

Journal of Graduate Education Research

Volume 5

2024

Challenging Elitism in Higher Education and Graduate Employability: A Thinking Piece

Bushra Baboo Rally
University of Lancaster

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.harding.edu/jger>



Part of the [Adult and Continuing Education Commons](#), and the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Baboo Rally, Bushra (2024) "Challenging Elitism in Higher Education and Graduate Employability: A Thinking Piece," *Journal of Graduate Education Research*: Vol. 5, Article 8.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.harding.edu/jger/vol5/iss1/8>

This Original Report is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Education at Scholar Works at Harding. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Graduate Education Research by an authorized editor of Scholar Works at Harding. For more information, please contact scholarworks@harding.edu.



HARDING
UNIVERSITY

Challenging Elitism in Higher Education and Graduate Employability: A Thinking Piece

Bushra Baboo Rally

University of Lancaster

How to cite this article:

Rally, B. B. (2024). Challenging elitism in higher education and graduate employability: A thinking piece. *Journal of Graduate Education Research*, 5, 48-61.

ABSTRACT

This paper critically examines the prevalence of elitism in higher education and the complex challenge it posits for graduate employability. Several sections of this paper explore the concept of elitism through the lens of positional conflict theory and narrow it down to the relative graduate employability challenges that are experienced due to various factors. The current paper contributes to knowledge since the existing pool of literature does not tackle, in isolation, the function of elitism in posing employment challenges for recent graduates and is not expressed in the current conceptualisations selected in this paper. The paper ends with a call for a collective commitment to dismantle elitist structures and empower graduates by fostering a more dynamic educational ecosystem, which is concretised by some recommendations that higher education institutions can implement.

Keywords

Higher Education, Graduate Studies, Elitism, Employability

INTRODUCTION

Before delving into the substantive arguments of this paper, it is imperative to elucidate relevant terminological distinctions as articulated by Trow (2007), aimed at enhancing a nuanced comprehension of the conveyed meanings: (1) elite education – which moulds the character and intellectual faculties of the ruling class and prepares them for roles of elite stature; (2) mass education- refers to the impartation of skills and readiness for a broad spectrum of technical and economic functions; (3) universal education- which adapts the “whole population” to rapid social and technological change. The landscape of higher education has undergone a process of “massification” in recent decades due to the rapid expansion observed in this field (Kapur et al., 2023). Prior studies, however, suggested that the rapid growth of higher education institutions does not correlate with increased social mobility but rather widens the educational inequality gap, eventually impacting graduate employability (Mok and Jiang, 2018). The stand of studies such as that of Brown and James (2020) highlights the stated contradiction since the research proves that education’s potential as a source of social mobility is severely constrained without additional employment opportunities. Moreover, the same study also highlights that it is essential to address both conditional and educational opportunity disparities to reduce poverty. Therefore, the nexus between the future of work and higher education has been redefined in the 21st century (Sharma, 2020).

Although there are numerous studies on graduate employability, including those that show inequalities that exist in terms of employment for students graduating from elite and less elite universities (Williams and Filippakou, 2010), the role of elitism in challenging graduate employability has not been tackled in its own right and articulated in current conceptualisations. This is important as concerns have been raised in this regard, especially if higher education institutions and societies aim to decrease inequality that keeps on reproducing.

Considering the background and issues introduced above, this paper is a conceptual thinking piece that builds on a literature review concerning discursive hegemony by offering a new articulation and rejecting essentialist concepts such as global class. By reviewing the literature on graduate employability and using a hybrid literature review on the focused discourse of elitism, this paper explores the challenges of elitism in the context of higher education concerning graduate employability, through the lens of positional conflict theory.

THE APPROACH ADOPTED TO DOCUMENT EXISTING LITERATURE IN THIS PAPER

A Hybrid Literature Review, adopted from the research of Paul and Criado (2020), is conducted for the themes of 'Graduate Employability,' 'Elitism,' and 'Positional Conflict Theory.' The different themes were searched in studies that were related to the context of higher education, and studies ranging from the years 2000 - 2023 were selected. Some of the 'older' studies that the paper refers to are to gain a better grasp of the founding theories or concepts that relate to the area of study in this paper.

What is a Hybrid Literature Review?

A Hybrid Literature Review combines both narrative and systematic reviews; systematic search criteria are applied to the selection of articles, while a narrative approach is used in the synthesis of the retrieved literature (Turnbull et al., 2023). One example of a study using the Hybrid Literature Review within the research area of education to good effect is that of Fleisher (2012).

Rationale for the Choice of Hybrid Literature Review

The preference for a hybrid literature review over content analysis or meta-analysis in this study is grounded in the research question's nature, the study's objectives, and the information sought (Turnbull et al., 2023). A hybrid literature review offers a distinctive advantage by amalgamating

systematic review elements with a traditional narrative approach, facilitating the synthesis of diverse perspectives and theoretical frameworks. This proved invaluable in comprehending the intricacies surrounding the prevalence of elitism in higher education and its repercussions on graduate employability. The qualitative nature of the hybrid review aligns seamlessly with the need to delve deeply into complex concepts (Mishra & Dey, 2023) like elitism, providing a nuanced exploration that surpasses the qualitative focus of content analysis and meta-analysis. Additionally, the flexibility to integrate both qualitative and quantitative evidence in a hybrid literature review suits the comprehensive understanding required by the research question, allowing for a more nuanced exploration that extends beyond numerical data. Lastly, the encouragement of critical engagement with the literature aligns seamlessly with the research question's call for critical examination of elitism in higher education.

Key Elements for Writing a Hybrid Literature Review

This sections emphasise the critical components of the suggested methodology for a Hybrid Literature Review, as brought forward by Turnbull et al. (2023) and each key element's application in the current paper is explained in the sub-sections below.

Research Questions

Since research procedures are chosen based on how well they address the research questions (Cipriani and Geddes, 2003), it is important to have a clear and well-defined research question. The current paper already defines a concise and clear research question in its initial section to enhance the hybrid literature review process.

Justification

In a Hybrid Literature review, there is a need to include inclusion/exclusion criteria, drawn from the systematic review practice, while applying a narrative approach to analyse the shortlisted articles (Turnbull et al., 2020). In the current paper, the main criteria for shortlisted studies are that they must adhere to a minimum of 2 elements described below. The paper adopted the following inclusion criteria, which can be overviewed in the table below, with a tick (✓) suggesting the elements that were present in each study:

Table 1

Studies/Research and The Inclusion Criteria (Author's work)

Studies/Research	Author(s) & Year	Element 1: Higher Education Context	Element 2: Graduate Employability/ Employability	Element 3: Elitism	Element 4: Positional Conflict Theory	Element 5: Inequality of opportunities in higher education or employment
Infrastructures of Sociality: How Disadvantaged Students Navigate Inequity at the University.	Budhiraja, 2023	✓		✓		✓
Re-Framing Employability as a Problem of Perceived Opportunities: The Case of Internships in a U.S. College Using the Student Perceptions of Employment Opportunities (SPEO) Framework.	Hora, 2023		✓	✓	✓	✓
Relative Employability: Applying the Insights of Positional Competition and Conflict Theories Within the Current Higher Education Landscape	Isopahkala - Bouret & Tholen, 2023		✓	✓	✓	✓
Student mentoring to enhance graduates' employability potential.	Bolton-King, 2022	✓	✓			✓
Impact of work-integrated learning and co-curricular activities on graduate labour force outcomes.	Jackson and Rowe, 2022	✓	✓			✓
Expanding or restricting access to tertiary education? A tale of two sectors and two countries.	Kish-Gephart et al., 2022			✓	✓	✓
Expanding or restricting access to tertiary education? A tale of two sectors and two countries.	Smith., 2022	✓		✓	✓	✓
Defining Social Justice in Education	Brady and Pijanowki, 2021	✓				✓
Can university qualification promote social mobility? A review of higher education expansion and graduate employment in China	Chan and Ngok, 2021	✓	✓	✓		✓
Chapter 10: <i>Teaching to Empower: Social Justice Action Projects as Imperatives for Educational Justice.</i>	Hancock et al., 2021	✓		✓		✓
Talent management, identity construction and the burden of elitism: The case of management trainees in Hong Kong.	Kamoche and Leigh, 2021		✓	✓		✓
A new elite? Higher education as seen through the lens of young people working in innovative technologies	Pantea, 2021	✓	✓	✓		✓
Inequalities in higher education in low and middle- income countries: A scoping review of the literature	Reindeers et al., 2021	✓		✓		✓
Revisiting the concept of employability through economic theories: Contributions, limitations and policy implications.	Suleman, 2021		✓	✓	✓	✓

Internships and the graduate labour market: how upper-middle-class students 'get ahead'	Wright and Mulvey, 2021		✓	✓	✓	✓
Educational expansion, poverty reduction and social mobility: Reframing the debate.	Brown and James, 2020	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The Nexus between Future of Work and Future of Higher Education: Redefining Employability and Equity	Sharma, 2020	✓	✓			✓
The curious promise of educationalising technological unemployment: What can places of learning really do about the future of work?	Peters et al., 2019		✓	✓	✓	✓
'I am competent so I can be choosy': Choosiness and its implication on graduate employability.	Jayasingam et al., 2018		✓	✓	✓	
How college education promotes intergenerational mobility: An empirical study on the comparison of graduates' city of birth, college and job	Liping and Yanlin, 2018		✓	✓	✓	✓
Massification of Higher Education and challenges for graduate employment and Social Mobility: East Asian experiences and sociological reflections."	Mok and Jiang, 2018	✓	✓	✓		✓
Who are gaining the highly paid elite placements in UK higher education?	Wang and Crawford, 2018	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The Illusion of Meritocracy and the Audacity of Elitism: Expanding the Evaluative Space in Education.	Gale et al., 2017	✓	✓	✓		✓
Symbolic closure: Towards a renewed sociological perspective on the relationship between higher education, credentials and the graduate labour market.	Tholen, 2017	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Graduate Employability in Context : Theory, Research and Debate	Tomlinson et al., 2017	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Higher education, elite formation and social stratification in contemporary China: Preliminary findings from the Beijing College Students Panel Survey.	Wu, 2017	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Honourable mobility or shameless entitlement? Habitus and graduate employment.	Abrahams, 2016		✓	✓	✓	✓
Higher education, social class, and social mobility:	Bathmaker et al., 2016	✓		✓	✓	✓
Class advantage, commitment penalty: The gendered effect of social class signals in an elite labor market.	Riviera and Tilsik, 2016		✓	✓	✓	✓
A Comparative Analysis of Graduate Employment Prospects in European Labour Markets: A Study of Graduate Recruitment in Four Countries	Branine and Avramenko, 2015		✓	✓		✓
A systematic review of current understandings of employability	Williams et al., 2015		✓	✓	✓	✓

What is the role of education in the recruitment process? Employers' practices and experiences of graduates from tertiary educational institutions in Estonia.	Saar et al., 2013	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ralph Dahrendorf's Conflict Theory of Social Differentiation and Elite Theory	Tittenbrun, 2013	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The student perspective on employability	Tymon, 2013	✓	✓		✓	✓
Becoming employable students and 'ideal' creative workers: Exclusion and inequality in higher education work placements	Allen et al., 2012	✓	✓		✓	✓
Accumulating human capital while increasing educational inequality: a study on higher education policy in China	Chan and Ngok, 2011		✓			✓
Higher education and UK elite formation in the twentieth century	Williams and Filippakou, 2009	✓	✓		✓	✓
The mismanagement of talent: Employability and jobs in the knowledge economy.	Brown & Hesketh, 2004		✓	✓	✓	✓
The opportunity trap: Education and employment in a global economy.	Brown, 2003	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employability in a Knowledge-driven Economy	Brown et al, 2003	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
The Globalisation of Positional Competition	Brown, 2000	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Literature Sources

In order to reduce publication bias (Paez, 2017), the current study included more than one bibliographic database, for example, Proquest, OneSearch, Google Scholar, and Springer.

Search Parameters

The literature review consists of only peer-reviewed articles. Boolean search strings (AND, OR and NOT) were used for each of the key themes of this paper, namely: Elitism, Inequality, Graduate Employability, and Higher Education.

Data Cleaning

The articles that have been selected above, were further examined to determine their relevance to the research under study. The process followed the suggestion of Linnenluecke et al. (2020) who posit that an article's inclusion in a particular study can be determined only after examining the abstract.

Information Synthesis

To synthesise information for this paper, the studies that are selected are analysed using content analysis, where the text is categorised against emerging codes that signify commonalities and differences between the research found.

ELITISM AS AN ELEMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO EMPLOYABILITY

Social justice is a concept that very broadly aims to ensure that every individual receives fair treatment in society (Brady & Pijanowski, 2021). Elitism is one of the concerns of social justice that can and often does result in educational disadvantage and thus inevitably affect employability opportunities (Gale, Molla, and Parker, 2017). The research of Gale, Molla, and Parker (2017) evokes that the relevance of education in achieving social justice has increased in the context of growing global inequities between privileged and disadvantaged social groups.

The employability agenda aims to create a benchmark of only desired and applicable skill sets, acknowledging that merely having access to a university does not ensure that one would receive an equivalent education or, for that matter, have similar employment chances. Bourdieu (1984, 1986, 1998, 2000) asserted that social injustices are perpetuated through educational disparities, which is a way of maintaining the status quo. According to Aronowitz (2004), who agrees with Bourdieu's contention that the primary goal of education is to prepare students for the workplace, this instrumental model has a broad expansion of educational attainment but is unable to address inequalities that arise as a result of different perceptions within higher education.

GRADUATE'S EMPLOYABILITY THROUGH THE LENS OF POSITIONAL CONFLICT THEORY

There are interdependent forces and inhibitors that result in specific consequences when the concept of social justice is used in higher education (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). Reexamining social justice in higher education exposes the political party in power's ideological assumptions, which are then followed by educational adjustments shaped by the state's social justice agenda. When the state develops frameworks for policy to deal with issues that delight its audience, it may create sophisticated frameworks that function more as political representations than actual attempts at tackling the underlying problems (Jansen, 2001), which ultimately results in legislation taking on a symbolic aspect. Furthermore, by giving one issue priority over another, the state will allocate resources to that issue at the expense of other social justice issues that could have been addressed. This leads to pursuing social justice issues that are exclusively on the state agenda, which may cause the gap between social "injustices" within higher education to expand.

The "consensus theory" of employability, which maintains that upskilling communities in a knowledge-based economy is a good thing that benefits all stakeholders, is unduly optimistic, (Brown, Hesketh, and Williams, 2003). The "conflict theory," on the other hand, contends that employment is an effort to rationalize unequal possibilities in school and the labor market at a time of rising income inequalities (Brown, Hesketh, and Williams 2003). In contrast, the aforementioned researchers are inclined toward this view. By proposing a "positional conflict theory" strategy that considers both the "rigging" of the system for credentials (by relying on Weber's notions of social closure) and the "ranking" of candidates based on their social and cultural capital in the job market, they enhance conflict theory.

Research suggests that social elitist status is often associated with over-education across various contexts. In parallel to this argument, the research of Chang and Zhang (2021) posits that the existing higher education model in China does not promote social mobility and is obligated to play a role designed by the state. In congruence with the argument brought forward, Li and Ou's (2019) work concludes that family background, parents' educational attainment, occupational status, and income level remain the most influential factors in determining children's access to higher education, and, therefore, influence their graduate employability. It is worth mentioning previous empirical studies that identified numerous factors such as location, household status, and gender, impacting access to higher education and therefore, having an influence on whether or not the graduate has the same access to employment (Chang & Ngok, 2011, Pang, 2016; Wu, 2016; Ma & Liu, 2018, Wu, 2019).

An important study reveals that in measuring intellectual elitism, one can objectively measure educational attainment or qualifications. However, measuring social elitism is a more difficult task since there is a need to measure one's work unit and the social influence attached to the society in which one lives (Chang & Zhang, 2021).

The early theories on the positionality of education and employability stem from the belief that the labour market is largely dependent on other people's actions can be found in writings on economics from the 1970s (Isopahkala-Bouret and Tholen, 2023). In addition to meeting the requirements of a specific job, one's relative employability also depends on where they fall in the hierarchy of job seekers (Brown et al., 2003). Therefore, positional competition and conflict between various social groups and individuals that strategise to gain an advantage over others in the labour market by utilising various types of resources, including graduate degrees, are involved in relative employability (Brown et al., 2003; Tholen, 2017).

The conflict theory interprets bias in the present educational policies and contends that there is economic instability that causes the social divide to deepen (Sharma, 2020). Drawing on founding theorists such as Bourdieu (1997), Hesketh and Williams (2003) argue that the consensus perspective is flawed since employability reflects an effort to justify unequal prospects in education and the labour market, where instead of boosting productivity, personal traits are emphasised in an effort to legitimise the perpetuation of disparities (Stoten, 2018). Therefore, Positional Conflict Theory offers a potent critique of the employability agenda that goes beyond just identifying desirable characteristics in the graduate labour force (Stolen, 2018) and is used in this paper as a lens to analyse the impacts of elitism on graduate employability.

Divergent viewpoints on the subject of understudy, act as a barometer for the difference between different colleges and their student enrolment and connect the idea of social justice in higher education to employability. For instance, the study by Boden and Neveda (2010) identifies the issue that local interpretations and notions about what qualifies graduates for employment may vary between Anglia Ruskin University and the University of Oxford. Although there isn't a statement about employability on the University of Oxford website, graduates from Oxford are typically regarded as having fantastic employability. The study also shows that Oxford's curriculum has not changed to reflect any emphasis on employability, as it did at many other universities, by building a broad base of knowledge and cultural capital. To put it another way, Oxford produces a highly sought-after cadre of "employers" with significant social and cultural capital, whereas Anglia Ruskin builds a re-trainable, flexible "employees" and work environment with highly specialized skills on behalf of employers. Elite institutions use their reputational capital to create their special capacity to place graduates in desirable professions (Brown et al., 2003).

CONFLICTING POSITIONS IN THE GRADUATE JOB MARKET

Graduate job markets around the world have undergone a fundamental change as a result of mass higher education, where everyone is urged to participate in higher education as an investment in their human capital under the rhetoric of the knowledge-based economy (Hora, 2023). Consequently, a sociological literature that specifically examined how the rising involvement affected the competition for graduate positions eventually came into existence; some sociologists (Brown, 2000, 2003; Brown et al., 2003; Brown and Hesketh, 2004) contend that graduate employability is socially structured and becoming increasingly relative as similarly educated people compete for a finite number of high-skilled jobs. The stated theory was built on earlier insights into the changing conditions for graduates and the role of the middle class in the competition for graduate jobs.

This section details some of the salient features of graduate employability and also provides background on the elements of positional conflict that affect graduate employability. Graduate employability refers to the way social class directly or indirectly affects employment results (Holmes, 2013). Indirect effects impact educational experience through the type of university attended, degree specialisation, and level of accomplishment, while direct impacts are demonstrated in terms of the type of employment that graduates from economically disadvantaged families are likely to secure (Clarke, 2017). The previous viewpoint is supported by Brown and Scase (2005), who contend that despite the expansion of the higher education system, highly sought “fast track” graduate positions are still mostly offered to people from wealthy backgrounds. However, the research by Clarke (2017) provides insight into the role of capital, individual attributes, and context while rethinking graduate employability and reflects that there are constructs that are beyond the control of an individual or even of the institution to curb elitist practices that might even be subconscious to some employers and practitioners.

In order for social groupings to gain a competitive edge in the graduate labour market, Brown et al. (2003) made a distinction between “rigging” and “ranking” techniques. “Rigging” is the practice of professional status organisations utilising exclusionary measures frequently in the recruiting process, to manipulate markets and competition laws to their own advantage (Brown et al., 2003), “Ranking” refers to a person’s capacity to mobilise social, cultural, and economic resources to gain a competitive advantage in the job market. Critical sociologists have emphasised the significance of social closure in the distribution of labour where groups and individuals can use educational credentials as a barrier to employment (Hora, 2023). Furthering the idea put forward by Hora (2023), by establishing strict entry standards for certain professions or occupations, one might increase the relative employability of graduates. The previous statement means that the rising demand for talents has not led to a rise in educational requirements for

jobs, and instead, as higher education involvement rises throughout the general population, businesses choose applicants according to their cultural or professional preferences. This viewpoint emphasises the relative nature of employability as well as the significance of other rivals in the job market (Tholen, 2017).

THE COMPLEXITY OF EDUCATIONAL ELITISM

Since the study combines the main domain theory of elitism with graduate employability, there is a need to investigate educational elitism to better analyse the dimensions affecting the concepts in this paper. A recent study by Telling (2020) focuses on the Bourdieusian concept of the sociology of education which reveals a complex mix of meanings held in educators’ minds, hinting at educational elitism and the link to misrecognition. The study of Telling (2020) also hints at several underlying factors; how educators are themselves, think of the link between class and education type, or even the choice of students for certain universities. The research equally expands on three main axes: domestic (personal qualities also framed as ‘culture’), civic (performance in examinations), and inspirational (personal qualities linked to intrinsic values such as integrity or intellect) (Telling, 2020). The same research draws attention to the slippage between the intellectual attributes of students and their social background; the author also critiques the link between the ideal student’s intellectual ability (measured by academic attainment) and their inspirational worth (intellectual openness and love for learning). The international baccalaureate is then used as a measure of this openness (domestic worth). In simple words, it is as though the pupil’s choice to enroll in the IB program and attend a private school is being applauded here because it demonstrates their intellectual curiosity. The kind of qualitative data gathered by the research of Telling (2020) portrays that the opinions of educators, elite employees, and graduates are supported by some seemingly legitimate set of ideals (typically meritocratic), yet they have the unintended consequence of perpetuating societal elites.

NAVIGATING THE LABYRINTH OF ELITISM: A COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OF LABOUR MARKET DYNAMICS AND GRADUATE OPPORTUNITIES

The dynamics of elitism within the labour market are intricate and influenced by a myriad of factors that extend beyond conventional academic metrics. Riviera and Tilsik (2016) and Jackson and Rowe (2022) underscore the salient impact of gender and social class, revealing a trend wherein individuals from higher social strata, particularly men, tend to secure employment more expeditiously. In contrast, lower-class applicants often encounter challenges assimilating into elite work cultures, such as those prevalent in law firms.

Suleman’s (2021) research introduces the conceptual framework of employability, placing a significant emphasis on

the intricate interplay of social and personal barriers encompassing social and cultural capital. This framework not only shapes access to higher education but also profoundly influences subsequent graduate employability. Tomlinson (2017) further expounds on this discourse by incorporating human capital, social capital (networks) and cultural capital (knowledge, habits and taste) as pivotal elements exerting a substantial impact on employment outcomes. Additionally, Williams et al. (2016) introduce the notion of psychological capital, recognizing personal qualities like adaptability and resilience as significant contributors to employee retention.

Despite the inherent complexities, institutional reputation emerges as a decisive factor in determining employability, as elucidated by Saar (2014). The preferences of graduates from specific higher education institutions are intricately linked to perceptions of enhanced cognitive and interpersonal skills. However, it is imperative to acknowledge the nuanced variations in these preferences across nations, contributing to the segmentation among institutions, students, and graduates.

Byrne's (2020) study introduces an additional layer of complexity, disclosing that factors influencing graduate employability extend beyond the sphere of individual universities' control. Notably, ethnicity continues to be a determinant of perceived employability, notwithstanding concerted efforts to broaden participation.

The subsequent section delves into the notion of the 'new elite' within the context of technology-related fields, as scrutinised by Pantea (2021). This exploration reveals that traditional university functions may not resonate with the experiences of certain bright and creative individuals, leading them to opt for unconventional paths, such as dropping out of choosing not to attend. The study challenges the conventional understanding of university dropout, contending that it does not uniformly signify failure or social disadvantage.

Furthermore, the research conducted by Wright and Mulvey (2021) sheds light on how upper-middle-class students strategically leverage family resources to secure high-status internships, thereby positioning themselves advantageously in the competitive labour market. This underscores the pivotal role of internships as a class tactic, contributing significantly to the social reproduction of inequalities in graduate employment. Wang and Crawford (2019) propose a potential remedy to this by suggesting that structured, paid, and regulated university-organised work placement programs can offer a more equitable opportunity for students lacking family networks or connections.

In synthesis, these sections collectively underscore the intricate interplay of various factors shaping elitism within the labour market. These factors encompass gender, social class, institutional reputation, employability barriers, and the evolving dynamics of the 'new elite'. The ensuing discussion emphasises the imperative of a nuanced and comprehensive

understanding of these multifaceted influences to effectively address and mitigate inequalities in graduate opportunities and employment outcomes.

REPOSITIONING HIGHER EDUCATION AS A GLOBAL COMMODITY TO MINIMISE THE IMPACTS OF ELITISM

Based on the analysis of the topics under study, there is a need to revisit and reconstruct opportunities for a more equitable balance for graduates' enhanced employability skills. This subsection focuses on three axes that are crucial for a less elitist approach to graduate employability which is enhanced if there is a repositioning of higher education as a global commodity on financial and regulatory frameworks, knowledge distribution, and knowledge generation in higher education.

Axis I - Financial and Regulatory Frameworks

Bourdieu's work is interesting to apply in this section: through Bourdieu's (1988, 1996) constructs of "field", "capital" and "habitus", universities have been conceptualised as relatively autonomous contexts governed by deeply ingrained cultures, values, and professional protocols that are distinct from those found in other domains of practice. Thus, it is conceivable that the university serves as an important mediating framework through which the forces of commodification may be dislodged, reorganised, or even subverted (Naidoo, 2003). Therefore, in order to curb the negative impacts of elitism, theoretical frameworks, and empirical data can analyse how these external influences, namely financial and regulatory frameworks, could be altered by logic and structure unique to the institutional environment of universities.

Axis II - Knowledge Distribution

Another argument to enhance the repositioning of higher education institutions in view to minimise elitism is the fact that higher education sociological research has tended to be defined by macro-level analyses that ignore university internal operations. Recently, there have been changes to this strategy and much research has been done on the effects of outside forces on management and administration in higher educational institutions (Naidoo, 2003). Nevertheless, the influence of forces for monetisation on what must be two of the most crucial roles of universities - knowledge production and knowledge reproduction remain a little unexplored (Nonaka and Toyama, 2015). Furthermore, government reforms are predicted based on the idea that current policy changes in research and education will result in increased equity, improved quality and a closer connection to economic productivity (Machlup, 2014).

Axis III - Knowledge Production

At the macro level, commodification forces may be very diverse between various university types. Higher-ranking universities with significant financial, reputational, and

scholarly capital as well as high levels of autonomy may be more resistant to commodification pressures than other universities. The implication is that vulnerable institutions that accept students from underprivileged backgrounds would likely experience the most damaging effects of the commodification of higher education. The majority of disadvantaged students will instead receive an education that is focused on developing a limited set of core competencies and a small elite of “self-programmable” workers who have mastered the art of learning and are occupationally mobile may emerge from the higher education system, according to Castells (2001), along with a sizable mass of “generic workers” who are interchangeable and disposable and unable to adjust to a volatile and changing labour market.

UNPACKING THE RELATIONSHIP: THE RELATIONAL PARADIGM OF GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY, ELITISM, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relational paradigm of graduate employability, elitism, and associated recommendations for higher education provided in the following sections, elucidate critical insights into fostering inclusivity and equity within educational and employment frameworks. Central to this paradigm is the recognition of the significance of relationships and networks in shaping graduate employability outcomes, as underscored by Lackovic (2019). This paradigm challenges the predominant focus on individual achievements and credentials, which often perpetuates exclusionary practices in employment, as noted by Telling (2020).

Recommendations stemming from this relational paradigm encompass a multifaceted approach aimed at mitigating elitism and promoting diversity and inclusion within higher education institutions. Firstly, enhancing outreach and access programs emerges as a pivotal strategy to broaden participation among underrepresented communities and individuals from diverse backgrounds. Through initiatives such as work readiness workshops, mentoring programs, and partnerships with external organisations, institutions can actively engage marginalised groups, thereby diversifying the applicant pool and addressing disparities in graduate employability.

Addressing social inequalities is another crucial aspect highlighted within the relational paradigm. Institutions are urged to acknowledge and mitigate the impact of elitism on perpetuating social disparities by ensuring equal access to opportunities, irrespective of one’s background. This necessitates the expansion of financial aid and scholarship programs targeted at underrepresented groups to facilitate their academic success and professional advancement.

Moreover, the development of inclusive career services emerges as a key recommendation to support students from diverse backgrounds effectively. This entails equipping career advisors with training on diversity and inclusivity to provide

comprehensive guidance and practical assistance in navigating the job market. Additionally, universities are encouraged to forge partnerships with organisations through graduate schemes and open applications to students of varied backgrounds, thereby broadening access to employment opportunities.

The relational paradigm also advocates for broadening the definition of employability beyond traditional markers of prestige to encompass a diverse range of competencies, including adaptability, interpersonal skills, and problem-solving abilities. This expanded understanding challenges narrow perceptions of employability perpetuated by elitism, which may exclude individuals possessing valuable skills and experiences.

Furthermore, fostering industry partnerships and experiential learning emerges as a critical strategy to equip students with soft skills essential for professional success. Collaboration with employers and industry professionals through internships, cooperative education programs, and industry-sponsored projects facilitates the acquisition of practical experience and enhances employability prospects.

The promotion of diversity and inclusion in the curriculum is highlighted as a pivotal avenue for higher education institutions to cultivate inclusive learning environments. By incorporating diverse perspectives and experiences into course content and fostering critical dialogue around issues of privilege and elitism, institutions can foster a more inclusive worldview among students.

Finally, cultivating a culture of inclusion within institutions is paramount to fostering a supportive and equitable learning environment. This entails organising awareness campaigns, providing diversity training for faculty and staff, creating safe spaces for marginalised communities, and facilitating dialogue on social justice issues to promote understanding and social responsibility.

In essence, the recommendations outlined within the relational paradigm underscore the imperative for higher education institutions to actively address elitism and foster inclusivity to ensure equitable access to opportunities and promote positive social change. These recommendations are intricately aligned with the principles and objectives elucidated within the relational paradigm, emphasising the transformative potential of fostering inclusive practices within educational frameworks to cultivate a more equitable and socially just society.

CONCLUSION

This paper reviewed the relevant challenges of graduate employability and mapped the concept of elitism through the lens of positional conflict theory. According to the status hierarchy, one’s relative employability is determined by where they fall in relation to other job seekers (Brown et al., 2003). Based on the synthesis of the literature in this paper, it is clearer

that achieving a high ranking in the job market requires simultaneously improving one's social, educational, and labour market positioning. Given the current state of the labour market and the rising stratification of higher education institutions, the challenge of defining the concept of graduate employability is topical and crucial. Congruently, the term relative employability, explored in the above sections, serves as a reminder that employability is ultimately a social and relational phenomenon rather than an individual one.

Areas for further research

There are numerous topics that require additional research within the context of graduate employability, and more

specifically, relative employability. Currently, there is a paucity of knowledge about how positional rivalry operates in many national contexts, particularly, those that are not Western. It is important to evaluate the graduate labour market, which should be seen as a mechanism for balancing labour supply and demand and as a social setting where individuals' and organisations' actions are influenced and supported by larger societal structures, such as the higher education system. Critical sociological ideas can elucidate how specific graduates are positioned toward others in particular areas, educational institutions, and cultures.

REFERENCES

- Abrahams, J. (2016). Honourable mobility or shameless entitlement? Habitus and graduate employment. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 38(5), 625–640. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2015.1131145>.
- Allen, K., Quinn, J., Hollingworth, S., & Rose, A. (2012). Becoming employable students and ‘ideal’ creative workers: Exclusion and inequality in higher education work placements. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 34(3), 431–452. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2012.714249>.
- Bathmaker, A.M., Ingram, N., Abrahams, J., Hoare, A., Waller, R. & Bradley, H., (2016). *Higher education, social class and social mobility: The degree generation*. Springer.
- Bolton-King, R.S. (2022). Student mentoring to enhance graduates’ employability potential. *Science & Justice*, 62(6). [doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scijus.2022.04.010](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scijus.2022.04.010).
- Bottoms, S.I., Pegg, J., Adams, A., Risser, H.S. & Wu, K. (2020). *Mentoring within communities of practice*. [online] The Wiley International Handbook of Mentoring, pp.141–166. [doi:https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119142973.ch10](https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119142973.ch10).
- Bourdieu, P. (1988). *Homo academicus*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1996). *The state nobility*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Brady, K. & Pijanowki, J. (2021) Defining Social Justice in Education, In C. Mullen (ed.) *Handbook of Social Justice Interventions in Education*. Springer, pp. 59–82.
- Branine, M. & Avramenko, A. (2015). A comparative analysis of graduate employment prospects in European labour markets: A study of graduate recruitment in four countries. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 69(4), 342–365. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.12076>.
- Brown, P. & Hesketh, A. (2004). *The mismanagement of talent: Employability and jobs in the knowledge economy*. Oxford University Press.
- Brown, P. (2000). The globalisation of positional competition. *Sociology*, 34 (4), 633–653. <https://doi.org/10.1177/S0038038500000390>
- Brown, P. (2003). The opportunity trap: Education and employment in a global economy. *European Educational Research Journal*, 2(1), 141–179. <https://doi.org/10.2304/eeerj.2003.2.1.4>
- Brown, P. & James, D. (2020). Educational expansion, poverty reduction and social mobility: Reframing the debate. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 100(100), 101537. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101537>.
- Brown, P., Hesketh, A. & Williams, S. (2003). Employability in a knowledge-driven economy. *Journal of Education and Work*, 16(2), 107–126. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1363908032000070648>.
- Budhiraja, K. (2023). Infrastructures of sociality: How disadvantaged students navigate inequity at the university. *Sociological Forum*, 38(1). <https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12874>.
- Chan, W.K. & Ngok, K. (2011). Accumulating human capital while increasing educational inequality: A study on higher education policy in China. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 31(3), 293–310. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2011.594420>.
- Chan, W.K. & Zhang, J. (2021). Can university qualification promote social mobility? A review of higher education expansion and graduate employment in China. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 84, 102423. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102423>.
- Cipriani, A. & Geddes, J. (2003). Comparison of systematic and narrative reviews: The example of the atypical antipsychotics. *Epidemiologia e Psichiatria Sociale*, 12(3), 146–153. [doi:https://doi.org/10.1017/s1121189x00002918](https://doi.org/10.1017/s1121189x00002918).
- Clarke, M. (2007). The Impact of higher education rankings on student access, choice, and opportunity. *Higher Education in Europe*, 32(1), 59–70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03797720701618880>.
- Cornelissen, J. (2017). Editor’s comments: Developing propositions, a process model, or a typology? Addressing the challenges of writing theory without a boilerplate. *Academy of Management Review*, 42(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2016.0196>.
- Fleischer, H. (2012). What is our current understanding of one-to-one computer projects: A systematic narrative research review. *Educational Research Review*, 7(2), 107–122. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2011.11.004>.
- Gale, T., Molla, T. & Parker, S. (2017). The illusion of meritocracy and the audacity of elitism: Expanding the evaluative space in education. *Policy and Inequality in Education*, 1, 7–21. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-4039-9_2.
- Hancock, S.D., Allen-Handy, A., Williams, J.A., Butler, B.R., Meloche, A. & Lewis, C.W. (2021). Chapter 10: Teaching to empower: Social justice action projects as imperatives for educational justice. *Teachers College Record: The Voice of Scholarship in Education*, 123(13), 1–37. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01614681211230131>.
- Hirschheim, R. (2008). Some guidelines for the critical reviewing of conceptual papers. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, 9(8), 432–441.
- Hora, M. (2023). *Re-framing employability as a problem of perceived opportunities: The case of internships in a U.S. college using the Student Perceptions of Employment Opportunities (SPEO) Framework*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-20653-5_10
- Isopahkala-Bouret, U. & Tholen, G. (2023). *Relative employability: Applying the insights of positional competition and conflict theories within the current higher education landscape*. [online] Palgrave Macmillan, 51–72. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-20653-5_3.

- Jackson, D. & Rowe, A., 2022. Impact of work-integrated learning and co-curricular activities on graduate labour force outcomes. *Studies in Higher Education*, 1-17.
- Jain, N., Thomas, A., Gupta, V., Ossorio, M. & Porcheddu, D. (2022). Stimulating CSR learning collaboration by the mentor universities with digital tools and technologies – an empirical study during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Management Decision*, 60(10).
- Jayasingam, S., Fujiwara, Y., & Thurasamy, R. (2018). 'I am competent so I can be choosy': Choosiness and its implication on graduate employability. *Studies in Higher Education*, 43(7), 1119–1134. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2016.1221918>.
- Kamoche, K. & Leigh, F.S. (2021). Talent management, identity construction and the burden of elitism: The case of management trainees in Hong Kong. *Human Relations*, 75(5), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726721996778>.
- Kapur, D., Foundation, S., Kong, L., Kong, L., Lo, F. & Under-Secretary, U. (2023). *The Oxford handbook of higher education in the Asia-Pacific region*. Oxford University Press.
- King, A. W., & Lepak, D. (2011). Editors' comments: Myth busting—What we hear and what we've learned about AMR. *Academy of Management Review*, 36(2), 207–214.
- Kish-Gephart, J.J., Moergen, K.J.N., Tilton, J.D. & Gray, B. (2022). Social class and work: A review and organizing framework. *Journal of Management*, 49(1), <https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063221076822>.
- Konstantinos Kechagias, Viorica Drăgan & Luca, S. (2011). *Teaching and assessing soft skills: Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation Project - a model of excellence, 2009-2011*. Atelier Didactic.
- Lacković, N. (2019). Graduate employability (GE) paradigm shift: Towards greater socio-emotional and eco-technological relationalities of graduates' futures. *Education and Technological Unemployment*, 193–212. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-6225-5_13.
- Li, C. & Ou, C. (2019). Technical recoverable volume quality evaluation of the offshore faulted block oilfields, determined by two-level fuzzy hierarchy technique. *Journal of Petroleum Science and Engineering*, 178, 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.petrol.2019.03.022>.
- Li, Z. (2013). A critical account of employability construction through the eyes of Chinese postgraduate students in the UK. *Journal of Education and Work*, 26(5), 473–493. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2012.710740>.
- Linnenluecke, M.K., Marrone, M. & Singh, A.K. (2019). Conducting systematic literature reviews and bibliometric analyses. *Australian Journal of Management*, 45(2), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0312896219877678>.
- Liping, M.A. & Yanlin, L.I.U., 2018. How college education promotes intergenerational mobility: An empirical study on the comparison of graduates & city of birth, college and job. *华东师范大学学报 (教育科学版)*, 36(5), pp.51-59.
- López-Alcarria, A., Olivares-Vicente, A. & Poza-Vilches, F., 2019. A systematic review of the use of agile methodologies in education to foster sustainability competencies. *Sustainability*, 11(10),
- Lukka, K., & Vinnari, E. (2014). Domain theory and method theory in management accounting research. *Accounting, Auditing, Accountability Journal*, 27(8), 1308–1338.
- Machlup, F. (2014). *Knowledge: its creation, distribution and economic significance, Volume I: Knowledge and knowledge production (Vol. 741)*. Princeton University Press.
- MacInnis, D.J. & de Mello, G.E. (2005). The concept of hope and its relevance to product evaluation and choice. *Journal of Marketing*, 69(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.69.1.1.55513>.
- Manongsong, A.M. & Ghosh, R. (2021). Developing the positive identity of minoritized women leaders in higher education: How can multiple and diverse developers help with overcoming the impostor phenomenon? *Human Resource Development Review*, 20(4), <https://doi.org/10.1177/15344843211040732>.
- Mok, K.H. & Jiang, J. (2018). Massification of higher education and challenges for graduate employment and social mobility: East Asian experiences and sociological reflections. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 63, 44–51. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2017.02.003>.
- Moore, T., & Morton, J. (2015). The myth of job readiness? Written communication, employability, and the 'skills gap' in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 42(3), 591–609. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2015.1067602>.
- Mishra, S., & Ajoy Kumar Dey. (2023). Expectation of the editors' from hybrid review studies: Focus on contribution. *South Asian Journal of Business and Management Cases*, 12(3), 243–252. <https://doi.org/10.1177/22779779231217395>
- Naidoo, R. (2003). Repositioning higher education as a global commodity: Opportunities and challenges for future sociology of education work. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 24(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142569031000115057>.
- Neubauer, D.E., (2019). Changing patterns in the governance of higher education in Asia. *Transformations in Higher Education Governance in Asia: Policy, Politics and Progress*, pp.47-65.
- Nonaka, I., & Toyama, R. (2015). *The knowledge-creating theory revisited: Knowledge creation as a synthesizing process*. In: Edwards, J.S. (eds) *The Essentials of Knowledge Management*. OR Essentials Series. Palgrave Macmillan https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137552105_4
- Paez, A. (2017). Gray literature: An important resource in systematic reviews. *Journal of Evidence-Based Medicine*, 10(3), 233–240. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jebm.12266>.
- Pang, S. (2016). Market transition, educational differentiation, and urban-rural inequality in Chinese higher education (1977-2008). *Chinese Journal of Sociology*, 36(5), 155-174.
- Pantea, M. C. (2021). A new elite? Higher education as seen through the lens of young people working in innovative

- technologies. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 34(3), 340–355.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13511610.2021.1873749>.
- Paul, J. & Criado, A. R. (2020). The art of writing literature review: What do we know and what do we need to know? *International Business Review*, 29(4),
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2020.101717>.
- Peters, M. A., Jandrić, P., & Hayes, S. (2019). The curious promise of educationalising technological unemployment: What can places of learning really do about the future of work? *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 51(3), 242–254. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2018.1439376>.
- Reinders, S., Dekker, M. & Falisse, J.B. (2021) Inequalities in higher education in low- and middle-income countries: A scoping review of the literature. *Development Policy Review*, 39(5), 865–889.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/dpr.12535>.
- Rivera, L.A. & Tilcsik, A. (2016). Class advantage, commitment penalty: The gendered effect of social class signals in an elite labor market. *American Sociological Review*, 81(6), 1097–1131.
- Saar, E., Unt, M., Helemäe, J., Oras, K. & Täht, K. (2013). What is the role of education in the recruitment process? Employers' practices and experiences of graduates from tertiary educational institutions in Estonia. *Journal of Education and Work*, 27(5), 475–495.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2013.781268>.
- Sharma, H. (2020). The nexus between future of work and future of higher education: Redefining employability and equity. *Medienimpulse*, [online] 58(1),
<https://doi.org/10.21243/mi-01-20-7>.
- Sin, C., & Neave, G. (2014). Employability deconstructed: Perceptions of Bologna stakeholders. *Studies in Higher Education*, 41(8), 1447–1462.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2014.977859>
- Smith, E. (2022). Expanding or restricting access to tertiary education? A tale of two sectors and two countries. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 27(3), 500–523.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2022.2076059>.
- Stephenson-Hunter, C., Strelnick, A. H., Rodriguez, N., Stumpf, L. A., Spano, H. & Gonzalez, C. M. (2021). Dreams realized: A long-term program evaluation of three summer diversity pipeline programs. *Health Equity*, 5(1), 512–520. <https://doi.org/10.1089/heq.2020.0126>.
- Stoten, D.W. (2018). *Employability: A contested concept in higher education*. uobrep.openrepository.com, [online] 8(1).<http://hdl.handle.net/10547/622552>.
- Suleman, F. (2021). Revisiting the concept of employability through economic theories: Contributions, limitations and policy implications. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 75(4), 548–561. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.12320>.
- Tholen, G. (2017). Symbolic closure: Towards a renewed sociological perspective on the relationship between higher education, credentials and the graduate labour market. *Sociology*, 51(5), 1067–1083.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038516641857>.
- Tittenbrun, J. (2013). Ralph Dahrendorf's conflict theory of social differentiation and elite theory." *Innovative Issues and Approaches in Social Sciences*, 6(3), 117–203.
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/140d/7a0a615a3a31621813391db7d0bbd845ce16.pdf>
- Tomlinson, M., Holmes, L., & SpringerLink (2017). *Graduate employability in context: Theory, research and debate*. Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Trow, M. (2007). Reflections on the transition from elite to mass to universal access: Forms and phases of higher education in modern societies since WWII. In *Springer International Handbooks of Education*. Dodrecht: Springer. Retrieved from
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-4012-2_13
- Turnbull, D., Chugh, R., & Luck, J. (2020). Learning management systems: A review of the research methodology literature in Australia and China. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 44(2), 1–15.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727x.2020.1737002>.
- Turnbull, D., Chugh, R., & Luck, J. (2023). Systematic-narrative hybrid literature review: A strategy for integrating a concise methodology into a manuscript. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 7(1),
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2022.100381>.
- Tymon, A. (2013). The student perspective on employability. *Studies in Higher Education*, 38(6), 841–856.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2011.604408>.
- Wang, Z. & Crawford, I. (2018). Who are gaining the highly paid elite placements in UK higher education? *Studies in Higher Education*, 44(11), 1960–1974.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2018.1476482>.
- Watts, L. & Hodgson, D. (2019) *Social justice theory and practice for social work*. Springer.
- Williams, G., & Filippakou, O. (2009). Higher education and UK elite formation in the twentieth century. *Higher Education*, 59(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-009-9229-6>.
- Williams, S., Dodd, L. J., Steele, C., & Randall, R. (2015). A systematic review of current understandings of employability. *Journal of Education and Work*, 29(8), 877–901.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2015.1102210>.
- Wright, E., & Mulvey, B. (2021). Internships and the graduate labour market: How upper-middle-class students 'get ahead.' *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 42(3), 1–18.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2021.1886051>.
- Wu, X. (2019). Inequality and social stratification in postsocialist China. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 45(1), 363–382. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-073018-022516>.
- Wu, X., 2017. Higher education, elite formation and social stratification in contemporary China: Preliminary findings from the Beijing College Students Panel Survey. *Chinese Journal of Sociology*, 3(1), 3–31.
- Wu, Y., Ngai, E.W., Wu, P. & Wu, C., 2020. Fake online reviews: Literature review, synthesis, and directions for future research. *Decision Support Systems*, 132,

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bushra Baboo Rally is a lecturer at Curtin University and currently a PhD candidate for the program 'PhD Higher Education: Research, Engagement and Enhancement' at the University of Lancaster (UK)