

The relevance of network theory to overseas students studying in Australia

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This paper introduces Boissevain's (1974) network theory which seems to be useful when considering the adaptation of international students to academic life in Australia. Boissevain broadly divides the criteria for network analysis into two types: interactional and structural. Density and clusters would be important criteria in the former type because they could be taken as an index of the amounts and types of the potential communication between international students and their network members, including Australian peers and the same nationals. The interactional criteria, such as multiplexity, transactional content, and frequency and duration of interaction, are also relevant to the success of the overseas students' academic life in Australia. These criteria would lead us to discover the quality of their relationships with English-speaking background students and the amounts and types of their investment in these relationships, which may have an influence on the maintenance and development of their networks.

References

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