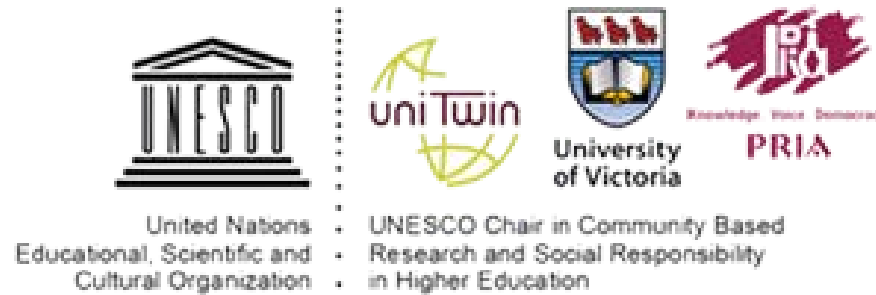


Gauging the Impact of Community University Engagement (CUE) Initiatives in India

Thinking Thursdays: IIHED Research Seminar Series

Aug 31, 2017

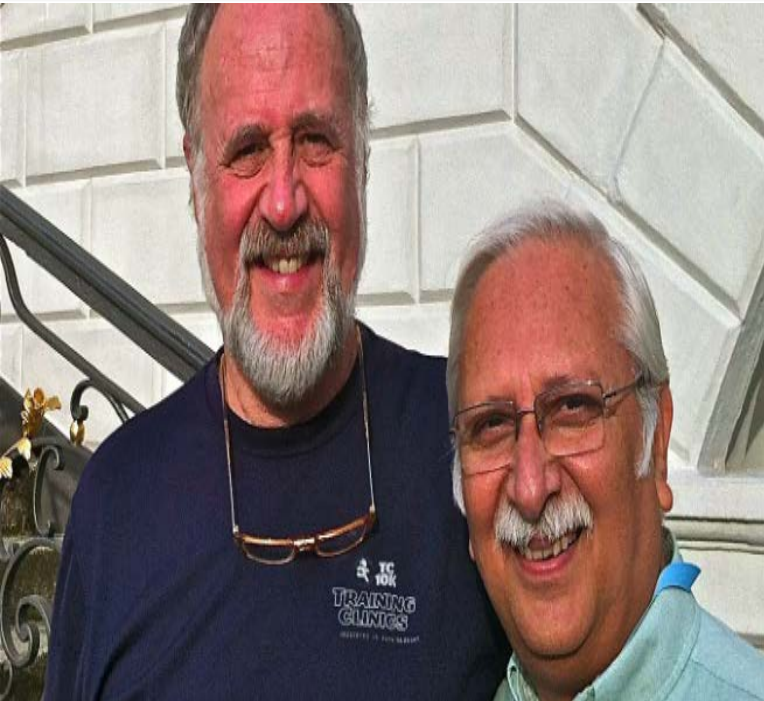
O P Jindal Global University, Sonapat, Haryana



Wafa Singh

*India Research Coordinator; UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research & Social
Responsibility in Higher Education*

About UNESCO Chair



UNESCO Co-Chairs
Prof Budd Hall and
Dr Rajesh Tandon

- Unique Chair based in a Northern University and Southern Civil Society Organization
- Supports North-South-South and South-South partnerships, enhancing 'knowledge democracy'
- Strengthens engagement between communities, civil society & academia
- Promotes discourse on Social Responsibility in Higher Education
- Renewed for second term till 2020



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Context

- Challenges of contemporary times
- Co-existence of plenty & poverty; democracy & exclusion; industrial development & degradation of natural resources
- Increased focus on institutions & processes that help address such challenges
- Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) emerge as crucial actors
- Debates on Social Responsibility further challenges HEIs to innovate & act for public good



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Community University Engagement (CUE)

- Multifaceted term; applicable to a range of activities
- Implies mutually beneficial relationships between universities & communities
- Participative; committed to creation & sharing of new knowledge
- Entails recognition of theoretical & popular knowledge
- Thrust is on mutual empowerment; developing a sense of active citizenship



Source: National League of Cities (NLC); Sustainable Cities Institute SM (2013)



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Community University Engagement (CUE)

Principles	Forms
Mutually agreed interests to be respected & articulated	Linking learning with community service
CUE to encompass all three core missions of Higher Education	Linking research with community knowledge
Should cut across disciplines & faculties	Knowledge sharing with the community
Should be assigned credits	Devising new curriculum & courses
To be feed into performance assessment of faculty/administrators	Inviting practitioners as teachers
	Social innovation by students



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Impacts of CUE: Why is it important?

- Provides evidence & justification for pursuing the process; yardstick to determine the relevance of CUE
- Contributes towards strategizing ways-forward & scale-up plans
- Helps design a framework for improved implementation
- Positive re-inforcements for institutional efforts
- Indicates the promise that CUE holds, its significance & potential in future



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What the academic literature says?

- Limited literature on documentation & illustration of CUE impacts
- Available ones point towards problems in measuring CUE impacts: lack of focus on outcomes/ standardized tools/ variety of approaches used
- Benchmarks for capturing socio-economic contribution present; but absent for measuring CUE impacts
- Tremblay, 2017 argues: ‘There is no one-to-one relationship; impacts reflected on a variety of connections, contributions & benefits



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India study

- Carried out in association with British Council, India
- Broad objectives: Mapping of CUE practices in India & their impact assessment
- Universities covered: University of Punjab, BPSMV, North Bengal University, IIT-G, North Eastern Hill University & Gauhati University
- Qualitative assessment (surveys, interviews, dialogues) used for documentation
- Data triangulated through different modes of enquiry



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Study results

- CUE is more than a process involving only binary stakeholders
- Includes sub-processes involving secondary stakeholders (CSOs, government)
- Impacts all stakeholders differently
- Emerging impacts rally around economic benefits, enhanced learning outcomes, improved quality of life, professional development, etc
- Results outline the importance of use of simple qualitative tools for impact measurement exercise



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Study results: Impacts on stakeholders

Students
(IIT-G)

Researchers
(NEHU)

Teachers
(Gauhati
University)

Communities
(NBU)

Universities
(BPSMV)

CSOs
(PRIA)

Government
(GoI)



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Closing reflections

- Current societal challenges have necessitated re-emphasis on CUE
- Impact assessment exercise an opportunity to gauge benefit/relevance
- As a monitoring mechanism; helps to review and reframe the process
- Provides clear differentiation between CUE & plain outreach
- Helps us appreciate the multitude of connections with respect to knowledge, awareness, skills, economic empowerment, quality of life etc.



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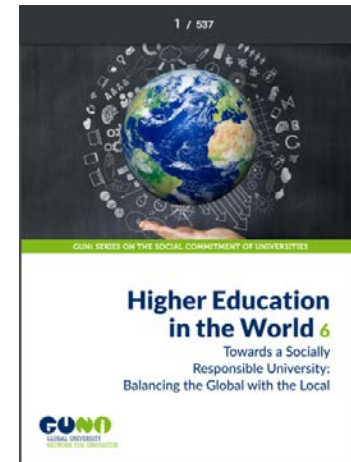
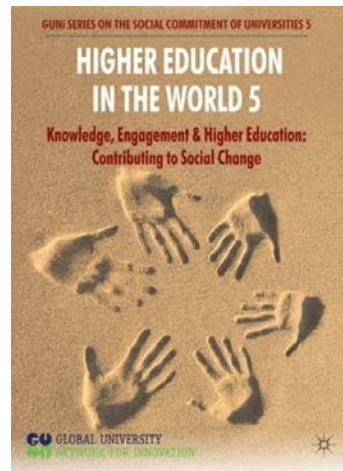
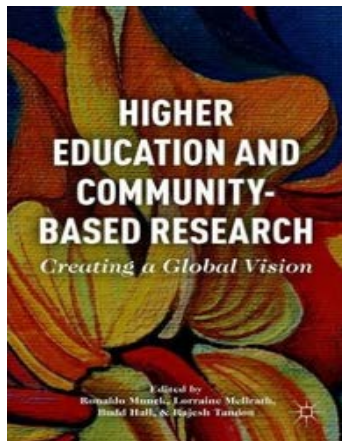
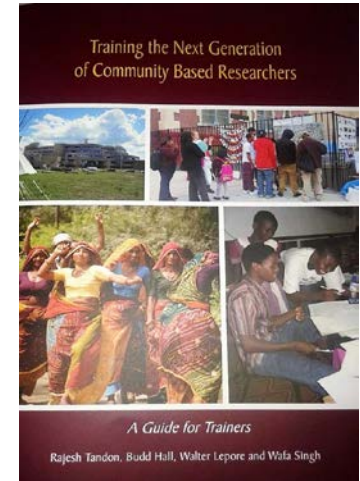
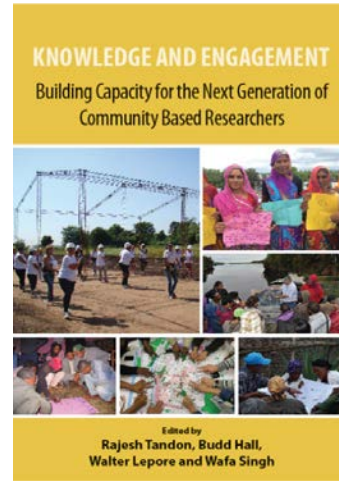
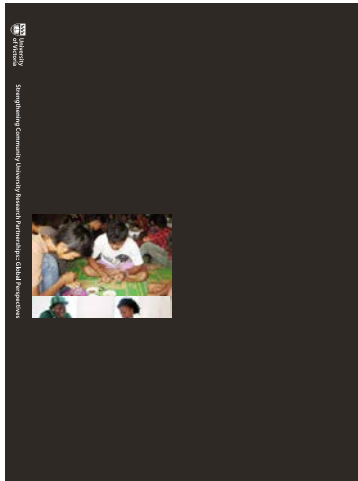
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