# Internationalizing the Curriculum

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Institutions of higher education have placed increasing importance on internationalizing their curricula over the past 10 years. The present work, through application of literature review and review of the Higher Education Framework for internationalization, presents a critical reflection of the challenges addressed in order a curriculum in Higher Education to be internationalized and provides a practical guide regarding the required steps that need to be followed. The example of internationalizing a business management curriculum is used in this study. The above assist educational leaders and educational decision makers to understand what is important to be considered when they plan, organize, design and implement activities for internationalizing a curriculum. The study also challenges that a more comprehensive framework is needed towards internationalization and through reflection upon personal experience provides practical guidance and recommendations to academics and educators how HE curricula can become international in context and in practice.

## 1. Introduction

Internationalization of curriculum is concerned with the curriculum in its broadest sense. As Leask (2009) (cited in Beelen & Leask, 2011, p. 8) states: "*Internationalization of the curriculum is the incorporation of an intercultural and international dimension into the content of the curriculum, as well as, the teaching and learning processes and support services of a program of study. An internationalised curriculum will engage students with internationally informed research and cultural and linguistic diversity.*

McCormick and Murphy (2000, p. 204) present three modes of how curricula operate: the '*specified*, the *enacted*, and the *experienced*'. The first two modes regard the perspective of people who design and teach the curriculum, the third regards people who experience it as learners. The main focus on curriculum regards the way it is intended and enacted by teachers than as it is experienced by students, so, in Universities, the typical focus has been the specified curriculum meaning 'the aims and content of what [is] to be taught'. An internationalised specified curriculum might challenge for a critical understanding of the 'sociohistorical influences on the production and validation' of one's disciplinary knowledge, and how it is 'selected, organized, transmitted and evaluated', (McCormick & Murphy, 2000, p. 204).

Moving forward, someone would ask 'which are the important steps for internationalizing a postgraduate (PG) curriculum/module, and, more specifically, in the area of Business Management? The students of business management programs are about 90% international and 10% home based/local students. Internationalizing the curriculum is a very important issue regarding effectiveness of higher education programs and activities, adding also value to students' satisfaction.

My experience is mainly on PG students of MSc programs, so, I will refer to this level with reference to management discipline.

**Methodology**

The methodological approach for the present study is based on critical literature review.

The purpose of a literature review is to gain an understanding of the existing research and debates relevant to the particular topic or area of study, and to present that knowledge in the form of a written report. Conducting a literature review helps building knowledge in the examined field. This approach serves the purpose of the present study because it helps to gain insight into how researchers apply the concepts in relation to higher education and internationalization of the curriculum, as well as, helps towards a better understanding of how research findings are presented and discussed.

## 2. Steps of internationalizing the curriculum
**The proposed steps following are**:

1. *To identify what is 'Internationalization':* To develop an understanding of the complexities when defining internationalization in my discipline. I make a list of statements, read and search. A challenge though is that internationalization of the curriculum is not only a discipline matter; Leask's (2013) five phase, cyclical action research regarding facilitating internationalization of curriculum (IoC) within disciplines indicates that engaging a disciplinary team in meaningful discussion about IoC as a concept appear to exist many deep-seated epistemological differences between team members. Research (Green & Whitsed, 2013) shows that IoC, as an interdisciplinary process, requires critical interdisciplinary spaces to be developed (Rowland, 2006), fostering the exchange of innovative ideas. It is important that those involved in IoC develop critical interdisciplinary spaces. Also, disciplines may be better to be described as spaces where 'multiple, conflicting narratives' co-exist (Trowler, 2012a, p. 23).

I think of internationalization in terms of building capacity for the university to work with a diversity of backgrounds. It is important to be recognized the contribution different student backgrounds can bring to the learning environment. The challenge to engage with differences among students is that strategies promoting internationalization should be broader (and perhaps simpler) than implementing global case studies or international field work modules. This more general approach would embed internationalization by teaching students how to respond to and engage with any sort of difference (national, ethnic, different learning styles, diverse and conflicting opinions, working in groups), learning to listen to others.

2. *To identify how international is the curriculum*:  Borrowing from my experience, I should promote self-awareness how my work contributes to internationalization of curriculum. Curriculum is driven by academics' understandings of the nature of disciplinary knowledge and the processes through which it is acquired or constructed (McCormick & Murphy, 2000; Mestenhauser, 2011; Strass, 2000). In business studies we have always included issues that relate to internationalization in both definitions of the term: being inclusive and 'international' in the classroom, as well as, including international themes & subjects in the syllabus. The nature of the subject material of the area of business management – such as focusing on ways of managing people, on organizational behavior, the impact of social contexts and values on individuals and groups - means that the study and understanding of issues of diversity, cultural matters are core in this discipline. What this means is that the two approaches of internationalization cooperate. First, we ensure our business curriculum modules are inclusive and provide a safe and supportive environment for all students from all backgrounds and all sections of society. We deliver modules which focus on issues of cultural differences, ethics, international management practices, cross-cultural awareness topics. The aim is to engender a critical awareness in our students and foster the development

of graduates who are truly international in their outlook, valuable employees in the 21st-century global community.

3. *To review current practices*:  exchanging opinions with colleagues, sharing practice and strategies for internationalizing the curriculum assist to this direction. As we know from experience, for most academics outside of the discipline of education, the disciplinary knowledge and the processes through which a curriculum is constructed are tacit; they lie 'buried in curricula' as largely 'uninspected assumptions' (Strass, 2000, p. 30). This is a challenge. To work collegiately, and, to discuss the approach that the business management discipline adopts or will adopt (Tingle, 2011) is important. Time is needed to review current practices and identify opportunities for students to have or/and share international experiences and interactions; this is an additional challenge as there are always time constraints.  I believe that a good internationalization strategy aims to develop approaches helping students to gain understanding of the global context and adjust accordingly. This could take place through well-designed classroom activities or experiences (. e. g overseas placements and short fieldtrips).

4. *To identify areas of development*: To identify challenges and opportunities in the business management discipline for internationalization. Searching, reading & discussing; I note that a) The aim is to create a supportive environment and opportunities for ongoing learning and development. The induction program contributes to this providing general introductory information about modules, staff and other. Library, language and student support services can also be part of the it. Attendance in the induction program may be sporadic; a challenge is the need to effectively communicate the value of the program to students from the start. Through the induction program students should be informed of the professional support and services available at the university. These include the International Student Advisory service and the English Language Centre; A combination of these induction activities is proven to accelerate the settling in period and improve the students' ability to focus on their learning. It is important to structure careful explanation of the program into pre- and post-arrival communications and formally timetabled sessions helping new students and especially international ones to have a smooth adjustment from the start.  b) Sharing current practices, helps academic staff to move forward and to identify international issues or examples within the business management discipline ; look at similar programs in different institutions for comparison ;   articulate overseas study opportunities (if any) ; develop a gap analysis where further international elements could be incorporated; consider the international expertise of staff who (could) contribute; identify the importance of including (if possible) fieldwork in the curriculum as it reinforces and enriches both learning and teaching and encourages knowledge exchange;. Through international fieldworks students enhance their interpersonal skills and research skills conducting research in different socio-cultural environments.

5. *To develop action plan:* To bring together elements of the above activities and think about taking this forward through a series of actions. For example:

*5a. Internationalize or enhance internationalization in the curriculum/module*

The curriculum arguably needs to prepare students for the global marketplace (Bremer and van der Wende, 1995). Even those whose goal is to remain in the UK, they will work in an environment with people from all over the world. An internationalised curriculum may not be appropriate for every module, however it should exist in every program and may help to attract international students and those with ambitions to work in multi-national settings. Using gap analysis, important areas are identified such as selection of  international examples/case studies,  reviews of various subjects from a different range of perspectives ; examination of challenges when students bring their international experience in the classroom; consideration of challenges when  students identify aspects of teaching styles from other

cultures and  incorporate them where appropriate; design activities (e.g analysis of group global case studies from the current business world; interactive discussions in the classroom examining different perspectives and international implications where students can bring & share their experiences; application of student role plays in examining international business examples in class; invitation of guest speakers from industry from local and international companies to share their experience with students providing perspectives of different corporate and national cultures and of their influence. Also, students' critical reflections on international journal articles & research findings, textbook chapters from authors from various countries; group research work on topics of international business interest emphasizing international applications; student led seminars, tutorials)  and assessments that are flexible enough to enable students to utilize their knowledge and experience of other cultures. Indicative content of the assessment regards group assignments examining international business issues or business practices or business matters with international implications; research essays on cross cultural issues; module reading list which contains international publications and other. Guidance and feedback are provided by tutorial. Research (Avila, 2007) supports that business schools internationalize curricula introducing *stand-alone units* as part of programs or by injecting international materials or /and activities into all (or nearly all) of its preexisting modules. Adoption of these could regard tutorial discussions, assignments on international business matters, research essays which explore cross-national practices and behavior, review of global business ethics (Robinson & Lee, 2007), global case studies and group work (Sharma & Roy, 1996).

*5b. Provide opportunities for intercultural interaction in the classroom*

International students often feel alienated as UK students and they do not mix (Heffernan et al, 2010). The challenge is that academic staff need to use a repertoire of strategies to bring student groups together using their varied experiences, as these can enrich the curriculum. For example, form groups with mixed nationalities to examine the impact of culture in the business management discipline. In general, good practice in terms of classroom management with international students is good practice for all students (Jones and Brown, 2007).

At this stage, identifying resources that contribute to demonstration of an international perspective also assist towards the internationalization effort. Borrowing from my experience, I encourage students to work in mixed groups starting with low risk tasks;  try to build their confidence to contribute to class discussions; I encourage them to raise queries publicly and to put forward other points of view ; make use of relevant technologies such as videos ,  Google Earth, and other.

*5c. Support international students*

International students take some time to tune/adjust; academic support is important to do it successfully (Kelly, 2009). Intercultural difference awareness helps all (including staff) to provide effective support for this. Academic, pastoral and front-line support should be provided, with clearly communicated office hours indicating staff availability outside timetabled sessions. The induction program has to incorporate activities which explain differences in educational culture such as: referencing styles, critical analysis and reflection (Heffernan et al, 2010). Students also need clear guidance on the parameters of the programme and a clear understanding that deadlines are non-negotiable.

Important actions include to make sure that students meet colleagues from the relevant support services; give students a tour of support services; consider developing a student buddy system; offer front-line staff training opportunities to understand the specific needs of international students better. At this point, a clear development of the module structure also assists where aims, learning objectives, teaching approach, assessment are clearly defined supporting students' learning environment.

### 5d. *Collaborate with national or/and international partners*

Bringing people from industry as guest speakers in class sessions or/and working with international partners is beneficial for all students' learning providing research opportunities as well; Additionally, sharing of knowledge & experience of experts, awareness of different corporate cultures of international companies assist towards the direction of becoming open and international oriented. The challenge is time constraints so that to build these collaborations. Another challenge is that working with colleagues at overseas institutions is important to understand very well the educational background and context of those international institutions and these links should be embedded within departments rather than based on personal only networks ; the challenge though for this activity is budget constraints.

### 5e. *Encourage or organize overseas visits*

Overseas experiences have a powerful impact on personal and academic development (Nilsson, 2000). Such experiences can help students to move from a parochial thought process to a more dynamic way of thinking and add to students' employability prospects (Huang, 2011). Usually this takes place with internship research projects where students can do research in companies in abroad. When planning overseas trips instructors should think how the visit will benefit students and colleagues both in terms of subject knowledge and intercultural development. During these trips, it helps creating various links with areas or the organisation that are visited.

### 5f. *Make use of development opportunities for staff*

Participating in discussions about internationalization (Biggs, 1997), learning from experts, attending training programs by people who have already internalized curricula has benefits for staff development. key areas of development may be considered: inter-cultural competence, international perspectives and other

Activities towards this direction include attending conferences or/and other events with international foci/global dimension; make proposals for appointing staff who can broaden the international knowledge. I personally attend conferences and other activities and publish research on these areas o intercultural development as well as my subject knowledge & expertise is on all the above

### 5g. *Internationalizing curriculum and student employability*

This is not a step, but an issue I consider when develop a module/curriculum. Internationalizing curriculum means resulting in graduates who think globally (Elkin et al., 2008), respect international diversity (Killick, 2008); students have to communicate effectively across borders, to understand international business practices, to be coss-cultural aware. Such graduates are better prepared for employment in contemporary firms (Bremer, L. & van der Wende, 1995, Goodman, 1999; Jones & Killick, 2007; Rudzki, 2000; Sangari & Foster, 1999). Avila (2007) supported that studying international and cross-cultural topics in a business program is of critical importance for "professional success" (p. 408). Employers' requirements are almost consistent across countries (Leggott & Stapleford, 2007), and it is known that many business graduates aspire to work abroad (de Wit, 2002); business graduates require international and cross-cultural knowledge and skills (Jones & Killick, 2007; Killick, 2008). Internationalized curricula are delivered to domestic, as well as, foreign students and should in principle be equally relevant for both groups (Elkin et al., 2008). Considering the above, while international the business curriculum /module, my actions regard selecting module themes of interest for the current business world (e/g Risk & Crisis Management); challenging all students to think globally while sharing their experience in class discussions, assignments challenging them to view this experience as case study exploring different perspectives and international implications; develop mainly coursework assessment challenging students to develop arguments for areas of their interest when go back home or work

overseas; supporting them with announcements and links about student or/and professional membership in professional bodies (e.g CIPD, CMI etc)

Finally, regarding challenges when internationalizing a curriculum, we should consider a) critical decisions: whose knowledge will be included in the curriculum and how to teach and assess learning? These,  to a certain extent, are predetermined by the discipline, b) institutional mission, ethos, policies and priorities will also influence approaches taken to internationalization of the curriculum, c) the local context, the social, cultural, political and economic conditions will also provide opportunities and challenges for internationalization of the curriculum, d)  accreditation requirements may require a focus on local legislation and policy, e) The national and regional context will also influence the options available to internationalise the curriculum. Factors such as the home country language(s), the academic reputation of the national higher education system and the size of the country (Teichler, 2004) will all have an impact. So, besides the steps that someone follows, also, the above factors challenge further.

### 3. A Broad reflection

A more comprehensive approach to internatiolization is needed (with focus on quality and value) enabling all staff and students to have an internationalized experience, whereas one important dimension of this is the  internationalization of the curriculum as the way global understanding, mindset and skills to be developed. Because there are many who perceive the context of internationalization differently, and, express their thoughts using wrong language (language also expresses mindset), inappropriate use of words shows lack of understanding. So,  a better conceptualization of what is the *quality* (?) and which is the *value* (?) *of internationalization* is needed to be clarified and justified so that gaining the right understanding, then to use the right wording, and then, to think, plan and move on having the 'right focus on the right direction' . However, I am concerned about two issues which may challenge for further research:

a) The target is our students to develop 'global mindsets'; however, the term international and global mean the same?

According to Rezaei.et. al.,2018), globalization in higher education has two meanings: The commercial one where globalization is a one-way economic and cultural communication where a dominant economy influences the culture of other economies; globalization of higher education is affected by the process of being McDonald. In this context, internationalization is a creative and deliberate action for sharing the assumptions and dominant patterns. Researchers, and educational institutions play an independent role in knowledge production reproducing and adapting their products to their own needs. The second approach is called 'globalizing'; this is the result of the evolution of human social life strengthening interactions among societies and cultures. Hence, globalization is unification and single polarization of the world, globalizing is dissonance and multi-polarization of the world. Internationalization reflects economic, cultural, scientific, and political transactions based on consensus and interactions among nations. So, internationalization is same as globalizing, but it is different from globalization. One end of the spectrum is globalization and the other side is internationalization. Internationalization of higher education regards mutual exchanges, is consensus-based, a pre-planned process including teaching, research, and services in higher education and  internationalization of the curriculum regards the distribution of the academic curriculum and its products beyond national borders contributing to development of international knowledge, skills, and values ((Rezaei, Yousef, Larijani , Dehnavieh., Rezaei,  Adibi, 2018).

 b) It is mentioned that the curriculum (IoC) is one dimension of the internationalized higher education aiming at the facilitation of intercultural learning (the term 'intercultural' serves 'international' but is it enough for being global?). Also, it is mentioned that the Higher Education Framework of

internationalization offers a guidance to be delivered *'a more global and inclusive learning experience to students'*, besides the overlap of the two terms 'global vs. international' showing confusion in perception and thinking, I wonder whether we can be considered internationals having applied the above. Agreeing on the point that the focus is more on the 'inputs' (what we consider important to be included in our curricula, practices etc.) than on the 'outputs'(what is produced' since nothing is mentioned 'how' we evaluate the extent of achieving being internationals or internationalized oriented knowledge institutions), my opinion is that *putting in, reacting on sth* are also important; we should not forget that - for some countries, systems, organizations, individuals- internationalization efforts include the concept of *reaction* towards competition or *adoption of trends* and does not necessarily mean action/behavior which expresses attitudes, values, beliefs, assumptions. I believe that comprehension serves cognitively the value and quality of internationalization to be understood , however, what is the most critical issue is people, organizations and knowledge based institutions besides this understanding, to have the 'international thinking' or 'global thinking' which is a further mental step; to believe and internalize the value out of it. So, having a comprehension of sth reflects attitude driven by this value or it may imply deeper understanding for acting better? I believe that achieving to adopt the value of internationalization in our 'value system' developing 'international thinking' (comprehension definitely contributes towards this direction) which will result in international attitude, this would help more. So, reflecting on this, I believe that the internationalization efforts it could be enriched considering the above. For example, when teaching the concept of internationalization in my classes, I plan many activities to facilitate my students' understanding, such as: I select many chapters from textbooks, international journal articles from authors from many different countries, I form groups with an international synthesis of students, I challenge students to share & reflect on their international experience analyzing international cases, examining ' role plays', addressing problems, inviting international speakers, etc., trying to comprehend 'what internationalization is and what its value', but, teaching without believing in this value what should mean?

*More far reaching curriculum reforms and innovative pedagogical approaches may be required to foster dispositions, values and skills with engaged global citizenship.* Research findings confirming that current efforts are still not enough, show also that a more fundamental change is required across all aspects of higher education in terms of institutional culture, ethos and values (Gorard,, Smith, May, Thomas, Adnett, & Slack, 2006). Caruana and Spurling (2007) reviewing research on internationalization in higher education, claim that an '*infusion' approach to curriculum design not only takes account of cultural pluralism in the selection of course content (De Vita et al. 2003) but also encourages staff and students to think critically about their own values and biases which, they say, 'engenders 'inclusive strategies' and flexibility allowing for negotiation of assessment tasks between students and lecturers and the 'linking' of assessments*' (Caruana & Spurling 2007, p. 65).

Caruana, (2009) argues that focusing on generic graduate attributes for employability purposes this would result in unintentionally detracting institutions from a needed more-reassessment of practices, purposes, principles required by diversity. Such reassessment regards the deconstruction of our conceptual understanding of issues such as critical thinking or/and critical literacy in developing a curriculum which incorporates various perspectives and gives the space to cross cultural obstacles & boundaries by the deployment of threshold concepts in learning and teaching strategies. Although this facilitation of border-crossing might seem somehow strange to some educators in higher education, it is supported that the best way forward is through an evidence-based and research-informed approach to curriculum design rather than a 'best-practice checklist' approach. In times of uncertainty and changes, it is required a pedagogy to view 'mind as constructor' that focuses on the knowledge construction ability and interaction with the world than to have a pedagogy with a 'container ' view towards the mind where

possession of knowledge and skills assumes the ability to apply, transfer and manipulate them (Su, 2008). Also, developing a 'pedagogy of recognition' embracing the idea 'being with the world' will deconstruct people's understanding of critical thinking processes addressing 'how' we students can be engaged students with texts and theories so that to create the right place for the examination of multiple perspectives which construct, than reproduce, knowledge (Caruana, 2009). So, all these elements and approaches have to be reflected in a comprehensive framework for internationalizing Higher Education.

Finally, besides more comprehensive approaches and importance of inclusivity & sharing of experience in learning and teaching, it is also important to be explored even more,  further ways of widening *participation* and *diversity* which would result  in even more innovative teaching, a source of different knowledge, an enriched social and cultural environment and improved learning outcomes for all.

*Culturally responsive teaching can make sure that domestic and international students have chances to interact, to develop sense of responsibility towards themselves & others, and, develop self-efficacy and resilience they need to live and work in diverse learning environments.* I agree that these skills are important for preparing students through a teaching approach & philosophy which should reflect international and intercultural values as well as intercultural knowledge for culturally informed responses and effective communication with diverse students. Inclusive teaching and learning should take place where pedagogy, assessment and curricula are developed and take place to engage students in accessible, meaningful, and relevant learning to all.  It regards individual differences and individual as the source of diversity which enriches learning and lives of others (May, & Bridger, 2010). All academic staff should contribute to designing, developing and delivering modules or programs to be *integrated* in line with the values and context of the curriculum inviting students to interact, exchange with others. So, *the* teaching and learning processes in whole including *the way we invite students to learn, the way/s we assess that learning., and,* ways of engaging students towards learning are important.  The internationalization of IoC is a journey for the staff, as well as, they have the chance to learn more, to challenge, to practice theory , however, it is not enough to develop a global mindset when institutional cultural climate or discipline cultural values might reflect behaviors and mentalities perhaps not in line with this internationalization spirit of staff, Institutional cultural climate influences values and  behaviors. The macro and micro workplace culture influence staff and students.

*Often, IoC focuses more on inputs than outcomes* For me the important is not only 'what' HE institutions do, 'what' and 'how' design learning, teaching, assessment,  but 'what' the result is and 'how' it is evaluated: e.g what type of skills, attributes, values graduates develop. Activities, and other inputs that constitute an internationalization strategy become often the means towards achievement of goals that are 'left fuzzy' (Green, 2002). Killick (2008) argues that university education should be 'fit for purpose' in a globalising world, and a 'starting point' is evaluation of graduate attributes.

*The emphasis that is placed in various dimensions of IoC will reflect how the institution, discipline policy makers conceptualize internationalization*. External drivers towards change (for example, supply and demand, legislation and directives,) as well as internal drivers (for example, restructuring) are defined as influencing the successful embedding of approaches towards student diversity and internationalization in general (May & Bridger, 2010).  I believe that the way an issue is understood/perceived, then, it is rational in such context to be reflected in policies and practices. However, we all know that institutional cultural values and organizational climate in general, influence policies, behavioral patterns, and way of thinking as well. So, I believe choices, priorities of what should be emphasized in a curriculum do not regard only what is understood , what has been comprehended, but, also  what the institutional strategy, politics, institutional values and climate prioritize and in which way these can be implemented.

*More collaborative & comparative  research would assist to a better understanding how knowledge is constructed ; how professional practices differ in other cultures; and how students' holistic experience can promote intercultural learning alongside their disciplinary area* I believe that since internationalization in higher education requires being open, inclusive, culturally interactive, sharing & challenging assumptions and dominant practices, encouraging mutual exchanges (Rezaei, Yousef, Larijani , Dehnavieh., Rezaei,  Adibi, 2018), collaborative and comparative research where scholars from all over the globe work towards a common goal, contributes a lot to internationalization through the process of networking, exchanging knowledge and inter cultural perspectives. Also, testing & elaborating existed research approaches & results incorporating inter-cultural issues and knowledge; developing new theories through an intercultural awareness reaching valid results with international implications; sharing practices and methodologies thus experiencing a common understanding of knowledge construction. In this scholar exchange knowledge and work process, our students can actively contribute to this through sharing & reflecting their experience and cultural perspectives assisting the learning environment to be enhanced, inclusive, more collaborative (student-student, students-instructors-scholars)   assisting all to get a better inter and cross cultural awareness.

*Regarding higher education evaluation, the position in global rakings='the new currency of quality'. It is based on the number of international staff and students, number of international exchanges, number of international joint publications. However, these can be considered merely as prerequisites for the university developing international outlook. It has to be integral to the strategy for achieving institutional goals.* I agree that evaluation results build the institutional international outlook and look more as prerequisites for being considered as international;, the value of internationalization should contribute towards the vision of the institution and should be part of it; there should be an internationalized policy with clear objectives justifying also 'how' internationalization is integrated in the strategic plan of the institution, as well as,; internationalization in the internal quality assurance system of the institution to utilize approaches such as internationalization benchmarking, peer learning and networking as part of its improvement strategies. Internationalization effectively integrated into its organization and decision-making structure, it enables the coherent implementation of all elements related to institutional Internationalization: Vision,1) Policy 2) Realization 3) Improvement strategy

*How internationalization.  happens in practice: new conceptualization, understanding about the quality and value of internationalization to be generated.* Better understanding helps for appropriate actions. Wrong perceptions or lack of deep understanding or/and a 'local' than 'international' approach towards perceived values and practices instead of a critical and comparative perspective of worldwide perspectives lead to inappropriate set of standards for selection of practices and actions. Explore, understand, adopt, and share.   Decisions, policy making, curriculum, practices to reflect in practice the right, commonly agreed international values. Teaching, research, institutional collaborations can assist towards this direction. So, I agree that it is important to be shared and perceived correctly by all involved parties (policy makers, institutional leaders, tutors, scholars, students on an international basis) a common, deep,  understanding of 'what' is the context and 'the values' of internationalization, 'which' are the educational and pedagogic practices to reflect the above, all to perceive these in the right way, so that all to speak the 'same language' and exchange mutually agreed practices. However, this can be taken place to some extent because considering that some viewed internationalization as a reaction of universities to the process of globalization (Van der Wende 1997; Qiang 2003) designed to meet the challenges posed by the globalization of economics, societies and human resources (Van der Wende 1997) by considering national identities and cultures as main elements of higher education internationalization (Qiang 2003). Qiang maintained that we cannot describe internationalization in all countries homogeneously, as the process is influenced by history, culture, resources and different concepts from

place to place; internationalization influences academic programs and the student body and creates new administrative structures (Stromquist, 2007).

*A more comprehensive framework for institutional benchmarking is called for.* A comprehensive framework leads to better, clear and correct understanding which contributes to correct decisions, design & application of appropriate practices assisting knowledge-based institutions to compete each other on standards which are clearly defined, understood and agreed. However, I believe that a conceptual framework should be needed to specifically and clearly define the links between the university internationalization areas and strategy development as well as to be used for assessing universities' current internationalization processes and generating new strategies (Onise, 2015). Iinternationalization is now perceived as one of the main parts of university life, and one which brings many benefits, considering that the strategy is properly set and executed. (Onise, 2015). Adams (2001) presented the positive sides of internationalization such as giving more educational choices to learners, encouraging traditional institutions to introduce innovative in context ideas & projects, supporting home education systems to be more competitive and providing home institutions the chance to generate more income and explore new sources of funding. However, in order all these to be achieved, there has to be a good understanding; comprehensive and conceptual framework to be developed to assist. Research

Caruana (2009) at a UK university shows  that adopting learning and teaching strategies which would encourage students to challenge the cultural bias in discipline knowledge construction valuing qualities (e.g. critical thinking and empathy) considering  many different perspectives, is shown that efforts to apply those strategies are dogged by feelings of uncertainty and lack of confidence. In a similar way, evidence from other Universities (e.g. the South Australia University), which has developed a comprehensive internationalization information toolkit assisting educators in developing learning outcomes with reference to many different cognitive and attitudinal levels of cross-cultural engagement, seems that this continues to be a significant challenge; maybe these toolkits provide a good contribution to supporting curriculum change in the field of internationalization as they support better comprehensiveness.

*The HEA international framework offers a guide to University program leaders, and tutors seeking to deliver a more global and inclusive learning experience; it provides a structure to university to benchmark their position against other HEIs.*  I believe that the HEA Framework guides, challenges and contributes towards the understanding of the nature and importance of internationalization facilitating high education institutions to develop the right programs, curricula, learning & teaching approaches so that to become competitive.

The concern of a more flexible curriculum that responds to the needs and expectations of the diverse students addressing the challenges faced by local and global communities will help to ensure a more grounded approach. As the nature of internationalization is a creative one, based on mutual exchange of knowledge and assumptions,  as well as, it is dynamic in process addressing changes and incorporating inter cultural elements on a continuous basis, flexibility instead of rigidity is of critical importance ; a curriculum which is addressed to students of diverse background, experiences and needs should be open to incorporate all these experiences, to include elements that are of an international interest, so, it has to be flexible so that to be continuously inclusive and dynamic serving common values and addressing the needs and interest  of all.

As Warren (2002) stated  regarding the integrated approach 'It targets all students and assumes that 'students bring varying cognitive, linguistic, knowledge and cultural resources to the learning situation' and that they need to be guided to 'develop the critical and communicative skills and conceptual repertoires that will enable them to deal with academic tasks' ( p 87).

4. Conclusion

Reflecting on all the above steps and reflections, and considering that internationalization of the curriculum is the process of incorporating international, intercultural and global dimensions into the content of  it as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods (Leask, 2015), the structure of business management module/s (learning objectives, content, types of assessment, sources) are designed in a way where international issues and approaches are considered in every part. Especially with regard to student assessment, considering language constraints of international students and differences in educational experiences a) various types of assessment are defined giving equal opportunities to all to perform well without the anxiety of exams time constraints and without the stress of language difficulties to express their thoughts in an exam setting;  coursework assessment is suitable for PG studies and assist knowledge enhancement; variety of assessment parts contributes to a more fair and objective assessment while students' performance improvement is supported by received feedback for each assessment part . Continuous feedback is provided in different styles assisting students to experience sharing of information, feedback, support and guidance. Closing, I agree that although there are some good efforts till now towards internationalizing Higher Education, however, a more comprehensive framework would have added value.

## 4.1 Contribution, limitations, recommendation for further research

The main contribution of the present work is that reviewing critically the literature on internationalizing the curriculum, it provides a practical guide regarding the required steps that need to be followed in order a HE curriculum to become international. This helps educational leaders and educational decision makers to understand what is important to be considered when they plan, organize, design and implement activities for internationalizing a curriculum. Also, the present study challenges that a more comprehensive framework is needed towards internationalizing the curriculum.

The main limitation of the present work is the methodological approach as this study is mainly focused on a critical literature review. An empirical study with international research findings from different educational systems and practices would assist to broaden our knowledge on possible additional factors that might be important to be considered for designing and delivering even more successfully international curricula.

Regarding recommendations for further research the present study , besides the need for an international empirical study, also recommends that further research is needed to explore the context of those specific curriculum reforms and innovative pedagogical approaches which can foster dispositions, values and skills with engaged global citizenship, as well as, how these reforms and approaches can be applied in practice so that to respond efficiently & effectively to needs of international students. Finally, the study recommends that in order higher education to develop global citizens a global and open mindset is needed by the educational leaders & decision makers as well as educators. On this basis, further research is recommended exploring the role of mentality, perception & biases of leaders, decision makers, educators when plan, organize, implement, follow specific steps in practice in order to internationalize the curriculum

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