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12. NORTH-SOUTH PARTNERSHIPS IN CANADIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

A Critical Policy Analysis of Contemporary Discourses and Implications for Higher Education Internationalization

INTRODUCTION

There is a clarion call to internationalize Canadian higher education through the formation of partnerships between Northern (read here Canadian) institutions and Global South communities (AUCC, 2010; Beck, 2012). Underlying this trend is the idea that universities, as a source of knowledge production, are a natural complement to economic activities (Marginson, 2007; Delhi & Taylor, 2006), and as such, may be called on to support economic activities in sites, including the Global South, which continue to contend with trenchant poverty and inequality and have been identified as potentially profitable markets. The Southern sites serve both as the grateful recipients and potential consumers of the innovative applications of research produced within or by the Northern institution. The discourses of North-South (hereafter N-S) internationalization do not speak directly to institution-to-institution collaboration; rather, the current focus is on research production from the North and its subsequent application within the South. The concerns raised in this chapter centre on the enactment of N-S higher education partnerships that assume an ahistorical and oversimplified context for the transfer of knowledge. While the global field of competition for higher education continues to intensify, and the highest caliber research institutions jostle with one another to maintain or increase institutional status and ranking, the South has become a renewed site for universities to demonstrate institutional excellence. This calls into question the motives and responsibilities for universities from the Global North acting as partners in what is arguably an asymmetrical relationship. As the functions and frameworks for higher education in Canada evolve, and neoliberal public policy reinforces the notion of knowledge production for profit and/or export, the call to form partnerships must be understood to be a relationship that seeks to confer some benefit or return on investment for Canadian partners.

The macro focus in this chapter problematizes the call to form N-S partnerships in higher education within an ahistorical and/or power-neutral context. The broad context of Canadian higher education internationalization is examined through an analysis of recent reports produced by the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC, 2012a, 2012b, 2010). In these papers the tensions and contradictions of N-S partnerships are aligned against the strong discourse for a more profit-oriented approach to international education activities. It will conclude with a discussion of attempts by multilateral organizations, specifically the OECD, to establish a working framework for the practice of N-S partnerships, to recognize the specific historic, geopolitical and socioeconomic context of North-South relationships. The Paris Accord, Accra Agenda for Action, and Busan Agreements for Partnership (OECD, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c) represent an ongoing global discussion to secure a commitment from Northern or more highly developed international partners who seek to engage in a broad range of economic activities with Global South partners, to act responsibly and equitably. Among the points highlighted within these documents, to which Canada is a signatory, is the commitment to strengthen national development strategies by aligning partner project with national development agendas, to engage in transparent financial transactions, to delegate management authority to local sources and to take "concrete and effective action to address remaining challenges, including weaknesses in partner countries' institutional capacities" and to "provide more predictable and multi-hear commitments on aid flows" (OECD, 2014). It is significant that the objectives included in these three documents which provide a framework for N-S partnerships are excluded from recent reports that call for widespread engagement in N-S partnership for higher education. This silence on matters of equity in partnership demonstrates that a move away from multilateralism has implications for the effects and actions of universities participating in N-S partnerships.

This research is concerned with the growing alignment between Canadian higher education internationalization with recent national policy shifts related to international development, foreign policy and the delivery of humanitarian aid through corporate social responsibility initiatives. Specifically, the move to merge the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), formerly the primary delivery organization for humanitarian aid from Canada with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade suggests that as higher education policy is brought into line with national economic policy, there are significant implications for how higher education engages with international partners. Policy sociology and critical policy analysis are the methodological frameworks engaged here to explore these themes.

Policy sociology draws on historical as well as sociological context to analyze the content of policy and its effects (Ozga, 2000; Gale, 2007, 2001). It is a methodology that contends policy is not value neutral, that it is influenced by multiple sources, both within and outside of the institution, and it is a method committed to investigating the biases and privilege embedded in official policy texts (Gale, 2001). Meutzenfeldt

(in Taylor, 1997) argues that policy sociology examines how "political processes and policy making shape and are shaped by both social power relations and the power of the state" (p. 25). What counts as a policy text is contested in this framework; critical policy sociology acknowledges the production of discourses outside of official policy documents which inform and frame institutional practices (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Ozga & Lingard, 2007). Recognizing the absence of research on education policy at the global level, Rizvi and Lingard (2010) call for critical policy analysis as a method to examine the discourses and power relationships operating within different sites that influence and shape the direction of (in)formal global education policy.

   In this chapter, I will consider several recent publications by the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada as sites of analysis and examples of unofficial policy texts whose discourses have implications for future institutional internationalization activities (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). These documents highlight the both tensions between and the alignment of higher education with N-S humanitarian and development goals versus market principles. Further, recent national policy decisions related to international development privilege political or trade interests over development, which further rationalizes and normalizes the discourses of N-S ventures that seek to profit from these higher education partnerships. It is a neoliberal strategy that avoids explicit reference to the equitable distribution of partnership benefits, assuming the efficacy of the market will ensure efficient redistribution.

INTERNATIONALIZATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY: FRAMING N-S PARTNERSHIPS

Considered within the context of the global knowledge economy, higher education is a key site where economic interests seek to capitalize on new knowledge and research products. Seeing education as a commodity removes it from the sphere of public goods and opens it up to marketization, with the potential to generate revenue and profits. It is in this context that the internationalization of higher education and subsequent call to form N-S partnerships between Canadian universities and Global South interests is considered. Within higher education, there is a growing body of research literature that argues that in the long term, global neoliberal educational policies are unsustainable because they contribute to producing social inequality, political instability, undemocratic processes and environmental degradation. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) contend that global education policies founded on notions such as "global imperatives and the demands of the global economy, …discursively position contemporary rationales for education policy, (sic) based on (a) neoliberal imaginary of globalization" (p. 187). Moreover, Rizvi and Lingard (2010) identify the individual beneficiaries of higher education activities pursued in this manner. They argue global neoliberalism has:

created a global architecture of economic and political relations that is not only largely undemocratic, but which has also polarized global wealth. It has enabled transnational corporations to acquire unprecedented, and arguably unregulated, amounts of power and has also reduced collective opposition such as that of the trade union movement. (p. 186)

Hill and Kumar (2009) concur with Rizvi and Lingard, arguing that neoliberal policy skews resources toward profitability from educational activities, and that the combined effects of neoconservative social policy along with free market policies works to resist the pursuit of equality. They identify a phenomenon termed by Myers, (in Hill & Kumar, 2009, p. 16), "equiphobia—fear of equality" which produces resistance to actors perceived to be active in the promotion of equality or equal opportunities. The antidemocratic bias inherent within neoliberal approaches to higher education is problematic for the negotiation of equitable partnership and the pursuit of equitable development for Global South partners. The focus on much of the development literature on attempts to improve partnerships incrementally through identification of best practices (Brinkerhoff, 2002), misses the significance of the global economic paradigm shift that has occurred since the financial crisis of 2008 and the influence this crisis has had on higher education policy through governments search for new sources of revenues. Within the Canadian context, there is clearly a belief that internationalizing education will not only provide greater revenues through knowledge products and the penetration of new markets, but that it will provide Canadian universities with opportunities to recruit students and faculty from abroad (as both providers and producers of revenue) and will position national research universities to compete at the highest level globally (AUCC, 2012a).

The effects of competitive higher education internationalization strategies have particular implications within a Sub- Saharan African context. Drawing on policy documents that explore the potential for partnership between Canadian and African universities, the disparities between the resources and expectations for partnership between Northern and Southern stakeholders is clear. Although Africa holds great potential as a site for future research, the institutional weaknesses within local universities makes a partnership of equals a tenuous future aspiration. The research literature on African higher education internationalization points to the history of partnership with Global North institutions that followed a direct aid model, one where the partner (donor) with the resources enters into the relationship with a specific end in mind, often one that does not necessarily correspond to local development agendas (Obama, 2013a, 2013b; Obama & Mwema, 2009; Samoff & Carrol, 2004). The end result is that the targeted project for the partnership is often attained, however with little new local capacity created or few additional resources available to address locally identified needs. There is an added ambiguity and asymmetry to N-S higher education partnerships when it is formed as a temporary or informal relationship, for example, between a university and local community agency or an NGO.

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A NATIONAL DISCOURSE OF HIGHER EDUCATION
INTERNATIONALIZATION AND N-S PARTNERSHIPS

A series of public policy papers produced by the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC, 2007–2013), have addressed higher education internationalization and outlined both the opportunities and exigencies to engagement for Canadian institutions on the global level. In particular, the most recent AUCC papers focus on the opportunities for innovative partnerships between Global North (Canadian) universities and partners in the South (AUCC, 2013). Although the AUCC reports are not representative of individual institutional internationalization policies, they present a perspective on both the direction of internationalization on the national level and a chance to identify the gaps and silences present in arguments promoting N-S partnerships. By focusing on the opportunities intrinsic to partnership for Canadian universities, the longer history and practices that have governed N-S relationships is elided, paving the way to N-S engagements that do not sufficiently consider and or take steps to mitigate the negative externalities potentially produced by partnerships for the host community. The AUCC (2012a) report, *International Education: Key Driver of Canada's Future Prosperity*, argues that

> international education makes an important contribution to Canada's culture, diplomacy and prosperity. Canada can be a model of excellence for the world… (there is an)…importance for internationalizing education in Canada…as a strategic component of the Government of Canada's Economic Action plan, its international trade and innovation strategies, and its immigration and foreign policies. (AUCC, 2012a, pp. 38–39)

The alignment of internationalization in education with trade and foreign policy is addressed as a measure to provide greater policy coherence. The report further states:

> the importance of internationalizing education in Canada has to be recognized as a strategic component of the Government of Canada's Economic Action plan, its international trade and innovation strategies and its immigration and foreign policies. (AUCC, 2012a, p. 39)

Recommendations from the report focus on elevating internationalization of education in Canada to compete with standards established by other prestigious institutions and nations. The goals target establishing centers for excellence in research, scholarships that will compete with Rhodes and Fulbright, recruitment of top researchers and students globally and a significant increase in the number of Canadian students studying and researching abroad (AUCC, 2012).

Related reports produced by AUCC consider the opportunities for engaging particularly with African universities in partnerships designed to create greater industrial and economic capacity (AAU/AUCC, 2012b; AUCC, 2010). The 2012 (AAU/AUCC) report, *Strengthening University-Industry Linkages in Africa: A Study on Institutional Capacities and Gaps*, explores possibilities for Canadian-African

partnerships to increase capacities within African institutions as well as the broader industrial and manufacturing communities. The report emphasizes the relatively weak infrastructure of African universities which could obstruct the formation or function of North-South partnerships, citing deficits in institutional revenues, state-of-the-art equipment, employment prospects for students, requisite staff, and opportunities for contributions to be made by African universities to the local economy (AAU/ AUCC, 2012b). Moreover, the list of deficiencies continues, identifying a lack of an *entrepreneurial spirit* among African academics (2012b, p. 1.4) and an unawareness of possible linkages between university research products and local commercial interests. The report concludes that although there is tremendous potential and capacity within African higher education, strong concerns remain, including: securing intellectual property rights and ownership; the costs of applying for and holding of patents; and the institutional commitment to sustaining research relationships (AAU/ AUCC, 2012b).

More recent reports produced by AUCC focus more broadly on the possibilities for North-South partnerships to mutually benefit all partners. *Innovative North-South Partnerships* (AUCC, 2013), focuses on elements that build strong, collaborative relationships and offers several best practices for N-S higher education research and development partnerships. There is a detailed discussion of the elements identified as key to the success and sustainability of the partnerships under study: the foundational principles of the partnerships, processes designed to ensure sustainability along with a sense of clear results and locally appropriate activities. Key features of innovative and effective partnerships are cited as "the incorporation of various types of knowledge" and "fostering a culture of learning" where "the northern partners are not always in the driver's seat and shared-decision making is the preferred mode of operation" (AUCC, 2013, p. 2). These goals are arguably in line with a vision and practice of N-S partnership that foregrounds local interests and invests in local development processes, however, the shadow side of partnership emerges at the report's conclusion.

There is a conceptual shift in the 2013 (AUCC) report, recognizing both the position and potential contributions of local participants and contexts to partnerships. This inclusion is in contrast to the AUCC (2012) documents that prioritize the potential economic benefits that may accrue to Canadian universities and the broader national economy through a market-driven approach to higher education internationalization and excludes any discussion of collaborative N-S partnership. Only in the AUCC (2013) report is the point raised that high quality and equitable N-S partnerships should be founded on principles that echo those of the Paris Accord, Accra Agenda or Busan Agreements for Partnership (OECD, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c). The report calls for N-S partnerships founded upon

> shared vision, strong leadership, power equity, interdependency and complementarity, mutuality manifested through shared decision-making on project design, shared resources and recognition of the importance of all

partners' contributions and of the validity of the various types of knowledge. (AUCC, 2013, p. 5)

The values expressed in the policy excerpted above suggest an awareness of the deleterious effects of N-S partnerships that ignore the local context where partnership is enacted and a. Achieving these ideals, however, remains a trenchant challenge within the current context of Canadian higher education.

North-South projects and partnerships in higher education struggle to maintain adequate resources and to secure priority status among the myriad goals for internationalization. In the 2013 (AUCC) report, participants acknowledge how the rigidities of university research timelines and programming frameworks disadvantage local community participation, and suggests a measure of resistance to the overtly competitive positions advocated in other documents. Although the articulated intention of *Innovative North-South Partnerships* (AUCC, 2013) is to "deepen knowledge and understanding about a new type of collaborative approach that constitutes a departure from the traditional, hierarchical model of North-South partnership focused on knowledge transfer from the North to the South (AUCC, 2013, p. 2), the report remains skeptical about the fit between Canadian university interests and local development agendas for communities and universities. Despite acknowledging the lead role to be played in partnership by Global South partners, the report concludes with a list of institutional barriers within universities that make it unlikely that progressive changes will soon translate into new N-S practices. The competitive context of higher education dictates that research and institutional reputation will outweigh costly and time-sensitive considerations of southern partners.

Development-oriented projects and partnerships are typically not as highly valued by key stakeholders who determine how institutional resources are invested. University administration does not typically "consider these types of international partnerships to be very beneficial for their institutions," and can be very "slow to respond to the resource needs of these international partnerships" (AUCC, 2013, p. 9). There is a sense that international development partnerships, if entered into, should conform to the standards outlined above. Even faculty members are sometimes reluctant to relinquish power and authority within partnerships or to subordinate publishing and research goals to accommodate local objectives. There is a sense that an altruistic approach to partnership may compromise academic rigor. The authors of *Innovative North-South partnerships argue* that if

> universities overemphasize this aspect of North-South partnership, as outreach programs rather than research or educational programs, there is a risk of reducing their value for Canadian researchers and faculty members. Researchers naturally still place a high value on the production of research outputs and look to achieve these goals through partnership. (AUCC, 2013, p. 9)

All too often, efforts to maintain equitable and progressive partnerships are challenged by institutional and economic interests that continue to pursue more profitable and high profile opportunities internationally. Redirecting efforts in N-S partnerships to promote sustainable and equitable partnerships will have to resist shrinking university funding from national and provincial sources and the temptation to secure international position through research and other global activities pose significant obstacles to reorienting N-S partnerships. There has been a broader shift on the national level away from international development as the delivery of aid or humanitarian assistance toward a model of corporate social responsibility initiatives (Brown, 2012a). Under this model, corporate social responsibility proposes delivering development programming by select trade partners to facilitate economic relationships abroad. It is a shift in the discourse of development that has several implications to promoting equitable N-S partnerships.

Historically, the Official Development Assistance Accountability Act (Government of Canada, 2013a) affirms a commitment to development projects and humanitarian aid where the primary objective is the alleviation of poverty (Government of Canada, 2013a). The purpose of this act is

> to ensure that all Canadian official development assistance abroad is provided with a central focus on poverty reduction and in a manner that is consistent with Canadian values, Canadian foreign policy, the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of March 2, 2005, sustainable development and democracy promotion and that promotes international human rights standards. (Government of Canada, 2013a)

The standards for official international development partnerships established by this Act are potentially challenged by a more recent move to deliver humanitarian and development assistance through corporate social responsibility initiatives. The Canadian government (2013b) published a Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy in 2009, directed primarily at enhancing the extractive mining sector's ability to engage with local communities in developing countries in order "to operate in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner." According to this strategy,

> Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is defined as the voluntary activities undertaken by a company to operate in an economic, social and environmentally sustainable manner. Canadian companies recognize the value of incorporating CSR practices into their operations abroad. Operating responsibly also plays an important role in promoting Canadian values internationally and contributes to the sustainable development of communities. (Government of Canada, 2013b)

The emphasis within CSR is to "improve the competitive advantage of Canadian international extractive sector companies by enhancing their ability to manage social and environmental risks" (Government of Canada, 2013b). There is a strong

emphasis on ethical and non-corrupt practices for Canadian interests operating abroad, but in the context of the merger of the Canadian International Development Agency into the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, it is a move that indicates that the focus for national development priorities continues to remain on activities that facilitate economic progress. It raises the specter of competing interests within Canadian international development initiatives, and as will be seen below, may not sufficiently recognize the objectives of local development agendas.

A MULTILATERAL CONTEXT FOR PARTNERSHIP

Partnerships have been identified as a significant policy trend in global education policy, promoted no only by local interests as a means to network and secure collaborative enterprise but also by the World Bank and OECD, suggesting that partnerships are "an important feature in the current reconfiguration of education within the frames of neo-liberal governance (Seddon et al., 2007, p. 236). The neoliberal framework for partnerships excludes interests that do not translate to the market including: culture, race and the legacies of history (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Excluding consideration or acknowledgement of history, culture and race erases the influence that context has on partnership formation. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) argue that N-S education partnerships have

> major social consequences, benefitting some individuals and communities while further marginalizing the poor and socially disadvantaged. This is so because the neoliberal social imaginary upon which this policy framework generally is based has rejected the need for redistributive policies, extensive social protection and measure to ensure equality of educational opportunity. (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010, p. 185)

In the interest of "fast knowledge" (Peters & Besley, 2006), neoliberal policy discourses that conceptualize N-S higher education partnerships as economic opportunities de-emphasize local cultural complexities and focus on particular points of partnership, such as an innovative solution to a persistent development problem. Further, policy prescribes the norms for N-S partnerships, contributing to the sense that international engagement, designed to assist communities struggling with poverty, are inherently ethically positive endeavors. This is an approach, however, founded on a western humanist approach to international engagement that is uncritical of the ethnocentric values embedded in a weak version of N-S partnership practice (Andreotti, 2011).

In 2005, beginning with the Paris Accord, the international community turned its attention to practices of North-South partnerships that conferred benefits to Global North stakeholders through partnerships that provided access to Southern resources (OECD, 2013a). Decades of efforts to modernize or develop the Global South were stymied by the "lack of co-ordination, overly ambitious targets, unrealistic time-

and budget constraints and political self-interest" by particular stakeholders (OECD, 2014). A full debate of the critical implications of international development practices lies outside the scope of this particular discussion, however, the alleviation of poverty through free- market trade has not materialized and global inequality appears by many accounts to have worsened in recent decades (Harvey, 2006). The intractability of poverty and inequality and failure of development initiatives throughout much of the Global South renders any initiative between North and South open to critique to determine which interests potentially benefit from individual projects. A strong majority of the international community agreed to the Paris Accord, a multilateral agreement designed to establish clear parameters for the enactment of partnerships between Northern interests in Southern sites. The primary motivation for the Paris Accord was the regulation of economic interests, sponsored by Global North interests operating in the Global South. To mitigate exploitation and to further efforts to create local capacity in host communities, the Paris Accord sought to establish guiding principles including

- *Ownership*: where developing countries set their own strategies for poverty reduction, improve their institutions and tackle corruption.
- *Alignment*: donor countries align behind these objectives and use local systems.
- *Harmonisation*: donor countries coordinate, simplify procedures and share information to avoid duplication.
- *Results*: developing countries and donors shift focus to development results and results get measured.
- *Mutual accountability*: donors and partners are accountable for development results (OECD, 2013c).

The goals for the Paris Accord (OECD, 2013c), and subsequent multilateral agreements that build on its principles, map out a "practical, action-oriented roadmap to improve the quality of aid and its impact on development" It was an effort to "put in place a series of specific implementation measures and establishes a monitoring system to assess progress and ensure that donors and recipients hold each other accountable for their commitments" (OECD, 2013a). It is unclear how stakeholders are to be held to account to their actions or practices, particularly if they do not adhere to the principles outlined in the above agreements. Further, higher education occupies an ambiguous position; it is neither a clear corporate or commercial actor nor is it wholly representative of national government (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). The ideal vision of the university posits its role as producer of knowledge for the common good, however the emergence of the knowledge economy and current competitive agendas for the production of knowledge render a neutral role for higher education implausible (Peters & Besley, 2006). There is need for further research to consider the specific role and obligations of the university as its activities expand to encompass more commercial and political interests.

N-S PARTNERSHIP AND POLICY ENACTMENT

The current notion of partnership is widely linked to neoliberal practices, particularly those that advocate for public-private partnerships in education. It is a strategy that integrates market principles to educational practices with results that subordinate local and contextual interests to market mechanisms (Ball, 2012; Olssen & Peters, 2005). In the case of N-S partnership, the concept is particularly seductive, especially when chronic poverty and inequality on the surface appear to be resistant to international development efforts. On the one hand, partnership is a notion that implies the potential creation of mutual benefits and collaborative opportunities for participants, yet on the other, a competitive and market driven practice of partnership opens the possibility that partners, (those with the comparative resource and mobility advantage) are participating in the relationship to achieve Global North institutions to showcase or sell research in sites within the Global South.

Historically, constituting the Global South as a site or subject for higher education partnership has overwhelmingly worked to the advantage of the Global North partner, and in the process, has contributed to perpetuating dependency versus the creation of local capacity (Samoff & Carol, 2004). The contemporary discourses of higher education internationalization, and subsequently the desire to form N-S partnerships, excludes reference to historical or local contexts and is noticeably silent on the matter of existing multilateral agreements which lay out the terms and conditions for N-S relationships and the distribution of the benefits produced by those endeavours. This silence is further underscored in the case of Canada where the clear move away from multilateralism in other fields of public policy is now mirrored in the closer alignment with higher education and foreign policy and trade strategies (Brown, 2012a, 2012b).

The call to North-South higher education partnerships responds to diverse national interests and aspirations, including the pursuit of opportunities to produce new knowledge in new sites and yields to pressures exerted by global competition among research universities. In the case of Canadian higher education, recent economic and political trends are reshaping the nation's international relations in the fields of international foreign trade and policy. The merging of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAIT) in 2012 has redefined the delivery of humanitarian aid from Canada to many communities in the Global South; the terms of aid are now negotiated to align with specific trade goals, ostensibly to bring more coherence to foreign policy and trade initiatives, highlighting a desire to garner better "return on investment for Canadians" (Fantino, 2013).

Peters (2002) analysis of discourses in higher education policy illustrates the discursive and institutional relationships between the terms *knowledge, economy*, and *education*, linking them specifically to market oriented interpretations and to

global mega-trends in education (p. 100). One effective example of the intertwining of discourses, from business, sports and education, is illustrated by the call from leadership in higher education for an "own the podium" strategy for higher education (Chakma, 2013). Drawing on the popular Canadian Olympic slogan, higher education is conceived of in this sense as another field where Canadians can demonstrate prowess, ability and dominate the global field. This discourse sets the course for an internationalization agenda in higher education that seeks out economic and remunerative rewards specifically to achieve dominance; it suggests that educational programs that do not produce returns or measurable results, or whose value is realized over time, are less likely to be pursued at this time (Seddon et al., 2007). The disembodiment of higher education from specifically local priorities allows for the exercise of interests from a potential mix of provincial, national and globalized sources (Marginson & Rhodes, 2002). The pressures of globalization and competition encourage the production of knowledge for export versus collaboration, a tension which generally disadvantages impoverished regions or institutions struggling to build a tertiary education sector (Larkin, 2012).

There is no clear understanding as to how universities should articulate or manage their interests within N-S partnerships, although several concerns related to international development and N-S emerge from AUCC (2013): first, although the main interest in partnerships is assumed to be the transfer of knowledge from North to South, the hierarchical model of partnership continues to challenge efforts to decentre leadership and to share power and decision making with Global South partners; second, the institutional processes and frameworks that govern research projects, including the need to showcase research findings "to enhance the profile and reach of the institution" disadvantages the Global South partner (p. 8); third, funding arrangements do not allow for the funding of full partner participation in research projects; and finally, in the end, Northern participants in research are able to engage in and exit the partnership without clear obligation or accountability to local partners, often terminating the relationship when the research or data collection phase is complete (Larkin, 2013).

CONCLUSIONS

The intertwining of higher education with national political aspirations has significant implications for potential partner institutions in the Global South. The current call to partnership is one that emphasizes the potential economic benefits of a commercialized relationship, and in the process, suppresses history, culture and/or local context. The possibility of sustainable engagement or the creation of local capacity is diminished in a competitive environment. Recent research suggests that global education policy enacted along neoliberal lines produces greater social inequality and interferes with the ability of host partners to achieve local development goals. In the current context of internationalization, and the expectation of profitable N-S partnerships, there are no mechanisms for democratic accountability, either for

higher education institutions or community organizations engaged as participants in partnership (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Hill & Kumar, 2009).

Multilateral agreements, including the Paris Accord and Accra Agenda sought to construct a framework for equitable North-South engagements. However, the lack of a mechanism for accountability among partners and the pressures of globalization are disincentives for partners otherwise willing to commit to equitable practices. The turn to a market-driven purpose for N-S higher education engagement obscures potential benefits to be achieved through a balanced approach to partnership. Global education policy must recognize local context and acknowledges difference, lest N-S partnership lapse into the latest incarnation of neocolonial relationships. This move will demand rethinking of the role of higher education and a decoupling of education with national political and economic agendas.

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