

Gönderim Tarihi: 25.12.2018

Kabul Tarihi: 24.04.2019

## EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITIES OF ON-CAMPUS CULTURAL GLOCALIZATION

Kampüste Kültürel Küyerel Ortamın Mümkünlüğü Üzerine

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Çalışmanın Türü: Araştırma

### Abstract

*At present, the whole world is walking through an internationalization process in which almost everything is thought, planned, negotiated and arranged globally. Due to the ever increasing correspondence and interaction among the nations of the world, culture also has taken its unique place in the globalization process along with other concepts rooted in the lives of people. This cultural globalization co-exists with a cultural glocalization, a relatively recent concept resembling a big bowl consisting of pieces of local cultures in the global frame. In the present world undergoing a process of increasing international connection in the global scale, international campuses, as learning spaces in university education in many parts of the world, may be unique environments for cultural glocalization that can ultimately contribute to the global peace, understanding and friendship. This article is intended to shed light on the possibility and significance of cultural glocalization and the practicability of the realization of this concept on international, cosmopolitan university campuses.*

**Keywords:** glocalization; globalization; campus life; higher education

### Öz

*Günümüzde, dünya neredeyse her şeyin düşünüldüğü, planlandığı ve düzenlendiği bir uluslararasılaşma sürecinden geçmektedir. Dünya milletleri arasındaki güçlenen ilişkiler sayesinde, insan hayatıyla ilgili diğer kavramların yanı sıra kültür de küreselleşme sürecinde kendine has yerini almıştır. Bu kültürel küreselleşme, küresel çerçevede yerel kültürlerin birleştiği bir fanusa benzetilebilecek kültürel bir küyerelleşmeyle birlikte var olmaktadır. Küresel bağlamdaki bağlılık çağında, dünyanın birçok yerinde üniversite eğitimi veren uluslararası kampüsler nihai bağlamda küresel barışa, anlayışa ve arkadaşlığa katkı sağlayabilecek kültürel küyerel ortamlar oluşturabilirler. Bu çalışma, kültürel küyerelleşmenin önemi ve bu kavramın uluslararası kozmopolit üniversite kampüslerinde uygulamaya dönüştürülebilmesi olasılığını incelemektedir.*

**Anahtar kelimeler:** küyerelleşme; küreselleşme; kampüs hayatı; yüksek öğretim

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Unlike their ancestors who lived before the nineteenth and even in the first three quarters of the twentieth century, today's citizens of the world have the capability to know a lot more about what is happening in the globe and many of them are able to access all parts of the world. They can hear

about important episodes in other parts of the world in seconds, they can go and visit other cities in their own countries and abroad not only as tourists but also for many other purposes like sports competitions and cultural events, they can save lives in natural disasters and disasters of human origin in territories other than their own, they can have the chance to study in educational institutions in other countries and they can choose their marriage partners from another nation. When something new is invented in a part of the county, all other nations can immediately become aware of it: it is the same for an electronic device, for music, for literary works, for a new technique of production, even for a kind of spice believed and proven good for health. Many more things available to modern residents of the world can be added to this list; in short, a huge percentage of the individuals in the globe at present lead their lives with global perspectives in their minds shaped by changing needs and horizons emerging with the necessity to keep up with the constantly changing and evolving conditions. Within this context, individuals and nation states try to keep on their existence in a global setting with their own personalities, political and religious beliefs and cultural accumulations; that is, the state of affairs naturally follow a glocalised (global-local) path in the international sphere.

Glocalization which originated in Japan to denote an economic term related to adapting farming techniques to local conditions has also to do with cultural context without which it would not possess sufficient analytic-interpretive leverage (Robertson, 2012). The expected benefits and the reliability of the new notion for humanity should be discussed in academic, social and political circles in detail and the possibility of its prospective utility should be sought for the well-being of human race (Swyngedouw, 2004).

When globalization, which is not a state of being but a process involving organized social connections across space (James, 2005), is contemplated as a whole thing, it will be understood that it is not something other than the total combination of what individually exists in all parts of the world. In principle, there exists a relation in every aspect of life between globalization and glocalization and cosmopolitans cannot be constructed without locals (Ritzer, 2003). This being the case, if there is a world culture, then it must essentially be something created with the contributions of all national and local cultures and experiences (Lechner & Boli, 2005) compromising all differences that have come into being so far. In this sense, it may be proposed that all individuals living on earth are parts of the local and the national within a context characterized in the course of time and that

“transnational and territorial cultures of the world are entangled with one another in manifold ways” (Hannerz, 1992, p. 244). In fact, the massive human undertaking pertaining to preserving local values and traditions has ultimately formed the global culture with glocal pieces.

Today’s nation states have, in a sense, become international or global nation states preserving their own unique national and cultural characteristics on the one hand and experiencing an unpreventable interaction with many other nations and cultures on the other. Smith (2007) defines the core of ideal composition of a nation as a concept to include “the formation and dissemination to the members of a distinctive public culture, including linguistic codes, an education system, public rituals and an official ‘ethno-history’—a set of traditions about the communal past held by the members of the nation and handed down the generations” (p. 23). This definition denotes the basic system on which nation states operate in the modern world with notions of priority mainly on cultural connections.

The international sphere composed of the participation of world nations is of a nature in which each nation state exists as it is. Through this participation a global whole comes into being as a reality directly incorporated with the intrinsic culture, characteristics and behaviors of every participant nation. In this global unity, no nation becomes the sole cultural model discrediting what other nations own as heritage from their historical experience. Of course, opinions, values, customs and political preferences may differ among nations but the existence of *others* in this globe is a never-changing reality for every individual and individual nation. With their unique characteristics preserved in the international sphere, the world nations, altogether, form a global whole as a glocal unity in which they are represented with their accumulation of a total heritage of the elements Smith touches on in his handling of the entities forming a nation.

Setting out from this perspective, it can be understood and proposed that a glocal culture, an understanding based on globally shared common features, can be created and preserved with the interconnectedness and interaction of all local cultures. In this new world context, cultural differences have come to be understood not as cultural fragmentation but cultural richness. Since the context of global culture is made up of the formation of different cultures in a long historical stretch of time (Friedman, 1995), differences of region, nationality, gender and ethnicity should be recognized, even celebrated as global heritage indicative of the rich history of the whole world (Handler 1994). In this setting, identities, beliefs and cultures other than one’s own should not be assessed as factors to prevent the establishment of reciprocal mutual understanding and interaction

(İnaç & Ünal, 2013) in a global scale.

Taking into consideration the topic of culture in the modern world, this article is intended to examine the issue of cultural glocalization on international university campuses (glocal campuses) housing students from different parts of the world. In such an international space where the main purpose is to get quality education in order to be productive and responsible world citizens, every individual can live as s/he is with the local culture the bring to the learning environment from different parts of the world. The perspective offered in this study is that glocal campuses may play a key role in sustaining a cosmopolitan public life with the spatial organization formed through the connection and cultural interaction among glocal participants. Especially in an age, like ours, when mutual relations in every imaginable area of human life between nations and peoples have reached a highly advanced level, the cultural dimension should not be neglected among the items concerning higher education in the agendas of nation states. Offering such a perspective to glocal campus life, this study is intended to address an issue that needs worldwide exploration as a facet of international friendship, understanding, communication, interconnectedness, and ultimately, global peace.

## 2. GLOBAL/LOCALIZATION

Globalization which “the global includes but does not override the local” (Pieterse, 2013, p. 509) has been a slow process in the history of the world as a transformation that has attained its present state through steps made in all areas concerning human life up till now. It has not been, just to note, viewed as an operation to be accomplished by destroying the peculiar features of nation states around the globe. The common underlying assumption of the term *globalization* is that just as nations may be formed with the unity of differences ascribed to the populations within that nation as it is true for a number of countries, a global world may well be established with the acceptance of the unity of differences constructed with the peculiar specificity of every nation on earth. In such a context, transnational relations are organized on a basis entailing respect for the differences between cultures, ways of life, religious beliefs and political systems of each nation. Thus, to keep on a sustainable international connection within this frame, nation states are to take into consideration shared features rather than conflict-causing actions in their mutual relations. Since discriminating or isolating one nation or population from others is not acceptable and applicable in the present world with modern standards, the commonly shared apprehension, without hesitation, should be the tenacity to accept the assumption that it “is humanly possible to live in a world that consists of

nothing but widely extended flows, by constantly monitoring and reflexively reconsidering one's own position in it and linking up flexibly to whatever other beings and objects there are in that world" (Karagiannis & Wagner, 2007, p. 7). If it is a fact that the present world nations cannot go back to local lives individually or totally, then, it is time to look for all possible ways to enable peoples of the present and future world to live in a glocalized planet.

There is, at present, "a global conversation under way in almost every area of inquiry" (Jacob, 1999, p. 112) and in all global processes the tendency operating in the process does not and cannot disregard localization (Sparks, 2000). Evaluating the conditions of the modern world, Weber (2007) underlines glocalization as an indispensable reality "to understand and explain social change in a general and theoretical sense rather than in concrete, empirically specific ways that highlight the patterns and contradictoriness of human experience in contemporary times" (p. 280). In this world, all issues from politics to economy, from education to employment, from trade to tourism, from national politics to international relations, in short, everything concerning humanity "is better thought of as a mix of global and local, as glocal. In other words, it can never again be thought of as 'purely local'" (Ritzer & Richer, 2012, p. 802).

When examined in view of political and cultural consideration, most global events will reflect glocal characteristics and dimension and will gain a local peculiarity through local lenses. Roudometof (2016) calls attention to the reality that the same or similar cultural authenticity is visible in many parts of the world with differentiations between form and content. He concludes that *diffusion* is a definitive term that reflects the mechanism certifying the transmission of world culture and that the social life under states of glocalization should be interpreted as transnationalism. And he elucidates three steps for the accomplishment of glocalization:

*identifying the set of social processes responsible for undermining the boundaries of the nation state, (2) designating the emerging reality of living in a world where social life consists of structured relationships that extend beyond national borders, and (3) outlining the subsequent qualitative features that can be observed in individual attitudes as a result of the new reality* (p. 124).

Roudometof's approach denotes that in a glocalized global world no one, except his/her own decision, is forced to be a person other than who he is or which nation he belong to. All these and many other aspects of life at

present, as if to support the above suppositions, indicate that we have become global and remain global and that glocalization, in other words global localization, will contribute to the potential to increase the sociological critique of globalization with reference to cultural differentiation (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2007).

Robertson (1992), by whom ‘glocalization’ was put into the conceptual lexicon with a meaning indicating a propensity to universalize the particular and to particularize the universal, deliberates that glocalization is of a character referring to the weakness of globalization for being in tension with the idea of localization. Robertson (1995) also comments that globalization is a product of incorporation of locality, which ultimately leads to the compression of the world as a whole and he contends that the notion of glocalization conveys many of the opinions put forward for a comprehensive definition of globalization. The central nucleus of his elucidation presupposes the interpenetration of what are historically and traditionally called the global and the local. He asserts the notion that local, national, and global interrelationships are to be mediated by regional, national, and political elements. Otherwise, the purpose to reach a glocal unity cannot be achieved due to the contradictions of terms and incomprehensibility of constituents for the glocal whole. Evoking attention to the necessity to eliminate contingent and conflicting propositions in this respect, Khondker (2005) establishes a connection between globalization and glocalization as a sophisticated version of globalization and concludes that glocalization has five main peculiar elements:

- (1) Diversity is the essence of social life.
- (2) Not all differences are erased.
- (3) History and culture operate autonomously to offer a sense of uniqueness to the experiences of groups (whether cultures, societies or nations).
- (4) Glocalization removes the fear that globalization resembles a tidal wave erasing all differences.
- (5) Glocalization does not promise a world free from conflict but offers a more historically grounded and pragmatic worldview (p. 187).

Copious theories and debates about the globalization process do not overshadow the historic reality called glocalization and do not diminish national identities of participants in the process gaining global sovereignty at present. Within the present state of affairs in the world and the mutual

positioning of nations, glocalization refers to the present shape of the world and the need for interrelatedness and interconnectedness of peoples and nation states without disregarding homogeneity and heterogeneity.

While globalization is a highly malleable concept, open to abuse by the opponents of multiculturalism, glocalization, holding a mirror to the globe and reflecting an appearance of co-existence of each nation and culture with local values, traditions and identities, seems to play its initiative role to eliminate conflicts stemming from differences. As interdependence requires collaboration in all areas of international connections, the need to show respect to other cultures gains an undeniable significance for the establishment and continuity of relations among nations in the glocal world. The other way around, one cannot conceptualize glocalization as an entity that can help bring members of different cultures closer in the present world. Before all, belonging to a nation gives an individual a cultural identity evoking the feeling of belonging to a nation and a linguistic identity in case to be utilized against foreign threats (Hobsbawm, 2000, p. 170). For every individual, regardless of political and economic power, belonging to a group means equipping himself with a sentimental power. And belonging to a certain part of the world, too, logically imposes on the individual certain local presentiment automatically differentiating his peculiar behaviors locally shaped by the long history of tradition and adding emotional and symbolic meanings for individuals who take their places in the large world picture (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996). People “live in a world of local assertions against globalising trends, a world in which the very idea of locality is sometimes cast as a form of resistance to the hegemonically global” (Robertson, 2012, p. 195). These observations suggest that glocalization raises a strong feeling of consciousness and naturally a powerful reaction against threats to local identity. However, no one can deny the critical reality of the modern world that “the purely formal elements of nationhood are clearly insufficient to differentiate one nation from the other” (Roudometof, 2014, p. 26).

Because nations are characterized by voluntary and intentional practices for the welfare of the nation state, a glocal understanding should be based on global commons triggering a voluntary devotion to the future of mankind by all parties. In this regard, glocalization should be conceptualized as a cultural entity with particular attributes to be shared by individuals who seek to imagine a bright future for the world with the belief that there are glocally accepted global rights and wrongs.

The cultural element in the glocalization context is to be witnessed

in a variety of ways exercised in the world at present. In this age of a high level of international interconnectedness, scientific development, collaboration in learning, research and information technologies, education in general and higher education in particular will be of great significance for a worldwide cultural glocalization. The proposition put forward in this study is that a global/glocal cultural interaction and interconnectedness can be achieved with proper success through creating, maintaining and sustaining glocal campuses designed and operated for the realization of on-campus cultural glocalization.

### 3. ON-CAMPUS CULTURAL GLOCALIZATION

Communication between individuals and nations has always preserved its significance at national and international level and the inevitability of international and intercultural communication has always been felt by all nations as a must to establish international ties (Kraidy, 1999). First between neighboring countries and then between countries all around the world, the need for international communication has reached a level indicating that the global world has gained a glocal essence. International communication processes have, ultimately, been understood as a major world undertaking and an indispensable facet of global interconnectedness. Through international relations, communication and interaction, local historical and cultural accumulations have also naturally gained international relevance. All this process, called glocalization, has inevitably placed individuals as its central locus (Thompson & Arsel, 2004). In this glocalized world, education, especially higher education, can play one of the key roles in the process bringing the peoples of the world closer and can contribute to the improvement of international relations.

Khondker (2013) argues that ‘global’, ultimately, is a perspective through which the world is conceived and that studies of nations, locality, and individuals can serve their purposes under the global framework. He adds that understanding the forces making up and shaping the outcomes of connections is of great significance to the students. Students receiving education at every level in local contexts lacking international and global dimensions cannot be expected to understand this framework properly. And nation states cannot, without including international dimension in their education, be expected to train their students as individuals who are supposed to have universal horizons in a system isolated from the rest of the world. An understanding of education with a glocal cultural dimension meeting the requirements of international standards can pave the way for this objective. Therefore, education in the glocal world must be organized

properly to enable individuals to gain a full grasp of this objective.

In recent decades, international university education has been preferred by a growing number of students seeking positions in a competitive global world. And in many countries campuses have become international spaces promoting an appreciation for international collaboration in every area of learning and such concepts as globalization, glocalization, cultural interaction and peace have gained international relevance and recognition. International education has also attained a magnitude and quality via the values it has added to the lives of individuals who are to shape the ways things are to operate in the future world. For these very reasons and owing to the fact that culture is among the issues within the ongoing globalizing processes throughout the world (Archer, 2013), the monumental experience enjoyed in higher education in the globe should possess glocal features revealing an all-embracing mentality to be acceptable for an international cultural interaction. Of course, there seems to be a long path to cover for the creation of an ideal atmosphere on glocal campuses but what has been achieved so far in the international arena seems promising enough for ensuring success on-campus cultural glocalization.

Brooks and Normore (2010) define nine literacies, almost all of which are to take part in glocal education system so as to make learners gain multiple perspectives: “(a) political literacy, (b) economic literacy, (c) cultural literacy, (d) moral literacy, (e) pedagogical literacy, (f) information literacy, (g) organizational literacy, (h) spiritual and religious literacy, and (i) temporal literacy” (p. 53-54). These literacies, required for a glocal cultural interaction among the peoples of the world, should not be neglected by authorities who are to establish a glocal understanding in higher education to increase international connection the world over. In this cultural glocalization reality, higher education can take its unique place as a facilitator of international relations and glocal campuses may shoulder a heavy load in training individuals with a cultural consciousness of global interconnectedness and interdependence. The only prerequisite for this is the determination to create glocal, international and cross-cultural spaces for higher education. Each experience in the glocal cultural interaction is expected to exert its idiosyncratic influence on the way peoples of the world look at each other because, as Hermoni and Lebel (2013) put it, “glocalization discourse is a conception indicating that interaction between the ‘global’ and the ‘local’ is not a zero-sum game, but rather, a mediating and cooperative model” (p. 129).

Glocal campus life, with its unique and matchless characteristics,

may be a world of its own in worldwide higher education at present. Housing students coming from different cities of the host country and from many other countries, modern international campuses can offer unprecedented opportunities for cultural interaction. The overall connection among students of different cultures on such campuses may constitute a chance for the generations of students majoring in all branches of learning to know about how individuals behave in the larger context.

Student life on glocal campuses naturally allows the establishment of individual ties that go on till the end of the education term for some and that last for long periods after graduation for others. In either case those ties and connections commence with the start of campus life. The global practice in student life on glocal campuses exhibits glocal features through the local cultural idiosyncrasy offering opportunities for connections between the young (Russo & Sans, 2009, p. 165). At first sight the host country or the local space where blending, mixing and adopting two or more processes involved by glocalization take place (Roudometof, 2015) may be assumed as the determiner of the dominant campus culture; yet, when the experience is viewed in detail, the whole group will be seen to be composed of individual participants forming a glocal whole. This is obviously the re-pronouncement of a cultural understanding supposed to be in effect in the modern world helped by the contribution of glocal campuses.

Glocal campuses should be approached critically as a cosmopolitan world where a global cultural interaction can be realized in glocal spaces. Such campuses must be like big bowls in which every single individual leads a life as he is and with his interactions with those around. These campuses are local sites where sometimes the global becomes influential and from time to time the local is influential on the global (Tolzmann, 2014). They are environments where the “global and local integration patterns and visibility analysis of selected open spaces show the potential areas for production of collective life” (Yaylali-Yildiz, Czerkauer-Yamu & Çil, 2014, p. 141). In such international sites the understanding to share glocal cultural elements may flourish with an undiminished vigor through the contribution of individuals bringing pieces of local cultures from different regions of the world. Viewed from this perspective, glocal campuses, in a sense, may resemble cities as specific places of inhabitation with unique, internal dynamics and social structure (Sasen, 2001).

Social spaces in a higher education academic environment should definitely be expected to exert important opportunities for an interactive social life. Allowing students to feel themselves as individuals belonging to

a larger world, glocal campuses may contribute to the development of a global understanding via a glocal experience through which students can re-root themselves into who they are in a universal context. They can support students who can perpetuate their cultures, customs and traditions in these spaces participating into out-of-class activities that are in the service of students for not only cultural interaction but also relief from the school stresses.

Culture being an indispensable aspect of human life also during the education period, glocal campuses are to be paid proper attention in order to provide a suitable environment for students to keep on their lives and studies in an environment in which they can also preserve and promote their local culture. Those in charge of universities are to understand that people in a glocalised world also bring their own cultures to campuses (Spring, 2008) and must keep in their minds that “glocalization happens not out there, but in here” (Beck 2002, 23). When these notions are given prominence and interpreted as required, glocal campuses may be of a nature denoting that youth culture diffuses in a particular space for social mixture (Kjeldgaard & Askegaard, 2006, p. 234).

In order to create ideal spaces for glocalization, campus authorities should also take into consideration student demands to improve opportunities not only for cultural glocalization but also for international understanding and global peace. They should encourage students to carry out joint activities to express themselves, their local cultures and traditions in a glocal atmosphere. This will provide a vivid and stimulating glocal life on the glocal campus, will contribute to the production of an international public realm and as a result, the pendulum will swing from the particular to the universal.

When this is realized, glocal campuses can be ideal first examples of a collective life comprising of differences and establishing new, healthy and sustainable global/local unities the world over. It may be observed on such a glocal campus that local and international students experience not a culture of war but a culture of peace.

With the present level of international social connections and technological development, glocal campus designers have an unprecedented opportunity to create an environment for learners coming from a variety of cultural backgrounds to interact with each other in a glocal space. The basic principle in creating a glocal community in this way will also help eliminate discrimination among peoples of the world because an improved on-campus

communication, friendship, understanding and international connection will add to international peace as well as improving the social quality of the lives of students on glocal campuses.

If glocalization is composed of two terms, global and localization, then a global outlook reflecting local conditions (Mok & Lee, 2003) must be created in international higher education. There must be a universal belief that the world is a global whole including local differences without which that global whole could not come into being. On glocal campuses, local cultural differences should be accepted as cultural richness and should receive the respect they deserve. In this way, individuals may realize that what is called *global culture* is in fact composed of local cultures which are similar to one another in many ways (Tartaglia & Rossi, 2015, p. 106).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

It is a fact that the world has, almost never, experienced a period without problems within the known history among nations that are parts and parcels of the world. This being the case, the history of the world has also been a history of ‘now war, then peace’ and ‘now enmity, then friendship’, and ‘now destruction, then reconstruction’. In this *vicious* circle, the effort to establish peace and ‘peace culture’ has always kept its prominence in the minds of people suffering from the evil caused by mankind. Emerging as an integral part of internationalization of higher education almost in the global scale, glocal campuses, as miniature world societies, can draw a picture of *shared life*, cultural interaction and peace culture in the minds of local and international students with the social spaces they possess for interaction.

Halsband (2005) notes, students who gather on glocal campuses with a sense of common aspiration and shared interests interact more in commonly shared glocal spaces of studying and living. In these spaces, receiving education can go hand in hand with a campus life composed of a variety of races, cultures, religions and folklores.

Brustein (2007) calls attention for a university education to equip students with the capability to gain “the ability to know, comprehend, analyze, and evaluate information in the context of an increasingly globalized world” (p. 390). With the realization of a cultural interaction, glocal campuses, many examples of which exist in the industrially developed countries of the world like the USA and the UK, may provide model environments for these purposes. Turkey is on the way to become one of the countries in which increasing number of international students prefer to study. Higher education settings where international students receive quality

education also provide students with a unique chance to be familiar with such pivotal issues as internationalization, cosmopolitanism and globalization with a focus on friendship, understanding and peace between individuals, which is an indispensable feature of higher education in glocal campuses.

Glocal campuses may reflect the notion that “the uniqueness of individuals lies in their blend of multiple social and personal identities” (Meyerhoff, 1996, p. 215). Bringing together individuals who look at the nature of things from different angles, glocal campuses may offer individual students chances for a cultural exchange and a new understanding of mutual relations in a larger context. In these cosmopolitan environments, students may reshape their national identities in accordance with the experience they get in the glocal environment and may have a new and different view of their nation (Kaufmann, 2017), other nations, races and cultures.

It is true that all purposes intended for improvement in the lives of peoples of the world cost an amount of effort and expenditure and that “economic power is being transferred upward, downward and outward from nation states” (Courchene, 1995, p. 3). It may also be true that, if invested properly in the field of higher education through the establishment of glocal campuses, the process will yield positive results transferred inward for every nation state in our globe. The investment in this area may, in fact, be the investment in the future of the whole world as a glocal unit.

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