

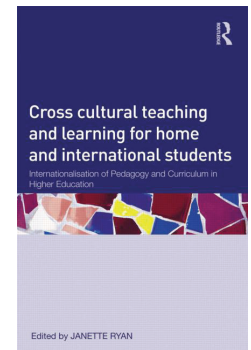


Book Review: Cross-Cultural Teaching and Learning for Home and International Students – Internationalisation of Pedagogy and Curriculum in Higher Education

Ryan, J. (Ed.). Routledge, Oxon, United Kingdom, 2013

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The internationalisation of higher education is a global phenomenon which challenges all universities worldwide. The globalisation of education is not new; Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, better known as 'Mahatma' Gandhi, was educated at University College London in 1888, and history tells of the lasting impact his legacy has had in India and beyond. 'Internationalisation' of teaching and learning, curriculum development and the way these are experienced by student populations need to be understood to ensure credible interaction between the vast and growing cultures that travel to be educated. Capturing key strategies from what the editor calls "Anglophone or non-Anglophone" perspectives will enable both staff and students to gain greater understanding of internationalisation.

The book gives examples from different academics involved in curriculum development and delivery within higher education from a diverse international field; in so doing, it helps the reader understand some of the dynamics between international and home students. It gives examples of how to integrate international and home students through group work, identifying challenging processes of multi-cultural and multi-lingual learning environments. This book also challenges those of us more familiar with Western-style education not to assume that the unfamiliar is wrong because we don't understand it but instead to embrace the similarities and differences of the two.

The book is divided into four parts: New ways of teaching, learning and assessing; New ways of designing and delivering curriculum; New ways of thinking and acting; and New ways of listening. It is a 'must read' for academics within all higher education settings given the globalisation agenda of all higher education institutions (HEIs) in the UK and beyond. The chapter titled: Towards the intercultural self: Mahatma Gandhi's international education in London, written by Martin Haigh, presented a thought-provoking insight into a famous student's educational journey in the UK. It provides an honest analysis of Gandhi's journey through an 'alien culture' from 1888 – at the very impressionable age of 18 – to 1891. Gandhi himself states that he would not support Indian students studying abroad because when they return to their home land they find themselves 'misfits' within their own society. This

experience, although over 100 years old, still resonates amongst present day international students who come to study in the UK. For an international student, the transition into a Western ideology and learning can alienate him from his own culture. It is, therefore, important to look beyond the classroom setting and see the 'whole student' experience.

A research project is presented in Chapter 5, looking at English, Australian and Czech senior academics' views on quality measures in HEI; whereas the Czech academic saw internationalisation as a positive development in his country, the Australian and English academics were more reserved in their views, seeing quality measures as not straightforward, and providing good and challenging examples but also highlighting the need to be clear about the reasons for the internationalisation agenda.

This book offers insight into different cultural ways of teaching and learning, and some parts of it can seem painful to those of us who see education through Western ideology. Janette Ryan's chapter, the last in the book, offers the reader an alternative to Western ways of internationalisation by discussing the educational system in China. The Chinese system has two concurrent approaches: firstly, internationalisation by 'internal' route – transforming and increasing spending on HEIs in order to make them more competitive in the world stage; and, secondly, by external processes – through funding its students and lecturers to travel overseas to study. The Chinese system works with both Western and Chinese styles of learning. The issues of the Western emphasis on critical thinking versus rote learning, memorising and wide knowledge-base of the Chinese paradigms does challenge the Western HEIs, often to the detriment of students who come from the Chinese-style systems of learning into Western universities. It is important to acknowledge that there is a place for both styles of learning, but these styles need to be openly acknowledged as co-existing.

This book provides a rich repertoire of internationalisation of higher education from many viewpoints; it challenges educators from all backgrounds and cultural standpoints to look at their own internationalisation agenda. Taking the abstract subject of 'internationalisation', it offers the reader a tangible experience by using case studies of best practice and practical situations.