

International Education Research in Globalization Era

Lee, Myung Sook

Professor
Daegu National University of Education

Position:

1991 ~ Present, Professor, Department of Education, Daegu National University of Education

Books:

Teacher education: Reflection and design. (2004). Seoul: Kyoyook Kwahak Co.
Qualitative approaches for educational research. (2001). Seoul: Kyoyook Kwahak Co.
Constructivist Education. (1998). Seoul: Kyoyook Kwahak Co.
Science learning through play. (1998). Seoul: Hak-Ji Co.
Performance assessment for learning. (1977). Seoul: Kyoyook Kwahak Co.



Summary

. Globalization and International Education

1) Globalization and Internationalization

The term 'globalization' and 'internationalization' can be defined differently. Globalization is seen as economic integration, achieved in particular through the establishment of a global marketplace marked by free trade and a minimum of regulation. Globalization initially seemed to be defined as the totality of substantial changes in the context and inner life of education related to growing interrelationships between different parts of the world whereby national borders are blurred or even seem to vanish.

In contrast, internationalization refers to the promotion of global peace and well-being through the development and application of international structures, primarily but not solely of an intergovernmental kind. Internationalization can best be defined as the totality of substantial changes in the context and inner life of education related to an increasing frequency of border-crossing activities amidst a persistence of national systems, even though some signs of 'denationalization' might be observed. Phenomena often viewed as characteristic for internationalization are increasing knowledge transfer, physical mobility, cooperation and international education and research.

Despite the conceptual differences, these are the key 'drive of change' for the world. Globalization has come about much faster than many of its forecasters in the 60's and 70's predicted, and the global society that has emerged is quite different than was expected.

Many researchers define globalization as "the process by which the peoples and nations of the world are increasingly drawn together into a single entity". Globalization may be characterized as a social process whereby the constraints of space and time on economic, political and cultural arrangements weaken gradually. In the economic arena globalization implies trends towards the free movement of labor between nation states, stateless financial markets, a flexible responsiveness of organizations to global markets and the determination of the balance of production activity in a locality by physical and geographical comparative advantage. In the political arena, globalization implies an absence of state sovereignty and a multiplicity of power centers at global, local and intermediate levels, a definition of local issues in relation to a global as well as local community, and an increase in the power of international globalizations over national organizations. In the cultural arena, globalization implies a global distribution of images and information, a deterritorialized cosmopolitanism, diversity and religious mosaic and the widespread consumption of simulations and representations.

2) International Education

Where does educational research in international education and development stand in relation to contemporary processes of globalization? As social activities it resides within the third arena, the cultural, alongside the more general processes of education. International education in a global sociological context that takes into account economic, political and cultural-ideological transnational practices. International

education is influenced by and contributes to the global diffusion of the values of free market economics. These are expressed in international education in terms of an ideology of meritocratic competition combined with positional competition with national systems of education. Globalized international education serves a market that requires the global certification of educational qualifications.

We could list three approaches for international education: 1) unilateral, such as a country concerned chiefly with the education of its own personnel away from home in a different country; 2) bilateral, such as exchange between and among students of two countries, chiefly at university level, and 3) multilateral, requiring funding from at least three national sources, no one of them dominant. Multilateral international education approach would fit into a global future. Globalization for schoolings are encouraged and supported by United Nations Organizations. For example, UNESCO Commission made up of representatives of 15 different countries has already provided a model of international curriculum based on world history, multiple language, universal science and firmly based on the best humanitarian values. This UNESCO curriculum addresses not only the academic, but also 'real life' learning (learning to know, to do, to live together, to be) designed to equip learners to cope with the uncertainties of the future whether in work, leisure, domestic or public walks of life.

The impact of globalization indicates that the role and power of the nation state has been much reduced, trans-national corporations have greatly increased, and collaborative efforts and global interdependence are much needed than ever.

2. International Education Research in the Global Era

International education research can be seen as cultural and economic activities. The processes and results of research are used to reinforce educational policy and practice, and may have some independent impact on policy and practice. Although researchers employ and generate symbols which represent facts, theorems, meanings and values, locating them primarily in the cultural arena, these activities are themselves embedded in a web of social and economic arrangements for their production, exchange, distribution and consumption (e.g., universities, research projects and consultancy services). Research carried out at a particular time and place will be subject to particular configurations of agenda and resources at the personal, intranational, national, inter-national levels. And they have implications for the generation of knowledge about specific country contexts and for the generation of the field of international education which transcends national boundaries.

1) Global Research

The current age of globalization poses challenges and opportunities related to the promotion of professional interaction with international colleagues to further scholarly efforts in education. Opportunities of international collaborative research include professional growth, idea exchange, establishment of lasting collegial connections, broadening of perspectives, sharing of resources, enhancing the profession of education in emerging regions, and global dissemination of knowledge.

Collaborative international research comprises three approaches. The first and most common approach involves conducting comparative research in a variety of countries or extending research to other countries. A second common approach is to examine beliefs, values and cultural practices of people of other countries to understand how these may affect their education. This approach will facilitate the development of culturally sensitive educational interventions that will contribute to the international education throughout the world. The third approach is active collaborative research teams with investigators conducting comparative and qualitative research in their respective countries.

Researchers learn from each other in significant ways through international research partnerships as perspectives are broadened and understanding increased. Host country collaborators should be seen as partners in research, without whose special knowledge the study could not take place, rather than simply as data collectors. From the perspectives of the author, the establishment of lasting collegial connections and friendships has been one of the most rewarding aspects of international collaboration. Increased appreciation for the strength and commitment of wonderful education researchers around the world has been heartwarming. Sharing of resources is an important advantage of international collaboration, as partnerships are formed, with equitable roles and the sharing of planning, resources, results, and credits as suggested by others in the literature.

Broader dissemination of knowledge is possible as findings are presented in a variety of settings including international conferences and published in international journals and in multiple languages. Respect for multi-cultural, multi-methodological, and multi-theoretical approaches to the generation of knowledge and educational practice would be a gift. Given the global society in which we live faces the challenges of moving to 'becoming globally relevant'. Thus professional collaborations research approach for developing and generating culturally sensitive knowledge should utilize 'qualitative' as well as 'quantitative' methods.

2) Qualitative Research in International Education

Qualitative research is viewed as strategies that combine an interpretive theoretical framework with the use of qualitative research techniques such as participant observation and in-depth interviewing. Growth of interest in qualitative research has been a product of epistemological critiques of a positivist approach to social and educational research. The ecological validity of qualitative research in natural settings enabled issues of unintended outcomes and processes to be addressed in ways that proved much more difficult in the traditional techniques of questionnaire, surveys, or fact finding visits.

In order to understand and interpret authentically the context of cultural mediation in globalization process, international education researchers need to collaborate in a global way. Life in globalization era requires understanding, sensitivity, and skills to cope with the phenomena of globalization and global interdependence, linking the economic, political, and cultural dimensions of globalization to the process of education. Collaborative qualitative researches focusing on culture, educational practice, schools, students' and teachers' experiences of learning and schooling, etc. can provide important insights for policy-making and educational theory, and may reveal the unintended consequences of them. Researches regarding educational phenomena based on socio-cultural theoretical approach and indigenous cultures can utilize combination of qualitative data from interviews and observation and quantitative data in order to maximize the benefits of depth and breath.

Currently, efforts and commitments are under way to foster greater international exchange at substantive levels. But still most educators and parents know little about education in other countries. If we are to learn from and share our knowledge with others and to promote international exchange and global understanding, we need to broaden the range and locus of research, increase the value of research for policy, involve practitioners in international dialogue, create joint research and development projects, and create institutional partnerships to integrate international content into teacher preparation and leadership development.

Reference

- Cambridge, J., & Thompson, J. (2004). Internationalism and globalization as contexts for international education. *Compare*, 34, 161-175.
- Mortimore, P. (2001). Globalization, effectiveness and improvement. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 12, 229-249.
- Poeter, J. (1999). *Reschooling and the global future: Politics, economics and the English experience*. Oxford: Symposium Books.