LinkedIn as a Tool for Higher Education Programme Evaluation

LinkedIn como Instrumento para la Evaluación de Programas de Educación Superior

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to conduct a preliminary evaluation of the outcomes of the European Masters in Lifelong Learning: Policy and Management (MALLL) on mobility, employability, and interculturality using LinkedIn data in conjunction with document reviews and a small sample of staff interviews. MALLL is an internationally-oriented higher education programme within the Erasmus Mundus scheme launched in 2006. Subjects were MALLL graduates between 2008 to 2014 and data were gathered from *Work Experience* and *Education* sections of 75 individual LinkedIn profiles as well as organic responses on the group's LinkedIn forum. The results show that the MALLL programme facilitated the graduates' academic and professional mobility in varying degrees. The sample's career profiles show that their roles are in line with MALLL's intended outcomes related to employability. Meanwhile, positive outcomes were perceived by the graduates pertaining to their interculturality. LinkedIn proved to be a potent instrument in evaluating the outcomes of a higher education programme. With a careful consideration of its benefits and risks and by drawing a strategy to harness its potential, programme evaluators can find at their disposal a rich and practical way of assessment in conjunction with more traditional data collection methods.

Key words

LinkedIn, evaluation, mobility, employability, interculturality.

Resumen

El objetivo de esta investigación fué realizar una evaluación preliminar de los resultados del European Masters in Lifelong Learning: Policy and Management (MALLL) utilizando datos procedentes de LinkedIn, junto con revisiones de documentos y entrevistas a responsables del máster. Los participantes son graduados de las promociones 2008-2014 y los datos se obtuvieron de las secciones *experiencia laboral* y *educación* en 75 perfiles, junto con testimonios extraídos del foro del grupo en LinkedIn. Los resultados muestran que el programa MALLL facilitó la movilidad académica y profesional de los egresados. Los perfiles profesionales manifiestan que sus roles están alineados con los objetivos del máster en términos de empleabilidad. Asimismo, los graduados percibieron resultados positivos relacionados con la interculturalidad. LinkedIn ha mostrado ser un potente instrumento para evaluar los resultados de un programa de Educación Superior. Tras una rigurosa consideración de sus beneficios y riesgos y asegurando un protocolo que garantice sus potencialidades, los evaluadores de programas pueden disponer de una rica y valiosa información, en combinación con la obtenida por métodos más tradicionales de recogida de datos.

Palabras clave

LinkedIn, evaluación, movilidad, empleabilidad, interculturalidad.

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1. Introduction

Programme evaluation has gained traction in the field of public policy in recent decades. In Europe, the demand for greater effectiveness and efficiency in the public sector with the rise of the new public management in the 1980's prompted the need to show the programmes' results and measure their impact (Stern, 2004).

The tendency to evaluate also spilled over to the higher education sector. Because of its potential to address societal challenges such as economic growth and social cohesion (World Bank, 2002), it has garnered interest from key donors and development organizations (Roberts, Day, Jenkins, & Geddes, 2012).

Erasmus Mundus (EM) is one of several higher education programmes funded generously by a supranational entity such as the European Commission. Its goals align with bigger societal challenges, including facilitating the mobility of students in Europe, fostering employability among its students, and promoting intercultural dialogue, among others. These objectives feed into the institutional goals of enhancing the attractiveness of European Higher Education (HE) and the cooperation amongst European Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the world.

Ten years after its launch and two cycles into its implementation, more than 200 Erasmus Mundus Master's Courses (EMMCs) have been made accessible to students from all over the world through scholarships and self-funding routes. The European Masters in Lifelong Learning: Policy and Management (MALLL) is one of such EM programmes. It is a two-year master course involving three European Union (EU) partner universities: Institute of Education, UK (currently University College London following the official merger in 2014); Aarhus University, Denmark; and University of Deusto, Spain. In August 2010, the University of Melbourne in Australia was included as a third country partner within the MALLL consortium and started receiving students since the academic year 2011-2012 for a summer module at the end of their first year of studies. A large number of scholarships for third country students have been made available through MALLL, with over 150 students from different continents having accessed and successfully completed the programme.

The large and unprecedented breadth of EM programmes such as MALLL garnered a fair amount of interest among IGOs, governments, academic institutions, and individual graduates as exemplified by a number of commissioned large-scale graduate surveys. The implementation of these studies has provided considerable evidence on the outcomes of the EM programmes on the general population of students. These studies include the EMA Graduate Impact Studies conducted yearly from 2009 to 2015 (EMA, 2009, 2010, 2011; ICUnet.AG, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015; ICUnet, 2017), the Erasmus Impact Study for students and staff (European Union, 2014), and the study on EM's graduates' employability (Hemmer et al., 2011). Some consortia such as MALLL also implement regular programme-specific feedback sessions and reviews on students' levels of satisfaction.

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Although evaluation systems are generally in place, MALLL stakeholders still perceived a need for additional data specifically in regard to the geographical and occupational engagement of MALLL alumni as well as their perceptions on how MALLL contributed to their lives after graduation. Furthermore, current students at that time expressed overwhelming interest in knowing the careers pursued by MALLL alumni to plan their own career paths. This prompted the implementation of a preliminary study on the outcomes of MALLL specifically in relation to the mobility, employability, and interculturality of its alumni.

While surveys and interviews would have been a rich source of data, designing a survey or interview instrument proved to be unfeasible given this preliminary project's time constraints. LinkedIn was then explored as a tool to evaluate the outcomes of the MALLL programme as intended for by its founding institutions – the European Commission (EC) and the MALLL Consortium – using data gained from students' perceptions and their mobility and occupational profiles. It was the first time that a social media-based approach was implemented to analyse MALLL graduates' mobility, employability, and interculturality.

The study only included seven cohorts and is intended to be part of a bigger process to collect data from all its students after the final cohort graduates in the last quarter of 2017. The research's results were projected to benefit the MALLL community as a whole by helping inform students' career decisions and serving as an accountability tool for the institutions involved.

1.1. Social Media in Research

Although there is a palpable and unusual social, professional, and academic interest in social networks, there remains a lack and a need for further research on this topic (Cabero, Barroso, Llorente, & Yanes, 2016). The use of social media such as LinkedIn in research is identified as a promising tool in comparison to the more traditional approaches to data collection. Wilson, Gosling, & Graham (2012) contend that online social networks are of interest to social scientists as they reflect current social processes and exhibit the changing way in which information is shared. Indeed, looking at social media provides a rich resource for looking at the viewpoints, feelings, attitudes, and intentions of people as compared to more traditional approaches like surveys and focus groups that involve directive questions (Romand, Donovan, Chen, & Nunamaker, 2003). Because of the nature and scope of information available in social media, many opportunities for conducting qualitative analysis are afforded (Parker, Saundage, & Lee, 2011).

Social science-oriented studies also benefit from raw and unperturbed data in the study of social media spaces (Hoser & Nitschke, 2010). While not completely unbiased, interactions gathered from social media sites are free from possible behavioural adjustments due to the knowledge that they are in fact being observed (ibid.). In the

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typology offered by Eysenbach & Till (2001), this form of data collection alludes to passive analysis, which lacks the participation of the researcher in any form of interaction with the subjects apart from observing and gathering related content.

1.2.   Ethical Considerations in Using Social Media as a Research Tool

Given a plethora of advantages as described in the previous sections, social media research also puts forward important ethical considerations. As it holds, the trustworthiness of the data is put into question when analysing its content (Redmond, 2010). In the case of LinkedIn, the fact that it is a professional networking site may lead to some data being purposefully skipped or tweaked to achieve an image that the user wishes to project to potential or current employers and colleagues. According to Guillory & Hancock (2012), LinkedIn can be a platform for possible deception and enhanced self-representation. In the use of LinkedIn profiles to review mobility and employment status of the graduates, the data's trustworthiness is a risk that the study acknowledges, although the richness and longitudinality of the data obtained reflect how the information harvested through this approach could provide answers to the questions posed. They also posit that the fact that LinkedIn information is made public decreases the likelihood of deception as its data is more readily verifiable than a traditional and private resume with authors being more likely to be discovered (ibid.).

Secondly, social media research brings about issues related to informed consent, privacy, and confidentiality (Eysenbach & Till, 2001). With regard to informed consent, Hoser & Nitschke (2010) contend that data from social media cannot be utilised without consent when it is not intended for research purposes nor when the researcher is not originally part of the assumed audience.

Some authors lay out contexts wherein an informed consent may be waived in implementing passive analysis. In a case study exemplified by Flicker, Haans, & Skinner (2004), information harvested from non-consenting subjects were expressed in general and contextual terms by avoiding direct quotations in the analysis. Eysenbach & Till (2001) also describe how the research can progress without obtaining informed consent in circumstances when "the material is anonymised at the earliest possible stage, if there is no inconvenience or hazard to the subjects, and if the institutional review board has reviewed and agreed the research protocol" (p. 1104). They argue that the nature of the data obtained, the manner by which they are presented, and the vulnerability of the group in question are determining factors in the decision whether or not to seek informed consent.

In the context of the MALLL study, the researchers' involvement in the programme as student and staff led to an ethical dilemma whether or not to solicit informed consent in obtaining LinkedIn data. Ultimately, the researchers opted to waive informed consent because the informational benefits to its audience were projected to outweigh its potential harm. The identities of the respondents are not disclosed and none of the

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information gathered and compiled for the purposes of this research can be publicly accessed. In addition, the information is stored in a password-protected device and the graduates' mobility patterns and occupational engagement are discussed using broad categories.

1.3   Social media and LinkedIn in HE programme evaluation

LinkedIn is a professionally-oriented social networking tool that enables the creation of a profile containing personal information, related work and educational experience, and samples of professional work. It also enables its users to connect with other people, participate in community forums, and subscribe to posts of specific groups.

Some studies have been carried out to map mobility patterns and career paths among graduates using data from social media. Case, Gardiner, Rutner, & Dyer (2011) mapped out the career progression of graduates of an Information Systems university programme through the information published in their LinkedIn profiles. They provided a summary of the typical jobs assumed by the graduates and their transition to higher managerial positions. Indeed, LinkedIn provided a wealth of information to map out career profiles and is considered by Case et al.'s (2011) study to be "a valuable information repository" (p. 45). Similarly, Tantawy, Farouk, Mohamed, & Yousef (2014) utilized LinkedIn to gather data on Egyptian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) graduates and their careers after graduation within and beyond the Egyptian labour market.

2. Methodology

This study intends to evaluate the outcomes of MALLL in terms of mobility, employability, and interculturality and explore LinkedIn as a tool for data collection. Data related to alumni's mobility, employability, and interculturality were collected from LinkedIn and were then analysed quantitatively through frequency distributions and qualitatively using the codes developed from document reviews and staff interviews.

2.1.   Participants

This study utilised convenience sampling by locating MALLL graduates from the first cohort (2008 graduates) to the seventh (2014 graduates) on the LinkedIn platform through the *Members* section of the MALLL Students and Alumni group. The eighth to the tenth cohorts were excluded from the study because they were still involved in the programme at the time the study was implemented. As not all MALLL graduates were members of this group, a manual search was also implemented based on the master student list procured from the MALLL administrators. Both the focused and manual searches garnered 118 results. The following criteria were then applied to these profiles to identify which ones could be used for analysis:

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- ▪ Has successfully completed and graduated from MALLL at the time the research was implemented
- ▪ Has an existing LinkedIn profile
- ▪ Has indicated his or her nationality or country of origin anywhere in the profile
- ▪ Has indicated which one of the MALLL universities he or she graduated from and, whenever possible, which universities he or she attended during MALLL
- ▪ Has declared at least one post either under *Experience* or *Education* (see Figure 1 below) after graduation, including their respective dates and locations

Figure 1. Samples of LinkedIn elements pertaining to work experience and education

A total of 75 profiles matched the criteria and were used for analysis. This number comprises almost half of the total number of MALLL students who graduated from 2008 to 2014 and was deemed sufficient for preliminary inferences to be made.

The largest share of MALLL alumni included in this study are originally from Asia and Europe, with the former representing the highest percentage (44%, N=33) of student intake in this sample. A significant number of Asian graduates' hails from India (12%, N=9) and the Philippines (8%, N=6). Meanwhile, the most number of European students come from Serbia (8%, N=6) and Denmark (5.33%, N=4). Other third countries that exhibit high representation among the research's subjects include the United States (6.67%, N=5) and Ethiopia (5.33%, N=4).

At the time the study was conducted, slightly more than half of the alumni were residing in Europe (53.33%, N=40) and a significant number (28%, N=21) were taking residence in Asia (see Figure 2 below).

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Figure 2. Number of MALLL graduates according to current region of residence (N=75)
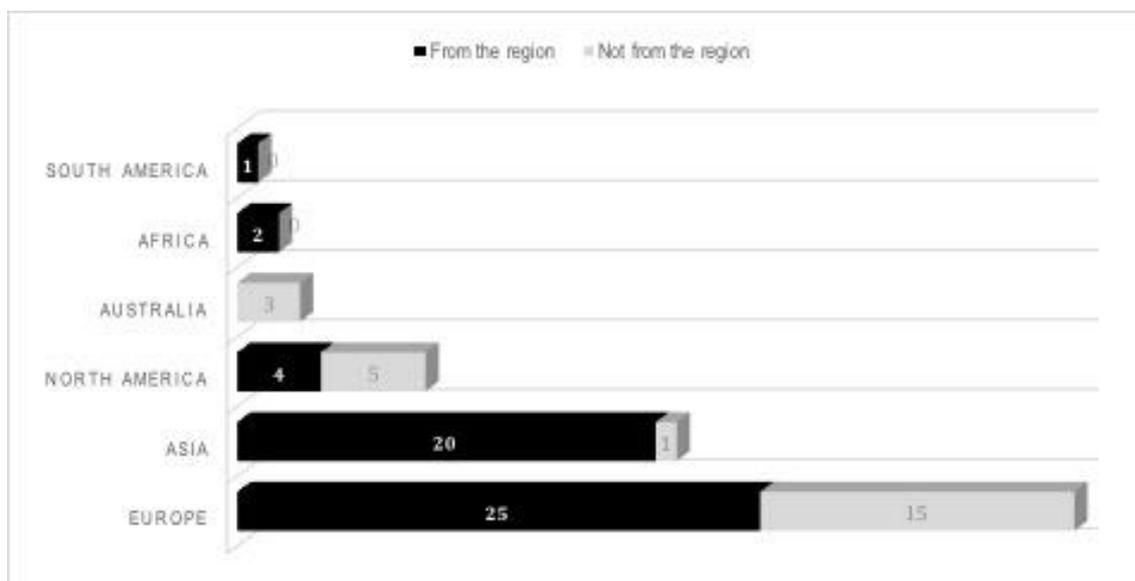
2.2.   Data collection

The following data were pulled from the alumni's LinkedIn profiles to map their geographical locations as a function of mobility:

- Country of origin
- MALLL universities attended and inclusive dates of participation
- Inclusive locations and dates of further studies and/or jobs they held during and after the MALLL programme

Meanwhile, the alumni declared jobs and roles were used as a measure of employability. They were categorized based on the nature of their roles as well as their associated sectors.

To complement the data drawn from their LinkedIn profiles, the alumni's perceptions pertaining to mobility, employability, and interculturality were gleaned from their responses posted on the group's forum. The forum questions and responses were organically derived and were initiated by the MALLL students themselves.

Two separate discussion threads were found. The first one, posted in June 2010, was entitled "Retrospective look at the MALLL." It had 6 responses to the following questions:

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- If you had the MALLL course start all over again, what would you have done differently?
- What were the highlights of the MALLL for you?
- Were your initial expectations met, and why/why not? How did you act to better accomplish your goals?
- If you had to advise an incoming student to the MALLL course on what they should consider doing, what would you tell them?

In the second discussion entitled "Where are you now?" posted in January 2011, the moderator encouraged the members to discuss where they are, what their careers are at that time, and whether their lives have changed after graduation and how. It garnered 11 organic responses.

2.3 Data analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were implemented to analyse the LinkedIn data gathered. The number of students from each region, the rates of return to their countries of origin, and the professional roles they have undertaken were represented quantitatively as frequency distributions. Meanwhile, the qualitative analysis required a set of codes to be established pertaining to MALLL's intended outcomes with which the actual outcomes were compared. The codes were gleaned through a review of Erasmus Mundus-related policy documents, existing EM studies, the MALLL programme's website, and promotional brochure content as well as through interviews with two members of the MALLL staff.

Promoting mobility, employability, and interculturality were common objectives for EM and MALLL. More specifically, MALLL's intended mobility-related outcomes include:

- increasing inward and outward streams,
- improving academic mobility during and after graduation, and
- facilitating further European work experience through professional mobility.

In terms of employability, MALLL's intended outcomes are to promote:

- professional relevance in policymaking, educational practice, and educational management,
- increased career opportunities as a result of MALLL participation, and
- development of professional skills and knowledge.

Meanwhile, interculturality included the following indicators:

- sharing of academic traditions,
- facilitation of intercultural dialogue,
- development of intercultural skills, and

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- belongingness to a global student network.

These indicators were used to analyse the outcomes of MALLL based on the graduates' locations after graduation, their published work roles, and their responses in the group's forum section.

3. Results and Discussion

An analysis of the actual work roles, geographical locations, and perceptions of the MALLL graduates based on LinkedIn data sheds light to the actual outcomes of the MALLL programme in relation to the goals set forth by its institutional stakeholders, namely: mobility, employability, and interculturality.

3.1.   Actual outcomes pertaining to mobility

Analysing the current study and/or work engagement posted by the MALLL alumni on their LinkedIn profiles, slightly more than half of the study's sample is based in Europe (53.33%, N=40). The second most common current residence among the graduates is Asia (28%, N=21), followed by North America (12%, N=9) and Australia (4%, N=3). There is a small share of graduates currently living in Africa (N=2) and South America (N=1), all of which are returning graduates.

Figure 3. Number of MALLL graduates according to current region of residence (N=75)

As shown in Figure 3 above, Europe currently holds the largest share of MALLL graduates' place of residence, 62.50% of which are European graduates themselves. Out of this percentage of European graduates currently residing in Europe, more than three-fifths (N=11) hails from EU countries. Second to Europe, Asia holds a significant share

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of MALLL graduates' current residence, majority (95.24%, N=20) also being originally from Asia. This tendency to stay either in Europe or Asia among MALLL graduates is argued to be affected by two factors: (1) the high representation of Europe and Asia as regions of origin, and (2) that there is a general pattern of return to one's home country among European and Asian graduates.

Almost two-fifths (N=29) of the total number of MALLL graduates in this sample has also had further work or academic experience in Europe other than the country of origin for a certain period after graduation, as evidenced by their LinkedIn profile entries under *Experience* and *Education*.

The graduates' first destination after graduation is a good indicator of the nature of the lateral mobility of MALLL graduates in relation to the intended outcome of gaining further experience in Europe. Based on their LinkedIn profiles, the first work or study activity after graduation was mapped. It was found that among the population of MALLL graduates who showed lateral mobility within Europe after graduation, majority of them (75.86%, N=22) listed a host country (Denmark, UK, or Spain) as the first country where further professional and academic experience was realised. This was an important indicator that shows how the MALLL programme can be a gateway for students to acquire further work or academic experience in Europe.

Meanwhile, the outgoing professional mobility of MALLL graduates from the EU was also analysed based on their published destinations right after graduation. Only a tenth (N=2) showed professional activity in a third country (Asia and North America) after graduation, while more than half (N=16) have returned to their countries of origin.

On the whole, lateral mobility among MALLL graduates in this sample is maintained at around a third of the sample in students both from within and outside EU, with a general pattern of return to the country of origin. The programme appears to contribute in promoting both academic and professional mobility after graduation in the MALLL host countries among non-EU graduates. On the other hand, EU graduates' outgoing mobility for EU students in this sample are intra-European and short-term in nature, with limited evidence of post-graduation professional mobility.

3.2. Actual outcomes pertaining to employability

MALLL's founders have envisioned its graduates to work as professionals in the field of lifelong learning (LLL) "to confront the challenges of educational policymaking, practice and administration in the 21st century" (MALLL brochure). As one of the MALLL founders described, the programme intends to train professionals to be educators, policy analysts and advisers, and LLL programme managers.

An analysis of the graduates' LinkedIn profiles shows that the MALLL graduates are involved in various roles. The most common roles assumed by MALLL graduates in this sample with regard to current job positions are as follows:

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Figure 4. Most common careers among MALLL graduates (N=75) according to current job positions
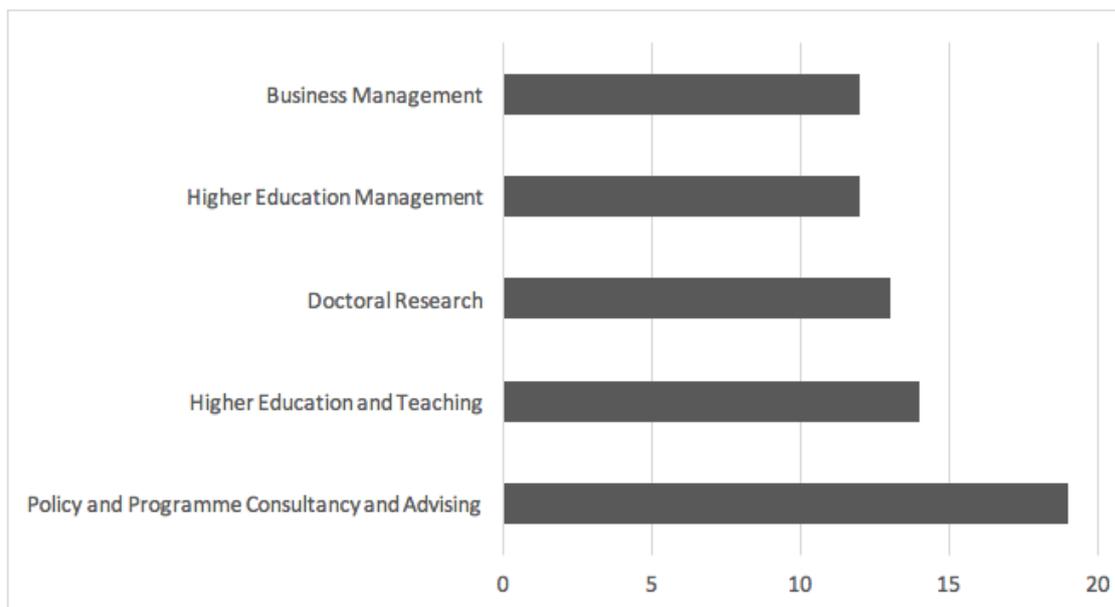
The top specific roles assumed by the MALLL graduates considered in this study are parallel to the three main areas of MALLL focus: educational programme and policymaking and implementation (N=19), professional practice in education (HE teaching, N=14), and educational administration (HE management, N=12). MALLL graduates also appear to be highly involved in research tasks (N=21), 13 of which are currently doctorate students. Alongside preparing professionals for policymaking and practice in LLL, its graduates are showing a tendency towards further studies and research. Subsequent data garnered from in-depth interviews with two staff and two students show that the decision to continue on with doctorate studies among MALLL graduates may be attributed to a number of factors, specifically:

▪ the high standards in student recruitment that enables the entry of competent students with high capacities for critical analysis,
▪ the programme's focus on critical thinking that is compatible with the rigorous process of research, and
▪ the development of career aspirations to more deeply engage in research because of their experiences in MALLL.

The data garnered from the LinkedIn profiles were complemented by graduates' LinkedIn forum responses, especially in identifying the skills they deem to have acquired through MALLL. Graduates described improvements in those pertaining to higher thinking, management, research, and academic writing. These findings are deemed aligned with MALLL's intended outcomes, as the programme is meant to

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prepare students for work in lifelong learning policy and practice through establishment of a strong research base and a knowledge of lifelong learning policies. While some graduates are not directly involved in the educational field, they still appeared to value their MALLL learnings especially those related to management and research skills.

Although MALLL's contribution to its graduates' skills was positively rated by the respondents, LinkedIn forum answers reveal varying perceptions on the relevance of MALLL relevance to their current job posts. Out of five graduates who mentioned how MALLL relates to their current professions, three expressed uncertainty in how the learnings from MALLL were relevant to their careers.

It is important to note, however, of the temporality of the LinkedIn forum content in that they were expressed immediately after graduation at a time of transition back to work. The responses also show that the perceived lack of relevance of MALLL to some in relation to their current occupational engagement was contingent on the mismatch between personal (career aspirations, at a stage of transition and uncertainty at the time the response was given) and institutional circumstances (available jobs in the labour market).

3.3.   Actual outcomes pertaining to interculturality

Promoting interculturality is one of MALLL's main objectives, which includes sharing of academic traditions, facilitating intercultural dialogue, promoting intercultural skills, and contributing to the graduates' sense of belongingness to a global student network.

Out of the 11 respondents in the forum, 7 (63.64%) reported that they have expanded their network, more so through international connections, as a result of their participation in the MALLL programme. They often refer to having had gained friends around the world as a valuable aspect of MALLL.

Aside from an expansion of one's network, a significant number of students also declared how the programme facilitated intercultural dialogue and how this affected both their professional and personal lives (N=5, 45.45%). With regard to the former, this included getting introduced to novel ideas within the realm of education. The latter, meanwhile, referred to gaining a greater knowledge of the local lifestyle and an increase in self-reflection as a result of exposure to different cultures and lifestyles.

Two graduates also described how the MALLL programme exposed them to academic traditions distinct from their own, leading to a greater understanding of its repercussions in their own academic experience. In terms of acquiring intercultural skills, one graduate reported an improvement in her language skills of the host country and the other one in his attitude when dealing with other people personally and professionally.

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4. Conclusion

The results show that the MALLL programme generally facilitated the graduates' academic and professional mobility, although further mobility after graduation was higher for non-EU graduates. It was also found that while the transition period to work was marked by uncertainty, the sample's career trajectories post-graduation are aligned with the job roles foreseen and intended by the MALLL founders for its alumni. Pursuing doctorate studies also appeared to be a popular option among the graduates alongside assuming roles in teaching, consultancy, and management. They also express a generally positive evaluation of MALLL's contribution towards their intercultural experience and understanding, reporting an expansion of their personal and professional network through their MALLL participation.

The LinkedIn platform has indeed been a valuable source of data in evaluating the actual outcomes of the MALLL programme in conjunction with more traditional approaches such as document review and in-depth interviews. This study has shown that the fit between the research questions, the data available in social media, and the project's practical considerations made LinkedIn a viable source for data collection. Although it might not be appropriate for some researches due to the nature of the information they wish to gather, LinkedIn's profile feature proved a good fit for this research with regard to the information needed by the MALLL stakeholders, which included the MALLL graduates' mobility destinations and occupational engagements after graduation. The graduates' forum responses, while far from exhaustive, also provided insight on how MALLL's contributions were perceived by the students. Indeed, all these data will be beneficial both to the programme's founders as an accountability tool and to its graduates for their own career planning.

Aside from the goodness of fit between the research questions and the data available from MALLL's LinkedIn group, this research sheds light to other equally important considerations when deciding to use social media platforms such as LinkedIn in evaluation of HE programmes. Firstly, the huge capacity of social media to provide retrospective data raises concerns about whether or not sufficient time has elapsed for an evaluation to be implemented. In this study, the timing of the students' responses in the forum coincided with the period immediately after graduation. This period of transition could have led to their feelings of uncertainty towards MALLL's relevance to their careers and was factored into the analysis. Future studies should group the responses based on the year they graduated and analyse the data collected separately.

Secondly, the availability of data may vary for different groups and can consequently affect the extent to which the evaluation may be implemented. Albeit limited, this research was able to gather data from LinkedIn's forum feature because of the relevance of the questions that were organically posted by the MALLL students. It is recommended that HE institutions think prospectively regarding the evaluation of their programmes' outcomes based on students' perceptions, create a social media strategy,

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and leverage professionally-oriented platforms like LinkedIn through engaging and targeted posts and questions.

Thirdly, the relatively small sample size of the case study also made manual search and data input feasible. Larger samples would make this kind of approach impractical and would then require automated methods both for data collection from the LinkedIn profiles and the forum content.

Lastly, ethical concerns are of utmost importance when gathering data for programme evaluation. Several considerations relevant to social media research include distinguishing the appropriateness of the tool based on the respondents' level of online engagement, determining its advantages and dangers, deciding when and how to request informed consent, and protecting the privacy and anonymity of the parties involved.

As a whole, this study has shown how LinkedIn can be used in the field of HE programme evaluation. With a careful consideration of its benefits and risks and by drawing a strategy to harness its potential, evaluators can find at their disposal a rich and practical way of assessing programme outcomes in conjunction with more traditional data collection methods.

The preliminary results from this study have been communicated to MALLL students and stakeholders during the most recent MALLL annual seminar in November 2016 and will likewise be presented in an international conference in 2017. Using these preliminary findings as basis, an extension of the study is currently being undertaken by the researchers as part of a doctoral thesis wherein data will be collected from all the student cohorts of MALLL using secondary data, email questionnaires, analysis of LinkedIn and Facebook data, and in-depth interviews. The doctoral project will also take the research a step further by adding a theory-based analysis of the contributions of an internationally-oriented HE programme such as MALLL to the global transformation of its students.

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