Editorial

Competing Global South and Global North knowledge sets contending for dominance in the post Covid-19 Higher Education space: expanding hegemonies or generating authentic reciprocity?

Birgit Schreiber
University of Freiburg, Germany
UWC, UP, South Africa

This article introduces this JIS Special Issue which focusses on competing Global South and Global North knowledge sets contending for dominance in the post Covid-19 Higher Education space and asks the question if GS-GN discourses and practices are expanding hegemonies or generating authentic reciprocity?

As higher education is becoming more globalized, the questions around who's version and voice is dominant and who's experiences are backgrounded, emerges with ever increasing urgency. We pose the question less as a binary, but as an exploration and suggest that a new discourse is emerging that transcends the artificial dichotomy of GS and GN. This issue contributes towards this new discourse which transcends the binary, and highlights a new, trans-level discourse: it's both, GS and GN intersecting to create a global understanding of our shared realities, premised on GS and GN.

The boundaries between GS and GN are porous and the positions are fluid, dynamic and mutually influencing each other. The new emerging position is hybrid, ambiguous and textured, complex and contradictory, surprising and full of possibilities.

The strength of this issues includes the range of authors who contributed, making this a truly international collection. The authors not only write from a variety of positions, geographical and disciplinary, but also have cited literature from local, indigenous and novel sources. Furthermore, we used

international reviewers for this issue so as to deepen the international lens, again aiming to transcend the GS-GN binary.

It is hoped that this collection of articles contributes towards the possibility of developing authentic relations and reciprocity, and a new emerging discourse that transcends the binary GS-GN dichotomy and overcomes the combative jostle for hierarchical power of whose knowledge dominates. But rather seeks to contribute to a discourse where pluralistic and textured versions of knowledge are possible.

Contributions to this Special Issue

Introducing the theme of export and import of knowledge sets, Saïkou Oumar Sagnane provides an epistemological examination of the knowledge generation and reproduction in Ghana. This article, *Hegemonic Knowledge and Situated Knowledge, A Conceptual and Epistemological Clarification for Researchers in Guinea,* powerfully argues the possibility of a newly emerging discourse, that is beyond a combative stance critiquing hierarchies of knowledge sets and critiquing the jostle for power and dominance of discourse. Saikou Oumar Sagnane premises his argument on Amadou Hampâté Bâ's emphasis on emancipation from epistemological entrapment and embracing multiple knowledges.

In another article, Sehoole, Strang, Jowi, and McVeety highlight the asymmetries in the power relations of GS and GN academic partnerships and propose a model, incorporating Ubuntu principles, that promotes a considerate and reflective approach, that enables a more equitable and mutually beneficial collaboration. They offer this approach in their article entitled *Reframing Global North–South Collaborations Through the Lenses of Aware, Connect, Empower (ACE) Principles.*

Building on the idea that new, indigenous, relevant, and contextualized models need to inform practices in the GS, Danie de Klerk and Aneschree Nayager reflect on the importing of theories and practices from regions that have disciplinary histories, in this case the USA GN, imported to South African Higher Education, in the GS. Given the ill-fit of imported practices to local realities, they propose a framework informed by social realism, that analyses the practice of academic advising, with a specific lens to make it relevant, locally embedded and meaningful to the students in this specific context. Reflecting the broader theme of this special issue, de Klerk and Nayager in *Towards a Social Realist Framework for Analysing Academic Advising in Global South Contexts* highlight, that yet unknown layers of insight might emerge as we search for and create openness for new sets of knowledge.

The IDEAS (International Digital Exchange between Africa and Switzerland) collective is a collection of author from Bama Universities of Bamako (Mali), Basel (Switzerland), Bayreuth (Germany) and Conakry (Guinea) who offer very astute and evocative *Ideas in exchange: reflections on transcontinental learning.* They ask questions around how the social science can contribute new insights that illuminate some of the shadows cast by the positionality of arguments. Their article exposes the complexities associated with epistemological diversity and they offer some suggestions on how to transcontinental knowledge creation is in part based on human relationships.

The following three articles in this JIS Special Issue reveal some of the applications on how the GS and GN knowledges are utilized, how these manifest and ultimately, how these can offer new ways of thinking about GS experiences.

The article by Savo Heleta and Samia Chasi on *Curriculum decolonization and internationalization: A critical perspective from South Africa*, highlights the risk of internationalization blurring and cloaking the further hegemonic expansion of knowledge sets that already occupy dominant positions. Heleta and Chasi offer a set of questions that assist higher education to examine if the process of de-colonizing a curriculum is indeed doing that, or is, perhaps insidiously advancing a dominant discourse, usually premised in GN values and on GN voices. The study by Schreiber, Perozzi, Bardill Moscaritolo and Luescher, *Student Affairs and Services: The Global South Leading the Global North in the Adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals* reveals how the GS is engaging more deliberatively and intentionally with the SDGs in Student Affairs in Higher Education. The article critiques the nebulous position of the role and function of Higher Ed in the SDGs and recommends a bolder and more explicit formulation of Higher Ed's contribution towards the attainment of the SDGs. Given this critique, it nevertheless appears that the Student Affairs practitioners in the GS have embraced the SDGs more deliberately in their work with students. Bantjes, in his article *Global knowledge-power asymmetries and student mental health in sub-Saharan Africa: A case study from South Africa*, highlights the relevance of local context and indigenous relevance in shaping meaningful responses to mental health provision for students. His research is based on South African higher Education provisions for mental health and he provides a tangible example of how the importing of GN models are ill-suited to being imported into new and varying contexts.

Yamutuale's article, *African higher education in the age of Internationalization: the case for international double and joint degree programs as an impetus for student mobility,* examines the lived experience

of students who study in a dual degree program at a GN campus. She employs Bourdieu's notion of capital and habitus to explore the gap in intended and actual experiences when GS students study in GN spaces. In her paper, Knowing Myself: Socio-Cultural Representation In *Critical Thinking Education In Transnational Higher Education In Ghana*, on export and import of knowledge sets, using the example of Ghana and the UK, Coomerene Muilerman-Rodrigo critiques the simplistic transfer of knowledge, and highlights the need to contextualise the curriculum.

The articles in this JIS Special Issue explore the conceptual tensions and the lived experiences across GS-GN notions and offer some new ways of thinking about and overcoming dichotomous ways of thinking and being. It is hoped that these articles contribute towards a new discourse that makes trans-positionality possible.