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Internationalization of Higher Education: A Stakeholder Approach

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ABSTRACT

Internationalization in higher education has been catching up as a trend receiving attention more recently than before. Academia, institutions, scholars, parents, host nations, and home countries all constitute a vicious circle of stakeholders who play a role in internationalization. Each of them has something to take and something to give, and all of them stand to benefit from it. Internationalization is achieved through various means. By opening up their border for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in higher education, countries navigate their opportunities to connect with foreign universities. However, this is limited by political decisions. Moreover, all of what constitutes a learning environment cannot be cloned and eventually miss out on the real experience that you get there. The alternative is to further the educational 'migration', cost and affordability notwithstanding. In both the former and the latter, the stakeholders are key instruments in the process. Therefore, any attempt to study internationalization should take into account a stakeholder perspective to examine the advantages and benefits which might accrue to them, more so the constraints and disadvantages. This would necessitate a systemic analysis of both types of supporting systems that favour internationalization. This paper aims to narrate a stakeholder perspective. An attempt is made to examine the key stakeholder issues and critical constituent elements that need to be addressed to facilitate internationalization. Internationalization as a global ranking parameter for educational institutions and its relation with gross enrolment ratio (GER) is also discussed.

Keywords: Internationalization, Stakeholder analysis, Global ranking, Gross Enrollment Ratio, Inbound and Outbound supportive system

1. INTRODUCTION:

Expanding educational opportunity coupled with the quest for quality and value, bringing internationalization in higher education to the fore. Various stakeholders emerge. Institutions as a stakeholder are characterised by faculty profile, infrastructure and facility, quality and standards, admission policies, ability to finance, tradition and popularity (de Wit, 2011). The state comes into the picture as a stakeholder exercising influence through rules and regulations such as visa and immigration, funds and foreign exchange norms. Students as stakeholders are marked by their interest and aptitude, ability to support on one's own. The expertise, research contribution and publication record marks the role of faculty as a stakeholder. Parents are stakeholders who invest concern and hope and to whom students look for encouragement and support. This apart, education as an instrument is decisively characterised by its quality and standards, innovation in pedagogy, ability to impart skills and transform the learners (Gatfield& Chen, 2006), Aithal

&Shubhrajyotsna, 2020). All these stakeholders are equally invincible instruments impacting internationalization. A stakeholder approach, therefore, becomes important in the study of internationalization (Altbach et al, 2009).

2. RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW:

To know the current status in the internationalization of higher education and related factors, an extensive literature review based on keywords using Google scholar was attempted. The relevant information published in scholarly papers with a focus on research and the references is listed in table 1.

Table 1: Relevant Published works in the area of Internationalization of Higher Education

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S. No.	Topic	Focus	Reference	
1	Changing debate on internationalisation of HE	Emergence of stakeholders	Teichler, (2004)	
2	Country differences in the internationalization of HE	State as a stakeholder	Nicolescuet al. (2009)	
3	Internationalization of HE: Findings from a world survey	The Global picture of Internationalization	Maringe (2010)	
4	Pedagogical dimension of internationalisation for 21st century	Role of the educational system	Wihlborg (2009)	
5	Graduate attributes and the internationalized curriculumbased better output	Learners and their perspectives	Jones & Killick (2013)	
6	Globalization and the university: Myths and realities in an unequal world	Expanding the scope of Institutions	Altbach(2004)	
7	Transforming higher education in whose image?	Changing roles and stereotypes	Deem et al. (2008)	
8	Cross border HE in India: False understandings and true overestimates	Shared understandings from the Indian context	Stella&Gnanam(2005)	
9	Multilevel determinants of internationalization rationales	Exploring the rationale of participation	Seeber et al. (2016)	
10	Successful internationalization processes in business schools	Institutional experiences	Bradfordet al. (2017)	
11	Finding next wave in internationalization of HE	Looking towards the future	Aziz&Abdullah(2014)	
12	Internationalization of HE - Past and future.	Best practices in Internationalization	Knight &De Wit (2018)	
13	Capacity building for transnationalisation of HE	Translating experience to action	Shams&Hasan (2020)	

3. OBJECTIVES, AGENDA & METHODOLOGY:

The objectives of this paper include the following:

- (1) To discuss a stakeholder perspective of internationalization.
- (2) To identify the factors affecting the internationalization of higher education through stakeholder analysis.
- (3) To attempt a systemic analysis of the supportive frameworks.
- (4) To examine the divergent stakeholder attitudes towards internationalization.
- (5) To study GER and Global Ranking in relation to internationalization.

This conceptual research made use of data from secondary sources including university and HE institutions websites and secondary data from various publications and research databases including google scholar, ResearchGate, and Elsevier's SSRN. The postulates are developed using predictive analysis methodology on collected data and information (Shubhrajyotsna& Aithal, 2018), Aithal &Shubhrajyotsna, 2020) and do not need testing.

4. A STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE:

The internationalization of higher education has become a key change agent leading to the expansion and globalization in education. Of late this has resulted in opening up the border for Foreign Direct Investment in Higher education by global service providers. The State has come into the picture through various supporting systems. These could be either inbound or outbound as the case may be depending on the strategy adopted. Thus, the internationalization of higher education is propelled by either inbound supportive systems or outbound supportive systems or both.

(1) Inbound supportive systems:

The inbound supportive activities are initiated by the government of any country aiming at strengthening institutional capabilities indigenously through creating an environment for global education service players to invest and operate. This can be implemented by attracting highly reputed and brand visible global education service players with global and regional rankings and creating an atmosphere to shift higher education models to the country. The competitive environment generated within the country by local institutions and foreign institutions together will create a foundation for improving higher education while maintaining low costs. Opening up HE system by eliminating policy-based and operation based constraints and creating open competition among the players along with offering supportive facilities such as land, long term interest-free loans, subsidies, reducing bureaucratic involvement, complete academic autonomy to HEIs, subsidised HE admission through merit and performance-based scholarships, easy educational loans to aspirants, focus on skill development and employability, etc are characteristic of inbound supportive system to improve service quality at an affordable cost and to attract youths toward higher education (Aithal &Suresh Kumar, 2016). This also enables the country to attract foreign students from other countries who can find value in availing of higher education in the country. The inbound supportive system can enhance quality education in the country as well as promote the internationalization of higher education by attracting both faculty members and students from various foreign countries. Further, in the inbound supportive system for global HE players, two strategies are observed:

- (a) Foreign universities directly establish their campus in a country through Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) route. Many European universities have established their campus in some Asian and African countries through this model. But many countries have adopted an education policy which does not permit foreign universities who wanted to establish their own campus in the country through the FDI route.
- (b) Foreign universities offer certain specified courses by utilizing their education model along with their faculty members in an existing university in a country by utilizing its physical infrastructure through a suitable collaborative understanding. For instance, many American and European Universities have established collaborative networks to offer their renowned courses on the local university campus of many Asian and African countries. This method is an alternative to the first method where many internationalization constraints of a foreign university in a given country can be addressed.

(2) Outbound supportive system:

The outbound supportive systems envisage creating a supportive environment for the aspiring students to take advantage of high-quality education facilities in developed countries (Kedziora, D., et al, 2017). The infrastructure, technology, experienced faculty members, their expertise, innovative and effective teaching-learning methods, pedagogy, laboratory facilities, industry interaction and international networking facilities provide a

better learning environment for the students in foreign countries. The long experience and long saga of innovations in higher education by many old universities and institutions in developed countries also attract the citizens of developing countries for foreign education. Further, better job prospects and high earning potential are attractions. The outbound supportive system is usually utilized by either economically advantaged groups who can afford the high cost of foreign education or students who are exceptionally bright in studies and secure scholarships or financial assistance in developed countries. Thus, the outbound education supportive system allows students to go out to avail of foreign education leading to the internationalization of higher education. Like an inbound supportive system, the outbound supportive system provides two strategic opportunities to a given country.

- (a) Creating a positive atmosphere through mutual agreements or financial support through long-term loans to the students of the country to avail HE in various foreign universities.
- (b) Supporting local universities to start their campuses in other countries through suitable foreign policies for FDI either through greenfield investment or by means of acquiring an existing campus. The country can also support its local universities to develop tie-ups with existing universities in other countries to run their flagship programs in their original brand name. Countries can formulate their strategies to derive advantages and benefits by following either one or both Internationalization models in higher education. Although promoting an inbound supportive model is strategically beneficial, it takes a long time to realize this model and it is difficult to attract foreign universities to invest in the country through FDI.

5. SYSTEMIC ANALYSIS OF SUPPORTIVE FRAMEWORKS:

A systemic analysis of the supporting frameworks is attempted through the ABCD analysis model (Aithal, et al., 2015). ABCD model is an analysing technique that has been evolved to study a concept, system, model or institution as a case (Aithal, P. S,2016). It enables generating advantages, benefits, constraints, and disadvantages based on the segregation of a set of pertinent factors relevant to the object of study (Aithal, P. S, 2017a),(Aithal &Shubhrajyotsna, 2018a). Both the inbound and outbound support system is separately analysed and presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Analysis of inbound and outbound models of Internationalization.

	INBOUND SUPPORTIVE SYSTEM					
S1.No.	Key Actors/Factors	Advantages	Benefits	Constraints	Disadvantages	
1.	Country	Promotion of FDI on education infrastructure of the country	Improved HE infrastructure in the country	Countries should be able to attract FDI from global Top Universities	The increased cost of HE in their home countries	
2.	Institutions	More HE institutions in the country	Enhanced job creation locally	Top positions may be occupied by Foreigners	Huge Money flow to foreign countries	
3.	Students	Increased opportunities for local students	Quality higher education to the students due to improved teaching-learning	HE in the country becomes more costly & not accessible by poor	Creation of gap between Global Private university graduates & Public university	

			process in the home country		graduates
4.	Educational System	Best practices translated to the local education system	Competency enhanced.	Unhealthy competition among the Institutions	Local HE institutions may not sustain the competition due to resource constraints
5.	Infrastructure	Support for research & development with access to global information & technology	Enhanced research infrastructure & increased IPR of the country	Difficulty in the transfer of indigenously generated IPR to local companies	Pressure for the globalization of new knowledge generated.

	OUTBOUND SUPPORTIVE SYSTEM				
S1.No.	Key Actors/Factors	Advantages	Benefits	Constraints	Disadvantages
1.	Country	Opportunities for Growth	Promotes advanced foreign education in the country	Less focus on HE infrastructure development locally	Chances of Brain drain to other countries
2.	Institutions	Supplements Shortage of infrastructure	Opportunity to collaborate	Expectations are unwieldy	Some foreign qualifications are not acceptable in the home country
3.	Students	Better opportunities for people who can afford the cost	Global exposure for higher education & networking	Only a few students can afford the cost of foreign education	Good students may be deprived of high-quality education and global employment
4.	Education System	Absorption of global technology & lifestyle	Become destinations of choice	Adjustment may be challenging	Most of the students who go for foreign education will not come back to serve the country
5.	Infrastructure	Access to developed research infrastructure	Opportunity to contribute ideas and knowledge	Staying in a foreign country and the loneliness due to changes in environment and culture	Research performance may be low due to working with new teams, communities and the environment

6. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS:

Stakeholder analysis enables to bring out the concerns and demands placed on various stakeholders of an organization or a system. Nine categories of stakeholders are subject to analysis here. A distinction is made between the 'affecting factors' and 'critical constituent elements' (Aithal &Shubhrajyotsna, 2018a), Aithal, P. S, 2017b). Affecting factors for each stakeholder indicates how stakeholders affect or are affected by internationalization. This also indicates the nature of concerns and demands which has to be addressed to facilitate better adjustment (Galushka, Z. et al, 2016). The critical constituent elements are critical to addressing the issues expressed in the affecting factors. They explain the manner in which the concerns and demands would be met in their ability to function. The analysis is undertaken in the framework of inbound and outbound support systems separately so that the affecting factors best convey the true characteristics of two contrasting situations.

Table 3: Affecting factors of Inbound supportive systems

S1. No.	Stakeholders	Affecting Factor	Critical Constituent Elements
1	Home Country	Vertical Expansion	Acceptability,
			Necessity
2	Host Country	Enabling Environment	Readiness,
			Participation
3	Investing/Host	Brand Building	Reputation,
	University		Trend-Setting
4	Home Universities	Opportunity for	Student Preference,
		Advancement	Novelty of Courses
5	Students	Expanding Choices	Motivation,
			Career Goals
6	Parents	Economy	Cost,
			Quality
7	Foreign Competitors	Safe Positioning	Flexibility,
			Expansion
8	Local Competitors	Threat Perception	Identity,
			Operation
9	State	Value Creation	Equity,
			Development

Table 4: Affecting factors of Outbound supportive systems

S. No.	Stakeholders	Affecting Factor	Critical Constituent Elements
1	Home Country	Financial Implications	Unlimited Demand, Growing Numbers
2	Host Country	Ensuring Preparedness	New Opportunities, New Challenges
3	Students	Encashing Opportunity	Academic Merit, Economic Means
4	Parents	Hopes and Dilemma	Future Prospects, Ability to Support
5	Host University	Balancing Concerns	Ability to Cater, Losing on Proportion
6	Foreign Competitors	Greater Competition	Liberal Policies, Increased Attraction
7	Industry	Pressure to Sustain	New Strategies, Rivalry
8	State	Derive Optimum Benefit	Containing Cost, Expanding Coverage

7. EFFECT OF GLOBAL RANKING ON INTERNATIONAIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION:

The quest for quality education and the search for innovation in higher education has fueled the internationalization of higher education. The internationalization of HE is included in the global rankings by many ranking agencies. The ranking is done based on three distinguishable parametric criteria such as (1)Teaching-learning process(2)Research output (Boden, R., et al, 2006), and(3)Internationalization (Yemini, M., et al, 2016). Table 5 gives an idea of major ranking agencies and weightage of various criteria based on the chosen performance indicators on the internationalization of higher education. Table 6 contains the different performance indicators used by global university ranking agencies for evaluating the contribution to the internationalization of higher education. On average internationalization gets 10 percent of the weightage. Adding to the specific scores that an institution secures in the other criteria, it becomes a significant determinant in the overall ranking. The performance indicators for measuring the level of internationalization include the number of international students, faculty, among others (Aithal &Suresh Kumar, 2020).

Table 5: List of ranking agencies and their weightage for internationalization of HE

S. No.	Ranking Agencies	Weightage for Teaching- learning	Weightage for Research output	Weightage for Internationalization
1	Times Higher Education Ranking model, UK	30%	60%	7.5%
2	QS World University Ranking model, UK	40%	20%	10%
3	Round University Ranking (RUR), Russia	40%	40%	10%
4	U.S. News & World Report's Best Global Universities Ranking (USA)	No	90%	10%
5	Global University Ranking, Russia	20%	20%	10%

Table 6: Internationalization as a performance indicator

S. No.	Ranking Agencies	Weightage for Internationalizati on	Performance Indicators & weightage
1	Times Higher Education Ranking model, UK	7.5%	 Percentage of international students: 2.5% Percentage of international staff: 2.5% International collaboration: 2.5%
2	QS World University Ranking model, UK	10%	International FacultyInternational Student Ratio
3	Round University Ranking (RUR), Russia	10%	 Share of international staff in percentile (2%) Share of international students in percentile (2%) Share of international co-authored papers (2%) Reputation outside the region (Country/ Continent) (2%) Institutions internationalization level (2%)
4	U.S. News & World	10%	International collaboration-relative

	Report's Best Global Universities Ranking (USA)		to country. • International collaborative publications
5	Global University Ranking, Russia	10%	 International Activities like: Membership of a university in the international academic communities Number of foreign students from an aggregate number of students.

8. ENHANCING GER THROUGH THE PROCESS OF INTERNATIONALIZATION:

It is suggested that countries have emphasized an inbound supportive system to attract foreign universities to invest in higher education. Concurrently, countries encourage local universities to improve their physical, digital, teaching-learning, IPR, emotional and networking infrastructure, to compete with foreign universities. This creates a competitive environment within the country for improved quality of higher education at a decreased cost. This also attracts many students to stay back in the country for their higher education, resulting in an improved Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of the higher education system of the country. The increased competition improves the quality of higher education in the country. This helps to maintain better economic status in the country. This also creates more job opportunities for local people due to foreign universities investment and corresponding economic growth in the country. On the other hand, if the country focuses more on the outbound supportive system, the local higher education quality does not improve due to low competition internally and hence many local students migrate to other countries which increases the outgoing of the huge amount of money without much benefit locally.

9. STAKEHOLDER ATTITUDE TOWARDS INTERNATIONALIZATION:

Stakeholder attitude is manifested through its approaches and actions in all realms of its operation, which promote internationalization. Such, for instance, are the following:

- (1) International students: The host country and those of the participating students display a positive and proactive attitude. This would enhance enrollment and act as a catalyst in the process.
- **(2)** International faculty: Just as international students matter, faculty also add to the diversity of the learning environment. Institutions with a global outlook always try to attract faculty from far and wide.
- (3) Institutional Partnerships: Collaboration between nations as well as institutional partnerships are favourable to the goals of internationalization in multiple ways. Institutions could be good comraderies responding to the needs of expertise.
- **(4) Collaborative publications:** Research and publications are part and parcel of the objectives of higher education. New knowledge is generated and dissipated to a wider audience through publications. It is a direct measure of the involvement in intellectual activity pursued by the faculty.
- **(5)** *Internship opportunities:* This is an added avenue to promote internationalization where cost could be compensated by contribution through service.
- **(6)** *International conferences:* Conferences act as an interactive forum for scholars to get to know the place (institutional location), people (academia and their expertise) and work (studies and researches). It servers to publicize the institution's profile as one of the key players.
- (7) Earnings through Consultancy: This is one of the ways by which institutions can generate earning by encashing their competence. It also provides faculty to enhance their

expertise and institutions to share the outcome. It fulfills the institution's responsibility and commitment to society.

- **(8) Image and Reputation:** Both institutions and host countries welcoming international scholars bring repute for their services and standards that have been built over time. A relentless pursuit is required to sustain it as well.
- **(9) Fellowships & Scholarships:** A lot of flexibility is demanded from state and institutions to promote international mobility for learning primarily that of providing economic means through scholarship and assistance to students.
- (10) Infrastructure and facilities: The swelling number of students necessitate the creation of improved infrastructure and facilities, such as accommodation, amenities, study spaces, and recreational facilities.

Universities in different countries can incorporate one or more above components in their objectives of internationalization of higher education.

10. CONCLUSION:

The internationalization of higher education has opened up new challenges for stakeholders. Two models emerge in the practice, namely inbound and outbound. Analysis of inbound and outbound models as support systems helps us to weigh the advantages and benefits of both these as opposed to their constraints and disadvantages. This has implications for formulating policies by institutions and the state. Stakeholder analysis through the 'Affecting factor framework' brings to light the role of constituent elements that need to be addressed to facilitate the better adjustment. Systemic analysis portrays the advantages and disadvantages that it might cause to the key actors involved in internationalization in the inbound and outbound models. Stakeholder attitude reflects possibilities to evolve strategies to derive the best benefit. From a stakeholder perspective, internationalization is a "planned, motivated and goal-oriented approach to attaining learning while at the same time fulfilling stakeholder interest in a mutually satisfying manner, in trans-national context". Financial imperatives notwithstanding, it is found to be gainful for all stakeholders.

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