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*Nurturing Solidarity: Considering the
Internationalization of Research Activities in
Kinesiology as a Moral Practice*

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1 **Nurturing solidarity: Considering the internationalization of research activities in**
2 **kinesiology as a moral practice**

3 There is a growing interest in the internationalization of research activities
4 in higher education institutions. Economic and political motivations are
5 increasingly the key drivers for internationalization which might be
6 viewed as disruptive and insensitive to local contexts, fostering inequality
7 and forms of cultural and socioeconomic imperialism. Unlike this
8 reductionist view of internationalization, we argue that internationalization
9 should be considered a moral practice grounded in solidarity as a key
10 concept to transform the social and material conditions of inequality. It is a
11 solidarity based on sharing the struggle with people, and the will to give,
12 and rethink, ourselves. The aim of this study is to explore the challenges
13 experienced by an academic as she attempts to increase the
14 internationalization of research activities in kinesiology through related
15 research, journals and academic associations. A critical theoretical
16 framework, based on Freire's notion of solidarity, encourages the reader to
17 interrogate the way in which they strive towards contributing to the
18 internationalization of research activities in kinesiology. It is suggested
19 that solidarity might direct readers to considering internationalization as
20 the promotion of cooperation among nations and, in turn, improving
21 quality and relevance of research.

22 **Keywords:** higher education;critical incidents; solidarity; internationalization; research;
23 morals

24

25

26 **Introduction**

27 Commonly accepted definitions of internationalization in higher education refer
28 to all aspects of an institute's mission, including teaching, research, and service (Knight,
29 2012). Internationalization of higher education can be defined as "the process of
30 integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose,
31 functions or delivery of postsecondary education" (Knight 2003, p. 2). This definition
32 underlines the ongoing nature of internationalization as a process and as a response to

33 globalization (Taylor, 2004). It also highlights its potential benefits in terms of
34 increasing cultural capital and diversity, enriching learning experiences, expanding
35 researchers' horizons and capacity through a professional community (Yuan, Li, & Yu,
36 2019).

37 The internationalization of research activities in particular has increasingly
38 become an area of emphasis for higher education institutions (Antelo, 2012;
39 Woldegiyorgis, Proctor, & de Wit, 2018) and is the focus of this paper. According to the
40 *Shape of Global Higher Education* (British Council, 2019), the more international the
41 research, the higher its impact. In that sense, overcoming obstacles to research activities
42 in this globalized world has become an important challenge to academics who undertake
43 international research projects. Although the internationalization of research activities
44 have increasingly become a priority in contemporary higher education institutions, far
45 less attention has been paid in the literature, most likely due to the belief that research is
46 international in nature (Woldegiyorgis et al., 2018). A more detailed understanding of
47 the internationalization of research activities could be gathered via empirical studies in
48 how work has been approached by academics.

49 There are various ways in which research activities, journals and academic
50 associations can be internationalized. Internationalizing research activities might
51 include: (a) publication and presentation of studies across international research
52 networks; (b) international funding (e.g., Erasmus funding in Europe); (c) international
53 Keynotes; (d) acting as a critical friend of international colleagues; (e) international PhD
54 supervision and PhD examination, and (f) panel membership on national funding
55 agencies of international countries. Internationalizing journals may include journals: (a)
56 considering their scope to reach across continents and disciplines; (b) supporting
57 publications written by colleagues across different continents; (c) supporting the
58 publication of meaningful work that has been translated from another language; (d)
59 ensuring there is international representation on editorial boards and, by association,
60 international perspectives being shared in reviewing submissions to journals, and (e)
61 upholding a journal culture that supports an international discourse. The
62 internationalization of associations includes associations: (a) seeking international
63 colleagues to serve the association; (b) informing and aligning the work of the
64 association with related international associations, and (c) encouraging spaces where
65 colleagues from related international associations meet, (e.g., identification of special
66 interest groups).

67 A number of academics have revealed various challenges brought by the
68 internationalization of research activities in higher education (e.g., Knight, 2012;
69 Rumbley et al., 2012; Taylor, 2004). Economic and political rationales, such as the
70 increasing attention paid to international university rankings and the place of research
71 indicators within those rankings, are increasingly the key drivers for
72 internationalization, while social and cultural motivations, such as the identification of
73 grand and complex societal challenges, seem to be decreasing in importance (Knight,
74 2012; Rumbley et al., 2012; Taylor, 2004). These key drivers for internationalization
75 have been viewed as disruptive and insensitive to local contexts, and as a consequence
76 seen to nurture inequities. It is widely accepted that the international relevance of
77 research includes a highly competitive agenda related to the increased productivity of
78 individual researchers, their universities, and their nations, tied to the use of
79 bibliometric analysis in support of rankings (Woldegiyorgis et al., 2018).

80 While market expansion and profit maximization are important motivators for
81 internationalization in higher education, we believe that internationalization should be
82 viewed as a "moral practice". This includes collectively educating academics to be
83 prepared to deal with global conflicts based on their understanding of other peoples'
84 cultures, and a desire to participate in the international academic debate in order to
85 increase the contribution of higher education research in a global scenario (Khoo,
86 Haapakoski, Hellstén, & Malone, 2019; Romani-Dias, Carneiro, & Barbosa, 2019).
87 Other rationales for greater internationalization have also been proposed, including the
88 identification of grand and complex societal challenges that are beyond the capacity of
89 one institution or research team to study (Woldegiyorgis et al., 2018).

90 We believe the notion of solidarity could be a way of considering
91 internationalization as a "moral practice". It could create openings for practices that
92 have not institutionalized into universities and organizations. In that sense, the
93 community cultivated by academics would not be based on particular geographical or
94 institutional affiliations but on a shared set of values that may radicalize solidarity
95 toward otherness (Freire, 1987; Zembylas, 2017). Despite the importance of considering
96 academics' intentions in internationalization, few studies analyze the extent of the
97 impact of academics' perspective on the internationalization of research activities.

98

99 *A Freirean perspective of solidarity*

100 The more radical the person is, the more fully he or she enters into reality so
101 that, knowing it better, he or she can better transform it. This individual is not
102 afraid to confront, to listen, to see the world unveiled. This person is not afraid
103 to meet the people or to enter into dialogue with them. This person does not
104 consider himself or herself the proprietor of history or of all people, or the
105 liberator of the oppressed; but he or she does commit himself or herself, within
106 history, to fight at their side (Freire 1987, p.13).

107 Solidarity figures prominently in Brazilian education scholar Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy*
108 *of the Oppressed* as a key concept to transform the social and material conditions of
109 inequality. For Freire, it is a solidarity based on sharing the struggle with people, and
110 the will to give and rethink ourselves. Through a commitment to love, Freire believed
111 that solidarity is a radical posture and requires that one enter into the situation of those
112 with whom one is in solidarity. Solidarity is not simply about entering into a state of
113 solidarity—to be in solidarity—which might suggest feelings towards another, but about
114 actions taken in relationship to someone (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2012). Freire
115 described that we are in solidarity with the “other” only when we stop regarding the
116 “other” as an abstract category and see them as subjects who have been unjustly dealt
117 with and deprived of their voice. In that sense, solidarity would happen when we stop
118 “making pious, sentimental, and individualistic gestures and risks an act of love” (Freire
119 1987, p. 24). It must encompass a deep unwavering commitment to social inclusion and
120 democracy: a revolutionary commitment to transform the oppressive ideologies and
121 practices in education (Freire, 1987). The enactment of solidarity seeks to acknowledge
122 these sufferings, yet without letting them perpetuate oppression and inequality
123 (Zembylas, 2017).

124 Solidarity is characterized by the will to give (Chabot, 2008; Freire, 1987, 2007).
125 Contrary to common misconceptions, giving does not refer to self-deprivation or
126 “giving up” something. Instead, giving is a productive act that enhances the joy, insight,
127 and ability of the giver as well as the receiver (Chabot, 2008). In *Pedagogy of Solidarity*
128 (Freire, Freire, & Oliveira, 2014), Freire and colleagues problematized the case of a
129 foreign professor helping to change education in Brazil. According to Freire and
130 colleagues, he/she can only do that if he/she really knows something about Brazil, is
131 eager to learn about Brazilian reality, and is sufficiently humble to re-think himself or
132 herself (Freire et al. 2014). In that sense, solidarity also affects or modifies the one who
133 acts (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2012).

134 Solidarity is the commitment with the voices and perspectives of marginalized and
135 non-dominant positionalities/perspectives, allowing researchers to recast power
136 differences in the research, providing tools for dialogue, action, hope and imagination. It
137 underscores the unpredictability of the encounter and of the coercion inherent in the
138 process of learning to become (Freire, 1987). According to Freire, those who authentically
139 commit themselves to the people must re-examine themselves constantly and it requires
140 a profound rebirth (Freire, 1987). It results in a process of personal and social
141 transformation for everybody. It is a process of opening our own eyes as researchers and
142 seeing the world through different eyes, coupled with a desire to open others' eyes (Cahill,
143 Rios-Moore, & Threatts, 2008).

144 Although it is recognized that academics' experiences are essential if we consider
145 internationalization as a "moral practice", there is a gap of empirical studies in this area.
146 The aim of this study is to explore the challenges experienced by one academic, the first
147 author, as she attempts to enhance the internationalization of her research activities in
148 kinesiology as it relates to the research process itself, journals, and academic associations.
149 The next section describes critical incidents deployed to investigate the academic's
150 experiences. We conclude by identifying future developments and promising directions
151 for considering solidarity as a lens through which to interrogate the internationalization
152 of research activities.

153

154 **Methodology**

155 In being invited to contribute to the NAKHE leadership development workshop
156 titled "Leadership in the International University" in June 2019, the first author was
157 asked to speak to the leadership of the internationalization of research, journals and
158 associations. Given this paper contributes to a special issue that has arisen from the
159 NAKHE workshop, it focuses on the same three noted activities. The first author
160 referred to critical incidents related to each element throughout the workshop. This
161 paper provides an opportunity for these incidents to be revisited in greater depth and the
162 significance of each to understanding the potential for nurturing solidarity through
163 international research activities. The second author played a crucial role in introducing
164 the solidarity framework and in discussions on the extent to which the critical incidents
165 contributed to, and/or challenged, the framework. The development of each critical
166 incident is a product of ongoing critical reflection between the two authors. They met

167 each other at a conference in 2012 and the professional and personal relationship was
168 developed through collaborations in writing and mentoring. This has resulted in the
169 creation of a safe space for a reciprocal trust with respect to constructive critical
170 analyses of each other's perspectives.

171 The critical incident technique is a qualitative research method that is recognized
172 as an effective exploratory and investigative tool (Butterfield et al., 2005). The critical
173 incident technique offers a flexible set of principles that can be modified and adapted
174 (Flanagan, 1954). In the context of this study, recalled extreme incidents capture the
175 challenges an academic has faced in attempting to increase the internationalization of
176 research activities in kinesiology. The authors have attempted to uphold Butterfield et
177 al.'s (2005) criteria for incidents to be included in a study. That is, they provide some
178 context to the incident, they contain a detailed description of the experience itself and
179 they describe the outcome of the incident (Butterfield et al., 2005). The critical incidents
180 evolved from the first author sharing stories about experiences related to
181 internationalization of research activities in kinesiology. The second author probed the
182 first author to ensure all detailed information related to the incident was captured before
183 working together to identify which issues were the most pertinent with respect to the
184 interest in nurturing solidarity across the kinesiology community. This, in turn, resulted
185 in conversations related to how best to resolve the specific issue(s). The academic, Ann,
186 is a senior scholar who was born in Scotland and completed her physical education
187 teacher education (PETE) undergraduate education and PhD on curriculum
188 development in physical education in Scottish universities. She then worked in England
189 for three years as a Research Associate which entailed her being part of a small research
190 team who were commissioned, at times, to do research in the area of sport pedagogy.
191 The post allowed her to attend numerous international academic conferences and,
192 through her mentor at the time, to be introduced to an international community of
193 scholars. Ann has been working as a physical education teacher educator at the
194 University of Limerick in Ireland since 2002. The world-class expertise in sport
195 pedagogy in has been central to the University of Limerick being named as the top
196 outstanding university in the field of sport pedagogy, as determined by a 2017 study
197 (Dong et al., 2017) that reviewed almost 3,000 sport pedagogy-related publications.
198 This further developed the international communities to which Ann was introduced. Her
199 exposure to the internationalization of research activities was heightened during a five-
200 year term as Chair of a Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences and more

201 recently as an Assistant Dean of Research for the Faculty of Education and Health
202 Sciences. The values and identities that Ann holds in attempting to support the
203 internationalization of kinesiology is somewhat evident in the critical incidents captured
204 later.

205 In the true spirit of considering the internationalization of research activities, the
206 first author approached a colleague, Carla (second author), to work together on
207 capturing their respective challenges in attempting to increase the internationalization
208 of research activities from their respective perspectives and jurisdictions. Carla is a
209 Brazilian early/mid career academic who began working in Australia in 2019. She
210 studied in England for part of her PhD and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the
211 United States (US). She has publications in collaboration with researchers from ,
212 Australia, Ireland, South America, Sweden, United Kingdom (UK) and US. The
213 professional relationship between Carla and Ann is testimony to the importance of
214 informally connecting with international colleagues before formally considering how
215 best to work together in a bid to learn with, and from, each other. The intention was to
216 capture the values and identities that each hold in attempting to support the
217 internationalization of sport pedagogy/kinesiology through reporting critical incidents.
218 However, as they considered how best to do this, it became apparent that providing
219 critical incidents aligned to the three chosen research activities for both authors was not
220 possible in the limited word count. The authors agreed to continue working
221 collaboratively on this paper and have outlined a follow-up paper, to be led by Carla,
222 that will extend some of the threads of the argument shared here.

223 **Findings**

224 This section presented a critical incident aligned with the internationalization of each of
225 the three research activities discussed above, i.e., research, journals and associations.

226 ***Critical incident 1: Research***

227 "Responsive to changes": Capturing diverse perspectives

228 *Setting a common international agenda for physical education, this book*
229 *asks how physical education and physical education teacher education can*
230 *be reconfigured together so that they are responsive to changes in today's*
231 *fast-paced, diverse and uncertain global society.*

232 The above extract is taken from the preface of a recent edited book

233 (MacPhail & Lawson, 2020, p. i) that set out to emphasize international-comparative
234 analyses which facilitate cross-border knowledge generation, innovation, professional
235 learning and continuous improvement. This was to be achieved through international
236 and cross-sector authorship teams addressing a specific "grand challenge" (e.g.,
237 readying schools and university program for student, teacher and faculty diversity) that
238 was agreed to be representative of what professionals in diverse nations worldwide
239 would discover and prioritize as catalysts for the collaborative redesign of physical
240 education, teacher education, and research and development. In working as an editor of
241 the text with lead authors of the respective chapters, it was evident to Ann that, in some
242 instances, there remained a preference to work with already established research-teams
243 that did not necessary include international and cross-sector involvement. This, in turn,
244 did not maximise the intention of capturing diverse perspectives on specific identified
245 grand challenges.

246 This critical incident highlights the challenge of considering how best all
247 physical education and PETE stakeholders can authentically be held accountable for
248 determining an international framework for strategic planning, proactive leadership, and
249 adaptive designs. The premise of the book was that the time has come to extend what
250 very well may be successful local and national research teams contributing to a specific
251 agenda item to include international representation, not only in authoring the chapter but
252 in the associated working relationship and conversations that can happen as a by-
253 product of writing together. One such example is captured in a chapter where a PhD
254 candidate in the field of Education, a Senior Education Officer for Health and
255 Wellbeing, a Consultant for Career Transitions working for a K-12 school board and a
256 Professor of Social Welfare and Educational Policy and Leadership have collaborated,
257 from their respective jurisdictions of Canada, Scotland and the US, on how best to
258 prepare and support teacher educators and teachers as change agents and policy
259 entrepreneurs. As Arndt et al. (2017) shares, "The knowledges that each of us
260 contributes are particular, situational, cultural and political (...) relational conceptions
261 of embodiment, places, theories and education (...) openness and unpredictability (...)
262 each of us applies the lens of our particular theoretical, educational, life-experiential
263 angle" (p. 293).

264

265 *Critical incident 2: Journals*

266 "Being courteous to an international readership": internationalizing research

267 *It is noticeable that this section is very [name of country]-centric. Consider a*
 268 *wider geographical scope and then focus in on the [name of country] context.*
 269 *Acknowledge that this is an international phenomenon and that a [name of*
 270 *country] study is a contribution to understanding the nuances of such.*

271 The above extract arises from an initial peer review of a paper submitted to a
 272 journal within the broad field of kinesiology. The author(s)' response to the comment
 273 explains that while considering the comments, they had decided to state that their data
 274 was limited to the specific country setting and provide recommendations for the
 275 extension of this work to other international settings. In the second review of the same
 276 paper, the same reviewer states;

277 *I am not suggesting the necessity to examine the study and its results from an*
 278 *international perspective but rather position the importance of the focus of the*
 279 *study in an international context. This is not only good practice but is also*
 280 *crucial in being courteous to an international readership. The author(s)'*
 281 *comment in acknowledging the study was limited to the [name of country] does*
 282 *not hinder them from acknowledging the wider international context.*

283 In responding to this comment, the author(s) explained that the editor associated
 284 with this specific paper had recommended that the authors either (a) frame the study
 285 within an international context or (b) state from the beginning that their findings and the
 286 scope of this work is limited to the specific country context. The authors state that,
 287 given that their data were related to a specific country, that option (c) was their favored
 288 approach.

289 This critical incident draws attention to the central role that journal editors,
 290 associate editors, editorial board members and peer-reviewers (can) play in the
 291 internationalization of journals. We contend that the scope of journals should extend
 292 beyond communicating national and international research to developing strategies for
 293 communicating productively with those we hope will use our research around the world
 294 (McNae & Cowie, 2017). This, we suggest, would prove more feasible in instances
 295 where journals actively seek and support meaningful research from a wide geographical
 296 pool as well as ensuring associate editors and editorial boards are international.

297

298 ***Critical incident 3: Associations***

299 Recruiting and nurturing early-career scholars: a shared responsibility?

300 *Objectives: (a) To consider how we can best work together across the sport*
301 *pedagogy community to increase the critical mass of talented early career sport*
302 *pedagogy scholars who may be confined by rules, regulations and/or*
303 *experiences that somewhat limit the opportunity to grow and be nurtured; (b)*
304 *To consider how we can encourage working as a collective community across*
305 *jurisdictions.*

306 The above extract is from a successful session submission made to an
307 association conference special interest group in the field of kinesiology. The session
308 was delivered by the senior academic and three early-career colleagues from three
309 different countries who the senior academic had opportunities to work with and mentor.
310 The context of the session was in response to addressing: (a) the prevailing demise of
311 PETE/doctoral programmes in some countries; (b) the extent to which academics
312 actively recruit and nurture international early-career scholars; (c) an increase in the
313 critical mass of talented international early-career scholars and encouraging their work
314 as a collective community, and (d) the reality that policies of working contexts in
315 different countries can significantly hamper the opportunity to grow and be nurtured.

316 The session involved the sharing of three stories from the three early-career
317 colleagues, and attendees were asked to work in groups and consider (a) What do you
318 hear in the shared stories that would inform how we can support (international) early
319 career scholars? and (b) How can we work as a collective community to support early
320 career (international) scholars? It was evident that the discussion in some groups was
321 somewhat stilted, perhaps conveying the impression that attendees had never been
322 prompted to consider such questions. In visiting one group, there was an admittance that
323 their potential for conversation had been weakened by a colleague with a particular
324 perspective on the topic. In seeking their perspective, the individual made it clear that
325 they did not appreciate the necessity for such a conversation, believing that the onus
326 was on early-career scholars to "find them" / "approach them" rather than the
327 established academic being proactive in locating such early-career scholars and
328 extending an invitation to them.

329 This critical incident conveys the influence that learning communities cultivated
330 by academics (can) have on acting as gatekeepers to early-career scholars looking to
331 enter, or move to, a working context that will support and nurture their professional
332 pathway. Given the admittance from the individual noted in the above paragraph, there
333 may well be individuals whose perception of the world is predominantly focused on
334 themselves. That is, they have not (and may choose never to) reached the stage in their

335 academic career where empowerment becomes related to a “growing sense of
336 identifying with something bigger than the individual self, and which enhances the
337 self’s sense of meaningfulness” (Locke, 2017, p. 193). It is therefore imperative that we
338 find a way to encourage such ‘gatekeepers’ to reflect on their role in academia and, by
339 association, the consequences for early-career scholars. Indeed, the challenge is to find a
340 way to move away from even having ‘gatekeepers’ in our field.

341

342 **Discussion and conclusion**

343 The aim of this study was to explore the challenges experienced by an academic in her
344 attempts to increase the internationalization of research activities in kinesiology through
345 related research, journals and academic associations. In addressing this aim, the authors
346 were interested in interrogating the way in which solidarity emerged, or not. This study
347 extends what we know in the area by suggesting internationalization of research as a
348 “moral practice”, grounded in solidarity as a key aspect to transform the social and
349 material conditions of inequality. We focus on two specific observations: (a) Solidarity
350 as empowerment and collective action; and (b) Solidarity requires reflexivity.

351

352 *Solidarity as empowerment and collective action*

353 The notion of being courteous to an international readership (critical incident 2)
354 conveys a level of respect and consideration towards international colleagues and, in
355 turn, a level of solidarity with respect to an awareness of shared interests, objectives and
356 sympathies that will help create a sense of unity across kinesiology communities. We
357 suggest that it is through such courteous practices as acknowledging the wider
358 international kinesiology context that we are supporting a level of solidarity across the
359 kinesiology field. While solidarity as a collective action was the premise of the text
360 mentioned in critical incident 1, it was evident that not all contributors to the text had
361 maximized the opportunity to work across kinesiology-related communities or
362 stakeholders. An interesting extension to understanding solidarity as a collective action
363 would be to interrogate the attributes and practices of individuals who advocate for
364 solidarity. We suggest that empowerment is one such attribute.

365 Locke (2017) has suggested a connection between unity (solidarity) and power,
366 “If unity is strength ... then a lack of unity (social fragmentation, isolation, anomie) is
367 conducive to powerlessness” (p. 192). It is empowerment, related to a growing sense of
368 identifying with something bigger than the individual self, and which enhances the

369 self's sense of meaningfulness, that we believe is central to the enactment of solidarity.
370 That is, an interest in the "greater good", i.e., what is of benefit to a targeted
371 population/group than to an individual. Critical incident 3 prompts us to consider the
372 extent to which a number of individuals whose perception of the world is predominantly
373 focused on themselves (conveyed through a lack of responsiveness, inclusiveness and
374 accountability to early-career scholars) detracts from the social element of
375 empowerment. That is, how such a view hinders established academics in positioning
376 themselves as members of a learning/academic community responsible for nurturing
377 early-career scholars.

378 In the critical incidents, we observed how the idea of empowerment has been co-
379 opted by individualism, supporting the rampant individualization in today's (neoliberal)
380 21st Century university (Brown, 2015; Zipin, 2010). For example, liberal higher
381 education democratic institutions "almost always fall short of their promise and at times
382 cruelly invert it, yet liberal democratic principles hold, and hold out, ideals of both
383 freedom and equality universally shared and of political rule by and for the people"
384 (Brown, 2015, p. 18). This reduces the value of higher education to individual economic
385 risk and gain to all domains and activities, and configures human beings exhaustively as
386 market actors, or what Brown (2015) described as *homo oeconomicus*.

387 Different to the concept of individual initiative, when people act independently
388 to "pull themselves up by their own bootstraps" and become even more self-reliant, we
389 argue that empowerment has to be social. Empowerment comes from knowing, being,
390 and acting in the world. It is a collective, comprehensive, mutual, and contagious
391 empowerment (Freire, 1987). Collective because it transcends a narrow focus on
392 individuals and targets groups and entire communities, aiming to organise and mobilize
393 them for collective action. It requires a sense of solidarity based on sharing the struggle
394 with people, and the will to give, and rethink, ourselves By thinking of solidarity
395 internationally, we might create an empowering space that challenges the
396 individualization of neoliberal universities. In addition, it would democratize knowledge
397 by positioning academics at different levels of experience as members of a
398 learning/academic community.

399 ***Solidarity requires reflexivity***

400 The revolution is made neither by the leaders for the people, nor by the people
401 for the leaders, but by both acting together in unshakable solidarity. This
402 solidarity is born only when the leaders witness to it by their humble, loving, and

403 courageous encounter with the people. Not all men and women have sufficient
404 courage for this encounter—but when they avoid encounter, they become
405 inflexible and treat others as mere objects; instead of nurturing life, they kill life;
406 instead of searching for life, they flee from it. And these
407 are *oppressor* characteristics (Freire, 1987, p.102).

408 Freire described that discovering himself/herself to be an oppressor may cause
409 considerable anguish, but it does not necessarily lead to solidarity with the oppressed.
410 "Rationalizing his guilt through paternalistic treatment of the oppressed, all the while
411 holding them fast in a position of dependence, will not do; it is a radical posture"
412 (Freire, 1987, p.23). The oppressor is in solidarity with the oppressed only when she/he
413 stops regarding the oppressed as an abstract category and sees them as a subject. It is a
414 process that requires a constant reflection and action.

415 In the critical incidents, we observed examples of a lack of conscientiousness
416 that might perpetuate oppression and inequality. For example, researchers' preference to
417 work with already established research-teams instead of including international and
418 cross-sector involvement (critical incident 1) and/or academics believing that the onus
419 was on early-career scholars to "find them" rather than the established academic being
420 proactive in locating such early-career scholars and extending an invitation to them
421 (critical incident 2). For those researchers, having more is an inalienable right, a right
422 they acquired through their own "effort" with their "courage to take risks".

423 Enacting solidarity implies reflexivity. It is characterized by a practice of self-
424 reflection and introspective awareness that involves being, or becoming, cognizant of
425 one's values, biases, assumptions, and positionalities. Thus, academics should engage in
426 ethical reflective practice to become more aware of how embodied subjectivities surface
427 in relation to the practice of solidarity. In internationalizing research by considering
428 solidarity, academics need to engage in reflexivity. This requires us to acknowledge our
429 intersecting identities, both marginalized and privileged, and then employ self-
430 reflexivity, which moves one beyond self-reflection to the uncomfortable level of self-
431 implication.

432

433 **Concluding thoughts**

434 The aim of this study was to explore the challenges experienced by an academic
435 in increasing the internationalization of research activities in kinesiology and to
436 interrogate the way in which solidarity emerged, or not. Based on the critical incidents

437 described here, we argued that internationalization of research as “moral practice”
438 should consider empowerment and require academics’ reflexivity. By thinking of
439 solidarity internationally, we suggest creating an empowering space that would
440 challenge the individualization of neoliberal universities. In that sense, knowledge and
441 understanding are co-produced where academics across different levels and
442 positionalities learn to resist the imposition of oppressive, disempowering, and
443 commonly accepted, practices (Freire, 1987, 2007). Such a space would create a
444 powerful way for academics to identify, critique and transform the oppressing situations
445 they face. Futures studies should continue to explore internationalization of research
446 activities as a “moral practice”, seeking to reimagine the conditions for ethical
447 encounters with others that challenge present conditions of inequality. Our
448 recommendations would be to map diverse academics’ learning trajectories and
449 positionalities (e.g., from developed and developing countries) and considering the
450 process of being, and becoming, a solidarity academic.
451

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