Potential of the Human Capabilities Approach (HCA) for strategy development in the Higher Education curriculum. (0264)

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Background and rationale

Many universities in the UK face the demands of 'competing' strategic initiatives for curriculum development. For instance, initiatives to embed, variously, employability, internationalisation, enterprise, global citizenship or education for sustainable development. Although there is some likelihood that use of differing terminology is part of the problem, as well as shifts in emphasis (from IC, to GCE for example), the consequences of these shifts for the students who experience the curricula are important and under-researched. In our own large UK Higher Education institution, we have been working to integrate the curriculum development elements of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and Internationalisation of the curriculum (IC). One emerging theme is the potential that the Human Capabilities Approach (HCA) has to provide a set of overarching principles to help define a university oriented towards 'public good'. As universities redefine themselves as competitors in a global market in the 21st century HE landscape, we may need to find ways to sustain the ethical perspective of a university providing opportunities to all for education for "the real possibilities and opportunities of leading a life which a person has reason to value" ((Boni & Walker, 2013; Sen, 1999)) as well as for the good of other species and for the natural environment.

This approach has implications for staff and students. For staff, their capabilities may need to develop, stretch and flex as universities undergo changes relating to what is taught, how it is taught and what is learned. For students, explicit acknowledgement of motivation to learn within a human capabilities framework has the potential to profoundly affect student engagement (e.g. (Linnenbrink-Garcia & Pekrun, 2011; Pekrun, Goetz, Frenzel, Barchfeld, & Perry, 2011).

The scoping review was carried out following the framework of (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). The main research question was "What is the potential of the Human Capabilities Approach (HCA) for strategy development in the Higher Education". There is extensive literature relating to the HCA, so a number of *a priori* decisions relating to inclusion and exclusion were made, for example, any HCA-focussed literature not directly related to education (of any sort), was excluded. To accommodate the global nature of the HCA, the review aimed to include literature in more than one language (English, Spanish and French) with the aim of exploring possible cultural bias in both the way that public good and HCA in universities may be portrayed. A framework for analysis of this literature was derived by both authors working independently and iteratively as described by (Levac, Colquhoun, & O'Brien, 2010) with a process of discussion culminating in the final framework for analysis. This framework includes dimensions resulting from consideration of the concepts of 'soft' and 'critical' global citizenship education (Andreotti, 2006).

The second strand of the scoping review aimed to explore institutional publically available grey literature for evidence of an HCA. We used institutional mission statements, and the Talloires

network (selected for its likely bias towards universities that might use a HCA approach) as a sampling frame to identify, from amongst the 346 institutions, those who might be described as 'leading universities' in this area. By analysing mission statements for their HCA 'content', using first an inductive and then a deductive method, we created an analytic framework for further iterative categorisation of these documents. This led to a more in-depth exploration of the universities thus identified, using a case study strategy to analyse their publically available policy documents relating to the areas of IC, ESD and GCE focussed on the degree of integration of these strategic areas, and the use (explicit or implicit) of a human capabilities approach.

Findings

Characteristics of the literature in relation to dimensions emerging from a structured consideration is presented, while acknowledging the filtering of this through the researchers' own cultural and linguistic lenses. From a UK perspective, there seems to be relatively little evidence of the use of an explicit HCA within universities, and the geographical spread of studies is one facet that has encouraged the researchers to see this as a *global* debate on the purpose of university education.

More generally though, in terms of potential differences mediated via language, it seems that different cultures, or authors using a particular language may perceive the HCA differently and seem to prioritise one perspective over another using a particular cultural "lens". This suggests questions such as, 'what are the implications of this differential prioritisation?' Or 'how are cultural or language differences shaping the theory and practice?'

Other emerging themes at the time of writing this abstract, include the tension between academic freedom and responsibility; the question of 'who' is looking at 'what' and in what context?; criticism of the approach as individualistic; relationship of the HCA to critical pedagogy; and the tension between 'market forces' driving universities' internal (and external) discourses and the (mis)appropriation of an HCA.

We discuss these themes in the light of wider debates in HE: internationalisation of HE; futures and systems thinking; and the purposes of a higher education and use of the HCA as a potentially overarching theoretical framework.

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