CURRICULUM INNOVATION FOR INTERCULTURAL CROSS-BORDER LEARNING: THE DOUBLE DEGREE EXPERIENCE BETWEEN UDS GHANA AND HSD GERMANY

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Prof. A. Atia Apusigah
OUTLINE

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INTRODUCTION

- The need to enrich higher education experiences propel curriculum innovations
- North-South collaborations have become important for fostering joint cross-cultural learning beyond the usual extractionism
- Cross-cultural platforms have emerged as means of leveraging resources and optimizing learning
- Various collaborative models including double degree programmes have been used
CROSS-BORDER LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- **Historical:**
  - Traditional model: Extractive and voyeuristic
  - Mitigating model: Reversal and compensatory
  - Decolonizing Model: Joint programme and leverages

- **Context:** North-South, South-South

- **Forms/nature:** Student/Faculty Exchanges, International Research Collaboration, Joint Programming
Development & Empowerment

A Double Degree Initiative
COLLABORATIVE EXPERIENCE (1)

- **Institutions:**
  - University for Development Studies (UDS), Ghana and Hochschule Dusseldorf (HSD)
  - Background analysis and profiling of institutions for synergies

- **Goal/Objectives:**
  - To foster inter-University partnership for institutional strengthening and the promotion of innovative teaching and learning in the field of development studies.
    - Strengthening of curriculum development and institutionalisation of joint curricula activities at MA-level
    - Strengthening Teaching/Learning Activities: Qualify Ghanaian and German master’s students in the field of development studies
THE COLLABORATIVE EXPERIENCE (2)

- **Planning and Design:** Over a year, consultations, programmes reviews, management buy-in, signing of MOU, funding proposal development, setting project management protocols

- **Nature: Double Degree Programme**
  - 4-year initiative (2013 – 2016)
  - MA (Dev. ED. & Empowerment Studies)
  - 80 enrolled students in two institutions
  - Nationally accredited programmes
  - Complete local institutional requirements in course work, research, practicals
  - Award of co-joined certificates by two institutions
CURRICULUM INNOVATION (1)

- Review and sync programme curricula of two institutions
- Determine relativities for a joint curriculum within existing framework
- Review and agree on time table for joint courses
- Use onsite and offsite tools for delivery of joint courses
- Draw of experiences of academics and practitioners
- Development and use of information bank
CURRICULUM INNOVATION (2)

- Virtual learning interface
  - Tools: Moodle, skype, email, WhatsApp
  - Use: Project management, participant/facilitator trainings, course materials share, presentations, student projects, project reviews
  - Flexible scheduling for individual and group work
  - Training of students and faculty
  - Technical support
BENEFITS/EFFECTS (1)

- Enriched curricula activities through course scope, shared materials, methodologies
- Issuing of co-joined certificates
- Sustained interaction by combining virtual and actual technologies
- Exposure to multiple learning environments in Ghana and Germany
- Cross-fertilization and fusion of ideas
BENEFITS/EFFECTS (2)

- Expansion of time on task for increased sharing and learning
- Virtual interfaces reduced cost, built skills and broaden learning spaces
- Enabled multicultural learning cohorts over the project period
CHALLENGES

▪ Demanded committed investments by students and faculty
▪ Required stable and accessible platform and technical backstopping which HSD covered
▪ Constant kneading of differences through dialogue and mediation
CONCLUSION

- Collaboration in higher education delivers tremendous benefits to part institutions
- It success depend largely to effective planning and management
- Virtual tools and platforms help ease the burdens while increase learning
THANK YOU!!