

Cash Cows and Back Doors: Contesting Media Representations of International Students

Double-edge exclusion:
Media Representation of International Students During COVID in Three
Jurisdictions: Mainland China, Taiwan, and Canada

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Land Acknowledgement

Our research was developed and discussed on the **traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of Musqueam, Squamish, Selilwitulh Nations**, where UBC is situated, and the **traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Chonnonton Nations**, where the Western University is located.

Background

COVID disease was first reported in Wuhan in Dec 2019 and the WHO declared the outbreak of a global pandemic in March 2020.



On March 16, 2020 Canada announces plans to close the border to international travel (Global News, 2020).



International students, especially those from Asia faced anti-Asian racism both from in-person violence and cyber racism. (Guy, 2020; Dubey, 2020; Firang, 2020; Human Rights Watch, 2020).



Colleges and universities across Canada were closed, and students experienced rapid changes to their academic life with online learning.



Research Question

How does mainstream media in Canada portray inbound international students during COVID-19?

How does mainstream media in Mainland China and Taiwan portray their outbound international students during COVID-19?

What discursive frameworks were evident in media stories published by these media outlets about international students during COVID-19?

Images of international students in media representations and policy documents in Canada

Ideal immigrants

consumers/cash of international education

recipients of the generosity of Canada

have moral deficits and are lawfully wrongdoers.

burden/harm/threat/competitors

(Anderson, 2020; Lee et al., 2020; Scott et al., 2015 ;Stein & Andriotti, 2016)

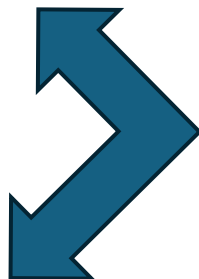
Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Media Framing

Framing, as defined by Entman (1993), is a process through which journalists “select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in communicating context, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p. 52).

Neo-nationalism

Neo-nationalism, conceptualized as “discrimination based on national identity” (Lee, 2016, p.23), is a critical framework to explain the segregation by nationality even within the same race (Lee, 2017).



Critical Discourse Analysis

CDA is “fundamentally interested in analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” and aims to “investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, constituted, legitimized and so on, by language use (or in discourse)” (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 10).

Data Collection

Jurisdictions	Canada	Mainland China	Taiwan
Selected media	The Globe and Mail CBC News	Xinhua News Agency Remin Daily	TVBS EBS
Platform	Facebook	Weibo	Facebook
Search Term	International student	“Liuxuesheng” (留学生)	“Liuxuesheng” (留學生)
Time Period	March 11, 2020 to March 10, 2021	Jan 28 , 2020 to March 10, 2021	March 11 2020 to March 10, 2021

Canadian News Media

Theme #1

International students as important financial resources.



Canadian universities are preparing for a very uncertain fall term because of the coronavirus.



THEGLOBEANDMAIL.COM

Universities, colleges face potential budget crunch as they assess impact of COVID-19 on international student enrolment

Canadian News Media

Theme #2

International students are isolated and disconnected.



Thousands of miles away from their families, international students watch as borders shut down, airlines cancel flights, and countries announce drastic isolation measures.



CBC.CA


International students feeling isolated and financially strapped as they wait out pandemic

Canadian News Media

Theme #3

International students as victims of increased anti-Asian racism/hatred in Canada.



The Globe and Mail 

September 14, 2020 · 



Online portal allows victims to report incidents anonymously, with 44 percent of attacks in British Columbia



THEGLOBEANDMAIL.COM

Data shows an increase in anti-Asian hate incidents in Canada since onset of pandemic

Mainland China News Media

Theme #1

International students are “heroes”.

Overseas Chinese students organized volunteer team to collect medical supplies

人民日报  

原创 20-2-23 22:22 来自 微博 weibo.com 已编辑

#青春的逆行#【中国年轻人的样子！#00后已到达防疫战场#】当80后90后纷纷请战一线，00后也在尽己所能为防疫作贡献：护士陈玉婷赴湖北一线抗疫；各地00后大学生报名成为志愿者；海外留学生组建志愿者团队，为抗疫筹集物资...曾经被守护的孩子，如今已长大成人。**#抗疫前线的00后#**↓↓为他们点赞，为中国的年轻人点赞！



陈玉婷
“护士陈玉婷，奔赴湖北一线”

詹同学
“我是湖北人，也是湖北人”

曹国超
“我是湖北人，也是湖北人”

崔馨月 崔众博
“我是湖北人，也是湖北人”

余鑫乐
“我是湖北人，也是湖北人”

潘子墨
“我是湖北人，也是湖北人”

施耀程
“我是湖北人，也是湖北人”

俞金旋
“我是湖北人，也是湖北人”

郑紫蓉
“我是湖北人，也是湖北人”

 7042  7434  22.5万

Mainland China News Media

Theme #2

International students are “care receivers”.

#Chinese students in Japan
Vlogged “health kits” allocation#



Mainland China News Media

Theme #3

International students are “virus carriers”.

Research shows the new waves of coronavirus transmission in the City of Harbin is from a returned international student



新华社

20-4-28 07:10 来自 微博 weibo.com

【现有研究结果更支持归国留学生韩某为此轮哈尔滨疫情传播源】中国工程院院士、哈尔滨医科大学校长张学4月28日下午向记者介绍，经中国疾控中心、哈尔滨医科大学等有关专家调查分析，现有研究结果更支持从美国归来的留学生韩某为此轮哈尔滨疫情反弹的传播源。

“通过基因测序分析明显看到，这个传播链的新冠病毒基因组序列，与中国人群中以往测过的病毒基因组序列是明显不一样的。”张学说，测序结果支持传播来自国外，是境外输入病例。综合考虑基因组测序分析、流行病学调查证据关联等信息，目前更支持韩某是此次疫情反弹的传播源。

韩某在哈尔滨结束居家隔离后，曾与家人共同进餐，还曾前往上海进行手术，但目前却未造成这些相关人员感染的情况。对此，张学解释道，韩某解除在哈尔滨的居家隔离时，有关部门对其几次进行核酸检测，都呈阴性。但两次IgG抗体检测是阳性，证明其已有了特异性抗体。“通俗地讲，这就相当于人的免疫系统把病毒给消灭掉了，此时的病毒通过飞沫、气溶胶等方式传染的可能性也就降低了。这种情况下，韩某接触的其他人没有被感染是有可能的。”张学说。（记者间春）



207

53

359

Mainland China News Media

Theme #4

International students are “victims”.

#What is happening in Australia#? Due to Covid, racism targeting Chinese and Asian are frequently exposed in public.



人民日报 🇨🇳 🇨🇳

20-6-10 05:12 来自 微博 weibo.com

【多部门连发预警，#澳大利亚到底发生了什么#?】过去数月，因为新冠肺炎疫情，针对华裔乃至亚裔的种种歧视现象已多次曝光在公众面前。4月，两名中国女留学生在墨尔本遭种族歧视攻击。在悉尼，一名亚裔男子在街头遭到当地人的攻击。然而，不少澳大利亚官员却对此“选择性失明”↓↓



506

983

5721

Taiwanese News Media

Theme #1

*International students as the victims
of “Wuhan pneumonia”*

International students are discriminated against for wearing masks, foreigners scold "Wuhan pneumonia"



#愛在身邊：大家有沒有被歧視的經驗？

留學生戴口罩被歧視！外國人怒罵：武漢病毒

●台確診破百例！日激增23例 1本土感染源未知

<https://www.facebook.com/news.ebc/videos/1896436923814950/>

【東森新聞telegram】新聞在哪裡東森就在哪裡→https://t.me/news_ebc... See more



Taiwanese News Media

Theme #2

International student as competitors/consumers of medical resources.

Taiwanese student diagnosed in the United States, netizens say "don't come back to use health insurance."



A screenshot of a Facebook post from EBC News (東森新聞). The post is dated August 26, 2020. The text of the post reads: "#滑水編：這樣合理嗎？ 台留學生自爆在美確診！酸民：別回來用健保 【東森新聞telegram】 → https://t.me/news_etc 影片授權：olie87035... See more". The EBC News logo is visible in the top left corner of the post.



148

18 Comments 8 Shares

Taiwanese News Media

Theme #3

*International student as “virus carriers,”
“rule breakers,” and the “breach” of
pandemic prevention*

Returning to Taiwan is not welcomed. International students say they must go home.



這個時候需要大家團結，而不是對立阿QQ

#如有疑似症狀請撥打1922專線

#新冠肺炎疫情→<https://reurl.cc/1Q5O9Q>

【返台挨轟不被歡迎 留學生痛訴心聲：很抱歉我必須回家】... See more



NEWS.TVBS.COM.TW | BY TVBS 新聞

返台挨轟不被歡迎 留學生痛訴心聲：很抱歉我必須回家|TVBS新聞網

國內新冠肺炎疫情這幾天進入高峰期，累計確診病例數已破百，且新增案例多半為境外移入感...



[Images of Bullying] (n.d.) https://www.sohu.com/a/456549449_121072174



You
belong.

Photo by [Tim Mossholder](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Belong

Thank you

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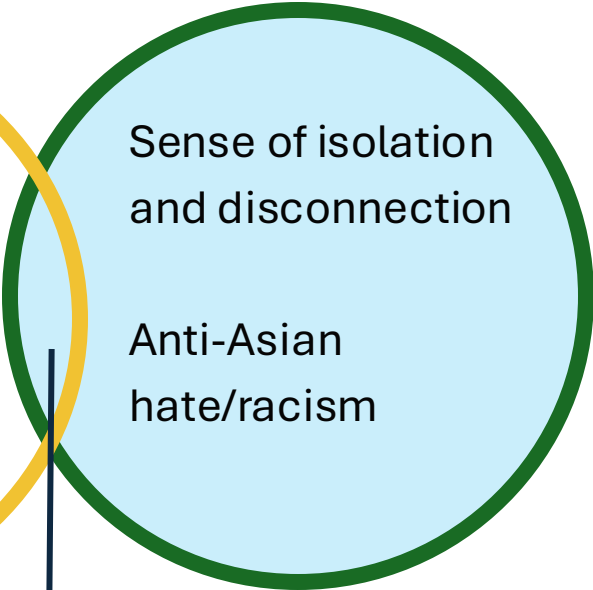
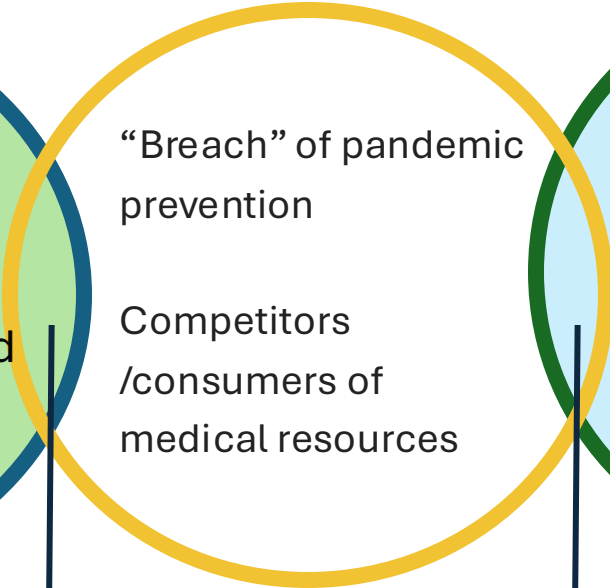
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Mainland China

Taiwan

Canada



The burden of medical systems
Virus carrier & rule breaker
Victim of racial discrimination and violence

International students in economic term

Summary of Canadian News Media

- Who represent international students and who is welcomed and who is not welcomed.
- IS are isolated and disconnected with societies in both host and home countries.
- Spatial separation between anti-Asian hate racism in Canada and in university campuses.

Summary of Taiwanese News Media

- Triggered geopolitical tension between China and Western allies.
- Portray IS as rich people and the consumer (competitors) of limited medical resources.
- Portray IS as a “breach” of pandemic prevention, virus carrier, and rule breaker.

Summary of Mainland Chinese News Media

- The representation of IS as the care receiver and volunteer also indicate a sense nation pride and national spirits of China.
- The negative representation of IS in Mainland China generates hostile attitudes in society, which is evidenced in the comments.
- The media discourses about IS is entangled with geopolitical tensions.

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