

Conceptual Challenges of Internationalization of Universities

September 23, 2013 – 1630 hrs

Education stands for transmission of knowledge, skills and development of competencies and belief system. It is considered an instrument for socialization, transfer of social norms and values to new comers, with a variety of ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds. Teachers play a key role in socialization of students and in inculcation of values such as democracy, justice and unity in society. The terminology internationalization and international reminds one of transnational path adopted by the Marxists through the Second International formed in 1889 and Third International formed by Lenin which controlled communist parties of the world.

Internationalization of education on the contrary refers to adoption of international standards of education in order to prepare graduates to respond to new frontiers of knowledge emergent needs, issues and problems and to challenges of mobility.

One advantage of internationalization of education is standardization of education. International ranking of academic programs and internal certification of universities helps students in making choice of suitable career plans and resolve issue of mobility. Online availability of courses in high ranking universities has made quality education available to seekers of knowledge at a global level.

Nevertheless three major conceptual challenges are faced: first and foremost is homogenization of values and culture. The flow of information from the North to the South is huge and value loaded. Education is essentially transformation of values. The values of the North may be suitable in the cultural set-up of the North, but not relevant in Asia, Africa or Australia. Internationalization of curriculum, text books and teaching methodology, in the final analysis subsumes a particular set of values as the benchmark of modernity, development, progress and enlightenment.

Second obvious challenge is socialization in a co-educational environment. This results into problems of serious interpersonal and social nature, a gender race and a gender center world view. Third, the “ultimacy” of individualism, materialism, and ethical relativism results into a self-centered personality.

A revolutionary strategy is needed to preserve and promote indigenous values through education. In case of the Muslim world, universal divine and revealed values should proliferate in the curriculum, teaching material and teaching methodologies in institutions of higher learning. A shift from individualism to collectivism and social responsibility is needed. It is important to inculcate values of justice (*‘adl*), moderation (*wasat*), Islamic universal brotherhood (*ukhuwah*) passion for knowledge and wisdom (*‘ilmwa al-hikmah*). Knowledge economies should evolve into a comprehensive value based social development.

Type: Technical Session 1C

Presenter

Prof. Dr. Anis Ahmad
Vice Chancellor
Riphah International University
Islamabad

Chair

Dr. Abdul Rahman Ahmad Arkadan
President
Rafik Hariri University
Lebanon

Download

[PDF of Prof. Dr. Anis Ahmed's slides](#)