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Facing Diverse and Dynamic Rationales: Is Internationalization Adequate For Higher Education Across Contexts?

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1. Introduction

1.1. The context of the research

- The presentation topic is in the progress of my PhD research which will further investigate how to preserve and develop original educational values, local dimensions in the English language teaching in Vietnam's higher education under the impetus of neoliberalism of globalization.
- It is a part of critical literature review.

1.1. The context of the research (cont)

- The aim of this topic is to address some raising research problems:
 - Whether IoHE is adequate to help its learners respond to global and local demands.
 - Whether we should continue to conceptualise and use internationalisation for shaping educational strategic plans across contexts.
 - Whether it is time to make a shift from Internationalization of Higher Education to another context-sensitive approach with consideration to global influence.

1. Introduction (cont)

1.2. Origin of Internationalization of Higher Education (IoHE)

- Internationalization of Higher Education model was born and developed in the Western/ Anglophone context.

1.2. Origin of Internationalization of Higher Education (cont)

- IoHE: originally means attracting students from other countries to the host countries → mobile education (De Wit & Hunter, 2015; Knight, 2014)

Then, also refers to delivering overseas-born curriculum to local institutions: Western/American curriculum, programs → Internationalization of Curriculum at Home (Leask, 2015)

1.3. Concerns of IoHE

- Misconception, misunderstanding: Internationalization = “doing good” (Brandenburg & De Wit, 2015)
- IoHE becomes a dogma: applied without questioning or interrogating in different contexts.
- Defenders of tradition - IoHE

1.3. Concerns of IoHE (cont)

- Arguably, it is risky to consider IoHE the best for higher education plans across contexts due to a diversity of factors, stakeholders, situations,...
- → no one-size-fits-all interpretation/model exists

1.4. Arguments

- Transform from a traditional defender of IoHE into an intellectual agent.
- IoHE: - Appreciate local, regional, national values, cultures, wisdom.
 - Engage local, regional, national issues → solve problems at local level in consideration of global solutions/influence.
 - Revisit and analyze educational values.

Thesis statement: Merely IoHE model is inadequate to help learners face local and global challenges due to diverse and dynamic rationales.

1.5. Gap of research

- Little critical literature review on limits of positioning IoHE interpretations to different contexts, negative consequences, its current status, the deficiency of IoHE implementation in non-English speaking countries including Vietnam.

1.6. Research Questions

- a. What are limits of IoHE interpretations across contexts?
- b. What are unanticipated consequences of the wide application of the IoHE model?
- c. What is the current status of the IoHE paradigm assessed in the literature?
- d. How is the IoHE model implemented in Vietnam and other non-English speaking countries?

2. Methodology

2.1. Data collection: Qualitative document analysis approach

32 articles, book chapter selected based on the most related content.

2.2. Data analysis: Thematic Analysis: An inductive approach --> Themes formed based on deep investigation of documents.

(1) familiarization of documentary data, (2) coding information, (3) generating themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) naming themes, and (6) writing up

3. Findings

3.1. Limits of IoHE Interpretations

• 3.1.1. Internationalisation of Higher Education Definitions

“The process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education” (Knight, 2004, p. 2)

→ Exclude the individual level: teachers (Renfors, 2021; Sanderson, 2008)

3.1.1. Limits of IoHE Interpretations (cont)

- “The intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of post-secondary education, *to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society*”. (De Wit and Hunter, 2015)

Strength: emphasize enhancing the quality of education not economic drive

Weakness: still fuzzy, too broad, too general (Kehm & Teichler, 2007, p. 2) → not contextualized → not clear and detailed enough for stakeholders to know how to implement it in a particular context.

3.1.2. Internationalisation of Curriculum at Home

- IoC "is the incorporation of international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods, and support services of a program of study" (Leask, 2015, p. 9).
- Strength: showing attempt to link the global to local
- Weakness: a mechanism (Nguyen, Phan & Tran, 2021) → not context sensitive.

3.2. Unanticipated Results of IoHE

- **3.2.1. Unreachable Values of IoHE**
- IoHE values: partnership, collaboration, mutual benefits, and exchange --> not to be operated in reality but merely presumed (Mittelmeier & Yang, 2022)
- Reasons: pressure on global standing, reaching a world-renowned status or higher rankings

• 3.2.2. Commercialisation, Brain Drain and Culture Loss

+ commercialised and profit-driven international projects

+ brain drain from developing countries to developed countries

+ cultural loss: threat of cultural homogenisation which usually seen as Westernisation

3.2.3. Commercialisation, Brain drain and Culture Loss (cont)

- Commercialisation is regarded as the top risk in four regions of Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, and North America, whereas brain drain is ranked in the first place in Latin America, and the Middle East places the loss of cultural identity as number one. (Knight, 2014)

3.3. The Identity Crisis of Internationalisation of Higher Education

- a turning point → an update, refreshment, and fine-tuning taking into account the new world (De Wit, 2016)
- “a midlife or identity crisis” (Knight, 2014)
- “whether IoHE can be adequate to the task of preparing people to respond to today’s numerous overlapping global challenges” (p. 12). Stain (2021) → IoHE is not adequate for the task.

3.4. The Deficiency of IoHE Implementation in Non-English-Speaking Countries

3.4.1. The Vietnamese Higher Education Case

- IoHE: Advanced Programs
- Results: + fragmented, restricted in practice (Tran, Marginson & Phan, 2018)
 - + a mechanism: mimicking knowledge content, course structure, and course delivery through English-medium instruction (EMI) programmes (Nguyen, Walkinshaw, & Pham, 2017)

- Nguyen, Phan, and Tran (2021): a study on how foreign-born curricula were inhibited in Vietnamese higher education by investigating the enactment of the Advanced Programs over the 12 years from 2008 to 2020
- Several challenges and shortages of the imported programmes:
 - + an ideological and methodological clash between the Vietnamese and the U.S curricula,
 - + the content gap between the Vietnamese culture, values, social situations, and American curricula,
 - + and the understanding gap between Vietnamese learners and American academics who lacked local experience and connection

- Ryu and Nguyen's (2021) study: investigated the status of IoHE in Vietnam, IoHE activities at national and institutional levels, and its challenges
- Findings: - IoHE through transnational programs → mainly for brain development
 - IoHE at home driven by international programs and universities, initiative to enhance competitiveness of its HE institutes
- Challenges: lack of systematic cooperation and coordination between state departments and organizations, quality assurance, and teaching staff quality, along with poor financial sustainability from the government, and increasing brain drain

→ Authors' recommendations: the program → Localise the teaching contents and require its stakeholders to not only have international experience but also local experience and understanding to meet students' needs and local market demands.

3.4.2. Other non-English-speaking countries' cases

- **Finland**

Renfors' (2021): how Finnish lecturers experienced IoC in their teaching practice at the tertiary level

Results: accidental rather than systematic at the institutional level

- **Malaysia**

Faiz and Mohamad (2022): the complexities of English language use among non-western international students and Malaysian lecturers in English-medium instruction programmes in relation to IoC delivery.

Results: staff and students' English proficiency → inadequate

→ affects learning process and learning efficacy

4. Discussion and Further Implications

- internationalization is “too disconnected from the local context” (p. 2) and an awareness that internationalisation should “not only touch on relations between nations but also between cultures and between realities at the global and local levels” (Knight and De Wit, 2018)
- Results: Conflict with the philosophy of education - desirable education in terms of meeting the domains including qualification (knowledge and skills, values, dispositions), socialisation (becoming part of existing traditions and practices), and subjectification (formation of the individual: existential uniqueness: the first reality of the self) (Biesta, 2012)

- recognising local, regional, national, and global conditions in its constant revolution
- rethink, re-evaluate, renovate and even replace it with a more context-sensitive perspective
- Call for more empirical research on how to develop higher education under the influence of globalization but preserving and developing local, national educational values, local and national wisdom and knowledge.

The next steps of PhD research:

- To investigate themes and concepts
 - the impact of globalization on higher education, examples in Vietnam and in other Asian countries
 - the nexus between globalization and the English language
 - the philosophy of education and education for a public good vs private good/economic good
 - original education values
 - socially-engaged education
 - local values/dimensions and localization, individualization in education/ Think globally and act locally

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Q&A Time