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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-59573

Title: Représentations et cohabitations estudiantines: cas des étudiants roumains et africains à l'université de Piteşti en Roumanie

Rating

Recommendation: Accept after Major Revision

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		Yes		
Techn. Quality			Yes	
Clarity			Yes	
Significance		Yes		

Reviewer's ID: JPR- 212

Detailed Reviewer's Report

The manuscript examines the representations that characterize relations between African and Romanian students at the University of Piteşti and the effects of these sociolinguistic representations on their academic coexistence. Using a semi-open questionnaire drafted in French and translated into Romanian by two native speakers, data were collected from thirty-seven Romanian students and six African students. The data were manually processed and grouped by question to form a corpus of student imaginaries, taking into account regularities and particularities across respondents. The analysis draws on the Theory of Spaces (Atchikpa, 2021), in dialogue with the theory of social representations (Moscovici, 1961; Jodelet, 1989) and Byram's (1997) model of intercultural competence. The findings show that student mobility is both a factor in deconstructing patterns of inequality and a vector for creating or reinforcing other sociocognitive patterns between students of different nationalities.

2. Originality and Contribution

The paper addresses a relevant and under-researched topic, namely the sociolinguistic representations and academic cohabitation of African and Romanian students in a Romanian university context. The study makes a modest but genuine contribution to the literature on student mobility, intercultural competence, and educational inequality in Central and Eastern Europe, a context that the authors correctly note has been less documented than the situation of the Roma minority in Romania.

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However, the originality is moderate. The theoretical framework combines established theories, social representations and intercultural communicative competence, with a lesser-known Theory of Spaces, but the empirical contribution largely confirms what existing literature on student mobility and intercultural relations already suggests. The paper does not offer a distinctive analytical model or a substantially new interpretation. The authors could strengthen the originality by more explicitly articulating what the Theory of Spaces adds to the analysis beyond what social representations theory and Byram's model already provide, and by demonstrating more clearly how the findings advance or challenge existing knowledge.

3. Technical Quality and Methodology

The methodology section is generally clear and transparent, which is commendable. The authors describe the fieldwork context, the sampling strategy, the data collection instrument, the translation procedure, the data processing approach, and the methodological limits. The explicit acknowledgement of the convenience sampling and the numerical imbalance between the two groups is appropriate and shows methodological reflexivity.

However, several methodological weaknesses should be addressed. First, the sample is very small, particularly the African student group, with only six respondents. While the authors justify this by the demographic reality of the field, the analysis draws broad conclusions about representations and cohabitation that may not be robust given such a small corpus. Second, the questionnaire is described as semi-open with nine questions for Romanian students and eleven for African students, but the actual questions are not provided, which limits the reader's ability to assess the validity of the instrument. Third, the data analysis procedure is described as thematic analysis following Lannoy (2012), but the paper does not explain how themes were derived, how coding was conducted, or how inter-coder reliability was ensured. Fourth, the paper does not discuss ethical considerations, such as informed consent, anonymity, or the handling of potentially sensitive responses about discrimination and inequality. Fifth, the authors do not discuss their own positionality, which is particularly relevant given that the research was conducted during a mobility stay and involved a local supervisor. Sixth, the paper does not explain how the French and Romanian versions of the questionnaire were reconciled or whether responses in different languages were analysed differently.

4. Clarity and Structure

The paper is generally well-structured, with a clear abstract in French and English, an introduction that sets out the context and problem, a methodology section, a results section organized by theme, an analysis and discussion section, and a conclusion. The use of verbatim quotations from respondents provides useful evidence and gives voice to the participants.

However, there are significant clarity and formatting issues. Most seriously, pages 11 and 12 of the manuscript contain a major formatting error, with hundreds of repeated line numbers and no substantive text, which makes the manuscript difficult to read

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and suggests a serious production problem that must be corrected. The reference to Atchikpa is inconsistently spelled, appearing as Atchikpa in the text and ATOHIKPA in the references. The numbering of sections is inconsistent, with section 1.3 appearing in the results section where it should presumably be 2.3. The introduction is long and could be tightened. The results section is overly descriptive and relies heavily on long lists of quotations with limited analytical commentary, while the discussion section introduces several theoretical references that are not always fully integrated with the findings. The conclusion is relatively brief and could more clearly summarize the main contributions and implications.

5. Significance and Relevance

The paper's significance lies in its contribution to understanding the sociolinguistic and intercultural dynamics of student mobility in a Romanian university context, and in its practical implications for institutional support and didactic planning. The emphasis on the language barrier as a central factor in inequality and on the need for institutional accompaniment is relevant to contemporary debates on internationalization and inclusion in higher education.

However, the significance is limited by the small sample, the single-site design, and the absence of comparative or longitudinal data. The paper acknowledges these limitations, but it could do more to discuss the transferability of the findings and to specify concrete recommendations for institutional policy and pedagogical practice. The practical implications remain somewhat general.

6. Use of Sources and References

The reference list is reasonably comprehensive and includes a mix of French and international sources. However, several issues should be addressed. First, there are inconsistencies between in-text citations and the reference list, for example, the spelling of Atchikpa and ATOHIKPA, and the citation of Springer (2024), which appears in the text but is not included in the reference list. Second, the reference to Iacob (2022) and ENAR (n.d.) appear in the text but are not included in the reference list. Third, the reference to IFEF (2023) and Jackson (1968) appear in the reference list but are not cited in the text, which suggests incomplete integration. Fourth, some references are incomplete or inconsistently formatted, for example, the Molinié (2008) reference lacks page numbers and full publication details. Fifth, the paper relies heavily on secondary theoretical sources and could engage more with recent empirical studies on African student mobility in Europe.

7. Specific Comments and Suggestions

Abstract: The abstract is clear and comprehensive. However, the English abstract contains several typographical and spacing errors, for example, researchaims, relationshipsthat, effectsthat, theiracademic, wassed, thirty-sevenRomanianstudents, six Africanstudents, wasmanuallyprocessed, whilaccounting, characteristicsthatemergedacrossindividualresponses, analyzedthrough, whichpositsthatspaceacts, interculturaldynamicsin,

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findingsindicatethatstudentmobility, deconstructingexisting, sociocognitiveframeworksamongstudents, differentnationalities, Africanstudents, studentmobility. These should be corrected.

Introduction: The introduction provides useful context but is long and could be condensed. The research problem and hypothesis are clearly stated, which is good.

Methodology: The methodology should be expanded to include the questionnaire items, the coding procedure, ethical considerations, and researcher positionality. The sampling strategy for African students should be clarified.

Results: The results section is overly descriptive and would benefit from more analytical interpretation. The presentation of quotations should be more selective and better integrated into the analysis.

Discussion: The discussion introduces several theoretical perspectives but does not always integrate them fully with the findings. The discussion could be strengthened by more explicitly linking each theoretical reference to specific findings and by comparing the findings with prior empirical studies.

Conclusion: The conclusion could more clearly summarize the main contributions, practical implications, and directions for future research.

Formatting: Pages 11 and 12 contain a major formatting error with repeated line numbers and no substantive text, which must be corrected. The section numbering should be checked for consistency. The spelling of Atchikpa should be standardized throughout.

Language and Style: The paper is generally well-written in French, but there are several typographical errors, for example, "rechercheaims" in the English abstract, "vécus" and other spacing issues, "nos hypothèses" and "leshupothèses". The English abstract requires careful proofreading.

8. Recommendation

Recommendation: Major Revision

The paper addresses a relevant topic and presents findings that are useful for researchers and practitioners interested in student mobility, intercultural competence, and educational inequality in Romania. However, it requires significant revision to meet the standards of scholarly rigour expected by the International Journal of Advanced Research. Key areas for improvement include:

1. Correcting the major formatting error on pages 11 and 12 and checking section numbering throughout.
2. Expanding the methodology section to include questionnaire items, coding procedures, ethical considerations, and researcher positionality.

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3. Deepening the analysis by integrating theoretical references more effectively and comparing findings with prior empirical studies.
4. Clarifying the originality and contribution of the study in relation to existing literature.
5. Correcting typographical and grammatical errors and ensuring consistency in referencing and spelling.

With these revisions, the paper could make a solid contribution to the literature on student mobility and intercultural education