



***Marilyn Naidoo (ed.) 2021. Making Connections: Integrative Theological Education in Africa. [n.l.]: African Sun Media. ISBN: 9781991201461.***

Theological education has a remarkable impact on the Christian leadership, mission, and other ministries of the congregations. Therefore, it is of utmost significance to regularly review theological discourse, curriculum, pedagogy, and institutional systems (pp. 4, 35). The book mentioned above is one of the seminal works edited by Prof Marilyn Naidoo concerning the development of theological education in Africa. It explores how integration within African theological education is understood and can be implemented by applying appropriate theological, philosophical, and pedagogical tools (pp. 4, 6).

Integration is an education strategy that occurs at multiple levels and engages the faculty and the students by involving the body and mind, being and doing, intuitive thinking and linear thinking, academy and community, curricula, and extra-curricular (p. 5). It requires a variety of factors like leadership with integrity and a desire to engage in a new culture of learning. Its benefits for theological education in Africa are that it is student-centered, recognizes the identity and context of the students, builds the inner life of the students, and develops holistic students who are skilled and knowledgeable to engage their context (pp. 16–18; 165, 170)

The book chapters are written by theological educators who are religious practitioners and active and esteemed researchers from various African theological institutions. The authors used examples from their African theological institutions to demonstrate their views. The book has ten chapters divided into four parts. The book's first part consists of two chapters; one chapter discusses the conceptualization of the pedagogical model of integration and its appropriateness for the African context, including theological education realities that ignore curriculum development. The other chapter uses a case study of one African theological institution to

highlight the challenges that hinder the implementation and practice of integrative theological education.

The book's second part consists of three chapters that focus on contextually appropriate learning areas that can assist with relating the gospel to African culture, community, and personhood. In this second part of the book, one chapter proposes that African theological education must embrace an African approach like using mother tongue Biblical hermeneutics, vernacular scriptures, and African theology in integrated theological education. The other chapter suggests integrating public issues into theological curriculum and education, which requires skills such as a holistic embodiment of God, appreciation of people's struggles, exposure to an interdisciplinary approach, and systems of theological thinking. The last chapter in this second part of the book discusses indigenous knowledge as part of integrated formational learning in African theological education.

The book's third part also consists of three chapters that deal with the relational dynamics of learning that impact integration. The first chapter in this third part of the book suggests that theological education in Africa must inculcate ethical values in students and incorporate traditional values of the African community in its integrative theological education. The second chapter advocates for the inclusion of gender studies in theological education to help pastors deal with issues of gender like abuse of women and economic and social disadvantages experienced by women in Africa. The last chapter in this third part of the book focuses on integrating the extra-curricular activities, moral issues, and community service learning into teaching and learning within African theological education.

The fourth and the last part of the book consists of two chapters that focus on completed research in Africa that contributes to integrative teaching and learning. One chapter recommends the integrated reformational missional curriculum framework to be integrated into African theological education to enhance the spiritual maturity of students in the academy. The book's last chapter explores a deeper understanding of integrated learning by examining lived experiences of alumni from one of the African theological institutions, here used as a case study.

The contribution of this book to the development of theological education is unique and of enormous value, as it discusses various factors that can

enhance integrated theological education in Africa. Integrated theological education has the potential to address some of the challenges of African Christianity, like enhancing the development of the whole person and facilitating the spiritual formation and societal transformation through embracing of African approach. One acknowledges that all research has a limited scope; one would like to suggest that in future, the editor may add a chapter on the leadership role in integrated theological education. By leadership, one refers to lecturers and leadership of the theological institutions.

In conclusion, one recommends that the book mentioned above be used in local and global theological institutions and can be read by students, academics, and ordinary people for personal learning and to promote the *African approach in theological education*.

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