

## Scholarly Practice in Internationalisation of the Curriculum in Slovenia: A snapshot

### Introduction

In Slovenia, as well as in other Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries the emphasis of internationalisation has traditionally been on mobility, while only a minority of students and staff are mobile and only a limited number of international staff is employed at our institutions. Purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within the domestic learning environments has not been a priority in the past.

In the context of Slovenian Higher education the conference Slovene Conference on Internationalisation Enhancing Quality, addressed to various concepts of internationalisation at home and internationalisation of the curriculum. The event is an important scholar-practitioner event for the sharing of research on teaching and learning. There are no formal support networks within Slovenia focused on the scholarship of teaching and learning. As one of the only conference of its kind in Slovenia, it is an important indicator of scholarly practice in teaching and learning in higher education. In 2016 a total of 34 papers were submitted for consideration by the conference committee. In this paper, I will analyse the papers to identify the themes and issues that are being discussed. To look at disciplinary understanding and approach to the discourse of internationalisation of curriculum, I will also consider the roles and positions of the authors. This will give an indication of the themes and issues of concern of scholarly practice in teaching and learning Slovenia and indicate how the scholarship of teaching and learning could be further supported.

Papers presented included topics such as: internationalisation policies and strategies at national and institutional level, impact of student and staff mobility on the quality of learning and teaching, professional staff development related to the latter, as well as the contribution of internationalisation in primary and secondary education to the quality of learning and teaching in higher education. I will in my paper look at the 34 papers selected after the review procedure.

I will situate my discussion within the context of the literature on the scholar-practitioner in international higher education and literature on how the academic disciplines affect internationalization and teaching cultures, to inform my discussion of the results. I will discuss how the results might be used to support scholarly practitioners in their capacity building and collaborative process. Based on the findings I will also suggest what might be the support needed and options provided to develop the support system for advancement of internationalisation of curriculum in Slovenia in the Slovene situation.

### Theoretical background

This paper is based on two concepts, relevant for the studied discourse: internationalisation of curriculum (IoC) and the scholar-practitioner (S-P). theoretical backgrounds of these two concepts are presented in this section.

#### *The scholar-practitioner model*

The scholar-practitioner model is an advanced educational and operational model that is focused on practical application of scholarly knowledge. A number of scholars write about scholar-practitioners, including their role, general competencies, and the work processes they undertake. Scholar-practitioners work in their specific domains as well as the scholar-practitioner space to improve their own and others' work. The goal for

these scholar-practitioners is to sustain, enhance, and produce new knowledge relevant to the transfer between and integration among research, practice, and education. It has been asserted that individuals who are scholar-practitioners are simply more effective than their non-scholarly peers (Holton, 2004; Short & Shindell, 2009).

McClintock (2003) includes three key points in his definition of this ideal. Scholarly practice is grounded in theory and research, also includes experimental knowledge, and is driven by personal values, commitment, and ethical conduct. Scholar practitioners reflect on and assess the impact of their work. Benham (1996) adds a problem-solving approach to scholarly practice. He sees the work of a scholar practitioner as learning about or recognizing problems, examining them closely, and searching for productive solutions.

Although practitioners may want to engage with research, they often face barriers around time, access, and the perceived value of such activities in the field or individual work environments. Scholarship and experiences are combined in different ways and amounts that lead to different profiles and models of professionals that go beyond traditional scholars and administrators. They work in their specific domains as well as the Scholar-Practitioner space to improve their own and others' work, with the goal to sustain, enhance, and produce new knowledge relevant to the transfer between and integration among research, practice, and education.

### *Internationalisation of the curriculum*

Internationalization of the curriculum is a critical component of any university's internationalization strategy and most of the institutions express their ambitions about the skills, knowledge, and attitudes their graduates will bring to the globalised, interconnected world through internationalization of the curriculum. In the paper I will use internationalization of the curriculum as defined by Leask (2009, p.209):

“... the incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the content of the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning arrangements and support services of a program of study. (Leask, 2009, p. 209)”

Leask and Bridge's (2013) framework for IoC review differing perspectives on academics' engagement with IoC. Leask (2008, p.13) argues 'decisions about curriculum innovation for internationalisation are not neutral'. They are ideological in nature, shaped by beliefs about internationalisation/globalisation and about the curriculum itself. Teaching in universities is complex, and highly context-dependent work and the curriculum and academics in the disciplines are at the heart of a university's internationalisation processes (Green and Whitsed, 2015, Leask and Bridge, 2013). In spite of the wide use of this term internationalization of the curriculum in the disciplines is poorly understood. Many academic staff are either uncertain what internationalization of the curriculum means within their disciplinary and institutional contexts and/or do not think it has anything to do with them (Knight, 2006; Stohl, 2007).

Clifford (2009) carried out a survey to explore disciplinary understandings of the concept of internationalisation of the curriculum (IoC) and ways academics might be encouraged to engage with the discourse among staff at an Australian university, including its international campuses. She based her analysis on the Becher's (1994) classification of the disciplines: hard pure (natural science and maths), hard applied (science-based professions, e.g. engineering), soft pure (humanities and social sciences) and soft applied (social professions, e.g. education, social work and law). Becher and Trowler (2001) draw on the works of others to show that the differences in the disciplines 'go to the heart of teaching, research and student-faculty relationships' (p. 194), since academics are wedded to their disciplines in which they have invested many years in developing knowledge and skills and with which they strongly identify.

Clifford's (2009) study showed that staff in the hard disciplines shared a belief that their discipline is already international, that the theories, principles and concepts of their disciplines are the same all over the world and saw their work as 'culturally neutral'. In the hard applied subjects, staff believed in 'international science', however also they recognise that science can be practices within different regulations, health systems and

ethical standards, and that this also affect the outcome. They showed a high level of awareness of cultural difference of professional practice and student body, as well as of the needs for graduates to develop cultural awareness and sensitivity to be able to solve problems in different environments. They found important the background of the students, the context in which the curriculum is delivered and the possible context of students' future lives. Both soft disciplines (hard and applied) saw education as 'about opening up people's ideas and different ways of looking at things, a different way of thinking, of talking about things' (Clifford 2009, p. 137). They saw the importance of the students' past and future lives in the construction of the current educational experience of the students.

In discussing the findings, I will reflect on these concepts, in order to better understand the Slovene situation of scholar-practitioners in internationalisation and its influence of the disciplinary background.

## Methodology

The data for this analysis come from the articles submitted to the 2016 Slovene Conference on Internationalisation Enhancing Quality of Learning and Teaching.

The purpose of the study is to improve support available to Slovenian academics seeking to enhance their skills in the quality of teaching and learning and the internationalisation of the curriculum. Being an engineer and a political scientist I am aware, how the development and growth of the field was contextually influenced in the political sciences and much less in engineering. The scholarly emphasis of my own training helped me to see the importance of the integration of scholarship into practices in disciplines. Therefore I will look on how the emphasis among the participants of the conference for scholarly inquiry and debate on quality of teaching and learning and IoC drives their work within their disciplines and discuss on how this can be further encouraged and supported to learn and share their learning through publications and conference presentations.

The purpose will be achieved using the following methodology. The titles, abstracts and keywords of the submitted articles will be analysed to identify the themes and issues that are being discussed. The analysis will involve implication of two theoretical approaches: one based on scholar-practitioner theory and second on discipline specific theories. As part of the analysis the roles and positions of the authors will be considered, to analyse the potential disciplinary understandings of the concept of IoC and ways academics engage with the discourse.

Based on the scholar-practitioner literature I will consider academic staff from teaching disciplines as scholars and staff from other disciplines as scholar-practitioner, since they were doing research in disciplines where they are not basically engaged. As practitioners, they should be familiar with the existing literature from the field of internationalisation of education and training and implement its findings to enhance their work. In turn, practitioners should engage scholars in the area of teaching where the research is needed, and help them with the necessary enquiry and understanding. This will give an indication of the themes and issues of concern of scholarly practice in teaching and learning Slovenia.

In regards to the disciplines, I will base the analysis on the work of Clifford (2009), to explore disciplinary understandings of the concept of internationalisation (especially internationalisation of the curriculum (IoC) and ways academics engage with this discourse.

The analysis is based on three elements of the articles submitted to the conference: i) Title; ii) Abstracts iii) Keywords. Titles and Abstracts were analysed on the main elements linked to internationalisation, teaching and learning. Keywords were before analysis grouped in three groups: international, teaching and discipline specific.

## Results

In total, 34 papers were presented at the Conference on Internationalisation Enhancing Quality of Learning and Teaching in 2016. At the submission phase, authors were asked to indicate one of the five most relevant topic area for their proposal. The topics were

- i) the development of higher education teachers' competences by incorporating the international and intercultural dimension in higher education;
- ii) impact of internationalisation at home and internationalisation of the curriculum on the quality of learning and teaching;
- iii) internationalisation policies and strategies at national and institutional level to foster development of quality of learning and teaching;
- iv) the contribution of internationalisation in primary and secondary education to the quality of learning and teaching in universities and
- v) the impact of student and staff mobility in EU and other programmes on the quality of learning and teaching.

The share of articles submitted under each of the topics was rather equal (Table 1). As evident in Table 1 the majority of papers (29) were submitted by practitioners (non-teaching staff) and only five by staff from teaching disciplines (within either Faculties of Education or Faculties of Arts). This shows a great interest and need of scholar practitioners in the field of internationalisation and teaching and learning for the space and opportunities to develop and share their knowledge. Also evident from Table 1 is, that Scholars submitted articles within the topics related to the development of higher education teachers' competences and Impact of internationalisation at home and internationalisation of the curriculum on the quality of learning and teaching, whereas the articles of scholar-practitioners address all topics of the conferences.

Table 1: Distribution of articles across themes

	Number of papers	Number of papers	Number of papers
Topic of the proposals:	Presented by PRACTITIONER (non-pedagogical staff)	Presented by SCHOLAR (pedagogical staff)	Total
Development of higher education teachers' competences by incorporating the international and intercultural dimension in higher education	5	3	8
Impact of internationalisation at home and internationalisation of the curriculum on the quality of learning and teaching	6	2	8
Internationalisation policies and strategies at national and institutional level to foster development of quality of learning and teaching	6		6
The contribution of internationalisation in primary and secondary education to the quality of learning and teaching in universities	6		6
The impact of student and staff mobility in EU and other programmes (eg. CEEPUS, bilateral agreements, etc.) on the quality of learning and teaching	6		6
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>34</b>

The analysis of submitted papers taking into consideration Becher's distribution of disciplines (Becher 1989) shows the same pattern as identified by Clifford (2009). The majority of papers (76.4 %) were submitted by applied disciplines (hard and soft), and only 1 by scholar-practitioners from hard pure discipline (mathematics), however also the article was prepared by international officer of the Faculty for Mathematics (Table 2).

Table 2: Distribution of articles according to Becher's classification of the disciplines

Disciplines by Becher	PRACTITIONER	SCHOLAR	Total
Hard pure	1		1
hard applied	12		12
soft applied	11	3	14
soft pure	5	2	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>34</b>

Table 3: Distribution of articles according to Becher's classification of the disciplines and across themes

academic field (by Becher)	Hard pure	hard applied	soft applied	soft pure	Total
1) development of higher education teachers' competences by incorporating the international and intercultural dimension in higher education	0	2	4	2	8
2) impact of internationalisation at home and internationalisation of the curriculum on the quality of learning and teaching	1	3	3	1	8
3) internationalisation policies and strategies at national and institutional level to foster development of quality of learning and teaching			4	2	6
4) the contribution of internationalisation in primary and secondary education to the quality of learning and teaching in universities		3	2	1	6
5) the impact of student and staff mobility in EU and other programmes (eg. CEEPUS, bilateral agreements, etc) on the quality of learning and teaching	0	4	1	1	6
Total	1	12	14	7	34

### Hard applied disciplines

As identified by Clifford (2009), staff in the hard applied disciplines showed a high level of awareness of cultural difference among students and of cultural difference in professional practice, about the needs of graduates to be able to problem solve, and who were culturally sensitivity and flexible.

Table 4: Articles from hard applied disciplines across topics and Bacher's discipline groups

Most relevant topic area of the proposal	Paper title
Development of higher education teachers' competences by incorporating the international and intercultural dimension in higher education	Challenges of teaching industrial automation
	Evaluation of the impact of internationalisation in teaching and learning of interactive media design
Impact of internationalisation at home and internationalisation of the curriculum on the quality of learning and teaching	Facilitation of „internationalization@home“ trough benchmarking - University of Sarajevo and University of Padeborn benchmarking recommendations
	Innovative Learning Methods in Educating Spatial Planners
	International joint field course as an quality improvement in curriculum in cartography
The contribution of internationalisation in primary and secondary education to the quality of learning and teaching in universities	Challenges of higher education in the field of fluid power technology
	High-level International and Intercultural Learning Robotics in Mechatronics Education
	The Importance of Systems Science in Secondary Education for more Efficient Higher Education
The impact of student and staff mobility in EU and other programmes (eg. CEEPUS, bilateral agreements, etc) on the quality of learning and teaching	Comparative study: Student Mobility Impact on Students' Achievements and Outlooks
	Experiencing the PhD Studies of New Media Design at Finland's Aalto University
	Importance of international cooperation on the development of wood product design education
	International mobility – opportunity for collaborative research and student centred project-oriented learning and training

Articles within this group of disciplines address elements on how the internationalisation can be implemented and provision made to evaluate their impact, professional development for teaching staff to in teaching and assessing intercultural skills, assist intercultural skills development in students or including cultural foundations of knowledge in the discipline. The titles reflect the focus on the practical use, implementation and good practices of internationalisation and intercultural dimension in the disciplines. However only few titles include words linked to internationalisation, curricula etc.

Further analysis of the content of the articles showed that even though the titles do not reflect strong contextual teaching and learning approaches, the activities itself were very well prepared and implemented to address the internationalisation of the curricula and at home. This shows that they are able to contextualise

the knowledge and the need to consider the future multi-cultural work environments of their students, but are not explicitly elaborating it.

*“We have discussed the possibilities of improving the teaching and learning processes by involving the international aspects in the field of planning and production of web and digital media. The research was performed at three levels. Teaching process by implementation and evaluation of different approaches of performing lectures, practical exercises and mentoring an individual and/or group project work; studying processes and learning by evaluation of the results of written or oral exams and final projects work and finally, analysis of the experiences and well-being of the Slovene and Erasmus+ students attending the classes. Results shows that effectiveness of teachers’ work is influenced by the international dimensions, besides, students evaluated that their skills and knowledge considerably improved after the courses.”*

Example from abstract in the hard applied discipline

Also analysis of keywords support the finding above, that scholar practitioners from hard applied disciplines, even though they believed in ‘international science’ (Clifford, 2009, p. 137), they also recognise that students also practise this science within different systems, with regulations, belief systems and ethical standards, and that this would affect the outcome. Within this group of articles the keywords show a balanced corpus of keywords between all three groups, showing that hard applied scholar practitioners are aware of potential cultural differences among students and of cultural difference in professional practice. They address the needs of graduates to be able to solve problems and who are also culturally sensitivity and flexible.

Table 5: Keywords of articles of hard applied disciplines

Disciplines by Becher	Key words
hard applied	<p>International: internationalization, communication, curriculum improvement international cooperation, international mobility, intercultural, student mobility,</p> <p>Teaching: field course, education quality, joint study, tailored training, teaching process, learning process, impact, achievements, competences</p> <p>Discipline specific: Cartography, furniture design, design workshop, interactive media design, robotics, mechatronics education, model, modelling, spatial planning development</p>

### Soft applied disciplines

In the articles from soft applied disciplines (Table 6), the titles already express much more elaborated elements of how internationalisation enhances quality of teaching and learning. Words like intercultural competences, internationalisation of curricula and internationalisation at home are present in most of the articles in this group of disciplines. Articles within soft applied disciplines, also partly focus on the applied use of internationalization of curricula in the disciplines, however also on the more conceptual approach on the interrelation of internationalization and quality of education and internationalization of the Higher education system. They include for example results and findings of the academic rationale for achieving international and global standards as a crucial benefit from higher education internationalisation process.

Table 6: Articles from soft applied disciplines across topics

Most relevant topic area of the proposal	Paper title
Development of higher education teachers’ competences by incorporating the international and intercultural dimension in higher education	Creativity as a tool for facing the challenges of education
	Intercultural dimension in teacher training - some examples from Bulgarian university practice
	The internationalisation of the curriculum: the case of the study program for Primary school teaching
	The Quality of Intercultural Competences in Higher Education
	Impact of internationalization on curriculum quality

Impact of internationalisation at home and internationalisation of the curriculum on the quality of learning and teaching	Internationalisation at Home: the Case of Non-Mobile Medical Students
	Understanding Erasmus Students' Motivation: What Directs Erasmus Students' Choice of Slovenia and Museum Education Course
Internationalisation policies and strategies at national and institutional level to foster development of quality of learning and teaching	Challenges to internationalisation through foreign students attraction faced by a large public university
	Changing Landscape of Internationalisation of European Higher Education
	Closing institutional internationalization gap at Slovenian universities
	Quality of university teaching and learning for investing in the European future we want
The contribution of internationalisation in primary and secondary education to the quality of learning and teaching in universities	Importance of Intercultural Competences of Primary School Teachers in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching
	Internationalisation of Curricula of Secondary Schools in Croatia - State and Perspectives
The impact of student and staff mobility in EU and other programmes (eg. CEEPUS, bilateral agreements, etc) on the quality of learning and teaching	How primary school pupils and teachers benefit from international cooperation

The articles themselves show a more comprehensive approach in bringing together internationalization and teaching and learning, that emerge from the soft applied disciplines having more focus on teaching as well as social and cultural dimensions in their disciplines.

*“The analyses of the internationalisation impact on the curricula and study programmes result in findings that refer to the academic rationale for achieving international and global standards as a crucial benefit from higher education internationalisation process.”*

*“Article presents the intercultural dimension in teacher training determined by the specifics of the multicultural school environment, legal regulations, institutional university policy and personal activity of individual teachers. It presents the integration of the intercultural dimension into disciplines.”*

Examples from abstract of the article in the hard applied discipline

Keywords of articles in the soft applied group of disciplines show a strong emphasis on internationalisation and much less emphasis on the disciplines themselves. Clifford (2009) argues that in soft applied disciplines lecturers saw the need for students to develop cultural awareness and sensitivity. Internationalisation is an element that can help students to understand their views in regards to their or other culture background, as well as the context (culture, understandings, conceptions) in which the curriculum is delivered.

Table 7: Keywords of articles of soft applied disciplines

Disciplines by Becher	Key words
soft applied	<p>International: international project, mixed international teams, intercultural dimension, internationalisation at home, mobility programmes, non -mobile students, intercultural competence, intercultural language learning, internationalisation of higher education, internationalisation at home, internationalisation of curricula, global, international students, foreign languages, staff mobility</p> <p>Teaching: creativity, teaching, ICT, motivation for learning, teacher training, quality of teaching and learning, telecollaboration, curriculum quality; national, institutional standards; individual endeavor</p> <p>Discipline specific: Lab Fab App recommendations, economy based on knowledge and innovation</p>

### Soft pure disciplines

In the group of soft pure disciplines, the focus of the articles is on teachers and quality of teaching and learning. Only two articles are addressing also the field of internationalization.

Table 8: Articles from soft pure disciplines across topics and Bacher's discipline groups

Most relevant topic area of the proposal	Paper title
Development of higher education teachers' competences by incorporating the international and intercultural dimension in higher education	Development of higher education teachers' competences
	Impact of social changes on teacher's role and responsibilities in the educational system
Impact of internationalisation at home and internationalisation of the curriculum on the quality of learning and teaching	Foreign Language Learning and Telecollaboration: a case study
Internationalisation policies and strategies at national and institutional level to foster development of quality of learning and teaching	Intercultural competence in the professional training and qualification of education specialists
	What is the Internationalisation All About? The Perspectives of the Teacher and the Students
The contribution of internationalisation in primary and secondary education to the quality of learning and teaching in universities	Comparative-situational models of learning in school education as a reflection on the quality of teaching at universities
The impact of student and staff mobility in EU and other programmes (eg. CEEPUS, bilateral agreements, etc) on the quality of learning and teaching	Student Centered Learning as prerequisite of high quality education

In the abstracts the international dimension was the strongest in articles linked to English (as a foreign language) teachers and students of geography. Geography was also in study by Clifford identified as discipline, that did not claim any privileged knowledge and all saw education as 'about opening up people's ideas and different ways of looking at things, a different way of thinking, of talking about things' (Clifford, 2009, p.137). Also language studies (and especially for translators and interpreters) are areas where knowing other cultures is an important asset.

*»Namely, the actions included the interactive cooperation of students who had the task to record videos in which they had to introduce themselves to the other group in Ireland/China/Montenegro as well as their university and faculty. It was up to them to present their own culture. The task had to be done in English, but the students were allowed to decide which elements of culture they found most relevant to present in such a multicultural telecollaborative project.*

*..... The results indicated that the whole concept of intercultural skills development requires more attention in language learning at all levels, as the students in Serbia are not really aware of the fact that these skills will be one of the basic skills they will need in their future careers as translators or EFL teachers."*

Example from abstract of the article in the soft pure discipline

Interesting both articles submitted by scholars from the field of teaching and learning (Faculty of Education) reflect no link to the internationalisation.

*Teachers usually identify themselves with the field they have studied. In their identity they are not completely aware that they train future teachers. Thus, there are resistance to 'pedagogization' of the profession, and therefore, they reject to ensure the proper number of ECTS to the pedagogical and psychological subjects in curriculum for preparing future teachers.*

Example from abstract of the article in the soft pure discipline (Faculty of Education)

One of the articles address the issue of intercultural competences. This is, however not linked to internationalisation, but to professionalization of the education specialists. Thir raise the question of the staff's own level of 'internationalisation' that reflect also in their ability to internationalise the curriculum.

*The current development of educational practice and policies imposes new requirements on education specialists, hence the need for better options for the improvement of their professional training and qualification. On the other hand, the multicultural context and the need to create a tolerant environment in education highlights the importance of developing education specialists' intercultural competence as a crucial professional prerequisite. Operationalising intercultural competence and an adequate approach analysis of the processes and stages of its complete development is an integrative part of the design of the educational environment.*

Example from abstract of the article in the soft pure discipline (Faculty of Education)

Keywords reflect findings, that articles submitted within the group of soft pure disciplines mainly emphasise the teaching components, the link to internationalisation terms is weak.

Table 9: Keywords of articles of soft pure disciplines

Disciplines by Becher	Key words
soft pure	International: international approach  Teaching: competences, project, training, academic personnel,  Discipline specific: /

## Recomendations

Results of the study show the need for support needed to further develop internationalisation of the curriculum and the quality of teaching and education in Slovenia. The IoC and S-P concepts are rather new to Slovene HE system. Since the results show significant impact of disciplines on the type and complexity of the engagement of academics to enhance the scholar-practitioners work on internationalisation and quality of teaching and learning, efforts should be made to provide scholar-practitioner across all disciplines an appropriate space and support to sustain, enhance, and produce new knowledge relevant to the transfer between and integration among research, practice, and education in IoC and quality of teaching and learning. Some consideration on the options on what could be done are presented below:

### 1) *Supportive infrastructure:*

Supportive infrastructure across disciplines should be provided to scholars by various means, such as:

- academic resources: such as textbooks and academic (journal) articles from the field of IoC;
- communities of practices with academics and non-academics: as an important sources of information, advices as well as access points for conducting research and
- social networking: sharing ideas with other academics in the social media platform, in professional learning communities, as well as sharing ideas via publications, to be recognized as scholarship, a scholar-practitioner's written work).

### 2) *Learning process and good practice body of knowledge:*

The teaching styles and approaches of scholar-practitioners should be influenced by the approaches on practically relevant knowledge on the field of IoC in different disciplines. Learning the academic writing style and main research methods that are especially relevant to teaching and learning praxis and knowledge creation, such as collaborative teaching and learning research should be available to scholars.

In addition formal professional or master programs could be offered in internationalisation by universities to aspiring scholar-practitioners and to advance in IoC (such as for example Master's in International Higher Education and Certificate in International Higher Education at Boston Colleague).

### 3) *Career and Professional identity,*

Career development plans and promotional criteria should include also elements addressing quality of teaching and learning and take into consideration the scholar-practitioner approaches. This should help to develop the scholar-practitioner in his/her professional career regardless their main disciplines. Beyond

scholarly practice, practitioners are urged by the scholarly community to be more evidence-based. This means they need to seek and produce more scientific evidence regarding the results of their practices in IoC and quality of teaching and learning, as well as to apply the most recent research results also from this fields, outside their main disciplines.

#### 4) *Personal characteristics and well being*

All the engaging efforts made on academic and non-academic endeavors are expected to lead to the experience of self-actualization by a scholar-practitioner. The role as a scholar-practitioner involves problem-solving and improving practice. Scholar practitioners are continually pushing forward, collaborating with others, exchange ideas within communities of practice and scholarship and teaching the field to others. Since the internationalisation has not its own home discipline where interested scholars could be primarily engaged, they have to pursue their scholarship primarily in their disciplines. This is a demanding task and therefore the engaging lifestyle of being a scholar-practitioner must maintain an appropriate work-life balance to be sustainable. This is however dependent on an individual abilities, values and beliefs.

## Conclusion and discussion

During the conference several papers with concrete practice were presented. They include implementation of international cooperation between different countries, evaluation of current work in international environment, as well as more strategic papers at national and institutional level within quality and international elements were presented, which means that in practice international and intercultural dimension are actively included into pedagogical work in its broadest sense of the word with the aim to improve its quality.

Results of the study support findings of Clifford (2009), that there are strong discipline footprints on the understandings of the concept of internationalisation of the curriculum (IoC) and ways academics might be encouraged to engage with the discourse. Academics in the hard applied disciplines show a high level of awareness of cultural difference among students and of cultural difference in professional practice, about the needs problem solving ability and culturally sensitivity. Their papers reflect the focus on the practical use, implementation and good practices of internationalisation and intercultural dimension in the disciplines and only few of the papers involve the terminology related to internationalisation & curricula. Papers presented by academics from soft applied disciplines express more elaborated elements and terminology on internationalisation and quality of teaching and learning. They focus on the applied use of internationalization of curricula in the disciplines, but also on the more conceptual approach on the interrelation of internationalization and quality of education and learning. In the group of soft pure disciplines, the focus of the articles mainly emphasise the teaching components, the link to internationalisation terms is weak. No paper was presented by academics from hard pure disciplines.

The conference, which papers were analysed in this paper present one of the first steps to establish the supportive infrastructure for Slovene scholar-practitioners on the field of internationalisation of curricula and quality of teaching and learning. It present a space where experiences, research results and ideas can be shared and discuss with other academics. It is the start of the development of the learning communities on the internationalisation of curricula. The discussion on the scholar-practitioner concept is not yet present in Slovene higher education, that is still in majority mono-disciplinary and where the performance evaluation system is highly quantitative for promotion purposes and international relevance, not excellence is required. Also the relevance of teaching quality in performance evaluation is marginal.

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