

Internationalization at home: internationalizing the university experience of staff and students

Internacionalização em casa: internacionalização da experiência universitária de funcionários e estudantes

Internationalización en el hogar: internacionalización de la experiencia universitária de equipos y estudiantes

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ABSTRACT

Internationalization has become a key strategic priority of many universities around the world. It is frequently regarded as a means to enhance the quality of higher education through strategic partnerships, collaborative research and teaching initiatives, for knowledge exchange and creation. Higher education internationalization often focuses primarily on the mobility of both staff and students as a means to improve their international outlook and intercultural capabilities. However, this paper argues that if universities are to become truly 'international', they should start 'at home'. It considers how a review of current internationalization practices, involving educators, students, staff development and professional service units, and those in leadership positions, can help higher education institutions to move towards a more values-based and ethical approach to internationalization.

Keywords: Internationalization. Higher Education. University Experience.

RESUMO

A internacionalização tornou-se prioridade estratégica para muitas universidades ao redor do mundo. É comumente considerada uma forma de ampliar a qualidade da Educação Superior, através de parcerias estratégicas, pesquisas colaborativas e iniciativas de ensino, bem como na troca e produção de conhecimento. Em geral, a Internacionalização da Educação Superior se concentra na mobilidade de pessoal e estudantes, de modo a melhorar suas perspectivas internacionais e capacidades interculturais. No entanto, este artigo argumenta que, se as universidades querem ser verdadeiramente "internacionais", elas devem começar "em casa". Para tanto, faz-se necessário realizar uma revisão das atuais práticas de Internacionalização, envolvendo educadores, estudantes, desenvolvimento de pessoal, unidades de serviço profissional, e aqueles em posições de liderança, ajudando as instituições de Educação Superior a se orientarem em direção a valores básicos e abordagem ética para Internacionalização.

Palavras-chave: Internacionalização. Educação Superior. Experiência Universitária.

RESUMEN

La internacionalización ha llegado a la clave principal de prioridad de muchas culturas alrededor del mundo. Es frecuente considerar las medidas para mejorar la calidad de una educación superior a través de una estrategia de colaboración, una colaboración de colaboración y de enseñanza, para el intercambio de conocimientos y la creación. Higher Education internationalization a menudo se centra en la movilidad de ambos equipos y los estudiantes a fin de mejorar sus perspectivas internacionales e intercultural. Sin embargo, este documento argues que si son universales para llegar a ser verdaderamente internacional, se deben iniciar en el home. En el caso de que se trate de una evaluación de las prácticas de internalización, los educadores, los estudiantes, el equipo de desarrollo y las unidades de trabajo, y en las posiciones de liderazgo, puede ayudar a las necesidades de educación superior para desplazarse hacia más valores basados en el enfoque y la inclusión de la integración.

Palabras clave: Internacionalización. Educación Superior. Experiencia Universitária.

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INTRODUCTION

The internationalization of higher education (HE) is one of the key contemporary debates within the HE sector. International scholarly exchange has occurred for many years, as a means to enhance the quality of HE through strategic partnerships for research and teaching, for knowledge exchange and creation. Prioritising the mobility of both staff and students has been regarded as an important means to enable their contribution to knowledge exchange and capacity building initiatives (SIDHU and DALL'ALBA, 2013). Brandenburg and de Wit (2011) track the conceptual development of internationalization from isolated and largely unrelated international activity in the 1970s and 1980s, activity that was generally considered to be of low prestige, and focused on the exchange of a small but elite cadre of students and faculty, to a major strategic focus on recruitment, a mass phenomenon.

Globalization, the knowledge economy and advances in technology have influenced, intensified and broadened the scope of activities related to the internationalization of HE (VAN DER WENDE, 2017; ROBSON, 2011). The political and economic aspects of globalization driving university internationalization strategies, shaped by terms and concepts of the market, are particularly acknowledged (KANDIKO, 2010). In the current financial recession, with its impacts on the HE funding climate, neoliberal, market driven approaches to internationalization are perhaps inevitable. Whilst altruistic aims for internationalization have been articulated, economic considerations are often at the forefront of institutional strategies (CLIFFORD, 2013). Universities have increasingly focused on the income generation and prestige associated with the recruitment of international staff and students, international entrepreneurial activities and research collaborations, to secure their place in global HE rankings, driven by the paradigm of the global knowledge economy (VAN DER WENDE, 2017; ROBSON et al., 2017). By 2014 an estimated five million students were studying outside of their home countries, more than tripling the number of global international students enrolled in 1990 (ICEF 2015). However as governments around the world increasingly focus on the international education market and the value of higher education to support their own economies, the viability of international recruitment as a key long-term internationalization strategy in those countries that led in the early stages of the international education export market has to be considered. A major challenge for HE is to maintain the positive benefits of internationalization in this increasingly competitive environment.

In parallel with, and in response, to market-driven approaches to internationalization, are calls for more

values-based and ethically-driven approaches to internationalization and the review of the basis on which HE institutions claim to be 'international'. Innovative collaborative networks and systems have developed to examine internationalization processes in HE and to review and compare regional, national and institutional policies and initiatives, as well as the perceptions of faculty, students, and managers engaged with internationalization processes (WIHLBORG and ROBSON, 2017). The literature highlights the complexity of factors involved and the lack of consensus about the purposes and priorities of HE internationalization. To successfully adopt an international strategy that furthers both the cooperative and competitive ambitions of universities (KNIGHT, 2011) requires what Hudzik (2011) describes as a commitment to 'comprehensive internationalization'. Universities are not necessarily international simply because they have an international strategy, large numbers of talented international students and staff, or international collaborations and projects. While we might assume that HE provides an ideal opportunity to promote intellectual and social exchange across cultures, Knight (2011) also refers to the myth that the presence of foreign students on campus automatically produces more internationalized, or enhanced institutional culture and curriculum. After several decades of internationalization, the cross-cultural interactions amongst students that could contribute to the development of international perspectives and tolerances remain, in many institutions, limited (MONTGOMERY, 2009; LANTZ-DEATON, 2017).

KEY CONCEPTS AND RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS INTERNATIONALIZATION AT HOME

The attention of researchers and practitioners has therefore turned to enhancing the international and intercultural experiences of students and staff on the main university campus, or home ground (WACHTER, 2003). In Europe this movement which became known as *internationalization at home* (IaH) owes much to work led by Nilsson at the University of Malmo in Sweden. Nilsson and other HE professionals recognised that the ambitions for student mobility underpinning the Erasmus Programme were unlikely to be attainable for the majority of students. This raised concerns about equity of access to international opportunities that remain relevant in HE today. A new, more inclusive approach to "internationalising" is required so that the majority of HE students and staff who are unlikely to study or work outside of their home country can develop the international outlook and the intercultural capabilities

required for employment and participation in democratic societies (ROBSON et al., 2017).

Some institutions have attempted to harness the more positive aspects of globalization and technologisation to enrich and internationalise staff and students' experiences 'at home' through virtual opportunities to connect across neighbourhoods, cities, regions and countries in ways that were not previously possible (UNESCO, 2010). De Goia (2011) emphasises that as we explore the expanding range of global opportunities available to us, and harness new technologies to be more connected, we must also become more connected to our local communities. Through local intercultural engagement we can contribute to the internationalization of the academic, cultural and social experiences and outcomes for our students, colleagues and local communities. With these ambitions in mind, a network within the European Association for International Education formulated a new definition of internationalization as "*The intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society*" (HUNTER, 2015).

The imperative to ensure that intercultural understanding and communication are enhanced for all HE staff and students has become an increasingly important function of HE internationalization. The demographics in Malmö at the time that Nilsson initiated a European special interest group on IaH indicated an immigrant rate of about one third, suggesting that a significant number of the student population would be likely to have diverse cultural roots. There are parallels to the present day, as the current data illustrates the rise in migration across Europe and the US and alarmingly suggests that it has reached crisis point (BBC News, AUGUST 2015; Council on Foreign Relations, 2017). This suggests the key role that HE can play in contributing to social cohesion and the importance of what Wachter (2003) called 'the two pillars on which the concept of IaH rests': an understanding of internationalization that goes beyond mobility and an emphasis on learning and teaching in culturally diverse settings. In emphasising the importance of IaH the aim is not to suggest that certain types of mobility, international exchange and study abroad opportunities are not worthwhile. There is however a lack of empirical evidence on the impact of outward mobility, for example, on employability or degree outcome (BRIDGER, 2015). In those studies that have indicated the benefits of mobility there is some evidence that students' transversal skills increase during study abroad, which can lead to enhanced self-efficacy that puts students in a better position to find

employment and develop their careers (JACOBONE and MORO, 2014; BRANDENBURG et al., 2014 cited in BRIDGER, 2015). However more comprehensive internationalization strategies are required to ensure a) that the benefits of mobility experiences are supported and harnessed when individuals return; and b) that equity of opportunity is ensured for those among the non-mobile majority who seek an internationalised experience, through more comprehensive approaches that include curriculum development and multicultural pedagogies. IaH has been redefined as 'the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments' (BEELEN and JONES, 2015).

INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE CURRICULUM

A comprehensive approach to internationalization requires that urgent attention is given to IaH, with internationalization of the curriculum (IoC) as a key contributory element of this process. IaH is the enactment of a core mission of HE, namely the production of graduates who can live, work and contribute productively in increasingly fluid and borderless global contexts (HUDZIK, 2011). Hudzik (ibid) elaborates that it is important to think about internationalizing curriculum content (contexts, values and understandings), the processes of teaching, learning and assessment, and to have regard for the skills and competences students (and staff) require for life and work in a diverse world. A commitment to this core mission requires systemic development within institutions so that international and comparative perspectives are infused throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of HE, to mainstream the comprehensive process.

Curriculum development involves review of both the *means* and *materials* with which students interact for the purpose of achieving identified educational *outcomes* (HUITT, 2013) to support the development of intercultural and internationalist perspectives (ROBSON, 2011). With regard to the *means* by which university staff and services can help students to access internationalised learning experiences, the medium of instruction has become a key area of focus. The upskilling of staff and students' language skills and the development of modules and programmes of study in English have been prioritised in many institutions as a means to create access to an international curriculum, intercultural communication and international employment opportunities. However concerns have been voiced that the growth of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) has mainly occurred in the private sector, and consequently there may be limited

access to EMI for students from lower socio-economic groups (DEARDEN, 2015; TESSLER, 2014). IoC should therefore be developed with more inclusive objectives to ensure the widest possible reach.

Internationalization of the *formal curriculum* will include review of the materials incorporated into the content of modules and programmes; the contexts, values and understandings underpinning the curriculum content; the processes of teaching and learning; the ways in which we invite students to engage with experiences and activities as part of their degree program, and the ways in which we assess their learning (HUDZIK, 2011; LEASK, 2015). Culturally responsive teaching can help to ensure that domestic and international students have opportunities to interact with each other, to develop a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others (ROBSON, 2015). The *informal curriculum*, including the range of support services and additional activities and opportunities organized by institutions, but not assessed, may also support learning within the formal curriculum (LEASK, 2015).

In addition to the altruistic aims of IaH and IoC to transform learning, an increased emphasis on public accountability in HE has led to a requirement for universities to evidence that they are producing employable 'global' graduates (CAMPBELL, 2010). IoC can provide an opportunity to review whether curriculum content and pedagogical approaches foster the values, skills and dispositions associated with engaged global citizenship (JONES and KILLICK, 2013, cited in ROBSON, 2015; HANSON, 2010). There is, however, little agreement on what we actually mean by 'global citizenship' and the scope and nature of the learning outcomes necessary for graduates to be global citizens. Not surprisingly, effective means to develop these outcomes and appropriate methods to assess them, also remain elusive (LEASK, BEELEN and KAUNDA, 2013, p.189). An Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership project, Approaches and Tools for Internationalization at Home (ATIAH, 2016-2018) involving three European universities: Newcastle University, KU Leuven and Università di Bologna, aims to develop a set of innovative resources and tools for IaH, including an audit tool for universities seeking to review their current practice, and an online toolkit for an 'internationalising university experience' module. The resources, aimed at educators, students, staff development and professional service units, and those in leadership positions in HE institutions in Europe and beyond are intended to support more values-based and ethical approaches to IaH and the new forms of assessment required to evaluate the educational outcomes of IaH and IoC.

The skills, attributes, and intercultural competences acquired by graduates and required by employers in the

global economy, the demonstration of an intellectual and global mind-set, go beyond disciplinary competencies and national, norm referenced criteria (Lilley et al., 2014). Universities aiming to educate global citizens often focus on generic capabilities such as open and reflective behaviours, self-management, conceptual, and analytical skills, and other competences considered necessary to life and work in international settings. The Council of Europe (2016) have also developed a guide to the competences regarded as necessary for students to live together, as democratic citizens in diverse societies. Their aim is '*not to teach students what to think, but rather how to think, in order to navigate a world where not everyone holds their views, but we each have a duty to uphold the democratic principles which allow all cultures to co-exist*' (Council of Europe, 2016, p. 7) The concept of competence is regarded in this model as a 'dynamic process in which a competent individual mobilises and deploys clusters of psychological resources (values, skills, attitudes, knowledge and critical understanding) in an active and adaptive manner in order to respond to new circumstances as these arise' (Council of Europe, 2016, p. 10). This conceptualisation aligns with the model of global citizenship offered by Lilley et al. (2014) and Yemini's (2014) notion of globally-minded, culturally aware individuals with 'international capital,' a kind of cultural capital (YEMINI, 2014, 69). Acquiring international capital does not depend on the crossing of national cultures but on recognizing Otherness in our encounters and in ourselves (KILLICK, 2012). Rizvi (2009) and Caruana (2014) align this thinking with a reconceptualization of cosmopolitanism for HE that implies that we develop new perspectives and learn about ourselves through our interactions, through ethical engagement with others (RIZVI, *ibid.*, p. 264).

"Competences have no meaning unless they are enacted in practice and connected to assessment in a particular context" (MOCHIZUKI and FAVEEDA, 2010, p.400). Assessment measures that enable critical reflection and incorporate self- and peer-assessment are more likely to capture the deeply personal and potentially transformative intercultural and intrapersonal learning that is generated by internationalised experiences. There are opportunities for multicultural/international campuses to develop spaces for rich learning for the non-mobile majority, creating emotional and intellectual engagement with real tasks that enable students to re-think their 'situatedness in the world' and the 'political meaning of intercultural experiences' (RIZVI, 2009, p.264-265, cited in ROBSON, 2011). As the student becomes more capable, more autonomous and self-determining, Marginson argues that society benefits through a socially-nested form of self-formation that embeds individual life paths in the common good (MARGINSON, 2017).

Academic staff are key to the success of IaH and IoC. Effective leadership of internationalization will provide support to faculty members involved in designing, delivering and assessing curriculum initiatives to ensure that they can reap similar benefits to their students (WIHLBORG and FRIBERG, 2016, cited in ALMEIDA et al., under review) developing their sense of *self-in-the-world* and appreciation of others (KILLICK, 2012). Encouraging enquiry and reflective practice, innovative practice-sharing and collegial approaches to the development of IoC across disciplines can help to consolidate pedagogical innovation and sustained engagement with IaH. The development of research and practice networks within and across disciplines and institutions can provide the learning space in which colleagues can work together to critique their own assumptions and actions, and to establish the mindsets and methods (GUERIN and GREEN, 2013) for ongoing critical inquiry into their teaching. This collegial engagement in collaborative critique (GUERIN and GREEN, *ibid*) enhances the practice of learning and teaching while developing new approaches and methods to research, develop and sustain IoC. It supports faculty to meet the demands of the academic role on international campuses and to acquire the competences required to function well in an international working environment (VAN DER WERF, 2012). This goes beyond the development of the instrumental abilities necessary to teach culturally diverse groups of students, to a more cosmopolitan approach that aids and models for students the importance of shared understandings, attitudes of acceptance, openness, interconnectivity, and mutual respect (SANDERSON, 2011).

FUTURE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

The increasing attention given to the internationalization of HE had resulted in a greater mix of global and local opportunities (JONES et al., 2016). Despite the development of guidelines to re-frame the internationalization process in systemic and potentially transformative ways (HEA 2016), the benefits to students and the importance of the engagement of academics in this process are not always given the attention they deserve (LILLEY et al., 2014; ROBSON et al., 2017). Almeida et al. (under review) note that the potential academic and cultural benefits presented by IaH are under-exploited. The complexity of IaH as a phenomenon and the lack of conceptual clarity around the term limit recognition of its contribution to the quality agenda in HE. The benefits of IaH cannot be realised simply by adopting terminology in

mission statements about valuing diversity and aspiring to develop intercultural competence in students. Institutions need to translate these aspirations into definitive plans (LANTZ-DEATON, 2017) and demonstrate their impact. In doing so it is important to review the drivers for internationalization in ways that are responsive to staff, student and public perceptions of these drivers and how they communicate institutional values and motivations for internationalization (ROBSON and WIHLBORG, under review).

The dimensions of leadership in internationalization demand further investigation. Of particular interest are leadership approaches that aspire to balance the competitive with the cooperative, the economic with the academic and social, ethical and moral drivers for internationalization. Hudzik (2011) suggests the importance of enquiring into the ways in which institutions create structures to support students to re-enter campus life after study abroad and apply their experiences to continuing internationalization of campus living and learning; to support international students and scholars to ensure that their needs are met and that their knowledge and skills are valued and utilised to provide cross-cultural contributions in and out of the classroom; to develop learner-centered pedagogies that are responsive to diverse learner needs and outcome goals.

Many of the studies of IoC to date focus on one institution or disciplinary case study. There is scope for collaborative and comparative research that considers how knowledge is alternatively constructed and valued in different disciplines and cultures (LEASK and BRIDGE, 2013, cited in ROBSON, 2015); how professional practices differ across contexts, with exemplars of innovative pedagogies and theoretically informed curricula to promote intercultural learning alongside core disciplinary learning. Research to date has questioned the extent to which internationalization actually supports students to interact across cultures (LANTZ-DEATON, 2017). This highlights the need for empirical studies that investigate how multicultural pedagogies can promote reflexive encounters, in both formal and informal learning situations, aimed at enabling both staff and students on home campuses to gain new intercultural understandings (RIZVI, 2009).

While the discourse of internationalization had become much entwined with 'globalization' (KIM, 2009) how will this discourse develop with the current backlash against globalization in Europe, the US, and elsewhere? What will be the impact of other major geopolitical trends such as the rise of new players on the international HE stage? (VAN DER WENDE, 2017). While neoliberal, market driven approaches to internationalization prevail, the movement to develop more ethical, values-based approaches to internationalization continues to gain

ground among those seeking to realise the transformative potential of internationalization for students and staff, for the HE institutions in which they work and study, and for the societies they serve (de WIT and HUNTER, 2015; ROBSON et al., 2017). However efforts related to IaH often rely on the goodwill and commitment of individuals members of staff and their networks. This suggests the importance of an ongoing dialogue around IaH within and across HE institutions to engage a greater number of staff and leaders in the development of a coherent narrative. IaH must be appropriately resourced so that it becomes embedded in institutional policy and practices. Institutions making this investment demonstrate the importance attributed to the non-market social and collective benefits of HE and their commitment to contribute to social cohesion, cultural tolerance, and enhanced democracy (MARGINSON, 2014, cited in ROBSON et al., 2017).

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