

# A Southern Charter for a Global Youth Studies

1. The aim of a Global Youth studies, while intentionally beginning from the vantage point of the South, is offered as a contribution *to improve the lives of young people everywhere* “so that the world becomes a more just and secure habitation for all” (Nyerere, 1990, p. 9).
2. However, since “people living in the South suffer from hunger, malnutrition, and preventable disease, and are illiterate or lack education and modern skills. ... the purpose of development is the promotion of the well-being of its people” (Nyerere, 1990, p. 23). A Global Youth Studies must aim to promote *the development and well-being of the South’s young people, who have been overlooked* and subsumed by a largely Northern Youth Studies.
3. Because the world is connected, Southern scholars cannot have as their ultimate aim a Southern Youth Studies but must participate in *formulating an egalitarian Global Youth Studies*. They must resist developing a ghetto of the aggrieved and instead choose to become equal contributors to a redefined humanity.
4. In order for such egalitarian participation to occur, academic associations and “*institutions in the South must be strengthened*” (Nyerere, 1990, p. 23 emphasis added) so that Southern scholars are able to contribute to practice-oriented scholarship that allows young people to “live in freedom and chart their own path to development in harmony with their culture and values” (Nyerere, 1990, p. 23).
5. To ensure these contributions, and to strengthen its scholarship, Southern scholars need to *know each other’s contexts*, the struggles of their young people, and begin to strategize amongst themselves to overcome these in solidarity and self-reliance, in order to offer the benefits of their insights to a global audience. To do so Global South Youth Studies’ scholars need to “organize itself effectively and to seek strength through wide-ranging joint undertakings of South-South co-operation which benefit from complementary resources and increase collective self-reliance” (Nyerere, 1990, p. 23). A Southern Youth Studies Association is therefore to be welcomed.
6. Southern scholars must be helped to *develop self-confidence* in order “to mobilise their contribution to the well-being and progress of [young people in] their societies” (Nyerere, 1990, p. 23).
7. Since “structural transformation implicit in development can materialize only if the efforts, ingenuity, and resources of the people of the South are fully mobilised” (Nyerere, 1990, p. 14), Southern scholars’ must collaborate, strategize and *organize for resources to be made available* to ensure time, space and a working environment conducive to theory building and offering deep reflective praxis. Examples of how this could be done include Southern-based Institutes for Advanced Youth Studies, Sabbatical Grants, and an intentional focus on theory-based journals.

8. Southern Youth Studies scholars “must enlarge their capacity to *benefit from advances in science and technology*” (Nyerere, 1990, p. 23, emphasis added). For Youth Scholars this must include better access to international literature, digital communication modalities, and analysis software, all of which depend on better, faster and more ubiquitous internet and data access.
9. For Southern youth studies, achieving *interdependence with Northern partners* is critical, both as a bulwark to domination but also as a supportive structure for establishing its voice and contribution. Global South Youth Studies’ scholars should use its unity and solidarity to restructure global relationships and foster interdependence.
10. Global South Youth Studies Scholars should therefore, after ensuring its own voice is strengthened, work with allies in the North who share this vision of ‘epistepaxis’ – an *aligning of theory, method, practice and justice* in Youth Studies. Key areas of discussion include what partnership, ethics and participation in youth research mean, when viewed from a Southern perspective.
11. Since it is the “South’s [young] people who suffer most from the poverty and failings of the South, as well as from the present world order with its maldistribution and misuse of the world's resources” the *responsibility to work for change lies firmly with the South*” (Nyerere, 1990, p. 24), and its Southern scholars.
12. To ensure that ideas are circulated and that insights have the chance of improving the lives of all young people (and thus improve the life opportunities of Southern youth exponentially), scholars from the South need to creatively, assertively and insistently offer perspectives and solutions, and embark on strategies to ensure its circulation. This includes *no longer being a reservoir for extracting data* about young people, but offering ‘beneficiated’ recommendations, i.e. theory-driven ideas for policy, practice and intervention.
13. Ultimately “the South seeks an undivided world in which there would be no ‘South’ and no ‘North’; in which there would not be one part developed, rich, and dominating, and the other underdeveloped, poor, and dominated” (Nyerere, 1990, p. 9). However, these undertakings and endeavors of Southern scholars should occur independently of the response from parts of the Global North. Those who do not want to work with Southern scholars must be free to pursue their own Northern Youth Studies, which should not be mis-labeled as ‘Youth Studies’.
14. “The task of producing knowledge from the South by the South entails speaking out and insisting on the space to produce knowledge; speaking back while remaining geographically, ethically, and theoretically grounded; speaking up and rooting research in emancipatory methodologies and ontologies; and never being spoken for” Breakey, Nyamnjoh & Swartz, 2021). This includes embarking on developmental review processes, rethinking ownership and monetization of research outcomes and outputs; and constantly evaluating partnerships to ensure they are egalitarian.