The internationalization of higher education scrutinized: international program and provider mobility

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Abstract

During the last two decades, there has been an exponential increase in all forms of international academic mobility – student and scholar, programs and providers, policies and regulations, and the universal exchange of knowledge, ideas, values, and culture. The diversity in the modes and forms of mobility is unprecedented. As with all new developments, there are multiple benefits, as well as potential risks, and usually some unintended consequences. These need to be carefully monitored. This article focuses on changes in internationalization and new developments such as international program and provider mobility (IPPM). There has been a steady increase in the number of international branch campuses around the world, as well as in the establishment of new independent international joint universities by partner institutions from different countries, an increasing number of joint/ double degree programs, and revolutionary developments in distance education. In view of these developments, the purpose of this article is to introduce the IPPM classification framework, which provides a new conceptual structure to analyse the meaning, trends, issues, and opportunities of IPPM activities around the world and to identify areas of further research and policy development necessary to harness the benefits of IPPM, especially in Latin America.[a]

Keywords: international branch campuses, double and joint degree programs, distance education, international joint universities, international program and provider mobility.

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A internacionalização do ensino superior examinada: mobilidade internacional de programas e provedores

Resumo

Nas últimas duas décadas, houve um aumento exponencial em todas as formas de mobilidade acadêmica internacional – estudantes e acadêmicos, programas e provedores, políticas e regulamentos, e o intercâmbio universal de conhecimentos, ideias, valores e cultura. Há uma diversidade sem precedentes de formas de mobilidade. Como ocorre com toda inovação, há vários benefícios, bem como riscos potenciais e, geralmente, algumas consequências não esperadas. Essas precisam ser cuidadosamente monitoradas. Este artigo trata das mudanças nos processos de internacionalização e suas inovações recentes, como a mobilidade internacional de programas e provedores (MIPP). O número de *campi* sucursais internacionais tem aumentado continuamente em todo o mundo, assim como o estabelecimento de universidades internacionais associadas independentes formadas por parceria entre universidades de distintos países, um número crescente de programas de dupla diplomação e um avanço revolucionário na educação a distância. Diante disso, o objetivo deste artigo é apresentar um marco de classificação da MIPP, que forneça uma nova matriz conceitual para analisar o significado, tendências, problemas e oportunidades das atividades de MIPP em todo o mundo e identificar novas áreas de pesquisa e desenvolvimento de políticas necessárias para aproveitar benefícios da MIPP, especialmente na América Latina.

Palavras-chave: campi sucursais internacionais, cursos de dupla diplomação, educação a distância, universidades internacionais associadas, mobilidade internacional de programas e provedores.

Few would question that internationalization has changed dramatically during the last two decades. Optimists would look at the increase in student mobility, the focus on developing intercultural understanding and global competencies, greater regionalization of policies and programs, innovations in information technology, the growing importance of internationalizing the teaching/learning process and curriculum, and the exponential rise in academic networks and research partnerships as indicators of the positive evolution of internationalization. Pessimists would

focus on the challenges facing international student recruitment, the move to bureaucratic compliance to quality standards, the negative impact of commercialization on international research and publishing, the questionable influence of geo-politics, academic fraud in the awarding and recognition of qualification, and threats of new forms of imperialism as proof of the dark side of internationalization. It is true that the turbulent times in which we live are impacting internationalization; but, if internationalization is understood to be a process of change, and not an end unto itself or a set of activities (Knight, 2013), one can imagine how internationalization of higher education can be an agent of positive change.

As with all new developments in international higher education, research and innovation (IHERI) there are multiple benefits, as well as potential risks and unintended consequences. These need to be carefully monitored. Internationalization rationales, strategies, policies and impacts have evolved and differ significantly among different actors, higher education institutions and countries. One size does not fit all. Respect for local context, culture, priorities, and history are fundamental to internationalization.

This article focuses on a particular dimension of internationalization which is understudied and often misunderstood – International Program and Provider Mobility (IPPM). It is no longer just students who are moving across borders; so are universities and academic programs. IPPM takes many forms but usually involves students taking foreign academic programs and qualifications while staying at home or in the region. There has been a steady increase in the number of international branch campuses around the world. A more recent and fascinating development is the establishment of new independent international joint universities developed by partner universities located in different countries. The number of twinning and franchise programs is now being surpassed by the staggering increase in joint/double degree programs. Distance education is being revolutionized by new technologies, virtual classrooms, the open access movement, and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

Increasing importance and enrolments in IPPM

The increasing enrolment rates and diversity of IPPM activities provides convincing evidence of the necessity to focus more attention and analysis on this phenomenon. In terms of sending or foreign partner countries, the growth in IPPM enrolments is startling. According to a recent report by Universities UK (2019) entitled *International Facts and Figures* there are approximately 707,000 international students enrolled in a United Kingdom (UK) qualification awarding program who follow their program through IPPM. That means that in the 2016-17 academic year there were 1.6 times more international students taking their HE programs through IPPM in their home or neighbouring country than the number of international students actually studying in the UK. Thus, there are more UK enrolled international students studying in programs outside the UK than in the UK. The breakdown by region is revealing. Overall, Asia hosted 48.7% of students, followed by Africa (22.5%), the European Union (10.9%), the Middle East (9.6%), North America (4.6%), non-EU Europe (2.8%), Australasia (0.6%), and South America (0.4%). This indicates that Latin American institutions and students are yet to be significantly engaged in IPPM. Research is needed to understand why, given the long history of Latin American collaboration with European and North American universities.

In terms of host countries, the IPPM enrolments are equally interesting. In 2016, for example, approximately 43 percent of local tertiary students in Mauritius were enrolled in some type of foreign higher education (HE) program – either through branch campuses, partnership program or distance education – thus significantly increasing access to higher education. In Botswana, IPPM students represent about 30 percent of all HE enrolments. In countries with a long history of IPPM such as Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong, between 10-20 percent of HE provision is through IPPM. In Dubai, higher education enrolments through IPPM is around 50%, primarily in international branch campuses (IBCs) (Knight; McNamara, 2017).

Unfortunately, the research and monitoring of these new IPPM developments is not keeping pace with the accelerated rate of change.

While opinion and anecdotal evidence reveal the benefits and risks attached to this burgeoning field, there continues to be a significant lack of robust data and analysis regarding the different IPPM modes of delivery, especially in host countries. A serious handicap in conducting this research is the confusion about what IPPM truly includes. Research shows that there are over 40 different terms used to describe higher education programs and providers crossing international borders. The result is terminology chaos. To address this situation a new IPPM analytical framework was developed (Knight, 2016).

The purpose of this article is to raise awareness about IPPM in Latin America and encourage more research on the topic by introducing the IPPM framework and providing examples of different IPPM modes of activities. The intention is to increase knowledge about the different approaches and characteristics of IPPM and to discuss new developments in host and sending countries around the world. Important to emphasize is that international program and provider (IPPM) is the sole focus of this article, not international student and scholar mobility (ISSM). The outline of this article is as follows. The next section addresses the mass confusion related to the terminology describing IPPM provision. This sets the scene for the discussion of the IPPM classification framework, which is presented in the following section. The two primary principles underpinning the framework – the nature of the relationship between a sending higher education institution (HEI)/provider and the local host HEI/provider and the mode of delivery at both the program and provider level – are highlighted, and descriptions of each of the six modes are discussed and examples provided. The last section looks to the future and identifies potential risks and benefits and advocates for further research and policy development to ensure that IPPM enhances the quality and access to higher education (HE).

Terminology confusion

To date, there are four generic terms used when referring to international academic mobility. They are crossborder, transnational, offshore and

borderless education. These terms are most often used interchangeably even though they mean different things to higher education actors and stakeholders. For instance, the terms transnational, offshore and crossborder higher education are often understood to include both student and program/provider mobility, which causes confusion in terms of policies and data collection. Borderless was once thought to include new developments in distance and online education but has since broadened and includes any and all kind of academic mobility in terms of space, time, discipline. Hence, the terms are becoming broader in concept but less meaningful in practice.

The interpretation of these four terms differs within and across countries and among national, regional and international organizations. While this is a sign of the growing importance and recognition given to international academic mobility, it is also a signal that more clarity is needed (Rüland; Kammüller, 2016). The challenge is to have a common understanding of the terms while respecting differences in local context and language orientation. For the purposes of this article, IPPM is used to denote the movement of HE providers and programs across national jurisdictional borders and ISSM is used to denote international student and scholar mobility.

Even when using the term IPPM, there is major confusion about how to describe and differentiate between IPPM modes such as franchise programs, international branch campuses or partnership programs. The implications of the IPPM terminology chaos are many and significant. While it is important that each country uses terms that fit into the domestic higher education landscape, it is equally important that there is a shared understanding and use of IPPM terms across countries. The lack of a common understanding of the terms raises serious issues related to appropriate quality assurance processes, qualification recognition procedures, registration of new providers or programs, completion rates, and the collection of program level information and enrolment data. In addition, the inconsistency in the use of terms also makes comparisons of IPPM provision, data, policies and research within and across countries challenging and often inconclusive. This has led to the development of a proposed IPPM Classification Framework (Knight; McNamara, 2017), which is discussed in the next section.

The IPPM classification framework

As discussed, the terminology chaos related to IPPM is legendary. Different terms are used for the same activity and the same IPPM activity is described with a diversity of terms. The Classification Framework is a step towards addressing this confusion and bringing some clarity to the diversity of IPPM activities which are taking place in sending and host countries around the world.

Objectives and uses of the IPPM classification framework

It is important to be clear about the objectives. The main objectives of the classification framework are: i) to provide some clarity and common interpretations of the different modes and categories of IPPM; ii) to provide a foundation to help develop and systematize IPPM data collection and management within and across countries through a common understanding of terms; iii) to allow cross country comparisons on IPPM and ensure that the comparative analysis is regularized and reliable by using common descriptions of the primary modes of IPPM; iv) to track national, regional and international trends and developments of IPPM through use of a common interpretation and use of terms; and finally, v) to distinguish and categorize the different modes of IPPM provision and to highlight the differences between International Program and Provider Mobility (IPPM) and International Student and Scholar Mobility (ISSM).

Assumptions and principles

The development of the framework is based on a number of key assumptions and two fundamental organizing principles. The following assumptions guide the development and use of the framework. The framework is intended to help countries and HEIs build a foundation of common terms and understanding of IPPM. It is not intended to be a top down imposed set of definitions but instead a set of criteria and descriptions that help to clarify what is involved with each IPPM mode and to help differentiate one IPPM mode from another.

It is applicable to both host and sending country HEIs/providers. Host countries are defined as those countries who are recipients of the IPPM, while sending countries are those who are providing the academic programs in the host country. It is of fundamental importance that host and sending countries have a common interpretation and lexicon of IPPM terms in order to negotiate the terms of both independent and collaborative IPPM.

One of the major uses of the framework is for developing IPPM policies, regulations, and programs. Thus, the framework is relevant to national/system level higher education government and non-government departments and agencies with a mandate related to IPPM as well as individual HEIs and providers.

The framework is designed for both early stage emerging IPPM countries as well as active mature IPPM countries. Local context is of fundamental importance for IPPM in general, but especially for country level IPPM data collection systems. The adage that "one size/system fits all" does not apply. The framework does not offer rigid standardized definitions of each IPPM mode. The framework respects local contextual differences by being generic enough to accommodate different country approaches to IPPM, but is rigorous enough to differentiate between IPPM modes.

Two organizational principles are fundamental to the framework. The first principle addresses the nature of the relationship between a sending HEI/provider and the local host HEI/provider and the second principle relates to the mode of delivery at both the program and provider level. The first principle makes the distinction between IPPM as a stand-alone or *independent activity* by the sending country HEI/provider *and* a *collaborative effort* between host and sending HEIs/providers as illustrated in Table 1.

The distinction between academic *collaborative IPPM provision* and *independent IPPM provision* is central to the framework. It has important implications for both host country and sending country regulations and policies related to registration, external quality assurance, awarding of qualifications, degree recognition, responsibility for the curriculum, and data management. For example, when a host country is doing a national review of IPPM provision, it would be useful to know the percentage of IPPM programs and student enrolments through a collaborative partnership

between local and sending HEIs/providers versus the percentage of IPPM programs and students enrolled in independent and often described as foreign imported programs.

Table 1 - Independent versus collaborative program and provider mobility

Two major approaches to IPPM provision	
Independent	**Collaborative**
The foreign sending HEI/provider is primarily responsible for the design, delivery and external quality assurance of their academic programs and qualifications being offered in another country.	A foreign sending HEI/provider and host country HEI/provider work together on the design, delivery and/or external quality assurance of the academic programs.

Source: Knight and McNamara (2017).

The collaborative IPPM programs offer a number of benefits, such as: i) opportunities for joint curriculum development and delivery to ensure that programs are relevant to the local context; ii) possibilities for joint research on locally relevant topics; and iii) the potential for capacity building and internationalization of both the local host and foreign sending institutions. On the other hand, *independent IPPM provision* normally provides a curriculum designed, delivered and quality assured according to the regulations and standards of the sending country and the qualification offered is from the foreign provider. For many students in host countries, having a foreign based curriculum, pedagogy and qualification is the most attractive and sought after feature of IPPM because it is more affordable than travelling abroad yet offers a foreign curriculum and pedagogy.

Many small countries depend heavily on IPPM to provide increased access to higher education and a wider diversity of program offer because the local higher education infrastructure is not able to meet the demand for full time or part-time tertiary education. Thus, it is important for these host countries to know what percentage of students are studying in local HE providers versus what percentage are studying in IPPM programs. Furthermore, it is critical to know whether the IPPM programs are offered through collaborative relationships or through stand-alone foreign providers. This is because host

country policies for registration, quality assurance and qualification recognition may differ for independent vs collaborative IPPM programs.

The second principle relates to six distinct categories or modes of program and provider mobility as identified on the three horizontal rows of the framework (Table 2). The six categories represent different modes of international program and provider delivery and are carefully aligned with the independent or collaborative approaches.

Table 2 - Six categories of modes of program and provider mobility

Row	Independent	Collaborative
1	Franchise programs	Partnership programs
2	International branch campus	International Joint universities/colleges
3	Self-study distance education	Distance education with local academic partner

Source: Knight and McNamara (2017).

Row one differentiates *franchise programs/arrangements*, which are primarily exported by a sending country, from *partnership programs*, which are based on collaboration between host and sending country HEIs/providers. The second row distinguishes between an *international branch campus*, which is essentially a satellite operation of a parent HEI in the sending country, from a *joint university*, which is co-founded or co-developed by both sending and host countries HEIs. The third row refers to distance education as a separate IPPM mode and distinguishes between *self-study distance education programs* (which are provided solely by the foreign sending HEI/provider and has no teaching or learning support provided locally), and *distance education with a local academic partner*. The continuous growth and dynamic changes in the use of distance education technologies demands that the Framework recognize distance/online education as a separate IPPM category unto itself. However, distance education is also a form of teaching and learning through face to face, online or blended approaches which are applicable to all modes of program and provider mobility.

The structure and logic of the IPPM classification framework

Table 3 integrates the two organizing principles into one framework and provides a short description and set of commonly used terms for each of the six categories.

Table 3 - IPPM classification framework

Two major approaches to IPPM provision independent and collaborative	
Independent IPPM provision	**Collaborative IPPM provision**
The foreign sending HEI/provider is primarily responsible for the design, delivery, and external quality assurance of their academic programs and qualifications being offered in another country.	A foreign sending HEI/provider and host country HEI/provider work together on the design, delivery, and/or external quality assurance of the academic programs.
Six categories of IPPM	
1. Franchise programs	**4. Partnership programs**
Description: The foreign sending HEI/provider has primary responsibility for the design, delivery, and external quality assurance of academic programs offered in host country. The qualification is awarded by sending HEI. **Commonly used terms:** *import/export, validation, foreign, non-local, international private programs*	**Description:** Academic programs in host country/ies are jointly designed, delivered and quality assured through collaboration between host and sending country partners. The qualification/s can be awarded by either or both host and sending country HEIs in the form of single, joint or double/multiple degrees. **Commonly used terms:** *joint/double/multiple degrees, twinning programs.*
2. International branch campus	**5. International joint university**
Description: A satellite bricks and mortar campus established by foreign sending HEI in host country. Sending parent institution provides curriculum, external quality assurance, and awards the qualification. **Commonly used terms:** *satellite, private international, offshore campus, portal campus*	**Description:** A HEI co-founded and established in host country involving both local and foreign sending HEI/providers who collaborate on academic program development and delivery. Qualifications can be awarded by either or both host and sending country HEIs. **Commonly used terms:** *co-developed, binational, co-founded, multinational, joint venture universities*
3. Self-study distance education	**6. Distance education with local academic partner**
Description: Foreign sending distance education provider offers academic programs directly to host country students. No local academic support available. Qualification, curriculum, and external quality assurance offered by foreign sending HEI. **Commonly used terms:** *fully online education, open university, MOOCs, pure distance education*	**Description:** A foreign distance education HEI/provider offers programs to host country students in collaboration with a local academic partner. Curriculum can be jointly developed, and the qualification awarded by foreign HEI or by both partners. External quality assurance provided by foreign sending HEI/provider or both partners. **Commonly used terms:** *online or distance education with reference to local academic partner*

Source: Knight (2019) updated from Knight and McNamara (2017).

Elaboration of the six categories of IPPM with examples from around the world

This section provides a deeper understanding of each of the six mode categories and includes examples from around the world. It is important that the six mode categories are robust enough to distinguish one from another but also flexible enough to accommodate the different contexts, regulatory frameworks, and linguistic orientations of more than 100 IPPM active countries.

Independent IPPM provision

Franchise programs

A franchise arrangement can be described as a program which is offered by a foreign sending HEI to students in the host country. The foreign sending HEI/provider has primary responsibility for the curriculum design, external quality assurance of academic programs and awards the qualification. In some cases, a local agent, provider or HEI may be involved by providing space and administrative support services and even some teaching, but the sending HEI/provider maintains ultimate responsibility for the curriculum, external quality assurance and awarding of the qualification.

Franchise programs will continue to evolve. While there is more growth in the partnership program category of IPPM than in franchise programs, one can expect more innovation and fluidity in franchise arrangements resulting in the development of new enabling policies and regulatory frameworks by both host and sending countries.

However, there is one trend which may eventually result in a significant decrease in the scale of franchise programs. This trend is the rapid and unprecedented increase is the offering of double or multiple degrees for any kind of academic program which involves two or more international

partners. Students are keen to register in a double degree program as it means receiving two or more qualifications from two or more different universities while essentially completing the normal workload for one degree. Institutions favor double degree programs as each partner claims the students as graduates of their institution, which increases their graduation rates. Thus, we might see sending country HEI/providers offering franchise programs linking up with host country HEIs to offer double degrees. If a double degree was to be offered, there is an assumption that there would be joint curriculum design and this would then mean it was a partnership program, not a franchise program, which is normally independent of any local academic collaboration, and only the foreign sending country awards one qualification.

An interesting development in the franchise mode is the creation of a university that relies solely on offering a variety of franchise programs from different foreign providers. The British University in Vietnam is a good example, as it offers academic programs and qualification from different UK universities and claims that all the teaching staff are international.

In most Latin American countries there is no systematic data on the number of enrolments and disciplines of franchise programs. Questions arise about how relevant the imported courses are to the local context and labour market and how rigorous the registration and accreditation processes are in host countries. These are critical concerns, but it is important to look at the potential benefits of franchise programs when the appropriate policies and regulations are in place. Franchise programs can offer specialised academic programs not offered by domestic HEIs, they are often offered on a part-time basis and attract students who are already working and want to upgrade their skills and knowledge. For countries with an underdeveloped higher education system due to political or economic upheaval, franchise programs could be a useful tool to help increase access as well as build HE capacity when framed as an international cooperation and development project.

International branch campus (IBC)

An international branch campus is described as a satellite bricks and mortar campus of a sending country HEI which offers a selection of their academic programs and qualifications to students in a foreign host country. The sending country parent institution provides curriculum, ensures external quality assurance, and awards the qualification. This is a basic "bare bones" description that can be applied to the majority of different models of IBCs.

There is no question that the number of IBCs has been increasing over the last 15 years. According to the 2016 report on IBCs (Garrett; Kinser; Lane; Merola, 2016), there were 137 IBCs operational in 2005 around the world and by 2015 there were 249. This comprehensive report is another example of how important it is to have a definition of an IBC that can be applied to both host and sending countries around the world. The definition of an IBC, according to this report, is "an entity that is owned, at least in part, by a foreign higher education provider; operated in the name of the foreign education provider; and provides an entire academic program, substantially on site, leading to a degree awarded by the foreign education provider" (Garrett *et al.* 2016, p. 8). This is a multi-faceted definition which covers several key aspects. However, this definition can be interpreted and used in different ways. For instance, in China, international branch campuses are not allowed as their national regulations require all foreign providers to collaborate with a local Chinese HEI/provider. Thus, all the Chinese IBCs mentioned in the 2016 report are unfortunately incorrectly categorised, since the Chinese regulate them as international joint venture universities, a collaborative type of HE provision, not independent. This is concrete evidence of the importance of a common understanding of IPPM modes.

There is no up-to-date reliable source of information on the number and location of IBCs in Latin America. Collecting data from a variety of sources, Table 4 suggests that there is a total of ten IBCs identified in Latin America, excluding the Caribbean.

Table 4 - International branch campuses in Latin America

Host country	Name of institution	Sending country	Established
Argentina	University of Bologna in Buenos Aires	Italy	1998
Brazil	Manchester Business School, South America Centre	United Kingdom	2010
	SKEMA Business School - Belo Horizonte Campus	France	2018
Costa Rica	Texas Tech University	United States	2018
Ecuador	Brookdale College Ecuador	United States	1990
	Universidad Tecnica Frederico Santa Maria de Chile in Ecuador	Chile	1996
Mexico	Alliant International University- Mexico City Campus	United States	2013
Nicaragua	Keiser University-Latin America campus	United States	2013
Panama	Florida State University-Republic of Panama	United States	1982
	EGADE Business School of Tecnologico de Monterrey in Panama City	Mexico	2012

Source: Author, with information from Garrett *et al.* (2016), C-BERT (2017), and individual IBC websites.

Interesting to note is that parent HEIs of two (20%) of the ten IBCs are located in Latin America, and another five (50%) of parent HEIs are from the United States. The dates of establishment range from 1982 to 2018. Informal sources of information indicate that Latin America is becoming a highly desired location for foreign universities to establish branch campuses but there is a lack of reliable information on this and no indication from host countries that this is a national priority or policy decision.

Self-study distance education

The self-study distance education IPPM mode involves a foreign distance education HE provider offering their academic programs directly to host country students. Self-study is a fundamental part of the description as it means that no local academic partner is involved in

designing the curriculum, ensuring quality and accreditation of programs, or awarding qualifications. These are the responsibilities of the foreign distance education HIE/provider. Self-study distance education is often difficult to track by a host country as students enrol directly with the foreign distance education provider. However, in some countries, higher education authorities require self-study students to register at a host country examination centre so that the enrolments of students can be tracked.

Examples of distance education providers that offer self-study courses internationally include The Open University (OU) in the United Kingdom and Athabasca University in Canada. There are national open universities in Latin America but data on foreign enrolments is not available. Thus, it is impossible to estimate how many Latin American students are enrolled in self-study distance education provided by a Latin American or other foreign provider. Other international providers who are offering self-study distance education through MOOCs include companies like COURSERA, EdX, Udacity, and FutureLearn as well as individual HEIs.

Collaborative IPPM

Partnership programs

Partnership programs are described as academic programs which are jointly designed, delivered and quality assured through collaboration between partner HEIs/providers in host and sending countries. In these types of programs, the qualifications can be awarded by one, both or multiple partner HEIs. Due to the dynamic growth and innovation of partnership programs there are numerous models (and much confusion) as to who awards the qualification, who has primary responsibility for external quality assurance, and who has primary responsibility for the design of the academic program and curriculum.

The policies and regulations of the partner countries dictate the nature of the partnership program and how many qualifications are offered. There

are countries where awarding a double/multiple degree is illegal – South Africa is one example – and other countries are considering this because of the integrity and qualification recognition issues related to the double counting of the same workload/credits for two or more degrees.

As of 2019, there are only a few countries in Latin America that have collected information from universities on partnership programs; but this does not mean that these collaborative programs do not exist. In fact, the opposite is true, as different funding programs from Europe and North America are promoting and funding these types of programs (Kuder; Lemmens; Obst, 2014).

Partnership programs represent the majority of IPPM activity in terms of actual numbers of programs (perhaps not enrolments). There have been major changes in terms of the number of qualifications offered, the increasing use of online education, the structure of the program and respective responsibilities of the partner institutions. A worrisome trend in partnership programs is that traditional student exchanges between the partner institutions are resulting in double degrees being offered. Thus, the partnership category is a mode which deserves close tracking given the changes and challenges inherent in collaborative program design and delivery. While partnership programs can be labelled as the fastest growing category of IPPM, it can also be described as the "messiest category" given the challenges attached to governance issues, qualification recognition, and double counting of credits.

International joint university (IJU)

International joint universities are a rather interesting development in IPPM. A joint university is described as a HEI co-founded and established in the host country involving both local and foreign sending HEI/providers who collaborate on academic program development and delivery. Qualifications can be awarded by either or both host and sending country HEIs.

Important to note is that an international joint university is a newly established entity in the host country. It is not an international branch campus. The newly created joint university can be a public or private university and is guided and regulated by both host and partner country policies and regulations. In terms of program offerings, the international joint university has several options – it can offer its own academic programs and qualifications or it can offer the programs and qualifications of its founding local and foreign partners through single/joint/double degree program arrangements. Quality assurance at the program level is normally done by the host country quality assurance agency (QAA) and by all partners for joint, double, multiple degree programs. The quality assurance procedures can be quite burdensome administratively as there could be quality audits by all partner institutions. Mutual recognition of QAA processes needs to be given serious consideration.

Examples of joint universities include the binational universities established by Germany. Each model is different, but they usually include a consortium of German universities who help to establish a new joint university in the host country. They include the German Jordanian University, Kazakh German University, and the Vietnamese German University, among others. The Singapore University of Technology and Design is another example, as it was co-founded and developed by three universities: the Singapore Management University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Zhejiang University in China. In China, there are a number of newly established joint universities such as the University of Xian Jiaotong-Liverpool University. This is a legally registered Chinese University co-founded by Xian Jiaotong University and Liverpool University. It is not an International Branch campus of Liverpool University, which it is often mistakenly believed to be.

As of 2019, there are no known IJUs in Latin America. A list of host countries and foreign partner countries for the 22 international joint universities operating around the world indicates the regional distribution of host countries as follows: 16 from Asia (China, Malaysia, Indonesia,

Singapore, Mongolia), two from Africa (Egypt), two from Middle East (Oman and Jordan), and two from Europe (Kazakhstan). The regional distribution of partner countries is as follows: seven from Asia (Japan, China, Hong Kong), 12 from Europe (Germany, France, UK and Russia), three from North America (United States) and one from the Middle East (Israel). While there are a number of new IJUs under development, there are none planned for Latin America. The key question is why, and there is no clear answer to this. The rationales for both host and international partner country vary greatly but there clearly has to be a readiness to invest, co-develop and jointly manage an IJU and as of 2019, the development of IJUs does not appear to be a priority in Latin America.

Distance education with a local academic partner

Distance education with local partner academic collaboration is not a popular mode of IPPM. It can be described as a foreign distance education HEI/provider which offers programs to host country students in partnership with a local academic HEI partner.

In general, this type of collaboration involves the local partner offering some face to face tutorial support, or access to a local host country HEI library, laboratory, and counselling services. A more recent trend is that distance education providers are building brick and mortar campuses or cooperating with established universities to offer students distance education courses and face to face courses. An example of this kind of arrangement is the Arab Open University in Oman.

The African Virtual University (AVU) is an innovative experiment involving a network of over 50 academic partners in more than 25 countries in Africa. AVU develops the curriculum with specialists and offers open access to all of its curriculum which can then be adopted or adapted for use by the academic partner country. Would this model be appropriate or relevant to Latin America, which still has major access and equity challenges?

Looking to the future

The purpose of the IPPM Classification Framework is to develop a common understanding of terms and categories within and between countries. For the framework to be useful, it must be robust enough to differentiate between each of the six primary categories of IPPM but flexible enough to acknowledge individual contexts and regulations of IPPM active countries. Countries have different approaches and levels of IPPM involvement and must be able to use the framework to meet their particular needs and circumstances. Thus, the framework is not a top-down imposed structure but rather a foundation and guideline to help countries have clarity on the different modes of IPPM provision.

Consequently, the use of the common IPPM framework for policy development and data collection will vary from country to country, depending on the prevalent IPPM modes, as well as how the data will be used for planning, policy analysis and development of regulatory processes (McNamara; Knight, 2015). It is important to emphasize that the use of the Classification Framework will vary, but not the actual content.

The type of information that can be collected is extensive and needs to be customized to the needs and priorities of the host or sending country. Clearly, there are similar parallels for using the framework at the institutional level. HEIs in both host and sending countries will benefit from collecting information on the modes and enrolments of their IPPM activities. At the same time, the framework provides the foundation to monitor international trends in IPPM and also undertake cross-country analysis on key issues and challenges as well as enrolments.

Potential risks and benefits

The possible benefits of IPPM are many and diverse. They include the potential to increase access to higher education, diversify program offer, internationalise the curriculum and teaching/learning process, offer new pedagogical approaches, share graduate supervision, exchange students

and staff, decrease brain drain, and perhaps assist politically unstable and failing states to rebuild higher education programs and institutions.

But there are potential risks as well. They can include low quality provision, inappropriate curriculum and pedagogy, sustainability, competition with local HEIs, duplication of program offers, qualifications not being recognised, and commercialization. As with all new developments, there are twists and turns in the road and many pitfalls to avoid. However, there are also new opportunities and prospective benefits. It is critical that IPPM developments be informed by research and analysis (McNamara; Knight, 2014).

Implications for further research

In comparison to student and scholar mobility, IPPM is a relatively new area of study in international education. This needs to change. Macro issues which merit further investigation include the rationales and expected outcomes driving host and sending countries/institutions to pursue IPPM opportunities. Other questions include what are the academic, social, cultural, political, and economic impacts of IPPM? Which higher education actors and stakeholders have the most to gain or lose from the growth in IPPM? Are there certain disciplines that are more appropriate for IPPM than others? How does IPPM contribute to shaping students' identities? Will independent IPPM provision become commercialised and affordable only by the elite? Will quality standards fall? What sort of governance and partnership models are more appropriate for collaborative IPPM provision?

Because IPPM focuses primarily on the design and delivery of academic programs across borders, there is an enormous amount of research to do on issues related to curriculum design and the teaching learning process. Can the academic sector be confident that imported programs are relevant to the needs, context and labour market of the host country? What are the implications, both positive and negative, of foreign faculty teaching or co-teaching classes? In partnership programs, how

are credits counted, qualifications awarded, and foreign, joint or double degrees recognised? What procedures are in place for co-supervision of students? How do learning outcomes address the issue of students' local and global competencies? These are but a few questions. Studies exist on these issues from a European or Asian perspective, but there is too little research done for the Latin American context. The next generation of international education policy analysts, researchers, and scholars, especially from Latin America, need to be convinced of the need for closer scrutiny of IPPM developments.

Finally, research on IPPM, whether it is applied, conceptual or theoretical, requires reliable and robust data. The collection of IPPM data on enrolments, program level and discipline, sending/foreign partner country, and qualifications offered for each mode of IPPM delivery is critical. Capacity building is important to help countries (and institutions) develop stand-alone or integrated IPPM data collection systems. Many potential host IPPM countries around the world are currently facing major challenges and opportunities to update and modernise their higher education management information systems and it is prudent to think about including IPPM data. For years, information on international students and internationally mobile students has been included in OECD and UNESCO data bases. Although there are challenges with the completeness and robustness of these data, progress is being made. It is timely to start planning how IPPM data can be included in these international data bases, but capacity to collect the data at the institutional and national levels first needs to be developed.

In this increasingly complex world in which we live, it is imperative that the higher education sector carefully examine the twists and turns, benefits and risks, fundamental values, and new opportunities in the evolution of higher education internationalization – especially the movement of academic programs and providers moving across borders.

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