

13 Global Collaboration for Global Solution in Academia

Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has created health, economic, and social crises globally and the rapid spread of the virus has hit the higher education sector hard with disrupting traditional academic programs and campus life. As Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) grapple with these unprecedented challenges, they must realize that they can play a major role in finding and implementing solutions given their expertise in different fields and scientific capacity. International collaboration between governments, non-governmental organizations, business and other societal actors can be one of those strategies to consider. As such, this chapter investigates opportunities and challenges for global collaborations between HEIs and various stakeholders. We argue whether the COVID-19 situation will serve as an impetus for triggering innovative and sustainable global collaborations as a global solution.

Keywords:

global cooperation, sustainability, internationalization of higher education, COVID-19

Higher Education in the COVID-19 Crisis

In the COVID-19 crisis, higher education can be one of the key pillars for mitigating the negative impact of this pandemic, and its consequences on society, and provide solutions. Due to the global nature of the pandemic, it is only through global collaboration that higher education can be part of the answer, as global challenges can only be met by global solutions. Therefore, the first step in order to understand the role of higher education in finding solutions to the challenges posed by the pandemic is to identify which are the consequences of the pandemic on global cooperation in higher education. Has the pandemic stimulated more cooperation among HEIs and between HEIs and other stakeholders at global level, or has it acted as an inhibitor for global collaboration?

The COVID-19 crisis stimulated a profound internal transformation of the higher education sector in relation to all its three missions: teaching, research, and community engagement. Scholars emphasize that “tertiary education around the globe has been affected in a way not seen since World War II” (Basset, 2020, p. 6). Although the pandemic has affected higher education in all its aspects and brought educators to reconsider the overall functioning of HEIs in order to adapt to the new conditions created by the crisis, the most notable transformation has happened in teaching. The delivery mode of higher education is what has changed the most. The massive move to online teaching provides an opportunity to apply this mode of delivery more widely in the future; the academic profession, the role and competencies needed by professors are changing as well and there will be a growing need of pedagogical training (Rapanta et al., 2020).

In addition to changes in the delivery mode, the significant changes that have occurred in the job market due to the pandemic happened at a global level with repercussions at a local level. Experts emphasize the necessity to reconsider curriculum and put more attention on the skills for the post-pandemic economy, such as digital literacy, data analytics, critical and innovative thinking, digital and coding skills, communication intelligence, and flexibility (McKinsey, 2020).

Internationalization in all its aspects, but especially student mobility and the education export industry associated with it, have transformed significantly, because of the slowdown (or even a complete stop) of all types of mobility, the change in global student flows, the emergence of new products for “education export” (such as hybrid learning and virtual exchange), and the change in admission procedures, etc.

In this chapter, we pursued two goals: (i) to provide a snapshot and comparison of the current situation at HEIs in all regions of the world in teaching, research, and community engagement, and (ii) to understand the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on global collaboration of HEIs and to discuss how global collaboration can help mitigate the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic for the higher education sector and for the society.

Research Method

In order to grasp the scope and state-of-the-art teaching, research, and community engagement of higher education institutions globally during the pandemic, we used pre-existing data collected by the International Association of Universities (IAU) in March/April 2020. The survey was built around four blocks of 25 close-ended questions and 2 open-ended: institutional profile, teaching and learning, research, and social (community) engagement sections. We sent the online questionnaire to all HEIs with contacts present in the IAU database (WHED). WHED lists about 20, 000 HEIs around the world, which is basically the whole population of recognized HEIs in the world. For this survey, it was difficult to calculate a return rate as there was

no precise way to know many HEIs received the survey or filled it out. The survey was disseminated through other channels as well, such as websites, social media, and mailing lists of IAU and partners organizations. For this chapter, we used 424 usable responses from different HEIs in 109 countries and two Special Administrative Regions of China (Hong Kong and Macao). The profile of respondents is broad with Faculty members (20%), Heads of institutions (17%), and Heads of international offices (16%) being the most common respondents.

While the original IAU report covers the data, the aim of this chapter is to explore the challenges and opportunities and state-of-the-art of global collaboration based not only on statistical data but also to explore the implications and domains of global collaboration in a more detailed way.

The data collected by IAU has several limitations. First, the data provides global and regional perspectives but the number of replies is too low to allow any national analysis. Moreover, institutions within regions and countries can have very different capacity for mitigating the pandemic risks and consequences, The additional research on the responses to COVID-19 in different types of HEIs (e.g. research-intensive universities or teaching institutions, comprehensive universities or specialized institutions, public or private institutions, institutions based in rural areas or in metropolitan areas, etc.) can contribute to a more comprehensive picture. Second, some regions of the world were underrepresented in the survey (namely, Americas, Asia & Pacific).

In addition to data collected by IAU, we performed an extensive literature review and used data from reports and research papers in order to provide a more comprehensive perspective on current challenges and good practices of global collaboration and to validate the findings of the survey. It is worth mentioning that while there is some data gathered in reports and opinion pieces from researchers and expert organizations, the number of scientific articles on the impact of COVID-19 on global collaboration in higher education is still relatively low.

It is therefore important to keep in mind the intrinsic limitations of this study, which does not pretend to be a comprehensive and detailed analysis supported by data of the current situation of global collaboration in higher education, nor of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on it. On the contrary, more research on these topics is definitely needed in the future and this article could be seen as a first attempt to understand it and how COVID-19 could be the trigger for more and better global HE collaboration for global solutions.

Global collaboration in higher education has the potential to solve several major issues. First, in teaching and learning, by educating globally competent citizens, who have an understanding of the global challenges and possess the necessary skills and sensitivity to address them in different national and cultural contexts. Second, collaboration in research and the joint research capacity is a promising instrument for boosting research productivity, avoiding multiplication of efforts and waste of resources, which can lead to faster and more efficient solutions both to the health crisis and to the wider effects of the

pandemic on the economy and society. Third, by sharing experiences and good practices of societal engagement globally, HEIs can help in solving local problems by translating and adapting societal solutions already developed in other parts of the world. However, global collaboration does not happen spontaneously and a strategic approach is needed for collaboration in all the three pillars of teaching and learning, as well as research and social engagement. We discuss more in detail global collaboration in these three pillars in the following sections. For each section, we provide a data analysis and a set of possible solutions.

Results and Implications

An Unequal Landscape

The way the COVID-19 pandemic has affected higher education around the world and the responses of the higher education community varies considerably throughout the world.

Some higher education systems, mostly in developed countries, possessed the capacity to address the challenges posed by the pandemic even in times of financial shortage and overall turbulence. Nevertheless, multiple reports indicate significant gaps in research and teaching capacity, in availability of methodological and organizational support, and in developed managerial practices and crisis mitigation expertise across the globe (International Association of Universities, 2020; Rumbley, 2020; World Bank, 2020a). In addition, different countries and regions of the world have different financial capacity for coping with the crisis, and one of the biggest dangers of the pandemic is that it can further deepen the already existing gap between developed and developing countries, causing further economic lag and instability in particular regions and countries.

This can be seen, for instance, in the results of the IAU global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on higher education (International Association of Universities, 2020), for the question concerning the effects of the pandemic on international partnerships. In Africa, 73% of HEIs reported that the effect of COVID-19 was negative, and that it weakened existing partnerships. This percentage is much higher than in all other regions (47% in Europe, 44% in Asia & Pacific, and 41% in the Americas). On the other hand, Asia & Pacific is the region with the highest percentage of HEIs reporting the creation of new opportunities (44%), a higher percentage than in all other regions and especially when compared to Africa (14%). Also in Europe (34%), and the Americas (32%) the percentage of HEIs reporting the creation of new opportunities is substantial. Unfortunately, the IAU survey data do not allow national analysis and an investigation of a possible relation between these results to the national economic indicators such as GDP, but they already point out the existence of inequality among various regions of the world.

Teaching and Learning

The effects of the pandemic on teaching and learning at HEIs globally is very inhomogeneous due to high differentiation in the higher education field “with public and private institutions with vastly differing resources and serving different needs” (Altbach & de Wit, 2020). In addition to high diversification by the type of institutions, HEIs operate in very different national and regional contexts which also results in their different ability to cope with the crisis. However, there are several common challenges in teaching and learning that are seen across the globe.

First and foremost, education experts express concerns about the growing inequality in quality of teaching and access to higher education (World Bank, 2020a). The issue of global inequality in education was one of the biggest challenges even before the pandemic, however, the COVID-19 crisis deepened the gap between different regions of the world and different HEIs. Some institutions had the capacity to switch to teaching online within a few weeks, and others had to stop teaching altogether or provided a very limited set of solutions for distance learning. The IAU COVID-19 report shows that Europe, Americas and—to a lesser extent—Asia and Pacific, tend to be more successful in moving their teaching online than African countries (Table 13.1).

This might be related to different reasons, but most probably the socio-economic background of many countries in Africa plays a major role, especially regarding access to technology which allows online teaching and learning.

Inequality is not only present among regions, but also within each region. For example, in South-East Asia, different countries coped with online teaching resulting in a different degree of success: while Singapore, Brunei, and Malaysia had relatively high internet access rates, other countries (for example, Myanmar and Vietnam) had less than 40% of internet accessibility (Jalli, 2020) which causes difficulties for the university students and leaves the financially vulnerable groups most affected.

Table 13.1 Impact on Teaching and Learning by Region, International Association of Universities, 2020

	<i>Not affected (%)</i>	<i>Classroom teaching replaced by distance teaching and learning (%)</i>	<i>Teaching suspended but the institutions is developing solutions (%)</i>	<i>Teaching cancelled (%)</i>
Africa	3	29	43	24
Americas	3	72	22	3
Asia & Pacific	1	60	36	3
Europe	≈0	85	12	3

These results show that the move to online teaching and learning, although overall performed quite rapidly and somehow successfully, is still more an emergency solution with many challenges, rather than a long-term transformation. Inequality in access is the most visible and probably the easiest to measure, but the issue of quality of teaching and learning is equally relevant. Preparation of teachers and students for online teaching and learning is paramount, training for teachers and support for students are needed. As it is the case for access, also quality of online teaching and learning is unequally distributed, with poorly resourced higher education institutions and isolated students from low socio-economic backgrounds being the groups most at risk of a low-quality online education experience, even if access is guaranteed.

Solutions for Keeping an International Perspective in Teaching

The COVID-19 pandemic and the travel restrictions caused by it strongly affected all types of academic mobility, both for students and staff with no signs of a quick recovery on the horizon. The relative lack of international students in the classroom and the absence of visiting professors had a negative effect on providing an international perspective in teaching. However, at the same time, this lack stimulated other forms of internationalization at home.

According to the IAU survey cited above, virtual mobility and/or collaborative online learning has lately increased in 60% of the higher education institutions that responded to the survey. Asia & Pacific is the region with the highest percentage, three quarters of HEIs in the region have done so. Even in the other regions, this percentage is higher than (Europe and the Americas) or close to (Africa) 50% of the institutions.

Moreover, in the open questions, respondents mentioned that the enhancement of the digital infrastructure and the shift to more blended and online learning would increase the opportunities for international exposure of both students and academics.

Both virtual mobility and collaborative online learning are useful tools to offer intercultural perspectives to a larger number of students, they can help not only to keep an international perspective on teaching, but also to increase the number of students exposed to international opportunities, making the process of internationalization more inclusive.

In addition to the internationalization agenda, teaching collaboration between different institutions can provide a necessary transfer of expertise, helping institutions to fill in the gaps in their curriculum and methodology and ensuring a more sustainable global education system altogether.

Research

The effectiveness of global collaboration in research was widely discussed in the literature long before the pandemic. Scholars emphasize that collaborative research results in wider expertise due to the wider availability of data

(Georghiou, 1998), it has a more significant research impact (Adams, 2013), and it addresses and involves a wider audience (Lee & Haupt, 2020; Sun et al., 2013). In addition, “international research collaborations offset domestic skill shortages, even in the most advanced economies, including the USA and UK” (Adams, 2013; Lee & Haupt, 2020), and it proves to be the most effective in the applied fields of research.

During the pandemic crisis, not all institutions were able to sustain their own research capacity at the pre-COVID-19 level. According to the IAU survey (International Association of Universities, 2020), 80% of HEIs reported that research had been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic at their institutions. The most common impact of COVID-19, not surprisingly, has been the cancelling of international travel (at 83% of HEIs) and the cancellation or postponement of scientific conferences (81% of HEIs). However, most importantly, scientific projects appeared to be at risk of not being completed at a bit more than half of HEIs (52%) and at 21% of HEIs scientific research has even completely stopped. From the regional perspective, Africa is the region that has suffered the most when it comes to research activities—they are reported to have been stopped at 43% of HEIs. The same has happened at 31% of HEIs in Asia & Pacific, but only at 12% of HEIs in the Americas and even less in Europe (9%). This regional divide follows the already existing divide in research capacity among regions, underlying the fact that the pandemic aggravates existing inequalities.

There are several areas for which collaboration at global level would be enviable: medical and pharmaceutical research, including on COVID-19, research on post-pandemic socio-economic issues, and sharing data and resources.

Medical and Pharmaceutical Research, Including on COVID-19

A pandemic such as COVID-19 affects humanity as a whole, viruses do not discriminate on the basis of nationality and do not care about borders. It is the global health which is in danger when a pandemic appears and no one can feel safe if her/his neighbors are affected. Only if the disease is overcome at a global level will each single individual feel safe.

Therefore, it would seem logical that in times of a pandemic researchers all around the world join forces in search of the most effective way of defeating the disease, being that of a cure or a vaccine. However, short-term, limited, and narrow-thinking, putting self-interest before the common good can lead to completely different decisions which jeopardize international collaboration.

For these reasons, the research related particularly to medical and epidemiological inquiries caused a lot of tension between countries. As Lee and Haupt (2020) emphasized, “geopolitical tensions are rising, particularly around the source of the coronavirus and information sharing,” which, together with considerations for national security, is to a large extent explained by the expectations of prestige and financial revenue from the vaccine for COVID-19.

There is a considerable risk of competition between countries and pharmaceutical companies in the race to develop the vaccine and to secure exclusive rights over it. Earlier this year (2020), a claim (later retracted) from the head of a big pharmaceutical company in France that the US government had “the right to the largest pre-order [of COVID-19 vaccines] because it [had] invested in taking the risk” made the headlines in the news (BBC, 2020).

If competition between governments and pharmaceutical companies can somehow be understood, at an institutional level, especially in medical and pharmaceutical research, despite all the pressure that HEIs might be subjected to, cooperation and not competition should be the way forward.

As a Stanford University statement reads: “Important lessons on disease management can be learned from around the world as each nation brings its expertise and experience to bear on addressing this crisis.”

In some countries, testing and case-tracking have been extensive. In others, previous experiences with other highly contagious diseases such as Ebola and SARS have informed their pandemic preparedness and response.... Collaboration with both well-established and emerging international scientific partners alike is critical (A Statement from the Academy project on Challenges for International Scientific Partnerships, 2020).

Fortunately, different COVID-19 related scientific publications in 2020 showed that “despite the tense geopolitical climate, countries increased their proportion of international collaboration and open-access publications during the pandemic” (Lee & Haupt, 2020). However, according to the same study, as can be expected, not all countries are engaged globally, therefore the risk of growing inequality in research is particularly relevant.

Many HEIs were directly involved in epidemiologic research. According to the IAU global report on COVID-19 (International Association of Universities, 2020), 35% of HEIs participating in the survey indicated that they were involved in COVID-19 research and their researchers contributed to public policy for their own countries. In addition to that 65% of HEIs had members of their senior management being consulted by public or government officials in the context of public policies relating to COVID 19. Overall, almost three quarters of HEIs were contributing to public policies either through their institutional leadership or through their researchers. This is a very interesting result pointing out the importance of higher education for society.

In fact, HEIs carry out an important societal mission, by providing support for students and staff in times of crisis, by providing support to their local communities, for instance through medical or nursing schools, by conducting community engagement activities, and, last but not least, by producing and disseminating scientific knowledge, which increases literacy on pandemic-related issues and crisis mitigation practices.

Sharing Data and Research Expertise

In addition to collaboration in medical research activities, there are a number of other initiatives launched by HEIs, research centers, and supra-national agencies aimed at sharing up-to-date research data and knowledge. Among organizations which provide comparative data and analytical expertise, we can cite UNESCO, World Bank, etc.

HEIs are showing examples of collaboration also through their associations, for instance the European University Association is active in the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC), a major effort to connect research data services, such as storage, analysis and transfer, across Europe, started by the European Commission to “enhance the possibilities for researchers to find, share and reuse publications, data, and software leading to new insights and innovations, higher research productivity and improved reproducibility in science” (European University Association, 2020).

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to increasing Open Access to scientific publications, as a matter of fact, among the 111 countries combined 3401 COVID-19 articles, three-fourths are open access (Lee & Haupt, 2020).

Research on Post-Pandemic Issues

While the immediate responses to the short-term challenges of the COVID-19 crisis, especially health-related, were the first priority for many governments, the experts emphasize the importance of the long-term effects that can significantly transform education, industry, and public policy across the world. Deeply rooted implications for social and economic sectors, production, business, politics, global trade, and many other areas will be seen long after the pandemic is over. According to the World Bank (2020b), “deep recessions associated with the pandemic will likely exacerbate the multi-decade slowdown in economic growth and productivity, the primary drivers of higher living standards and poverty reduction.”

Responding to these challenges will require policies and practices based on analytics, data, and research. Comparative and collaborative research on possible consequences and risk mitigation mechanisms will allow the development of more elaborated responses as well as enhance joint efforts on the elimination of long-term challenges of the pandemic crisis. Therefore, economists and social scientists have a major role to play to investigate the long-term impacts of the pandemic and to provide research results, which will help policy makers to come up with appropriate decisions to mitigate these effects.

In addition, collaboration in research can be very helpful for educators. A good example of global collaboration for research on teaching and learning is the COVID-19 Social Science Lab at the University of Ljubljana funded by the Slovenian Research Agency and developed in collaboration with 11 international partners. During the pandemic, the research hub performed

comparative research on student learning experiences in 62 countries (Aristovnik et al. 2020), highlighted the government responses and provided data; this can serve as a valuable reference point for policymakers and university professionals from different countries.

Community/Societal Engagement

The COVID-19 pandemic has come with risks and opportunities also for the third mission of HEIs, the one of support and engagement with local communities and society in general. According to the IAU Global Survey, the pandemic had a mixed effect on community engagement, especially at regional level, where an unequal impact can easily be identified, with COVID-19 having mainly increased community engagement in the Americas and in Europe, while it has mainly decreased in Asia & Pacific. In Africa, there are almost two equal groups of HEIs, those for which their community engagement increased during this COVID-19 period and those for which COVID-19 decreased their community engagement.

Among the most common social activities, the participants of the survey named an increase in community actions (52%), science communication initiatives (49%), medical care and support (40%), and student volunteering for people that were affected by the pandemic (28%).

While institutions took part in social engagement mostly at the local level, global collaboration in this domain can also be a great help, especially for the regions that were affected the most by the pandemic. Providing support for medical training is, perhaps, one of the most crucial activities.

Some universities have already taken a proactive stand on these challenges. For example, “Imperial College has established a virtual space for surgeons in the front line of the COVID-19 crisis to work together” (Buitendijk et al., 2020, p. 2). However, these efforts can take a more systemic nature and involve more institutions across the globe, as well as hospitals and medical professional communities.

Another type of social engagement—support of the underprivileged groups—is a very locally based activity. However, sharing practices in service and volunteering can help institutions to develop their own volunteering and community programs, find partners, and raise awareness on both local and global social issues. One example of this kind of collaboration is the European Observatory of Service learning in Higher Education (EOSLHE), created in 2019, with the aim of enhancing and disseminating the knowledge of service-learning in higher education in Europe, as an educational approach that enhances students’ civic engagement, brings them closer to different social realities while allowing them to work in a real environment (EOSLHE, 2020).

Finally, a very important issue during the turbulent times of the crisis—pandemic literacy—can benefit significantly from the global collaboration among HEIs. Even before the pandemic, the scholars emphasized that the lack of health literacy is one of the main obstacles to health (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2017). This issue was particularly

relevant during the crisis due to what the World Health Organization called “an infodemic” —a large amount of information on COVID-19 and its treatment which is in many cases unverified and even hazardous (Zarocostas, 2020). One of the most helpful COVID-19 trackers was the one initiated at Johns Hopkins University (Coronavirus Resource Center, 2020); it is a successful example of timely and clear scientific data collection and provision and recommendations for the wider public provided by a higher education institution. International partnerships aiming at supporting health literacy and providing verified information across the globe produce transparent comparative data on pandemic-related issues, help avoid unreliable and speculative data, and eventually help the spreading of knowledge by making it available to a wider audience. This will allow people to make safe and rational decisions in their daily life, recognize the level of hazard, and decrease the panic and social anxiety which is reported to be one of the most serious psychological implications of the pandemic (Ayers et al., 2020).

Conclusion

The data from the IAU Global Survey and other sources confirm that HEIs in different regions of the world coped with the challenges of the pandemic crisis at a different pace. Some of them managed to find sustainable solutions, others were lagging behind and were held back by the lack of resources and risk mitigation capacity.

There are many ways to address the challenges of the pandemic through global collaboration initiatives, and many of these initiatives can be addressed by higher education institutions as hubs of knowledge, expertise, and social awareness. Some practices of global collaboration for crisis mitigation are already shaping up in different parts of the world. However, in order to develop global cooperation in higher education as a systemic phenomenon rather than as a collection of localized more sporadic initiatives, it is crucial to have both the political will and dedicated leadership with a global mindset.

The pandemic is not the first crisis in the history of mankind. Looking back at the challenges of the previous decades and centuries, we can certainly learn from these lessons and see that global issues do have long-lasting effects, they impact every region of the world, and sustainable development even at local level is impossible if the global crisis is not solved with a joint effort at a global level. Higher education has a major role to play in providing solutions to the crisis and holds the great responsibility of doing it, and many universities already have a capacity to do so.

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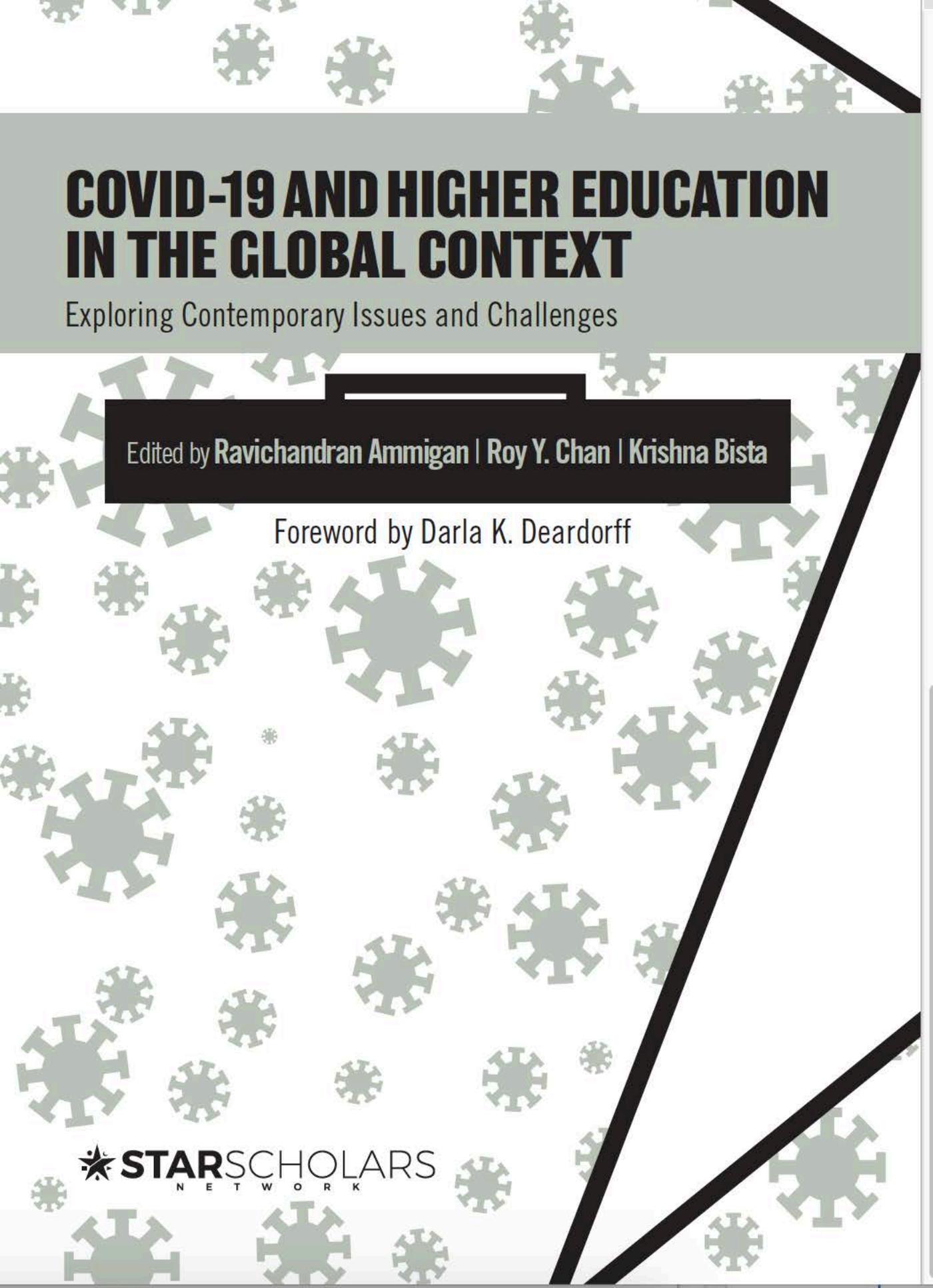
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COVID-19 AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Exploring Contemporary Issues and Challenges

Edited by **Ravichandran Ammigan | Roy Y. Chan | Krishna Bista**

Foreword by Darla K. Deardorff

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Praise for this book

This book is a must-read for all university leaders and senior managers to enable them to get a better insight into the numerous challenges facing academia in the new normal, where it is not only about academic excellence but also about the human dimension through the enhanced use of technology.

—Dhanjay Jhurry, Professor and Vice-Chancellor,
University of Mauritius, Mauritius

This thought-provoking book captures contemporary changes to higher education at the micro and macro level post-2020. Stakeholders across the sector will benefit from reading the research-driven chapters that are stimulating and insightful. The book interrogates and challenges ways in which internationalization and global mobility can be re-imagined.

—Dawn Joseph, Associate Professor,
Deakin University, Australia

This book shows a more intensive and multi-faceted response by the higher education community to the pandemic that one might have expected. Attention is paid notably to sustain international life on campus.

—Ulrich Teichler, Professor Emeritus,
International Centre for Higher Education Research,
University of Kassel, Germany

This volume is a welcome addition to the literature on international Higher Education produced during the COVID-19 era. With a sensitively chosen array of topics, it shows new thinking around internationalisation, which is encouraging for all, and is exactly what is needed.

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Centre for Higher Education Internationalisation,
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

With the COVID-19 pandemic seeing no end in sight and its effects on international higher education for students around the world yet unknown, the importance of this timely book cannot be overstated. At a time when we are

literally awash in countless editorials prognosticating on *possible* implications of this health catastrophe, it is refreshing to get a carefully collected series of essays that step back, take a deep breath, and bring us back to the fundamental questions we need to be asking at this most dangerous time for humanity.

—Bernhard Streitwieser, IEP Program
Director & Associate Professor of International
Education & International Affairs,
George Washington University, USA

This is a valuable addition to higher education for understanding the complexities that COVID-19 introduced into the academic landscape. This volume explores valuable topics and issues such as employability, research and mentoring, innovative teaching and learning, and emerging opportunities during the pandemic.

—Jane E. Gatewood, Vice Provost for Global
Engagement, University of Rochester, USA

This timely book is much needed for practitioners, scholars, and policy makers who are grappling with the challenges created by the pandemic. The book is comprehensive given the depth and breath of topics. The human centric approach is refreshing.

—Fanta Aw, Vice President of Campus Life &
Inclusive Excellence, American University, USA

COVID-19 and Higher Education in the Global Context: Exploring Contemporary Issues and Challenges

COVID-19 and Higher Education in the Global Context: Exploring Contemporary Issues and Challenges addresses the lasting impact of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in the higher education sector and offers insights that inform policy and practice. Framed in a global context, this timely book captures a wide variety of topics, including student mobility, global partnerships and collaboration, student health and wellbeing, enrollment management, employability, and graduate education. It is designed to serve as a resource for scholar-practitioners, policymakers, and university administrators as they reimagine their work of comparative and international higher education in times of crisis. The collection of chapters assembled in this volume calls for a critical reflection on the opportunities and challenges that have emerged as a result of the global pandemic, and provides as a basis for how tertiary education systems around the world can learn from past experiences and shared viewpoints as institutions recalibrate operations, innovate programs, and manage change on their respective campuses.

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Roy Y. Chan, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Education and the Director of the Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) program in Leadership and Professional Practice in the Helen DeVos College of Education at Lee University, Tennessee, USA.

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COVID-19 and Higher Education in the Global Context

Exploring Contemporary Issues and
Challenges

**Edited by
Ravichandran Ammigan,
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**In memory of those who lost their lives during the
COVID-19 pandemic worldwide**

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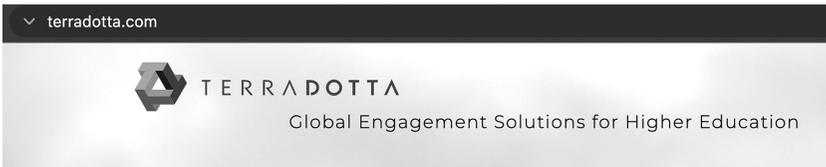
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Foreword

Darla K. Deardorff

The COVID-19 pandemic has represented a unifying challenge globally, providing a defining era in human existence as the pandemic upended life as we know it. *COVID-19 and Higher Education in the Global Context: Exploring Contemporary Issues and Challenges*, edited by Ammigan, Chan, and Bista, delves into the pandemic's impact on higher education around the world. Such an exploration empowers “educators, administrators, practitioners, policy makers, and families” with ideas and guidance that not only can be applied in the current context but also in the post-COVID future.

As the world emerges from the COVID pandemic, it is good to remember the signs of hope that have been there all along from the small gestures of kindness to the heroic efforts of those on the frontlines, from strangers lifting their voices together in song across balconies as the pandemic began with the later Jerusalema dance challenge that swept around the world, even as the pandemic was raging. This pandemic has shown us that we are all truly interconnected, for better or for worse. Desmond Tutu reminds us that we are all in this together and that our humanity is bound up together. We are members of one human family, and when some members are hurting, we all are hurt. He goes on to say, “For us to engage in the practices that will ensure that we all prosper, we must come to know that each of us is linked in the chain of our common humanity.”

As we move into the light of a new day, there is radical hope in truly embracing our shared humanity. Let's seek to see ourselves in others. Let's seek to see the whole picture through discovering others' perspectives beyond our own. Let's seek to see the invisible among us and to remember the power of being seen and heard. As we do so, we can reflect on some of the following questions:

- What do I know about my neighbors?
- Do I make an effort to learn more?
- What are others' perspectives and can I articulate those?
- What are the connections I see in others to my own experiences?
- How much do I really listen for understanding and seek first to understand?

Higher education provides opportunities for students to explore these and other questions, as universities seek to educate global citizens. As we have come to understand more poignantly over the last year that we are indeed part of one global community, we need to remember that education is more than employment or even graduating global citizens—in the end, it is about how we come together as neighbors both locally and globally, to build a better future together. We can make choices every day that help make the world better for all. As Tutu noted, “When we step into our neighborhoods, we can engage in the practices of good neighborliness or we can choose not to. The quality of life on our planet now and in the future will be determined by the small daily choices that we make as much as by the big decisions in the corridors of power.” As we move forward into a post-pandemic era, we must remember that actions matter and what we do impacts others. What daily actions will we take to support the most vulnerable among us? To improve the quality of life for others? How will we uphold justice and dignity for all in the human family? In the end, how will we be good neighbors to each other?

Let us commit to taking action to address the racial injustices and inequities faced by our neighbors. Let us commit to being a good neighbor, as we live in authentic solidarity with each other, aspiring to be compassionate, generous, and kind, knowing that we can find our greatest joy in showing love to all and that in doing so, we are embracing the oneness of our humanity.

Bio

Darla K. Deardorff is the Executive Director of the Association of International Education Administrators, a national professional organization based in Durham, North Carolina, USA. She is also a research scholar with the Social Science Research Institute at Duke University, where she has been an adjunct faculty member in the Program in Education and a faculty affiliate with International/Comparative Studies. In addition, she is an Adjunct Professor at North Carolina State University, a Visiting Research Professor at Nelson Mandela University in South Africa, and at Meiji University Research Institute of International Education (RIIE) in Japan as well as visiting faculty at Shanghai International Studies University (SISU) in China. Dr. Deardorff has served on faculty of Harvard University’s Future of Learning Institute as well as Harvard University’s Global Education Think Tank, in addition to being on faculty at the Summer Institute of Intercultural Communication in Portland, Oregon. She has also been an affiliated faculty at the University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill, and Leeds Beckett University (formerly Leeds Metropolitan) in the United Kingdom and taught at Thammasat University in Bangkok, Thailand. She receives numerous invitations from around the world (in over 30 countries including in Europe, Latin America, Africa, Australia, and Asia) to speak on her research and work on intercultural competence and international education assessment, and is a noted expert on these topics, being named a Senior Fulbright Specialist (to South Africa and to Japan).

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