

Chapter 6

Bridging Borders in the Globalisation of Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

As higher education institutions worldwide strive to prepare students for a globalised world, internationalisation has become a crucial aspect of their strategies. However, this trend brings unique challenges, particularly in quality assurance and accreditation. This chapter explores the interconnections between internationalisation and quality assurance, highlighting the need for effective strategies to navigate these complexities while upholding quality standards. By examining the dimensions, motivations, and rationales of internationalisation, this study provides insights into best practices and strategies for integrating internationalisation with quality assurance and accreditation mechanisms. Recommendations emphasise the importance of collaboration, cultural competence, and research and evaluation to ensure high-quality education that meets global standards. This study serves as a guide for institutions and stakeholders involved in internationalisation, providing insights to navigate the complexities of internationalisation while maintaining quality standards.

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INTRODUCTION

The internationalisation of higher education has become an increasingly important topic in the global higher education landscape (Knight, 2004; de Wit, 2002). As universities and institutions across the world, including in Zimbabwe and Africa, strive to prepare students for a globalised world, they are embracing internationalisation as a means to foster cultural diversity, promote global competencies, and establish collaborative partnerships (Knight & de Wit, 1995; Mohamedbhai, 2015). However, internationalisation brings forth unique challenges, particularly in the context of quality assurance and accreditation, which are at the heart of higher education (Materu, 2007; Okebukola, 2014). The main focus of this chapter is to explore the interconnections between internationalisation and quality assurance in higher education, focusing on the need for effective strategies to navigate the complexities of internationalisation while upholding quality standards (Knight, 2008; Materu, 2007). It is thus critical to understand what Internationalisation in Higher Education (IHE) really entails. The discussion provides an in-depth understanding of internationalisation in higher education, including an exploration of the various dimensions of internationalisation, such as student mobility, faculty exchange programmes, joint degree programmes, and transnational education (de Wit, 2002; Knight, 2004). The chapter also delves into the motivations and rationales behind internationalisation efforts, emphasising the importance of global competencies, intercultural understanding, and the development of global citizens (Mohamedbhai, 2015; Obamba, 2013). The chapter will be anchored by the Internationalisation Theory (Johanson & Wiedersheim (1975) as well as the Transformational Learning Theory (Mezirow, 1991).

INTERNATIONALISATION THEORY

The internationalisation theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the multifaceted processes and motivations underlying the globalisation of higher education. At its core, the theory defines internationalisation as the integration of international dimensions into various aspects of higher education, including academic mobility, curriculum development, partnerships, and internationalisation at home (Knight, 2004; de Wit, 2002). The theory identifies the diverse rationales and motivations driving these internationalisation efforts, such as economic, cultural, academic, and political factors (de Wit, 2002). By contextualising internationalisation initiatives, the theory enables the recognition of varied goals and priorities among different stakeholders, including institutions, governments, faculty, students, and partners.

Internationalisation theory also outlines the stages of internationalisation, from awareness and planning to implementation and evaluation (Knight, 2004). This framework facilitates the exploration of the developmental aspects of internationalisation and the identification of best practices for effective implementation, highlighting the importance of strategic planning, leadership, and resource allocation. Furthermore, the theory acknowledges the pivotal roles of key players and stakeholders, allowing for the consideration of diverse perspectives and the exploration of strategies for collaboration and partnership building (de Wit, 2002). Additionally, the theory recognises the challenges and barriers that institutions confront, such as cultural and language differences, funding constraints, and regulatory frameworks (de Wit, 2002). By addressing these challenges, the theory offers valuable insights for the development of effective internationalisation strategies and practices, enabling institutions to navigate the complexities

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