Spoken Paper

Boundary crossing in an intercultural learning environment - Dialogical reflections between Nepali and Finnish music teacher-researchers

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Through a research project “Global visions through mobilizing networks: Co-developing intercultural music teacher education in Finland, Israel, and Nepal”, the presenters of this paper started to collaborate in both, artistic and educational fields. We will present a case where us, two Finnish and a Nepali musician-teachers working in higher music education, have started to inquiry and work together and through that, established a what we identify as a professional partnership. In this presentation we will discuss how this international and intercultural partnership has supported the expansion of professional capacity, ability to aspire, vision and through that, has supported the emergence of hybrid ideas and practices in educational and artistic settings for both of us.

In Nepal, music is only now entering formal educational settings. New arising educational field in music calls for developing new pedagogical and artistic approaches. New tools are needed in order to guide music students ability to envision and act beyond what is now -building the capacity to expand their horizons of the possibilities of music and music education inside and across national borders. This requires skilled and networked teacher-researchers. Educators, who are aware of the global possibilities by participating in an international discussion on music education research, develop artistic
innovations across and inside national borders and take lead in educational development. Equally, in Finland, an ever-diversifying population calls for revisiting the existing educational surroundings, contents, and practices, thus, looking ‘beyond what is now’. Through a critical reflexive approach, we examine, how international partnerships may host a potential of acting as spaces where new innovations, knowledge building can take place and begin to flourish. Working through a collaborative learning approach, as we have experienced, might enable the emergence of hybrid concepts, that are inspired by global phenomena but stem from the potentials as well as complexities in local surroundings.

Thus, through reflexive dialogical discussions, we will illustrate, how interaction in the boundaries of two culturally different contexts has carried a great potential for us to learn. We will identify learning in categories such as identity development, change of practices, as well as institutional level development. Through our experiences, we suggest that the global community of musician-teachers and researchers need to commit to knowledge building through equal partnerships beyond geographical and cultural boundaries, as they carry a potential of opening new visions and fresh approaches to development, including sustainability and expanding of creative opportunities globally.