Elaborating Policy Pervasion: Personal and Organizational Immigration Policy Impacts

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The term policy pervasion describes the influence of visa and study permit policies on the lives of international students, based on findings for students studying in Australia, Canada, and the United States. This conceptual article works to elaborate and expand on the concept of policy pervasion in two complementary ways. The first section explores the manifestation of policy pervasion in different national contexts and draws on news, literature, and the author's own international student support experiences to refine the concept of policy pervasion as a crucial component of the international student experience globally. The second section introduces the idea of "organizational policy pervasion," wherein the activities, processes, or decisions of higher education institutions are impacted by policy pervasion considerations. From there, the article proposes a tool for guiding or instigating responses that constitute a caring, productive, and student-centered organizational policy pervasion. The article concludes with an outline of potentially fruitful future research paths related to (organizational) policy pervasion, as well as clarification of the theoretical and practical utility of both forms of policy pervasion.

Keywords: international higher education; international students; policy pervasion; visa policy

Introduction

Though by no means limited to the United States, the impacts of immigration policy on international students have become increasingly spotlighted with the slew of actions by the second Trump administration that target non-immigrant international students. In the U.S. context, the deeply personal impact of immigration policy on international students

> is taking on a grim tenor as stark new sources of uncertainty appear with dizzying speed for international students… Sources of concern… include: stories about nonimmigrants being denied entry into the country, threats to colleges' eligibility to enroll international students…, highly publicized arrests of international students, visa revocations…, new targeting of the Optional Practical Training program…. and unwarranted terminations of students' immigration status. (Crumley-Effinger, 2025).

Both in light of these drastic changes in the United States as well as the challenges posed by political and social events in other host countries, it is perhaps no surprise that the personal, professional, and academic lives of international students continue to draw significant interest in both scholarly and journalistic circles. Past, in-process, and pending or future changes to student visa and study permit policies (more generally referred to as international student mobility and migration [ISM] policies) in a number of traditional host countries have highlighted how personal these

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policies can be to international students, as well as the broader local national communities in which they study (Castiello-Gutiérrez & Whatley, 2025; ICEF Monitor, 2025; Porter, 2025).

This study contributes to the discussion of self-disclosed impacts of ISM policy on international students. Based on empirical findings from a comparative study of international students studying in Australia, Canada, and the United States, Crumley-Effinger (2024a) outlined the concept of *policy pervasion* as "the pervasive influence of ISM (or visa and study permit) policies on the lives of international students" (p. 91). That study described how visa and study permit policies framed and influenced many students' personal, academic, and professional decisions and experiences, including impacting personal relationships, swaying perspectives on their chosen courses and academic fields, creating opportunities and barriers to their pre- and post-graduation employment, and more (Crumley-Effinger, 2024a).

The present study expands on the concept of policy pervasion to clarify its contours and to enhance its accessibility and practical application for ISM scholars and practitioners. It does this in two complementary ways: First, with an illustration of the manifestation of policy pervasion in different national contexts, drawing on news, literature, and the author's own international student support experiences to refine the concept of policy pervasion as a crucial component of the international student experience globally, through the embodiment, in international students, of national- or regional-level ISM policy. Second, the article introduces the idea of *organizational policy pervasion* (OPP), wherein the activities, processes, or decisions of higher education institutions may be impacted by consideration of the policy pervasion experienced by future, current, or past enrolled international students. Finally, the discussion section provides an introductory framework for institutional responses to policy pervasion and explores prospective research and theoretical exploration of both individual student and organizational policy pervasion.

Policy Pervasion

As introduced above, policy pervasion "sheds light on the institutionalized influence of visa policies on the international student experience and indicates how visa policies impact students in a variety of ways" (Crumley-Effinger, 2024a, p. 91). In short, policy pervasion succinctly describes "the power of policies to exert a controlling influence" on international students (Crumley-Effinger, 2024a, p. 91) and lends new insights to what Robertson (2013) describes as the "intersection of the realms of the personal and the political" (p. 88). Examples of this policy pervasion come through in students' recounting of how visa and study permit policies impacted their academics, their employment activities, and their personal lives (Crumley-Effinger, 2024a), policy pervasion in students' decisions to participate in political demonstrations and protests (Crumley-Effinger, 2024b), and students' perceptions of how the cultural political economy of their host country impacted their immigration experiences while studying (Crumley-Effinger, in press).

Like many international student advisers in the United States, my day-to-day work

often centers on supporting international students as they navigate policy pervasion. Policy pervasion crops up often as my students regularly recount how their decisions and actions are shaped by student visa regulations. For example, some of my advisees have described choosing majors based on immigration benefits afforded to programs designated by the Department of Homeland Security as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) degrees, despite desiring to study something else. Others have expressed pain over decisions to forego visiting terminally ill family members abroad due to immigration benefit processing wait times and the resultant travel limitations. Many of my advisees have struggled with immigration-related enrollment requirements that do not provide options for decreases in the face of personal challenges that arise. Finally, some advisees have agonized over the unknown repercussions of choosing to fail a course and the subsequent impacts on their grade point average (GPA), instead of dropping the course, since dropping would bring them below the enrollment requirement. These are just a few examples of the many ways that international students in the U.S. have described policy pervasion in their lives.

Policy Pervasion Around the World

There are numerous examples of the international student mobility literature touching on the policy pervasion faced by international students, with example studies below selected based on manifestations of policy pervasion in their findings. Siczek (2024) explained that "visa issues were invoked across multiple interviews" (p. 42), posing various challenges to participants in a longitudinal study in the United States. Lynch et al. (2023) describe varying levels of "visa anxiety" and precarity as a result of changing visa policies during the COVID-19 pandemic (p. 4). In Canada, international students during the pandemic were also faced with a changing policy environment, with benefit eligibility changing as distance education became the norm for health reasons (Brunner, 2024). Looking at the case of international students in Norway, Beaumont and Glaab (2023) contend that the "EU's migration regime produces precarity and insecurity" (p. 2). This prompts students to create "strategies for navigating the system" and to exert energies, such as the "persistent labour and self-management" required to maintain one's status (p. 3).

In a comparative study of international student experiences in the United Kingdom and Japan, Brotherhood (2023) described students' appreciation for work opportunities afforded by ISM policies. However, specifically in the case of the UK, "participants felt that… the regulatory restrictions placed on their work hours… emerged as significant barriers in securing [work] experiences" (Brotherhood, 2023, p. 45). Similarly reflecting the connection between higher education and employment while on student visas, a study from Finland examined how student permit renewal processes limited international students' ability to travel outside of the country (Maury, 2022). Additionally,

> A large number of student-migrants find work in the low-paid sector to cover their daily life expenses and to collect the resources to renew the student permit, which demonstrates the way in which their student status shapes the

> student-migrants' occupation and moulds their lives into sequences of precarious one-year projects. (Maury, 2022, p. 111).

One study from Malaysia looked at the unique experiences of Syrian international students who experienced visa-related challenges that ultimately led to their withdrawal from academic programs (Sulong & Othman, 2024). Facing a "'chaotic' visa renewal process" (Sulong & Othman, 2024, p. 402), students were often bounced between many different institutional and government offices, taking time away from their studies, where itself, missing classes to deal with these processes put their visa approval at risk. Risk to one's visa can stand out as a crucial concern for some international students, for example in the case of international students studying in Australia, Canada, and the United States who may police their involvement in demonstrations for fear of the impact on their status (Crumley-Effinger, 2024b; 2025), or even hesitancy on the part of international student victims of sexual assault in the U.S. "for fear that rocking the boat in any way could jeopardize their student-visa status" (Fischer, 2022).

In South Africa, international students highlighted ambiguity and confusion with visa application processes as influences on their experiences of starting or continuing their studies (Lee et al., 2018). This uncertainty caused concern and perhaps regret from some students, as "several indicated in hindsight that they were not sure if their efforts were worthwhile as they had not anticipated the emotional stress and financial costs in securing their study visas, suggesting they might have simply decided to study elsewhere" (Lee et al., 2018, p. 1989). In a systematic review of literature of ISM, Gutema et al. (2024) noted that the ease or challenge of obtaining a student visa impacted students' study abroad decisions, as did the ease or difficulty of getting work authorization during one's studies. The same study notes that divergence of the ISM policy reality on the ground in the host country from the student's perception of the policy impacted students' experiences (Gutema et al., 2024).

These examples from around the world indicate that the concept of policy pervasion obtains beyond Australia, Canada, and the United States, which were the host countries included in the article outlining the concept (Crumley-Effinger, 2024a). The conclusion to this article outlines avenues for prospective, fruitful research into the varied contours of policy pervasion in many host countries around the world. Before turning to explication of the connected concept of organizational policy pervasion, the following section seeks to refine the concept of policy pervasion and to provide a succinct definition.

Refining Policy Pervasion

This section draws on the literature and examples described above, as well as the author's prior studies and their own professional experience working with international students, to refine the concept of policy pervasion, including provision of a succinct definition. International student mobility and migration (ISM) policies include the host country rules, regulations, and practices that pertain to international student transnational mobility and rules for conduct within the host country. This is

the "combination of (i) regulatory arrangements prescribing border ingress to study and (ii) in-country regulations for the duration of the degree program studies" (Crumley-Effinger, 2024a, p. 79). The case of the application form for U.S. visas, described below, indicates why it is prudent to expand the description of ISM policy to also include rules for those who have not yet entered the host country. As such, ISM policies in the context of this study, and as they relate to policy pervasion, concern rules, regulations and practices for (i) visa or study permit *issuance*, (ii) *ingress* into the country, and (iii) host country *inhabitance* (see Hammar, 1985; Van Puymbroeck, 2016; Grimm & Day, 2022).

ISM policies can be wide-ranging, and likely will not always be student-specific, even if they do impact international students. For example, when applying for the most common student-specific visa (called an F-1 nonimmigrant visa after its location in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations) to study in the United States, prospective students will complete a Form DS-160, which is a generic application form used to apply for a number of visas, not only for students. The DS-160 requires individuals to answer a number of questions, including about terrorist activities, providing social media account handles, and more. Students' decisions about whether and how to respond to these questions may constitute an impact on them, indicating a pre-enrollment form of policy pervasion. For example, students' social media handles must now be made public for the visa application process, opening up previously private activity to unknown entities; alternatively, students may experience stress about content on their accounts, with unknowns about how that content will be viewed or whether it will factor into visa approval decisions.

The example of the pre-enrollment policy pervasion when students complete the DS-160 for a U.S. visa highlights the fact that policy pervasion need not be time-bound to the period of enrollment, nor location-bound to the student's presence in the host country. The impacts of policy pervasion may be felt before, during, and after the enrollment period, and may similarly impact students' experiences and decision-making while both inside and outside of the host country. Further examples can help clarify this point about the relevance of pre-arrival policy pervasion: In light of the social media vetting measures recently introduced for U.S. visa applicants (Department of State, 2025), students who plan in the *future* to study in the United States may take into account visa issuance restrictions and processes when making decisions about what to post on their social media *now*. Neto et al. (2024), in the context of a study of Erasmus Mundus students seeking to study in Europe, explained

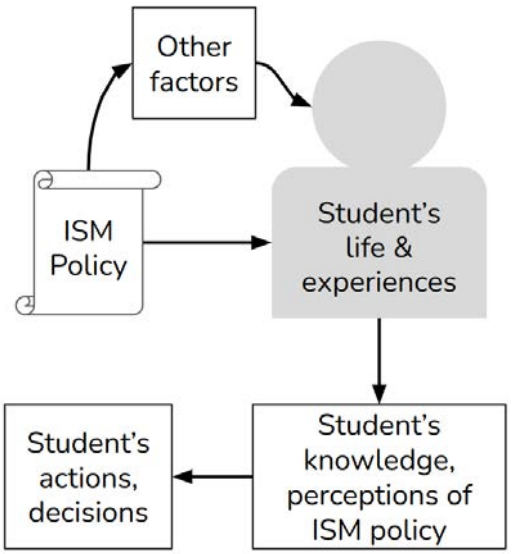
> Recurring issues such as appointment delays, accommodation confirmation, inconsistent visa guidelines, and financial strains, particularly for self-funded students, emerged as considerable obstacles. These challenges sometimes disrupt study schedules and impose unforeseen costs, affecting students' academic and extra-academic experiences. (p. 9)

Based on Crumley-Effinger's (2024a; 2024b; in press) empirical studies and consideration of the topic here, policy pervasion can be succinctly defined as *the direct or indirect impacts of ISM policy on the lives and experiences of international students,*

as well as on their actions and decisions, as mediated by their knowledge and perceptions of ISM policy. This could include, but should not be limited to, impacts on their academics, employment, personal life, and political involvement in the host country. Figure 1 diagrams this description of policy pervasion. Indirect impacts could include, for example, (i) HEI interactions with ISM regs and student supports, or (ii) employer or general public knowledge of ISM regs and their resultant treatment and perspectives of, or discourses around, international students.

Figure 1

Diagram of Policy Pervasion



Note. Arrows indicate directions of influence; for example, the line from "ISM Policy" to "Students' life and experiences" illustrates the influence of ISM policy on the student. Rectangular boxes represent tangible and intangible concepts, while the other shapes represent the labeled item.

Policy pervasion is an inherently personal matter, focusing on the experiences of individual students, including how their actions and decisions will be impacted by what they do and do not know about immigration policies associated with their status, as well as their perceptions of the ISM policy environment. Looking specifically at international student self-policing of political involvement and demonstration activity, Crumley-Effinger (2024b) noted that some of the students' decisions were based on their "perceptions of their legal precarity due to the visa regulations, even if they were unable to point to specific policies that may hamper or result in detrimental responses to their political activism or protests" (Crumley-Effinger, 2024b, p. 213). This emphasizes the importance of student knowledge of local immigration policy and how it impacts them, but also points to the role of interpretations of ISM policy. Thus, student' knowledge and interpretation of ISM policy information may be informed by host institution support infrastructures, conventional and social media, word of mouth, contemporary immigration discourses, and more.

Authority, agency, and access are prominent in the idea of policy pervasion. That is, the power inherent in the authority of ISM policy to impose boundaries on, or avenues for, student activities and decisions (see Brunner, 2022; Crumley-Effinger, 2023; Brunner & Tao, 2024; Crumley-Effinger, 2024a). Agency in the sense of students' personal choices to take actions or make decisions within the power structure of the ISM policy environment in which they have decided to enroll. As well as students' agency to make decisions in the first place about their association with the host nation's ISM policies (see Greenfield, 2025). Agency here could also relate to students' decisions about adherence, or not, to the rules and regulations outlined by local ISM policies, and resultant impacts on them stemming from those decisions. And finally, access refers to the decision made by the students to acquiesce to the power of ISM policies—and the potential ISM policy impacts—in order to physically gain access to the country after deciding to study there.

Importantly, ISM policy pervasion is not about the size or magnitude of these impacts on students; it is simply about the existence of such impacts. Furthermore, while Crumley-Effinger (2024a) referred specifically to policy pervasion in the areas of academics, employment, and personal life, the boundaries between these different areas can naturally be fuzzy or indistinct. Policy pervasion impacting a student's academics can have a knock-on effect on their professional life, just as ISM policy impacts on the personal life can have a knock-on effect on the academic life, et cetera. To be clear, policy pervasion goes beyond the black and white of the policy determinations of what is and is not allowed, or who is or is not eligible for a benefit, and so on. Policy pervasion describes the personal impacts— perhaps beyond the intended effects—of these policies on the student.

Finally, it is crucial to recognize that policy pervasion does not only refer to challenges posed by local ISM policy; it also refers to opportunities created. Despite the challenges that can arise as a result of ISM policy, these policies facilitate educational opportunities, some life-changing, giving students access to new countries and cultures, permitting in-country study and life and work opportunities that are presumably different from what they might access at home. Policy pervasion points to the impacts of visa policy on international students, both good and bad, and everything in between.

Organizational Policy Pervasion

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are often tasked with supporting their international students in a number of ways, including connecting them to local communities (Thomson & Esses, 2016; Ammigan et al., 2022), familiarizing them with academic customs (Cho et al., 2021; Sheng et al., 2022), providing language support (Auschner & Jiang, 2025), generally assisting with adaptation to the local environment (Monicah, 2024), and more. Host institutions are also often tasked with immigration support to ensure that their students are eligible, according to relevant local immigration and ISM policies, to conduct their studies (Briggs & Ammigan, 2017). As such, HEIs may be especially cognizant of, and sensitive to, ISM policies and the impacts of those policies on their students. It is in light of this institutional

duty and work, when associated with individual student policy pervasion, that led to the development of the new concept of *organizational policy pervasion* (OPP), which is explored in the following section.

Examples from the U.S. Context

A COVID-era policy adjustment by the federal government provides a valuable illustration of how institutions may choose to respond to immigration policies impacting their students. In July 2020, policy guidance clarified that while international students could take advantage of COVID-specific relaxation of the limits to the number of online courses they could take, these students would be required to take at least one in-person course in the Fall 2020 term (Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2020; Crumley-Effinger, 2021). Prior to this announcement, many institutions were planning to continue with online-only study, after having moved online during the initial COVID-19 outbreak in Spring 2020. However, this new guidance immediately prompted institutions to scramble for creative solutions in order to provide sufficient course offerings to enroll all continuing international students in at least one in-person course (see Whitford, 2020). Some of the institutions with which I was connected at this time made serious efforts to introduce new courses and make curricular adjustments to respond to this new policy barrier faced by students. Ultimately, the policy was rescinded, presumably due to the fierce pushback from institutions across the country.

A second scenario relates to specific benefits afforded to a subset of international students based on their program of study. Students in F-1 visa status who complete higher education degrees are usually eligible to apply for up to 12 months of post-graduation work authorization, called Optional Practical Training (OPT) (Department of Homeland Security, 2025a). However, federal policy provides a special allowance for students who complete degrees in STEM-designated fields: unlike those in non-STEM-designated fields, these students are eligible to apply for an additional 24 months of STEM-OPT, for a total of 36 months of post-graduation work authorization in the U.S. associated with their F-1 visa status (Department of Homeland Security, 2025b). For students who are interested in gaining work experience in the United States, this can be a powerful incentive to pursue STEM-designated degrees or to select programs that have degrees of interest coded as STEM-designated.

Because having STEM-designated programs may be attractive to some international students as they consider how they will be impacted by immigration policies that benefit those completing degrees in these specific programs, some HEIs may take actions to change or align their programs with STEM-designated CIP codes (used by the Department of Education to classify academic program areas; see Department of Homeland Security, 2025c). This can mean not only actions to redesignate programs, but also efforts to advertise the STEM-designation as a selling point to prospective students or as an equity effort (Rashid, 2023). Some of the HEIs I have worked for have taken STEM designations quite seriously, including efforts to change CIP codes, advocacy for inclusion of new CIP codes on the Department of Homeland Security's

STEM designation list, and navigating challenges posed by prospective students' interest in enrolling in STEM-designated programs.

Defining Organizational Policy Pervasion

The preceding are just a few examples of activities that may be taken by HEIs in response to immigration policy impacts on students that may constitute an adjusted form of policy pervasion, wherein HEIs respond to the reality of individual policy pervasion by implementing organizational adjustments to better serve their students. OPP is thus a second-level form of policy pervasion, and may therefore be defined as *organizational activities undertaken to respond to policy pervasion at the individual student level*. It is a phenomenon one step removed from, though responding to the realities of, the individuals beholden to the visa and study permit policies. OPP responses may be designed to mitigate limitations posed, or to capitalize on opportunities created, by the (student-level) policy pervasion.

It is valuable here to clarify that HEI activities resulting from policy-imposed immigration requirements for the institutions themselves would not be considered OPP. For example, the international student attendance tracking and Home Office reporting requirement for host institutions in the United Kingdom is an example of an immigration requirement for HEIs specifically (University of Reading, n.d.), and thus not an example of OPP. Instead, organizational policy pervasion entails HEI activities as responses to the policy pervasion experienced by the students themselves. As another example, some institutions in the United States might adjust their international student worker hiring timelines and practices to account for the fact that international students' eligibility for a Social Security Number (SSN)—required for employment in the United States—may be delayed by immigration reporting requirements. Because the institution is responding to a limitation faced by the student, as imposed by immigration considerations, this would be an example of OPP. In such a case, the institutional response may constitute an equity-driven effort to mitigate challenges for international students who might be otherwise disadvantaged in relation to their domestic peers when it comes to applying for on-campus jobs.

Discussion & Future Research

Policy pervasion is useful for succinctly describing a concept that is crucial for policymakers, HEI administrators, and the general public to understand. It highlights the personal nature of student immigration policies, the personal impacts of immigration politics in the host country, and can shed light on the ways that these policies impact not only the students, but also their decisions about the countries in which they will undertake their studies. Current actions by the U.S. government are shining examples of the ways that immigration policy can impact students (Crumley-Effinger, 2025; Fischer, 2025), and have elicited subsequent actions by other nations to try to entice prospective students to their shores (Davidson, 2025; Kakuchi, 2025).

Organizational policy pervasion is crucial for understanding how HEIs do and do not respond to the policy pervasion experienced by enrolled/ing international students. By what means, and with what level of commitment, do institutions take action to help their international students to take advantage of opportunities afforded by student visa or study permit policies? And, alternatively, to what degree are these institutions prepared and committed to taking the initiative to support international students with understanding and negotiating obstacles or limitations posed by these policies? Have institutions codified avenues for proposing and taking action on areas in which they are failing to make adjustments, considering the challenging policy pervasion faced by their students?

OPP may be a concept of particular value in the study and practice of comprehensive internationalization—a topic of great importance in the field of international education—as it highlights the importance of acknowledging policy pervasion at the student level to incite consideration of the ways in which organizational responses can mitigate the impacts of, or enhance the opportunities afforded by, ISM policy in the host country. This might entail consideration of new or adjusted curricular offerings, administrative and bureaucratic processes, financial expectations, and more.

Element Audit Tool

In this article I have argued that the concept of policy pervasion is useful for communication of the international student experience, and for conducting research related to these students. When combined with the concept of organizational policy pervasion, it holds practical promise as it relates to services for international students, such as through the facilitation of audits of institutional policies, programs, and processes to identify areas in which the college or university can respond to policy pervasion experienced by international students.

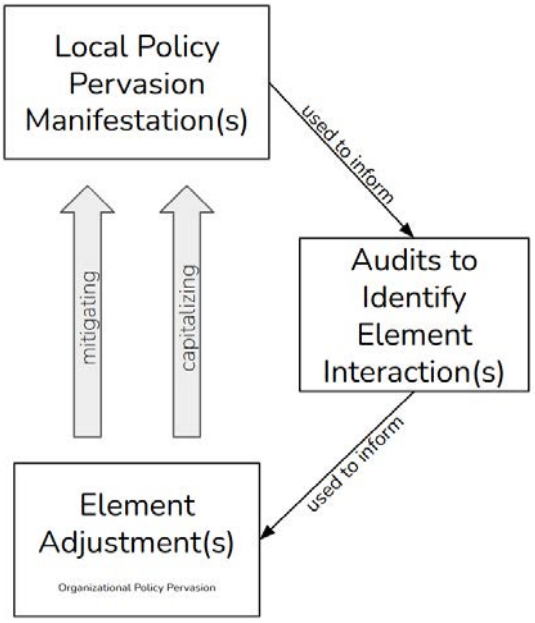
A review of relevant research and incorporation of professional knowledge about policy pervasion for students in the particular host country is invaluable for understanding how students at any given institution might be impacted by local ISM policy. This knowledge, then, could serve as a valuable starting point for determining what organizational response efforts might benefit students. However, considering institutional particularities within countries, context is important. It is therefore crucial to determine how particular institutional policies, programs, and processes (i.e., elements) interact with local ISM policy and impact students' policy pervasion experiences. An institution-specific element audit tool could serve as a framework to pointedly "interrogate" institutional elements to identify potential ways in which any given element might play a role in mitigating challenges or amplifying opportunities vis-a-vis policy pervasion. Thus, such a tool has the potential to make knowledge of individual policy pervasion actionable to drive productive OPP to better serve students.

An element audit tool could facilitate these interrogations with ideas derived from the literature on policy pervasion and from the expertise of international educators at the institution (and elsewhere) to guide users in methodical consideration of various

areas of policy pervasion experienced by students at the institution in order to identify and subsequently respond to any given element's capacity to impose or remove barriers associated with the visa or study permit impacts on students. This could vary from general to specific, cover a range of potential policy pervasion areas, and might be thematically grouped in order to facilitate element interrogation for any specific policy pervasion instances that have been identified as salient at a given higher education organization. This could entail a recursive process whereby educators identify local instances of policy pervasion, seek to understand how institutional policies, programs, and processes (elements) do and do not interact with those instances, and then use international student, student affairs, and other literatures, as well as the professional expertise of the educators, to explore opportunities for mitigating or capitalizing responses. The proposed element audit concept is visualized in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2

Visualization of the Element Audit Tool concept



Note. Rectangular boxes represent concepts and actions, described by their labels. The slim black arrows indicate directions of use of information. The gray arrows indicate actions by institutions to mitigate, or capitalize on, ISM policy pervasion at the institution.

In short, the element audit tool is envisioned as a mechanism to enhance equity for international students through pointed and methodical self-executed audits of institutional or departmental policies, processes, and programs (elements). The element audit has the potential to be a flexible, open-source tool for incorporating the knowledge and contributions of diverse and varied higher education administrators and literature, focusing on potential institutional responses to policy pervasion experienced by students at the school. Furthermore, the tool will ideally be updated in order to remain reactive to changes to local ISM policy, student

populations, institutional approaches to supporting students, and more.

Future Research

In this study, I have outlined some of the ways that policy pervasion obtains in different countries around the world, though an empirical study is needed to understand how this policy pervasion is similar to or diverges from that which was explored in Australia, Canada, and the United States (Crumley-Effinger, 2024a). Drilling down to the personal experiences of international students in countries around the world will likely identify new areas in which the student experience is impacted by potentially vastly different ISM policies. This should also include investigating the ways that international students gain knowledge of local ISM policies relevant to their status, as well as how they develop their perceptions of what is or is not permitted and expected of, or risky to, them. It is also critical that such future studies focus on a variety of countries that do and do not host large numbers of international students. Additionally, it is prudent to consider ISM policy at the regional level (including intersections with local and national policy within the region) in studies of policy pervasion; a natural example of this would be the confluence of national and European Union ISM policy and the resultant effects on international students.

Empirical and conceptual study of the triplet ideas of authority, agency, and access as they relate to policy pervasion will likely be significant for the continued development and expansion of the utility of policy pervasion, as will comparative, theoretical exploration of the concept to critically consider how it connects with relevant theories in the field. Finally, this article suggests, using examples, that organizational policy pervasion is both present at institutions and a concept that could fruitfully assist with the identification of prospective institutional adjustments to support international students. Empirical studies of the contours of organizational policy pervasion and the utility of the proposed element audit tools are an important next step in the development of this concept.

Conclusion

Understanding and acknowledging policy pervasion is crucial in the fields of international education and international student services because it succinctly describes the intuitive idea that immigration policies can impact students intimately, in different parts of their lives before, during, and after enrollment. Navigating policy pervasion is an everyday reality for many international students around the world, just as it can be a background or explicitly foregrounded reality for the many professionals supporting international students.

In this article, I have illustrated the applicability of the concept of policy pervasion in different national contexts, which contributed to the elaboration of the definition of policy pervasion as expressing the direct or indirect impacts of ISM policy on the lives and experiences of international students, as well as on their actions and decisions, as mediated by their knowledge and perceptions of ISM policy. This

article, as well as its precursors and prospective future empirical and conceptual research projects, have the potential to set the stage for the development of a *theory of policy pervasion* to enhance its capacity to benefit the field of comparative and international education, by informing both international student-facing practice and studies with international students around the world. A full theory of policy pervasion, derived from current and future research to wrestle with the concept's strengths and weaknesses, could equip researchers to enhance the study of policy pervasion manifestations in local contexts, just as it equips practitioners and policymakers to better understand and respond to the policy pervasion experienced by their international students.

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