instruments</p>	
