



Researching Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in South-North Collaborative
Online International Learning/Virtual Exchange

Project Update Webinar 28/03/25



Introduction and Programme

2.00 - 2.40 *Female Voices Project Update (staff voices)*

Kyria Finardi, Lynette Jacobs, Marina Orsini-Jones, Jenny Wells and Katherine Wimpenny

2.40 - 2.50 Q&A

2.55 - 3.00 *Elevating Voices: The Value of Female Collaboration in Virtual Exchange*

Professor Asuman Aşık (Gazi University, Türkiye)

3.05 – 3.10 *The Female COIL Leader: Joies et Peines*

Dr Alexandra Reynolds (Université de Bordeaux, France)

3.15 – 3.25 *Virtual Exchange and Social Justice*

Dr Lin Ching-Ching (Adelphi University, USA)

3.30 -3.40 (Neuro)Divergent Voice(s): Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) in Virtual Exchange

Dr Juliana Salvadori (Universidade do Estado da Bahia, Brazil)

3.40 – 4.00 Discussion and close





Initial findings from female staff interviews

Kyria Finardi
Lynette Jacobs
Marina Orsini-Jones
Katherine Wimpenny



Outline

- Theoretical framework
- Findings from students' interviews (Orsini-Jones et al., 2025)
- Review of initial conceptual framework
- Female staff voices
- Results from initial coding of staff interviews





Project focus: Theoretical perspectives



Why 'Third Space'

- Challenging
- Transformational
- Fluid
- 'Otherwise'

Bhabha (1994): *interstices between colliding cultures, a liminal space which gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning*



Decolonial theory foundations and concept analysis

- COIL through a decolonial dialogic Global South-North lens (Andreotti et al, 2018; Guimarães et al, 2019; Stein & Andreotti, 2021)
- Hybrid approach to qualitative Concept Analysis (theory, fieldwork and analysis, Hermanns & Mastel-Smith, 2012)
- How do women define attributes of their engagement in COIL-VE as aligned to the concepts of the model, especially in relation to the named capitals and value?



Decolonial theory foundations and concept analysis

- Bourdieu theory of capital and habitus
- Freire Autonomy and Agency
- Female voices



Values and Capitals

- V: The worth and relevance of HE practices to student and staff development, associated with the promotion of education as a social good, emphasising the importance of inclusivity in the teaching, learning, and research missions of institutions
- C: not as an indication of class and wealth as in the original theorisation by Bourdieu (2006), but as a resource, strength or potential to draw from





Approach to Inquiry



RQs

1. How does the COIL framework designed by Wimpenny et al (2022, p. 289) resonate with **female staff** and students who took part in South-North COIL projects?
2. In what ways does the research evidence gathered from this project **corroborate the 'capitals of resonance' previously identified in COIL**: social capital, digital capital, cultural and psychological capital, trust capital and structural capital?
3. To what extent does the research evidence gathered from this project validate the claim **that COIL supports 'Substantive Equality'** (accommodation of difference and promotion of the worth of all – cf. Hagenmeier, 2021) for the female participants involved in it?



Qualitative Concept Analysis

4 step approach (Hermanns & Mastel-Smith, 2012)

1. Questioning how the women (ourselves included) can identify what makes the capitals and values significant for them, if at all (*the operationalisation of the concept*)
2. Investigating what situations, including antecedents and consequences in all their nuances, serve to add meaning and relevance to the concepts (*the tangibleness of the concept*)
3. Linking the analysis to any further literature that may support any conceptual ambiguity
4. Determining implications for further research

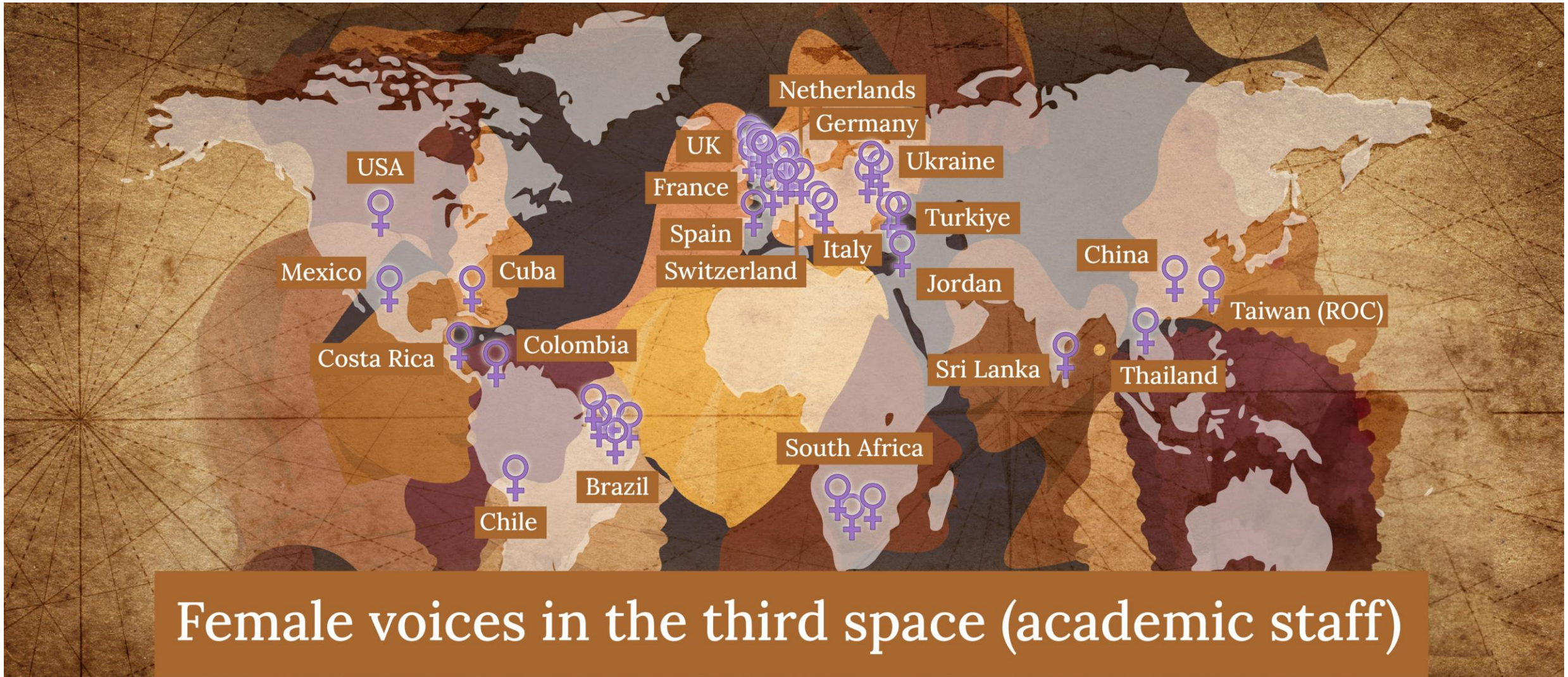


Inquiry

- Ethical approval including gatekeepers' permissions
- 80 in total in two cycles, aiming for 40 students and 40 staff
- Recruitment via online survey at the Female Voices website: <https://female-voices.coventry.domains/would-you-like-to-take-part/>
- 35 staff respondents to date, 28 staff interviews to date (including 5 from the team)
- 6 different discipline areas represented (Education/English/HR/Finance/Design/Leadership)
- Staff from 22 countries
- 7 with dual nationality

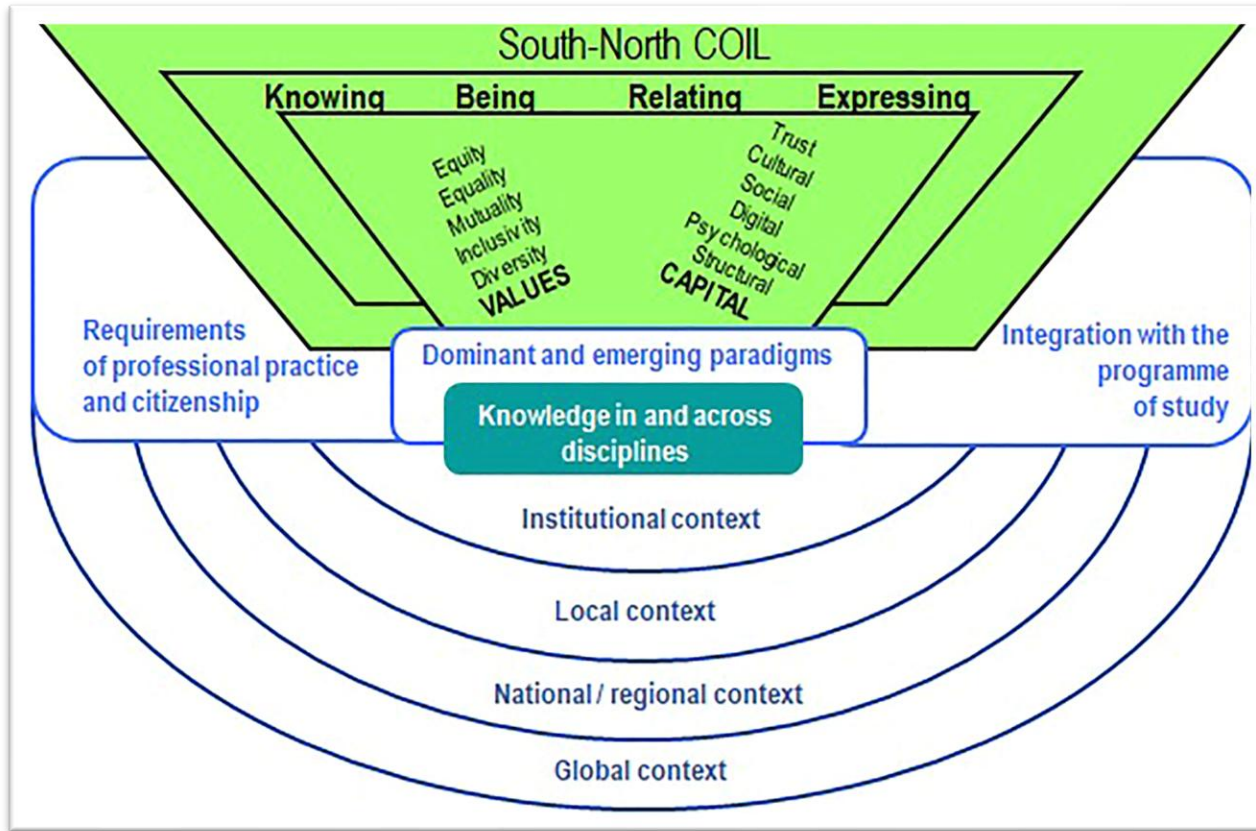


Staff nationality

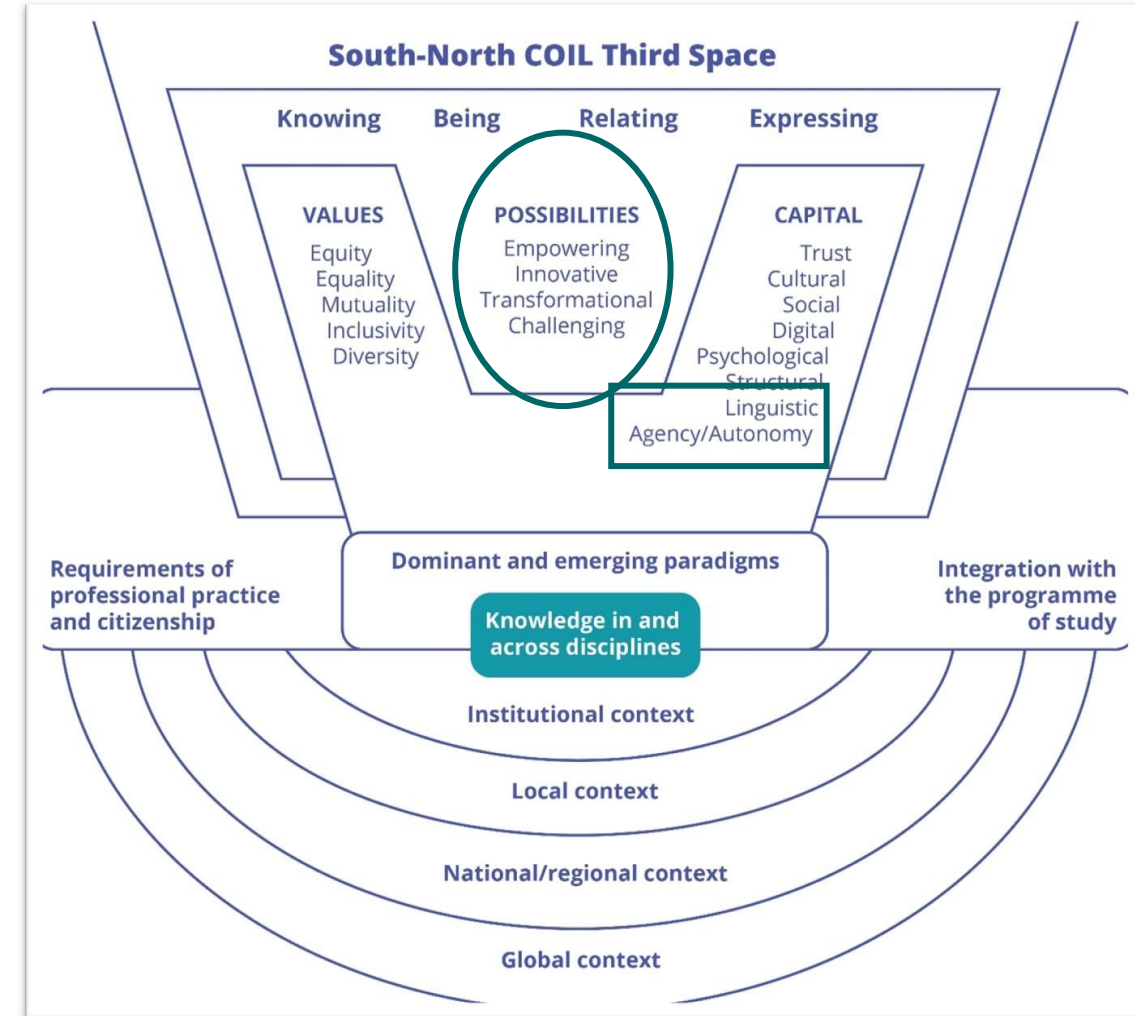


Female voices in the third space (academic staff)

Reviewed conceptual framework after student interviews



Wimpenny, Finardi, Orsini-Jones & Jacobs
(2022)



Orsini-Jones, Jacobs, Finardi & Wimpenny
(2025)

Values, Capitals and Possibilities

- V: The worth and relevance of HE practices to student and staff development, associated with the promotion of education as a social good, emphasising the importance of inclusivity in the teaching, learning, and research missions of institutions
- C: not as an indication of class and wealth as in the original theorisation by Bourdieu (2006), but as a resource, strength or potential to draw from
- **E: Extras – new (socio)material possibilities which students recognised, valued and co-constructed – confronting, becoming, emerging.**





Preliminary findings

Academic staff voices



New codes emerging

Values (V):

V1 Equity,
V2 Equality,
V3 Mutuality,
V4 Inclusivity,
V5 Diversity;

Capitals (C):

C1 Trust,
C2 Cultural,
C3 Social,
C4 Digital,
C5 Psychological,
C6 Structural,
C7 Linguistic
C8 Agency/Autonomy

C9 Professional (new one)

C10 Conflict Resolution (new one)]

(E): Extra (experiences emerged through the lens of space)

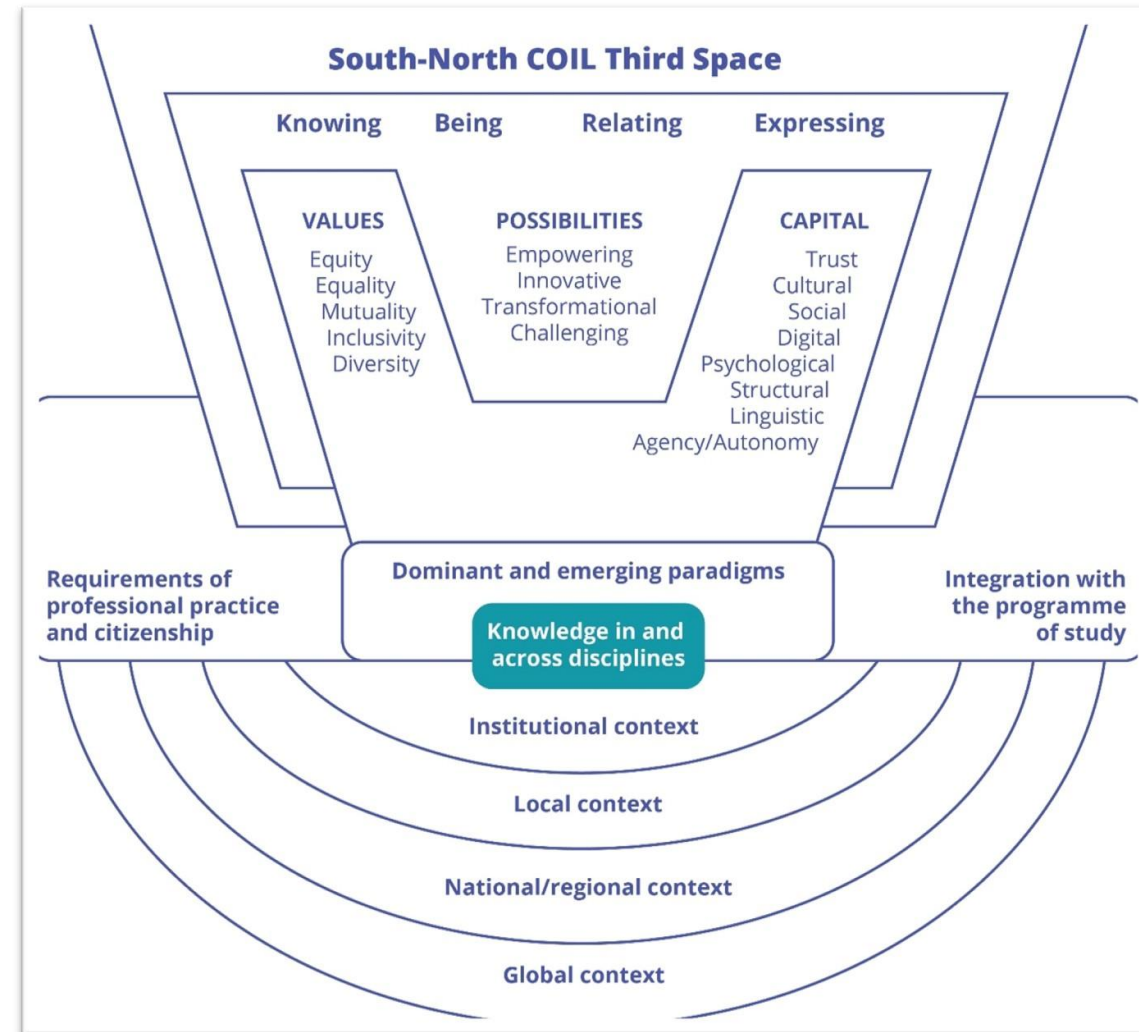
E1 Empowering;

E2 Innovation/Innovative;

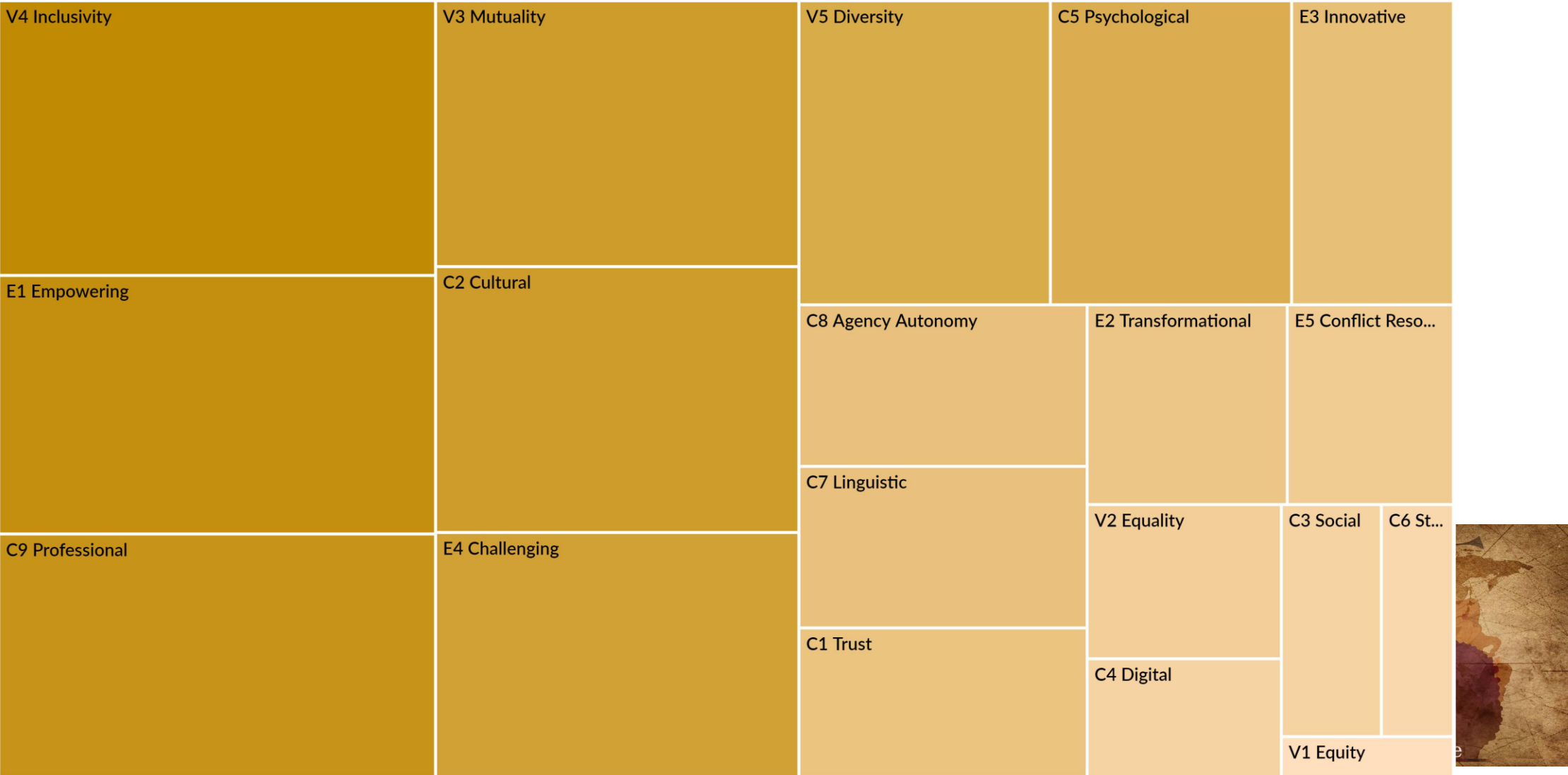
E3 Transformational;

E4 Challenging/challenges

E5 Conflict Resolution (?)



Interesting South-North differences emerging from the NVivo code analysis (RA analysis): South (8/9 staff)



Some quotes for C9 Professional

*I think it, gives you at least, **for professional development**, it gives you many opportunities, not only because you can publish because you can exchange ideas with other colleagues when you participate in a conference but because you have to study as well.*

Staff_13_Costa Rica

*It has enabled me **to work, develop research and write papers with another colleague***

Staff_7_Brazil

*And I think it's also these virtual exchange experiences **increased my networking as a female academic**. And I can see that especially we built a kind of **nice community around virtual exchange and nearly all of them the, you know, academics that I have worked with are female**. And now, for example, I am kind of **virtual exchange ambassador at university, talking everywhere how virtual exchange changed my life***

Staff_9_Turkey

*It is opportunity to be prepared to be well prepared for **globalised team working, consortia and work in a team***

Staff_17_Ukraine



Female Voices in the Third Space

Conflict resolution E10 (TBC)

*They want you to share their values sometimes. It's really difficult and for me, for I wanted to, to teach students that the tolerance, the understanding and the skills language **this is a tool for diplomacy** and language can be a conflict resolutions tool. [...] now I see that this project COILs they might serve as **a restorative tool, and they can be a strategy for trauma, informative pedagogy***

Staff_17_Ukraine

Conflict solving

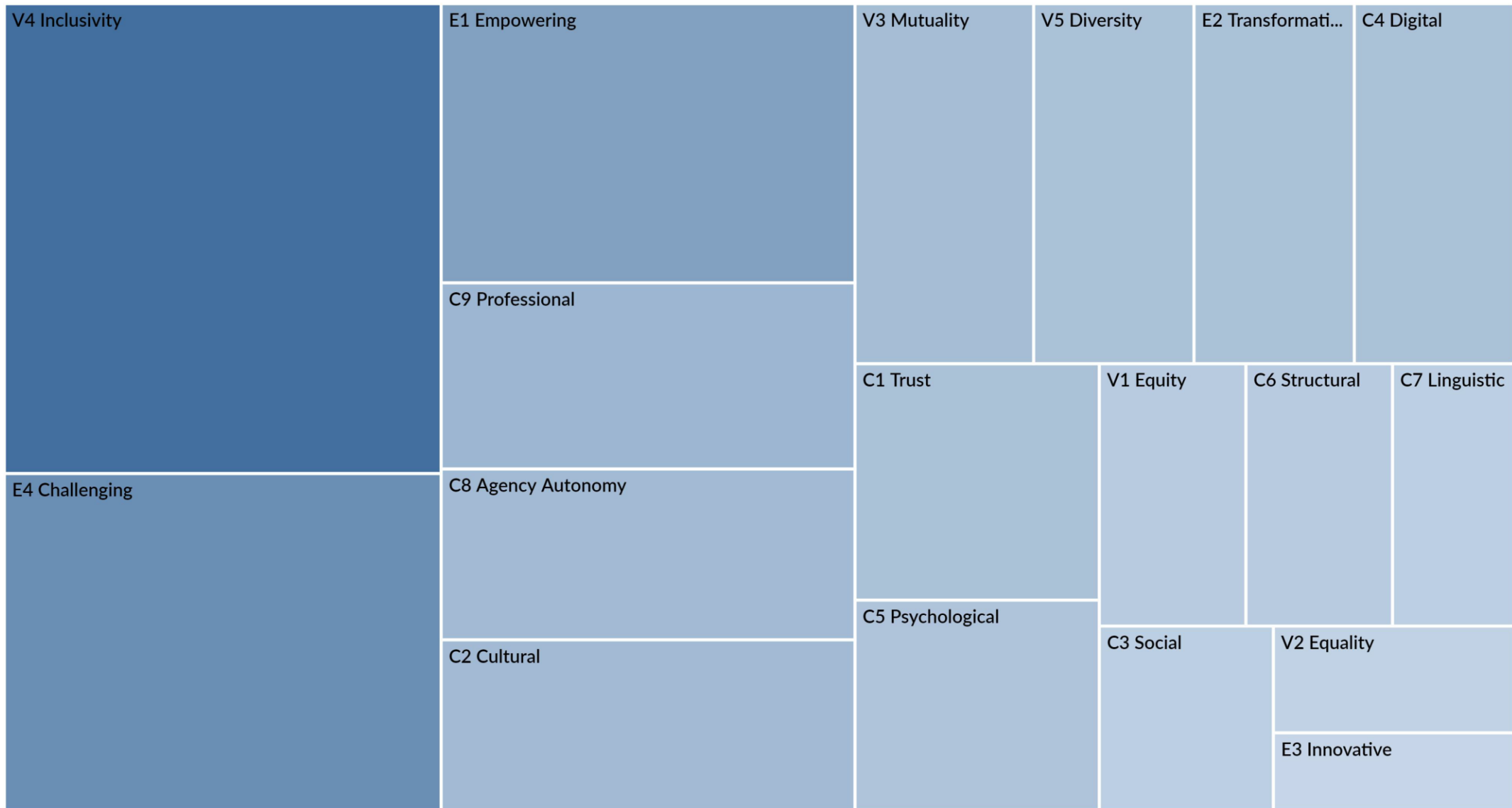
Staff_20_Ukraine

But there's always the unexpected part that really happens that we need to make room for. Whether it's misunderstanding or tension, or it could be, you know, students understanding tasks in a different way.

Staff_18_Jordan



Interesting South-North differences emerging from the NVivo code analysis (RA analysis): North (6/14 staff)



Challenging E4

*But **it's always challenging** because we rely on the tech so much and **often things go wrong**. And we have to be flexible and adaptable about that I think **and resilient, a lot of resilience**.[...]I do notice that the perspective on China over the last 5 years has dramatically changed. Where in the beginning students would be excited about having these collaborations with China now **it's all political** and we **even get questions from parents** and some people have all kinds of security gadgets involved because you're communicating online and if **we're not giving our data to the Chinese**.*

Staff_10_Netherlands



Inclusivity V4

*And one of the comments that came from one of my students is that this type of projects **makes us feel important**. And they really love that, like there is a word for me important, but because of the context my students said it. involved, I think also makes others feel important because **they feel included**.[...] **I do feel included. Actually, I talk to you about the association we are part of. And a lot of women are involved, and I was very happy to see many women in charge.***

Staff_1_Mexico

*But I think it **gives girls an opportunity to be involved in something that**, I learned about things because, for example, one of the groups or a couple of the groups have done things related to, for example, female fashion and things like that. So it gives them the opportunity to participate and be included in, something beautiful.*

Staff_13_Costa Rica

*I felt that it was my voice **was not fully included in the conversation. The facilitators didn't necessarily do a good job you know, validating my voice.** Lesson kind of stayed with me throughout my career also as an educator, like, you know, later on **kind of taught me how, how important it is to be inclusive to certain topics that, you know, it's not necessarily looked at in virtual exchange or intercultural dialogue. You know, something like religion or something like, again, certain conflicts or you know.***

Staff_18_Jordan

***I think that not only for women, right, but I think it is more inclusive for everybody** who participates, right.[...] talking, you know, like as a woman, for example. I think that for me it is difficult for example to go to another company to be there for example one year right because of my family organization here. And then I think that virtual exchange projects, they are excellent because I work a lot with many people from other parts of the world*

Staff_7_Brazil



Inclusivity V4

*But, I mean, I mean, this setting is very special. I mean, especially in a good way. **Very inclusive per se, I think one who value was the openness, the inclusion. [...] The possibility, new possibilities to interact internationally, in an international way. Especially I think special for Brazilians, it's so difficult to go outside. I mean, not all this time, but I mean for some it's very difficult to, to travel. So, I think it's, this is a very good impact.***

Staff_11_Switzerland

Sometimes in a classroom the Nigerian males tend to dominate the discussion in class, so the female Nigerian students may be a little bit more subdued. I should say but online I find that they are more confident to express their opinion because they have the opportunity to use the chat function as well.[...] If someone monopolised the conversation, write something in the chat. If it's not highlighted, put your hand up, you know, just try and give them examples of how to overcome those. Through digital capital enables opportunity for better inclusion and diversity and, and, and to persist in, in in trying to find out about one another.

Staff_2_UK

*I mean COIL is also real life but **in face-to-face interaction some women in some countries cannot speak their voices, but in COIL they do. So, I think it's already an inclusive space.***

Staff_3_Spain



Future directions

- More coding in NVivo14
- More interviews with staff and students
- Refining/revisiting of our conceptual framework – adding emerging values/capitals
- Creating an inclusive toolkit for COIL-VE (e.g. accessibility gap)



Questions?





Wimpenny, Finardi, Orsini-Jones & Jacobs
(2022)

Would you like to take part?



Orsini-Jones, Jacobs, Finardi & Wimpenny
(2025)



References

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