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Re-imagining Internationalisation of Teaching and Learning for a Better Global Society: Perspectives on Internationalisation of Higher Education, Curriculum and Pedagogy

BELLAM Sreenivasulu

Residential College 4, National University of Singapore (NUS)

Correspondence:

Name: Dr BELLAM Sreenivasulu

Address: Residential College 4, National University of Singapore (NUS), 6 College Avenue East, #B1-01, Singapore 138614

Email: rc4bs@nus.edu.sg

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ABSTRACT

Internationalisation of higher education, as impacted by globalisation, is primarily meant for improving the quality of education and global competitiveness among students for a better understanding of the world and rapidly emerging global challenges. With most universities internationalising education as part of their mission, vision, and strategies, it has also become an integral part of meeting institutional goals. Current real-world challenges—the pandemic, depleting natural resources, climate change, poverty, unemployment, food and energy security—necessitate creating opportunities for new ways of thinking and re-imagining the process of internationalising higher education and curriculum for global learning.

The educational goals of internationalisation require curricular and pedagogical strategies built around collaborations, local and networked learning environments, and engagement in global learning. These also require universities to revisit and re-imagine the pedagogical basis for the internationalisation of higher education in terms of inculcating and achieving 21st century skills, and addressing current global challenges. Like any systemic process that is inherently complex and dynamic, higher education internationalisation is also an ‘ongoing, ‘evolutionary’ and ‘developmental’ process. Driven by these considerations, this paper seeks to provide useful perspectives and insights as currently required to revisit and re-imagine the rationales and goals of internationalisation of teaching and learning, curriculum internationalisation, and pedagogical approaches for global learning for a better global society. It also gives brief insights into how residential living and learning settings on campus (locally in Singapore) will enhance international student engagement and global learning.

Keywords: Internationalisation of teaching and learning, higher education, curriculum internationalisation, pedagogical approaches, global learning, residential living and learning

INTRODUCTION

According to Betty Leask (2009, 2015), internationalisation of the curriculum, teaching and learning methods and processes for global learning can potentially open up the higher education domain by including a variety of perspectives at local, regional, and global levels. Hence, the design of the curricula, pedagogies, assessments and student engagement in higher education institutions need to adopt international perspectives while meeting the intended goals. However, the real challenge is that the curriculum, teaching methods and limited use of new technologies and infrastructure, and methods of engaging students, assessments evaluation can put international students in difficult situations (Rizvi, 2007).

Internationalisation is a process which is in constant evolution while responding to changes in local, national, regional, and global environments. Internationalisation of higher education is impacted by globalisation and primarily meant for improving the quality of education and global competitiveness for a better understanding of a rapidly changing world and emerging global challenges. Current grand challenges such as the pandemic, depleting natural resources, global warming and climate change, poverty, and unemployment create opportunities for new ways of thinking and re-imagining the process of internationalising education and curriculum for global learning (Kahn & Agnew, 2017). With most universities internationalising education as part of their mission, vision, and strategic plans, it has also become an integral part of meeting institutional goals. Meeting such educational goals through internationalisation requires strategies, curriculum and pedagogies built around collaborations, local and networked learning environments, and engagement in global learning (Leask, 2009, 2015). This also necessitates universities revisiting and re-imagining the pedagogical basis for the internationalisation of higher education in terms of inculcating and achieving 21st century skills, and addressing current global challenges. Like any systemic process that is inherently complex and dynamic, internationalisation of higher education needs to be an ‘ongoing, ‘evolutionary’ and ‘developmental’ process (Knight, 2004). Driven by these considerations, this paper is a conceptual exploration intended to provide useful perspectives and possible directions to revisit and re-imagine the rationales and goals in relation to the internationalisation of teaching and learning, curriculum internationalisation, pedagogical approaches for global learning to catalyse the generation of students as global citizens for a better global society.

INTERNATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION: AN EVOLVING PROCESS

Internationalisation of higher education is an evolving process, which is both a broad and varied concept driven by a dynamic and constantly evolving combination of political, economic, sociocultural, and academic rationales. It is difficult to fit all these rationales into one model because this process will take different forms and dimensions in the different regions and countries, and in their respective internationalisation programmes. In the past 30 years or so, the European programmes for research and education—in particular the ERASMUS¹ programme but also research programmes like the Marie Curie Fellowship²—have been the drivers of a broader and more strategic approach to internationalisation in higher education in Europe. They have also set an example for universities in other parts of the world (Brandenburg et al., 2020)

The internationalisation of higher education has been influenced by the globalisation of our economies and societies, and the increased importance of knowledge at the global level (Altbach, 2004). A very neutral definition of internationalisation in the deeper context of academia is this: the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions (primarily teaching/learning, research, service) or delivery of higher education (Knight, 2013, p. 85).

Accordingly, internationalisation has to become more inclusive and less elitist by not focusing predominantly on mobility, and more on the curriculum and learning outcomes. The “internationalisation abroad” component (mobility of students and faculty) needs to become an integral part of the internationalised curriculum to ensure

internationalisation for all, not only the mobile minority. Thus, it reemphasises that internationalisation is not a goal in itself, but a means to enhance quality, and that it should not focus solely on economic rationales.

REIMAGINING THE FUTURE OF INTERNATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Over the past decades, while regional and national differences are varied and constantly evolving across the world, internationalisation is becoming mainstream. However, the following highlight what can be viewed as the unintended consequences or characteristics that can be revisited for an intended purpose:

- Driven by continuously fluctuating range of political, economic, sociocultural, and educational rationales, with an increasing focus on economic motivations.
- Increasingly motivated by national, regional, and global rankings for reasons of soft power, reputation and/or revenue, and the commercialisation of education. Thus, though intended to be a strategic focus of universities, it has also been becoming a priority of national governments and of regions (ASEAN, E.U., Bologna signatories, etc.)
- Predominantly focussing on internationalisation abroad than on internationalisation at home.
- Fragmented in the policies of universities, nations and governments that led to either poor misalignment of the international dimensions of the three core functions of higher education: education, research, and service to society.
- Becoming exclusive while benefiting a small, elite group of institutions, students, and faculty, instead of the intended aims for global learning and intercultural outcomes for all.

Thus, most national strategies, including in Europe, are still predominantly focused on mobility, short-term and/or long-term economic gains, recruitment and/or training of talented students and scholars, and international reputation and visibility. This implies that far greater efforts are still needed to incorporate these approaches into more comprehensive strategies, in which internationalisation of the curriculum and learning outcomes, as a means to enhance the quality of education and research, receives more attention (de Wit & Altbach, 2020).

On the other hand, we can say that the future of internationalisation of higher education across the world looks potentially bright. However, its further positive development and impact will only take place if the various stakeholders and participants maintain an open dialogue about the rationales, benefits, means, opportunities, and obstacles in this ongoing process of change. We cannot ignore the fact that it is also being challenged by increasingly profound social, economic, and cultural issues, such as the financial crisis, unfavourable demographic trends, immigration, and ethnic and religious tensions. While these challenges represent a threat, they also foster awareness of the importance of internationalisation in developing a meaningful response.

During the past half-century, internationalisation in higher education has evolved from being a fringe activity to becoming a key aspect of the educational reform agenda, owing to the increasing globalisation and regionalisation of economies and societies, along with the demands of the knowledge economy. However, internationalisation is often confused with globalisation (Altbach, 2004). Globalisation represents the context of economic and academic trends that are part of the reality of the 21st century skills and demands of higher education toward greater international cooperation and involvement, whereas internationalisation involves the policies, practices and strategies considered by academic systems, universities, learners, and even policymakers and leaders to cope with the global academic environment.

Moving forward, internationalisation will remain a central force in higher education, though its contours are unclear. It is predicted that perhaps 15 million students will study abroad by 2025, up from the current 2 million (Knight, 2013). This prediction might be optimistic. The international student numbers in Australia have declined somewhat, after a decade of dramatic expansion. The United States, the leading host country, also saw a modest enrolment decline in 2004. The long-term trends are strong and stable, but several uncertainties and challenges may affect the pace of internationalisation (Altbach & Knight, 2007; de Wit & Altbach, 2020).

GLOBAL LEARNING THROUGH INTERNATIONALISATION OF CURRICULUM AND VALUES

Most of the universities are tied up with the administrative policies that practice foundations of 20th century learning based on the existing curriculum and pedagogy. However, enabling students as global learners requires a shift in how administrators, faculty, and students believe or think about the changing nature of the knowledge for the 21st century, its meaning, and value to society when viewed as a global community. For the 21st century, there is a great need for higher education institutions to respond to a compelling call for globally competent citizens and professionals. Consequently, the concepts of “internationalisation at home” and “internationalisation of the curriculum” have become a priority (Leask, 1995, 2009). Internationalisation at home is the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments.

Curriculum design also requires support from strong leadership at the discipline and university administration levels, collaborative action plans on the part of the programme teams and support staff, and regular progress reviews in view of the institutional, regional, national and global context within which the curriculum or programme is delivered. Leask (2009) defines internationalisation of the curriculum as “the incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the content of the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning processes and support services of a program of study.” In terms of the intended student outcomes, she states that the “internationalisation of the curriculum will purposefully develop the students’ international and intercultural perspectives as global professionals and citizens” (p. 209). Thus, the ultimate purpose for internationalising a curriculum is to improve students’ learning outcomes for which imagining new directions and possibilities become an essential part of it in any discipline which can be best handled as a planned, developmental and cyclical process (Leask, 2013).

The growing use of English as a medium of teaching and research, especially at the graduate level, may stimulate interest in international programmes offered by universities. Students attending universities abroad may find international curricula useful, as such programmes are seen as global learning models which are developed based on the curricula of universities in the United States, Europe, and other developed and industrialised countries. Production of knowledge and design of curriculum for 21st century and towards internationalisation of higher education requires a re-definition of classrooms and learning environments, which demands a globally collective and diverse process through which administrators and faculty can work together on designing collaborative international learning communities in classrooms and across universities (Kahn & Agnew, 2017).

RE-EMPHASISING THE INTENDED VALUES OF INTERNATIONALISATION

Traditionally, internationalisation is intended to be a process based on and to promote the values of cooperation, partnership, exchange, mutual benefits, and capacity-building. However, the current era of globalisation has unexpectedly changed it to a process that is increasingly characterised by reputation- and status-building, self-interest, commercialisation and competition. Hence there is a challenge of rebuilding and reinforcing the values of cooperation, exchange, and partnership over the current emphasis on commercialisation and competitiveness. It is important to shift and re-direct internationalisation through re-orienting it towards its intended purpose and academic values. The following needs to be re-emphasised:

- Recognising globalisation's benefits as it provides the conditions for cooperation at all societal levels, whether governmental, employment-related, educational or leisure-oriented;
- the pursuit, through cooperation, of understanding, peace and prosperity for all partners equally; and
- a democratic way of implementation based on human rights, through which equality in cooperation can be assured.

In terms of curricula and curriculum design it is also essential to focus on partnerships and collaboration that recognise and respect differences in contexts, needs, goals, partner interests, and prevailing economic and cultural conditions. Internationalisation along these lines thus involves:

- recognition of the existence of many disciplines and traditions of university teaching learning and research, all of which need to be included in the curriculum;
- enhancement of an intercultural competence so as to enable all academic staff, students, administrators and support staff in universities to understand each other and each other's academic cultures;
- incorporation of cross-cultural diversity in cohorts and culturally-inclusive curriculum in universities so that students appreciate, recognise and value global learning through intercultural interaction and socialisation. It is necessary to engage students to learn through global perspectives so that they recognise the value and limitations of their own culture and also others' social and cultural aspects. Thus, curriculum for global learning needs to provide opportunities for students to consider their own biases and assumptions about various socio-cultural aspects, and
- the implementation of teaching and research processes which give equal voice to all involved and a rational, democratic approach to solving problems.

Instead of focusing excessively on the economics of international education, international higher education must become more responsive to the needs and demands of other stakeholders, including students and parents, employers and politicians, academics and indigenous people. Global learning as a powerful instrument of internationalisation of higher education requires methodologies and pedagogies developed around international collaborations, interconnections, networks, and engagement with global society as whole. However, considering the rapid pace of change in all contexts and at the global level, the task of internationalising the curriculum and pedagogy for global learning is always dynamic and unlikely ever to be completed (Leask, 2009, 2013).

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES TO FACILITATE GLOBAL LEARNING THROUGH INTERNATIONALISATION: SOME DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Aligning with the students' expected learning outcomes focused on global competence, international content also needs to be introduced to the classroom so as to enable them to develop skills and capabilities as global citizens who can actively engage with the changing world in an informed, reflective, empathic, and ethical manner. Experiential learning enables students to gain direct learning experiences outside the classroom by providing opportunities not only to apply cognitive information relevant to real-life situations but also gain global perspectives through relevant curriculum and projects. Aligning with the higher-order Bloom's taxonomy, it directly engages students to learn through reflection, discussion, analysis and evaluation of the experiences created and intended for global learning. For example, experiential learning in terms of service learning, fieldwork, global internships, teaching through networked and overseas community-engagement-based lessons, projects on business models through collaborative projects involving international students/community partners are all expected to enable students to achieve high-impact experiential learning outcomes, and enhance their understanding of socio-cultural, economic, and geopolitical contexts. To achieve this, it is equally important for students to be actively engaged and physically involved in the real-time situation or field. Thus, curriculum, pedagogies and learning activities such as group work, whether within in-class or out-of-class settings, should integrate multiple perspectives that allow students to realise the value and utility of various angles of interpretation and contradictions to gain an in-depth understanding of the global issue or a problem. Such an application of the breadth of various theories to contextualise and interpret a complex real-world issue exemplifies global teaching and learning (Kahn & Agnew, 2017).

More and more, global learning outcomes include social action and responsibility (Chickering & Braskamp, 2009), and thinking about the world in dichotomies such as local and global, economic or cultural, national or global governance, those with power or those without, or the similarities and differences which can prevent oneself from seeing and acting on their connections to the world.

Universities in Southeast Asia have also begun to refine their experiential pedagogical approaches to learning by emphasising the group of skills related to the specific focus on problem-solving, group work, cognitive abilities, inter- and intrapersonal skills to enable students to cope across multiple areas in a real-world setting. For instance, using an interdisciplinary approach, Singapore has embarked on its mission to prepare students for uncertainty (Seow et al., 2019), by integrating into higher education curriculum design the main elements of training students with abilities to cope in a multifaceted work environment, and to think critically across disciplines.

University administrators, curriculum experts, and the wider teaching community and industry will need to collaborate and plan how to prepare for this likely transformation of higher education and work. The immediate challenge will be how best to respond to the growing demands of workplaces, employees, and employers displaced by emerging technological and pedagogical innovations.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES

Academically, international students can expect higher standards due to the global competition they may go through or create it for greater academic attainment; therefore, international higher educational institutions might need to update their curriculum and pedagogy. Accordingly, pedagogical techniques used in the classroom for global learning across the disciplines should be more learner-centred rather than teacher centred, and hence should focus on students' active and collaborative experiential learning rather than just covering content (Seow et al. 2019; Kolb, 2005; Ahmad, 2020). In order to facilitate and enrich undergraduates' global learning experiences, more learner-centric pedagogies and interdisciplinary collaborations need to be extended

to the entire academic community, encompassing researchers, educators, and students including the discipline-specific organisations, university administrations, community members so that the concept of global learning would be integrated across the curriculum, rather than compartmentalised in one or two isolated disciplines or programmes (Frezzey et al., 2017, and references therein). Hence, intentional planning of interdisciplinary curriculum for global learning and integrated pedagogical approaches are essential to prepare students to be globally competent in the 21st century. For example, some of the learner-centric pedagogies for global learning can be considered as listed below:

- **Experiential learning:** Teaching and learning activities associated with experiential learning include team-based overseas internships, international student exchange programmes, summer schools on sustainability/global problems/issues, study abroad programmes, field trips, project-based learning, problem solving through collaborative teamwork, internships with multinational organisations, cross-cultural community engagement and services, volunteering in overseas community engagement etc., all of which enable undergraduates to gain a better understanding of global issues and gain international perspectives about their learning
- **International learning via collaborations online:** In the context of global learning, learning via online international collaborations about global issues is almost similar to gaining international experience obtained by participating in study-abroad programmes.
- **Interdisciplinary collaborations.** Global learning via interdisciplinary collaboration can be achieved via courses that expect students to approach global issues from a more holistic view. Undergraduates in such courses can apply what they learnt in their major specialisation to knowledge from another field or domain. This method requires adaptation of materials from other disciplines and/or collaboration with specialists outside the discipline and potentially burdens the instructors. However, implementing an interdisciplinary approach makes sense to enhance students' competencies as global citizens, given that global problems require interdisciplinary solutions. Teaching and developing these higher-order learning skills will enable undergraduates to become more adept at dealing with ever-changing global and complex problems.
- **Systems Thinking and System Dynamics Modelling as a pedagogical framework for global learning:** In terms of teaching for global learning, acquiring 21st century skills and multidisciplinary learning, the methodology of systems thinking and system dynamics modelling employs cognitive frameworks, tools and skills that enable students to visualise non-linear interdependent interconnections and relationships among various components of complex and dynamic systems, together with an investigation of how the system changes over time and how systems-level phenomena emerge from interactions among the components (Meadows, 2008). It can assist students to develop higher-order thinking skills to address complex and interdisciplinary global issues/problems as they will be able to perform system dynamics modelling and simulations of the scenario-based real-world problems and real case studies, learn through games based on modelling, and role play as global leaders/policymakers (Sterman, 2000). While the systems thinking curriculum offers a holistic and systemic way to assess and even address the complicated dimensions that encapsulate current complex socio-, economic, political and environmental issues, it is also equally important to implement other innovative teaching based on the design thinking curriculum. Either way, it is essential to enable students to learn to work empathetically/compassionately towards sustainable development holistically through the systems approach (Meadows, 2008). Accordingly, we can expect a growing demand for future graduates in global society who can operate through multidisciplinary systems-based framework and design thinking across disciplinary areas.

- **Intercultural group-based-teaching and learning:** This approach is intended to put students with varied backgrounds together, working on projects outside the classroom setting to enhance their decision making, teamwork, and problem-solving skills. This will align with institutions' internationalisation-oriented efforts towards enhancing intercultural, leadership and internationalisation skills among students to strengthen collaborations globally (Fransen et al., 2011).

Besides these examples, a clear understanding of the global competencies and skills required in the future and how universities are preparing students to enhance those skills will help all stakeholders in improving internationalisation of teaching, learning and how universities function. Universities will continue to play an integral role in preparing students with global learning skills to meet the demands of the 21st-century work world as well. However, no one knows the future and forthcoming events are difficult to predict.

INTERNATIONALISATION OF LEARNING: ONLINE MOBILITY VS. ON-CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

Digitalisation and digital literacy are also impacting internationalisation and mobility in various ways. For example, massive open online courses (MOOCs) form a platform in which online courses are open to everyone free of charge but without credit. For the past several years, while the number of MOOCs has increased as well as the number of international users and providers, the MOOCs' retention rates in general has been low. Distance education can have an international component in that it provides access to such programmes without incurring costs related to physical mobility. However, students will not experience any active engagement and cross-cultural and social interactions compared to intended internationalisation of learning on campus (de Wit & Altbach, 2020). However, strategies such as blended and adaptive hybrid teaching and learning, in which students can take part of their course load with international partners, are becoming more important as part of global learning and internationalisation (Garcia et al, 2018).

As universities worldwide address the impact of globalisation and internationalisation, and information and communication technologies (ICT) continue to make an impact on all aspects of modern education, it is necessary in the process of internationalisation to address the challenges, gaps and risks that arise due to the digital divide between the developed and developing nations. Any gaps and subsequent consequences arising due to the digital divide needs to be addressed so that both students and faculty facing its impact will also have better access to online resources and international experiences similar to their counterparts in developed nations.

RESIDENTIAL LIVING AND LEARNING ON CAMPUSES: AN EXAMPLE FROM NUS, SINGAPORE

Residential living and learning programmes are not new concepts in Asian countries. As part of establishing residential colleges (RCs) on campus, the National University of Singapore (NUS) launched University Town (UTown) in 2008. UTown offers a structured University Town College Programme (UTCP) as one of its key curriculum-based programmes so as to conduct junior and senior seminars on broad academic topics. Besides offering world-class infrastructure for a residential living and learning environment, UTown is also considered as one of the best green building projects undertaken by NUS in terms of environmental sustainability. It has become an educational hub with teaching facilities and study clusters, residential buildings with facilities and spaces which foster collaborative student interaction. It has created a lively intellectual, social and cultural environment that distinguishes NUS through excellence in residential living and learning, and student engagement (Daquila, 2013).

Any global learning goal requires pedagogies that engage, incite, make connections, and ensure learning continues far beyond the classrooms (Kahn & Agnew, 2017). To achieve this, UTown is a place where residential curricular programmes get blended with informal, co-curricular activities, and there are always opportunities that enhance and complement the global learning that occurs within the formal curriculum. Along these lines, for example, the central theme and the vision of the curriculum, pedagogy and academic programme at NUS Residential College 4 (RC4) is built to inculcate ‘systems thinking and system dynamics modelling’ skills to promote the transformation of its student community into ‘systems citizens’. This curriculum and seminar-style pedagogy is intended to enable students to study current grand challenges such as the pandemic, depleting natural resources, global warming and climate change, poverty, unemployment, etc. through systems thinking and the dynamic modelling approach (Serman, 2000). It is so that they can develop new interdisciplinary thinking and re-imagine solutions to these problems at a holistic systems level. RCs also provide various out-of-the-classroom learning activities with global learning aspects to foster experiential learning. The RC curriculum programmes in NUS are excellent in facilitating the nexus of living, learning, and working in RC settings for local students, faculty and international students from different nations.

Living in the RCs and halls of residences at NUS, international students need to live and interact with local students as strangers from different backgrounds. However, through everyday social and classroom interactions, students may gradually build positive relationships with others. The literature has indicated that the social networks among local and international students mitigate the effects of discrimination (Krahe et al., 2005), minimise feelings of depression, anxiety, and loneliness (Sümer et al., 2008), increase levels of adaptation to the host university and country’s cultural behaviours and norms (Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004), and makes it easier for them to communicate with their local peers.

The residential living and learning environment through the UTCP modules at NUS has been shown to promote learning outcomes that make an impact on various student groups in terms of fostering a sense of belonging, engagement, and growth (Tambyah & Mukhopadhyay, 2018; Lee, 2018). Thus, the RCs in UTown provide sites of social interaction for international students to effectively engage with their local peers, typically through a range of social events such as informal and formal dinners, cultural activities and inter-cultural exchanges, and intercollege sporting competitions. Participating in such activities is a means of encouraging their active immersion and involvement in residential life while developing a sense of belonging with the student community. RCs and the halls of residence on campus will increase both local and international students’ opportunities to communicate with others, and these interpersonal dynamics may improve values such as students’ intercultural cooperation and humanity as well (Inkelas, 2016).

All these intended outcomes would also clearly be of benefit and improve the sense of social security experienced by international students as they expect residing in residential living and learning settings through university accommodation will also provide secured living and learning spaces on the campus (Johnson et al., 2007; Sawir et al., 2008).

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Internationalisation is a process which is in constant evolution, changing in response to local, national, regional, and global environments. A new phase of internationalisation in university education is ahead and in view of new global learning demands, and teaching and learning strategies for 21st century. At the same time, implementing internationalisation towards more carbon-neutral policies (de Wit & Altbach, 2020), increasing the contribution of internationalisation to society (Brandenburg et al., 2020), and connecting the global to the regional and to the local, these are all becoming an imperative as the latest global trends can be seen to be

moving in a more radical direction than in the past, and demand stronger attention and greater international cooperation. The need to address climate change, poverty, unemployment and the impact of the current COVID-19 pandemic are particularly worth mentioning.

In Southeast Asia, universities have also developed initiatives to improve their experiential pedagogical approaches towards global learning by emphasising the learning outcomes and skills that specifically focus on enhancing problem solving, group work, cognitive abilities, inter- and intrapersonal skills, intercultural collaborations etc. to enable students to gain insights from multiple disciplines in a real-world setting.

In terms of teaching and learning for a better global learning and society, besides some of the pedagogical approaches mentioned earlier in the paper, more research needs to be done to answer a number of pertinent questions in order to integrate global education effectively in all aspects of university teaching and research. For example:

- Are the pedagogical approaches effective, particularly when prior global learning knowledge and experience is limited for students under instruction?
- How do we educators ensure that such students can achieve a higher level of global learning and competency based on the courses that use these pedagogies and international curricula?
- Are faculty members sufficiently competent to deliver the curriculum and content aligning with the expected learning outcomes for global learning for the 21st century?
- How essential is it to design and structure global learning content and opportunities, and scaffold learning processes within and across multiple courses and disciplines?
- How can instructional technologies be used to facilitate deeper and significant global and experiential learning?
- Would universities be ready to revamp their curricula to incorporate systems thinking and modelling methodologies across various disciplines and courses (for example, integrating the teaching of sciences, engineering and humanities in real-world systems/problems context and through systems thinking curriculum to facilitate multidisciplinary holistic perspectives about real-world problems)?

When it comes to internationalisation, global learning classrooms should offer a teaching and learning platform where students incorporate perspectives, overcome challenges, transcend differences, and seek answers collaboratively. Such cooperative and collective work incorporates knowledge into practice, enable students to transform into educators, and allows them to see themselves as nodes within global learning networks and communities. While disciplinary silos and thinking as well as idiosyncratic cultures continue to play dominant roles in some institutions, global learning and interdisciplinary learning towards internationalisation of university education call for a re-imagination and reframing of curriculum and pedagogies to create more interdisciplinary orientation, adaptability, and innovation.

To sum up, universities moving towards internationalisation encounter significant challenges and pressures in relation to talent search and student enrolment, revenue generation, ranking of their institutional brand and reputation, competitive international research and publications, recruiting international students, faculty and research scholars, and on using English as a language for research and instruction. There are also pressing issues that arise due to national funding policies. These are areas that significantly conflict with a more inclusive, less elitist approach, catering to the needs of local students and faculty, and creating opportunities for these groups.

In other words, it is time to mitigate the tension between a short-term, neoliberal approach to internationalisation while shifting the focus primarily to mobility and research, and a long-term, comprehensive approach, offering global learning for all. Hence, in terms of internationalisation policies,

university administrators and policymakers should work towards encouraging global learning for all, by paying more attention to internationalisation of the curriculum, pedagogies while internationalising teacher education, and foreign language education; integrate Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with internationalisation initiatives with efforts to realise them in global, regional, national, and local dimensions. Universities should encourage more inclusive and social internationalisation that focus on ethical concerns, intercultural competence, and global citizenship education instead of being exclusively focused on profit-oriented revenue generation and ranking of excellence; mitigate over-commercialisation of internationalisation and instituting regulations to control profit-based approaches and institutions of that kind. Along these lines, the SDGs will also provide direction for study programmes that promote active participation of both students and faculty, peer-interaction and collaborative research activities. Students should also learn to exercise sensitivity and empathy when actively engaged in dialogue sessions with overseas communities, especially when discussing holistic solutions to address socio-economic disparities among nations, and recognising the complexity of solutions for problems associated with SDGs.

At the same time, the current global challenges and crises—regional and global climate change, trade wars between nations, economic recessions and geopolitical tensions, poverty, unemployment, unstable job markets, the COVID-19 situation—all offer a multitude of disfavoured factors to the internationalisation process, making it even more challenging to prioritise and move along these directions.

For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic is a clear illustration, causing massive disruptions to academic life, moving teaching, at least temporarily, to a fully virtual format, and putting the application of many of the traditional practices of internationalised higher education on hold. Undoubtedly, this pandemic has greatly affected the direction of internationalisation of higher education landscape around the world, impacting social, political, economic, geographical, and cultural relations. This unforeseen challenge will be among the new determinants influencing the decision of international students to study in universities of their interest. At the same time, such challenges can also be seen as yet another set of opportunities to re-imagine the future direction of the internationalisation of higher education.

ENDNOTES

1. More information about ERASMUS scholarships can be found at (as of Apr 2022): <https://www.erasmusprogramme.com/post/scholarships>
2. More information about Marie-Curie research fellowships can be found at (as of Apr 2022): <https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/actions/postdoctoral-fellowships>

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

BELLAM Sreenivasulu received his PhD in Chemistry from NUS, Singapore. Currently, Dr Bellam is a Senior Lecturer at Residential College 4 (RC4) at NUS. At RC4, one of his areas of focus is teaching systems thinking and system dynamics modelling skills in relation to energy systems and related issues on sustainable energy production, energy supply and demand, energy security, carbon emissions etc. through designing and implementing effective, impactful and interdisciplinary student-centred pedagogy to enhance students' critical and systems thinking skills. He is passionate about teaching, educational research activities, student mentoring, curriculum and pedagogy development activities and engaging students for their and learning and holistic development etc. Prior to this, he was teaching various undergraduate and graduate chemistry modules.

Dr Bellam can be reached at rc4bs@nus.edu.sg.

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