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Internationalization of Higher Education in Ethiopia: Evidence from Public and Private Institutions

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Abstract

The changing landscape of higher education over the last few decades has brought to the fore internationalization as one major manifestation of the educational systems of both developed and developing countries alike. This change has mainly been driven by such factors as the globalization of the labor market, the augmenting mobility of students, the growing research and teaching cooperation being forged among higher education institutions, and the commercialization of higher education. As part of this global development, the Ethiopian higher education system has in the last decade begun to exhibit some features of the emerging internationalization of higher education. The major objectives of this study were thus to: identify which aspects of internalization are dominant within the Ethiopian Higher Education Sector; outline the rationales, benefits, risks and barriers of internationalization; examine national and institutional frameworks, policies and regulations that promote or hinder the internationalization of higher education. The subjects of the study were nine public institutions and six private institutions. The research used both primary and secondary sources of data. A questionnaire was used to explore the major elements of internationalization within the Ethiopian higher education sector. A focused group discussion was further held with subjects of the study to explore matters in greater details. Important policy documents and regulations were also consulted towards the same end. The major findings and conclusions of the study are discussed together with their policy implications with the hope of elucidating current patterns and trends of internationalization in the Ethiopian higher education context.

1. Introduction

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The changing landscape of higher education over the last few decades has increasingly brought to the fore internationalization as one major manifestation of the higher education systems of both developed and developing countries alike. This change has mainly been driven by such factors as the globalization of the labor market, the augmenting mobility of students across the globe, the growing research and teaching cooperation among higher education institutions and, the commercialization of higher education (Kreber 2009; Jiang 2008; Sorenson 2009; de Wit 2009).

As part of this global development, the Ethiopian higher education system has in the last decade begun to exhibit some features of the emerging internationalization of higher education. Unfortunately, there is little or no research that documents this growth in a manner that elucidates current patterns and trends of internationalization within the Ethiopian higher education sector. Hence, the need for this study.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The major objectives of this study are to:
  a) identify the dominant aspects of internationalization within the Ethiopian Higher Education Sector;
  b) outline the rationales, benefits, risks and barriers of internationalization as perceived by the sector;
  c) examine national and institutional frameworks that promote or hinder the internationalization of higher education;
  d) explore the existing regulatory frameworks for internationalization;

1.3. Research Design

This research used both primary and secondary sources of data in meeting the objectives set above. The subjects of the study were 9 public and 6 private institutions.
A questionnaire was used to explore the major elements of internationalization within the Ethiopian higher education sector. A focused

group discussion was further held with subjects of the study to explore matters in greater details. Important policy documents and regulations were also referred towards the same end.

1.4. Organization of the Study

This study report is organized in four major parts. The first part introduces the overall design of the report. The second part presents the theoretical framework of internationalization. The third part outlines the major findings of the study while the fourth part offers the summary and conclusions of the study.

2. Internationalization of Higher Education: Theoretical Underpinnings

The growing body of literature on internationalization addresses the various issues that exhibit its major features, challenges and opportunities, and the policy frameworks that either promote or hinder its growth. This section of the paper outlines the major theoretical underpinnings related to the concept of internationalization.

2.1. Internationalization and its Major Manifestations

As a new feature of higher education driven by (and contributing to) globalization, internationalization has, in the last two decades, increasingly assumed growing importance and a dominant position in the higher education arena all over the world.

Traditionally, the concept of internationalization has mainly embodied such engagements as faculty/student exchanges, student and staff mobility, and inter-university partnerships in such areas as research and other projects (Bashir 2007). As a manifestation of such features, internationalization has been considered as old as the very essence and creation of universities.

Over the years, the traditional conceptualization of internationalization has shifted to a more comprehensive one. Internationalization is now widely understood to mean "the process of integrating an international, inter-

cultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of tertiary education" (Knight 1994). In terms of specific activities, it comprises one or a combination of the following (INQAAHE 2010:6):

- the international movement of students between countries;
- the international movement of academic staff and researchers;
- internationalization of higher education curricula in order to achieve better understandings about other people and cultures, and competence in foreign languages;
- international links between national states through open learning programs and new technologies;
- bi-lateral links between governments and higher institutions in different countries for collaboration in research, curriculum development, student and staff exchange, and other international activities;
- multi-nation collaboration such as via international organization or through consortia;
- export education where education services are offered on a commercial basis in other countries; and
- convergence of systems and international recognition.

Among others, the features defining the growing trends in internationalization of higher education around the globe have been reflective of the above list of activities. These major areas of activities are outlined below with brief descriptions that indicate in what ways they may exhibit the features of internationalization.

2.2. People Mobility

This form of internationalization is exhibited in such various forms as student and staff mobility, study abroad and student exchange. Although the mobility of students and staff has always been regarded as an aspect of university life for centuries (INQAAHE 2010), the mobility of students to foreign countries in search of education and training is now identified as the fastest growing element of internationalization of higher education (IAU 2003). The movement has been financed mainly through direct aid to higher education by donors, and through students themselves who are

increasingly ready to pay for international educational services from local resources (World Bank 2010).

Such countries as the US, few European countries and Australia are among the leading countries in terms of attracting students from all over the world. Among the 85- 90 % of all foreign students whose destinations in 2002 were OECD countries, only 5 countries received 77% of all students. These countries were United States (33%); UK (13%); Germany (12%; Australia (10%); and France (9%) (Vincent- Lancrin: N.D). The countries that are well known in sending students to these recipient countries are mostly from the Asian continent. This trend which is already a dominant feature of cross-border higher education is still expected to grow in the future. OECD and the World Bank (2007), citing the Global Student Mobility 2025 Report, note that the demand for international education will increase from 1.8 million international students in 2000 to 7.2 million in 2025.

2.3.   Program and Institution Mobility

Although of recent origin (Cf. Stella 2006), next to student mobility, program and institution mobility are regarded as the most common features of internationalization (OECD 2004). It should, however, be noted that the popularity of program and institution mobility may depend on the geographical location of institutions. For instance, South Asia, Sub- Saharan Africa and Francophone countries are notable for their limited participation in the internationalization of higher education (Bashir 2007).

While partnership between the provider institution and the local institution can take commonly known forms as branch campus, joint degree, twining, franchise, etc. program mobility can be exhibited through a variety of partnership arrangements made between institutions of provider and recipient countries or through education provided on-line and/or distance mode. The provision of education through on-line modality and distance education which do not necessarily require institutions to have physical presence in the host country is considered to be key area for new developments in the future (IUA 2003).

2.4.   Teaching and Research Collaborations

Another important aspect of internationalization is the teaching and research collaborations initiated among higher education institutions. At the faculty level, such activities "range from personal experience to participation in conferences and networks, to short-term or long-term appointments as visiting researchers or instructors "(Dewey and Duff 2009: 494).

2.5. Internationalization of Curricula

Internationalization could assume a domestic dimension whereby students are helped to develop international and intercultural skills without leaving their countries through the international and intercultural dimensions of curriculum (Stella 2007). This has now become another major manifestation of the internationalization of higher education, and is regarded as an essential aspect of 'internationalization at home'. An internationalized curriculum is understood as 'a curriculum which gives international and intercultural knowledge and abilities, aimed at preparing students for performing (professionally, socially, and emotionally) in an international and multicultural context' (Nilson 2000).

2.6.Rationales for Internationalization

There are a variety of rationales that account for the increasing prominence of internationalization of higher education across the globe. At the broader level these rationales may be subsumed under what Knight (2004) calls political, academic cultural, social, and economic rationales.

2.6.1.Economic and Political Rationales

As noted by Knight and de Wit (1995) such rationales as technical development, potential investment in future economic relations, and the need for graduates with global skills, and income generation through internationalization are regarded as the major economic reasons that drive internationalization. Educational cooperation realized through scholarships and cultural and academic agreements between countries are also

considered major vehicles for future political relations. The political rationale is thus about achieving national security, stability and place through internationalizing (de Wit 2009).

2.6.2. Cultural/ Social and Academic Rationales

Such important goals as the creation of better awareness of others' culture and the development of the individual through international academic exchange are widely considered essential ingredients of the cultural/ social rationales for internationalizing. Providing international dimension to teaching and research, strengthening institutional structures and activities through links with others, and enhancing the quality of education and research are, on the other hand, considered to be academic rationales that dictate the need for internationalizing (Ibid). The latter mainly relate to achieving the goals of meeting international standards while the former is more about understanding others' culture and language.

Knight (2004 as cited in Agarawal, et al 2007) also identifies rationales for internationalization at the national level as human resources development, strategic alliances, commercial trade, nation building, and social and cultural development. In similar vein, international branding and profile, income generation, student and staff development, strategic alliances, and knowledge production are identified as rationales at institutional level (Ibid).

Concurrent with the above broad rationales are specific objectives that institutions wish to achieve while planning to engage in internationalization activities. According to IAU (2003:8), the major reasons for internationalizing of many of the world higher education institutions (in descending order of importance) are:
- mobility and exchanges for students and teachers
- teaching and Research Collaboration
- academic Standards and quality
- research projects
- cooperation and development assistance
- curriculum development

- international and intercultural understanding
- promotion and Profile of institution
- diversifying source of faculty and students
- regional issues and integration
- international student recruitment
- diversifying income generation

2.7.   Benefits and Risks

The growth of internationalization of higher education has brought with it additional opportunities and risks for stakeholders and countries at large. True, internationalization of higher education assists in broadening access and satisfying the demand for foreign qualification. Such aspects of it as program and institution mobility are advantageous in reducing the number of students travelling abroad and reducing brain drain (Bashir 2007; Ziguras 2007). OECD and IBRD (2007:12) note that "Cross-border education can typically help to expand quickly a tertiary education system and to increase the country's stock of higher skilled human capital". Internationalization supplements deficiencies in areas where local universities may not have the capacity to offer academic services at such levels as masters and/or PhD. Furthermore it can afford local higher education institutions the intellectual enrichment and stimulus to their academic programmes and research (Stella 2007). The concomitant result has been the creation of capacity both at the institutional and the national level.

The findings of IAU (2003) indicated that the most frequently cited benefit of internationalization as perceived by universities across the globe is 'human development' as contrasted with 'economic development'. When mapped against the four broad rationales discussed earlier, it may be evident that the academic rationale explains the most important benefit when it comes to institutional benefits within the higher education sector as compared to economic, political, and/or social/cultural rationales.

The level of importance ascribed to the variety of benefits that come through internationalization may, however, differ from region to region. While the improvement and/or attainment of high academic standards and quality

was noted as the most important benefit for Europe and the Middle East, this element does not appear in the top three list for Asia, North America or Africa (IAU 2003:9).

Despite its benefits, internationalization also accommodates risks which at times are sources of suspicion towards the variety of activities it embodies. The major risks of internationalization as identified in the IAU (2003) study were: brain drain, loss of cultural identity, commercialization or commoditization of education, threat to quality of education, and delivery of academic programmes in languages other than the local one. In a similar vein, the major risks cited by Bashir (2007) and OECD and World Bank (2007) include: "the negative effects of competition with domestic institutions; influx of low quality foreign providers; and increasing inequality in access to higher education".

It is widely argued that internationalization can aggravate the loss of intellectual and professional resources in the form of brain drain leading to further marginalization of developing countries (Singh 2010). The unequal relationships between North and South universities due to the difference in institutional, national and regional capacities are sometimes taken as examples of neo- colonization of the higher education systems of universities in the South that have little say on such issues as curriculum, quality standards and many other educational elements (Singh 2010; Jiang 2010). The commoditization of higher education through such arrangements as treaties under GATS is also interpreted as giving more places to the interests of the most powerful higher education systems and corporate educational providers deepening inequality and dependence (Jiang 2010). Internationalisation is further considered to create hegemony of the English speaking countries by leading to the abandonment of writing and publishing in indigenous languages which eventually marginalizes local scholarship and studies (Wai Lo 2009; Deem et al 2008 in Wai Lo 2009). Another area of risk that is identified with internationalization is poor quality of education offered by transnational education providers. As a result, transnational education which is an element of internationalization has received a significant mistrust due to the suspicion that it is operated by low-quality providers that focus on revenue generation alone (Stella 2007).

2.8.   **Barriers to Internationalization**

There are a variety of factors that pose serious challenges to the success of efforts to internationalize higher education. These factors include resource short falls, lack of financial facilities, marginalization of weak institutions, administrative difficulties, lack of efficient coordination, and insufficiently trained staff (Sorensen 2009; IAU 2003). At global level, the study made by IAU (2003:14) indicated that the major obstacles identified by universities around the world are (in their order of priority):

- Lack of policy/strategy to facilitate the process of internationalization;
- Lack of financial support;
- Administrative inertia or difficulties;
- Insufficiently trained or qualified staff to guide the process;
- Increasing level of competition among HEIs;
- Issues of non-recognition of work done abroad;
- Lack of reliable and comprehensive information;

2.9.   **Strategies of Internationalization**

The successful implementation of internationalization requires the adoption of national and/or institutional policies that enhance its existence and sustainability. Internationalisation is regarded as both a matter of strategic action and organizational adaptation as it is increasingly becoming dominant in international, national, and institutional documents and mission statements than ever (Frolich 2006; Agarwal, et al 2007).

National government policies which are considered to be critical in promoting internationalization efforts (Cf. Teichler 2004) are increasingly becoming common practices in many countries. However, the regional difference in terms of setting policies is remarkably noticeable. Such countries as the US and Europe are known for clear, forward looking policies and strategies concerned with global competition, competitiveness and dominance, while countries in the Southern hemisphere lack such policies and/or have policies which are at their embryonic stage (Agarawal 2007).

According to Kim (2006), the British Government set a target in 1999 to have 25% of the global share of higher education students which gave the impetus for universities to act in the desired direction. In the same vein, in 2002, South Korea developed a major strategy for the internationalization of higher education which set a target to increase the number of foreign students and foreign academic staff to 17% in the public sector, and 30% in all higher education institutions (Ibid). A variety of reasons have also encouraged governments in OECD countries to develop policies towards the internationalization of higher education (Kim 2006).

Equally important is the need for policies and strategies at institutional level. Knight and de Wit note that "internationalization needs to be entrenched into the culture, policy, planning and organization processes of the institution so that it is not marginalized or treated as a passing fad" (1995: 20). Among the organizational strategies that are considered to be important for internationalization are: commitment and support from top management and critical staff, the presence of an international office for coordinating activities, funding, policy, incentives, formal communication channels, annual planning, budget and review process. This requires thinking at system level with the intention of creating a supportive culture within institutions that would ensure the sustainability of internationalization efforts. This may be realized through a system that treats internationalization as a cyclical activity with the intention of creating a supportive culture.

Diagram 1: Internationalisation Cycle
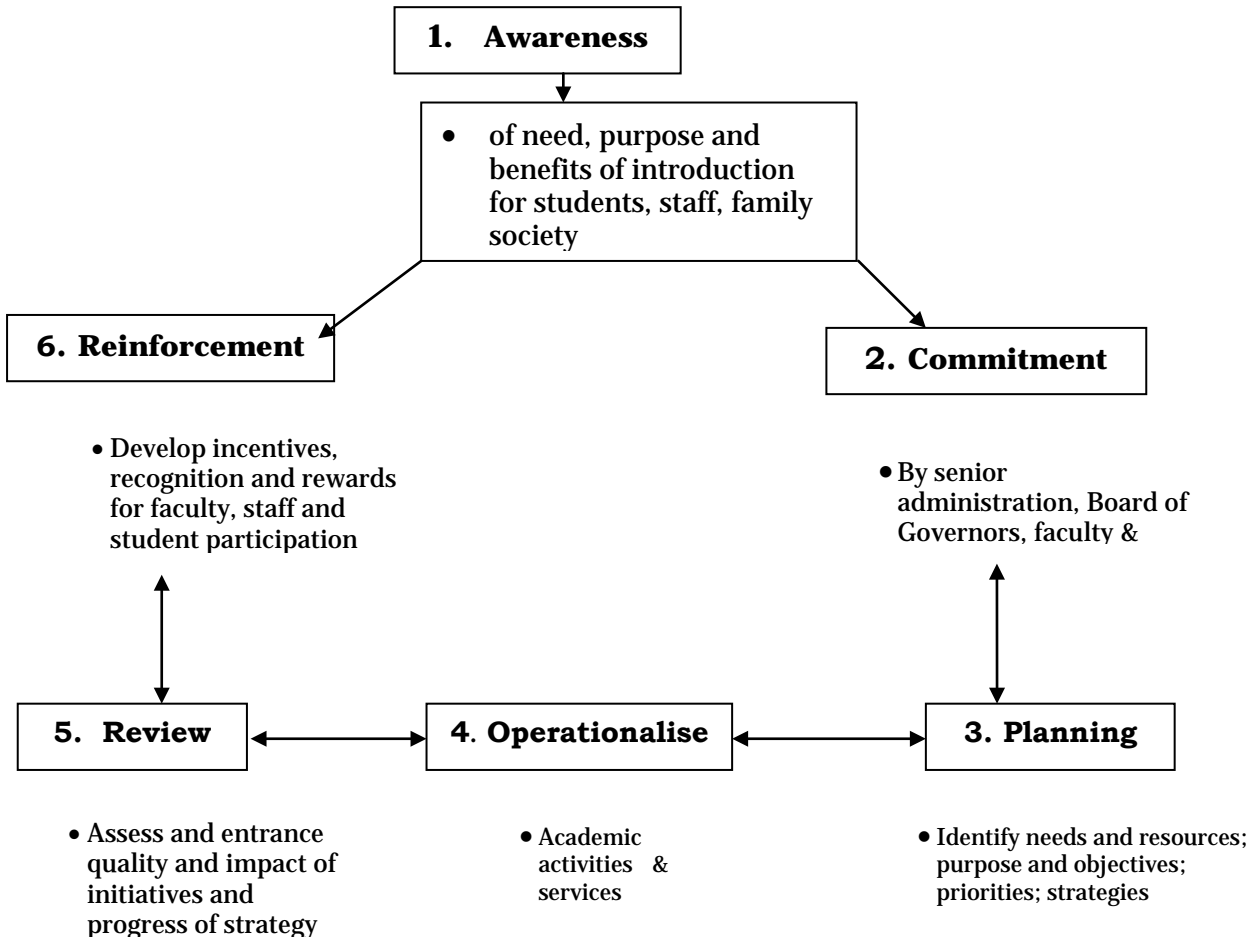
*Source: Adapted from Janet Knight (Nd) "Internationalization: Elements and Checkpoints (*www.cbie-bcei.ca)

2.10. Regulatory Framework for Cross-border Higher Education

The growth of cross-border higher education (CBHE) which is an element of internationalization has put quality assurance under new scrutiny (OECD and World Bank 2007). Such new developments within CBHE as e-learning,

for-profit providers, joint campuses, branch campuses, transnational consortia, etc, are challenging existing national QA frameworks and requiring new efforts for consumer protection (OECD 2003). However, the availability and enforcement of laws governing cross-border education in many countries leaves much to be desired.

Though not abundant, there are efforts made in international circles, in provider countries and recipient countries to develop the needed regulatory frameworks that can respond to the various concerns related to cross-border higher education.

One major means of addressing the acceptance of qualifications obtained through cross-border education is what is known as academic recognition of qualifications and equivalence arrangements made in many countries.

Due to its newness and the possible dangers associated with rogue providers, the need for some form of registration and quality assurance of cross-border education providers is widely felt. The most-oft cited international and non-binding standard in cross-border education has been the guideline developed in 2005 by UNESCO and the OECD. The guideline calls for a comprehensive and transparent system of registration or licensing; establishes the need for developing quality assurance capacity; and emphasizes the need for consultation and coordination amongst the various competent bodies established for quality assurance.

Some countries exporting cross-border education have also developed binding guidelines for their providers operating offshore (Ziguras 2007), as have some recipient countries which are institutionalizing mechanisms for registration and assuring the quality of foreign providers operating within their borders. Accreditation of foreign providers which is practiced in some countries is another mechanism used to regulate performance in this direction. A research made by the Center for Educational Research and Innovation at the OECD indicated that existing national frameworks of quality assurance, accreditation and recognition of qualifications in higher education are, in many cases, as yet insufficiently geared towards addressing cross-border provision (OECD 2003).

3. Methods and Results of the Study

3.1. Objectives

As noted earlier, this research was conducted to meet the following major objectives:

a) To identify which aspects of internationlisation are dominant within the Ethiopian Higher Education sector;

b) To outline the rationales, benefits and risks of internationalisation as perceived by sector representatives;

c) To examine national and institutional frameworks that promote or hinder the internationalisation of higher education;

d) To explore the existing regulatory framework for transnational education.

3.2. Survey Design

3.2.1. Sample Institutions

Nine public universities and six private universities were selected as samples of the study. The public institutions chosen were AAU, Adama, Arbaminch, Bahir dar, Gonder, Haromaya, Hawassa, Jimma, Mekele. The private institutions were Admas, Leadership, New Generation, SMUC, Sri Sai and Unity University.

The selection was purposive pertaining to the institutional experiences and involvement in internationalization.

3.2.2. Respondents' Profile

Each institution selected a representative to fill in the questionnaire and participate in the focused group discussion and/or interview held. The profile of the respondents varied in terms of experience, qualification, and position they assumed within their respective institutions.

Diagram 2: Respondents' Qualification
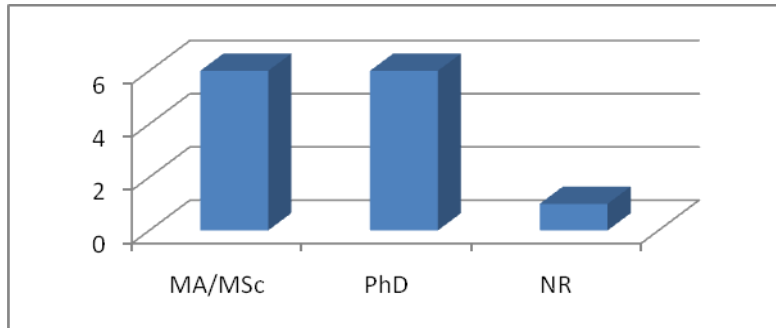
A significant %age of the respondents have their post-graduate degree with significant years of experience in teaching.
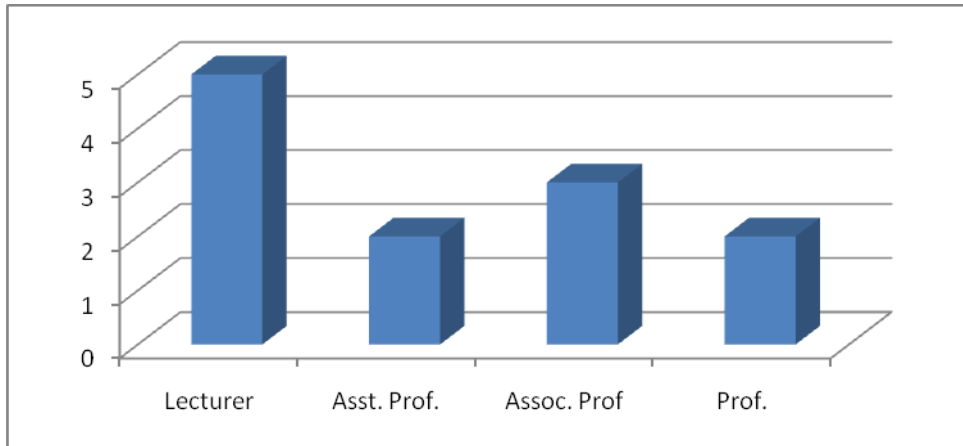
Diagram 3: Respondents' Teaching Experience
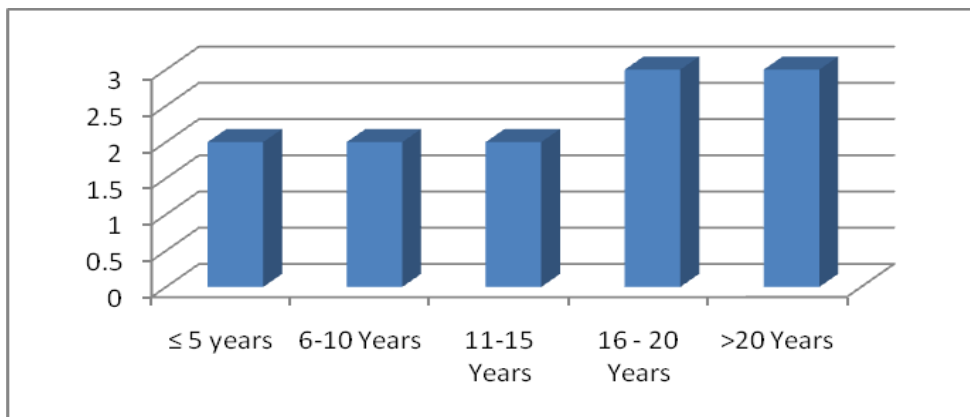
The respondents' academic rank also indicates that they currently assume lecturer to professorship positions though those in the lecturer category are dominant.
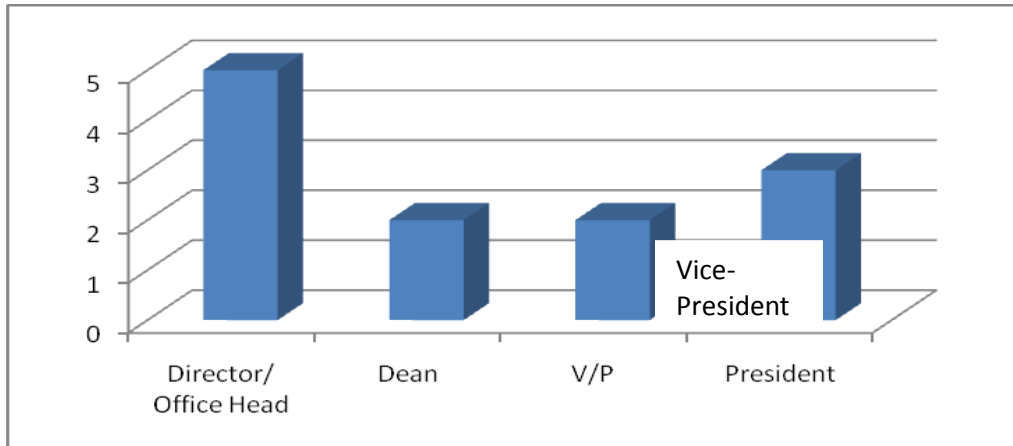
Diagram 4: Respondents' Academic Rank

The position the respondents assumed within their institutions also differed from director to president as may be shown in the diagram below.

Diagram 5: Respondents' Position

3.2.3. Data Collection Tools

Questionnaire and focused group discussion were employed as principal data collection tools. The questionnaire was an adaptation of a similar instrument used by the International Association of Universities (IAU) to gauge the internationalization activities of universities at global level.

Additional checklists were developed by the researcher for the interview and focused group discussions.

4. Major Findings of the Study

On the basis of the objectives set, the results obtained are presented below.

Level of Importance given to Internationalization

One major interest of this research has been to discover how important Ethiopian HEIs consider internationalization to be.

### Diagram 6: Level of Importance given to Internationalization
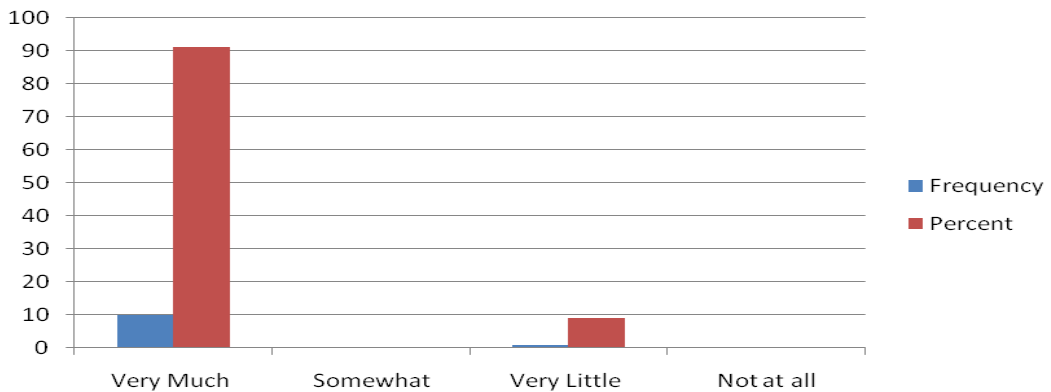
The findings indicate that both public and private HEIs ascribe a high level of importance to internationalization. The explanation for this level of importance might further be gleaned from the motives institutions identified as driving their internationalization efforts.

4.1. Rationales for Internationalizing

The motivations that drive the majority of our HEIs to involve in internationalization activities are revealing as may be discovered from the diagram below.

Diagram 7: Major Reasons for Internationalization of Higher Education
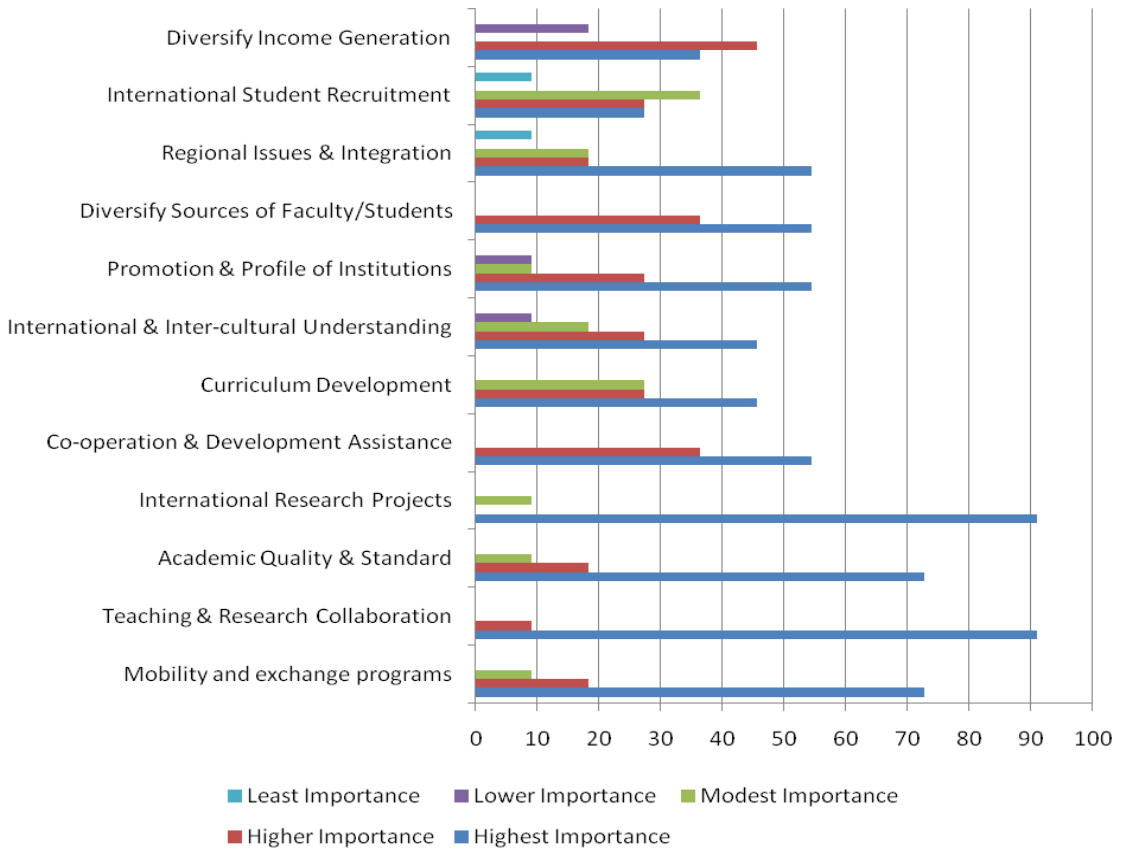
The above findings indicate that, among the various motivations for internationalization, the dominant reasons relate to teaching and research collaborations, international research projects, academic quality & standard, and mobility and exchange programs. The sample HEIs underscored that internationalization provides them the opportunity for all these to happen.

The responses given by sample HEIs given to an open-ended question on the purpose and main objective of internationalization bears similar results as may be evidenced in the table below.

Table1: Purpose and Objectives of Internationalisation in studied HEIs

Name of Institution	Purpose and Main objectives of Internationalisation
Hawassa	• To help develop connections, partnerships & mutual understanding with outside communities, groups and organizations
Haromaya	• To enhance quality of education and research work • To learn from experiences of other HEIs & improve service delivery • To benefit from staff student exchange programs • To undertake joint research programs • To mobilize funds for research work
Jimma	• Strengthening teaching, research and extension through partnership and collaboration
Adama	• To exchange professional and for technology transfer
Arba Minch	• Creating international relations, academic competence and research collaboration
Gonder	• To enhance the accomplishment of the university's five year strategy in quality education, research and community service
AAU	• Mobilize resources, diversification, capacity building, collaboration and partnership
Admas	• To enhance the link between the University College and other international higher education institutions

Source: Author's Compilation from data obtained through questionnaire

As may be gleaned from the findings, the dominant rationales at broader level relate more to academic as compared to economic, political and/or cultural rationales. This may be a reflection of the capacity building needs of our institutions which are in the midst of aggressive expansion. Such issues as international student recruitment and regional issues and integration which appear to be dominant features of HEIs in the North do not yet appear to be operational agendas for Ethiopian HEIs.

The findings discussed above corroborate with the study made by International Institute of Education (2011) which found that Ethiopian HEIs want to attract US scholars to engage in joint research and academic

collaboration, to bolster cultural, language and knowledge exchange, and to help their institutions become more globally competitive.

4.2.   Major Manifestations of Internationalization in Ethiopian HEIs

The research sought to explore the major aspects of internationalization as exhibited in the internationalization efforts of Ethiopian HEIs and how much each of these activities are considered to be important.

Diagram 8: Degree of Importance Assigned to Aspects of Internationalization
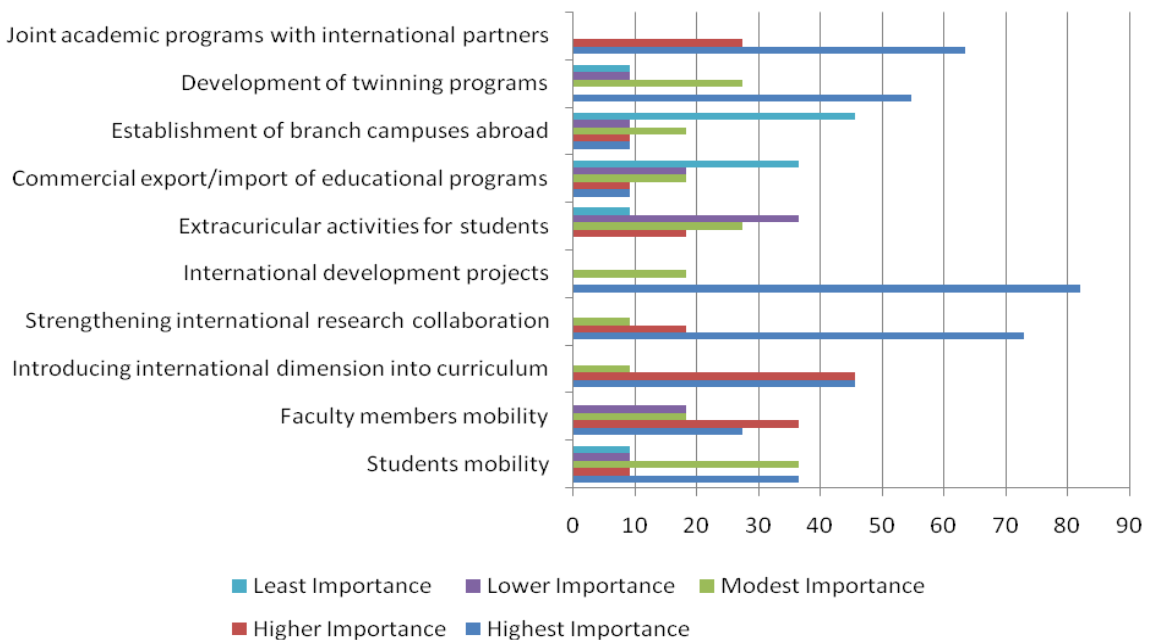

Among the variety of internationalization activities identified, the highest level of importance is accorded to international development projects, strengthening international research collaboration, and joint academic programs with international partners. The response to an open-ended question which asked sample HEIs to list the existing partnership schemes they have bore similar results as indicated in the table below.

The above findings mesh with the findings of IIE (2011) where academic publications and collaborative projects in the professions were identified as the most frequently cited areas of potential collaboration between US and Ethiopian institutions. Such ventures as establishment of franchise campuses abroad and commercial export/import of educational programs are not, however, yet high on the agenda of Ethiopian HEIs. Similarly, at regional level IAU's (2003) findings indicated that African institutions rated research and development projects top of the list, concurring with the results of this study.

Respondent institutions were further asked to state if they have any geographic priority in their internationalization efforts. The geographic origin of existing partnerships were sought both at regional and country level.
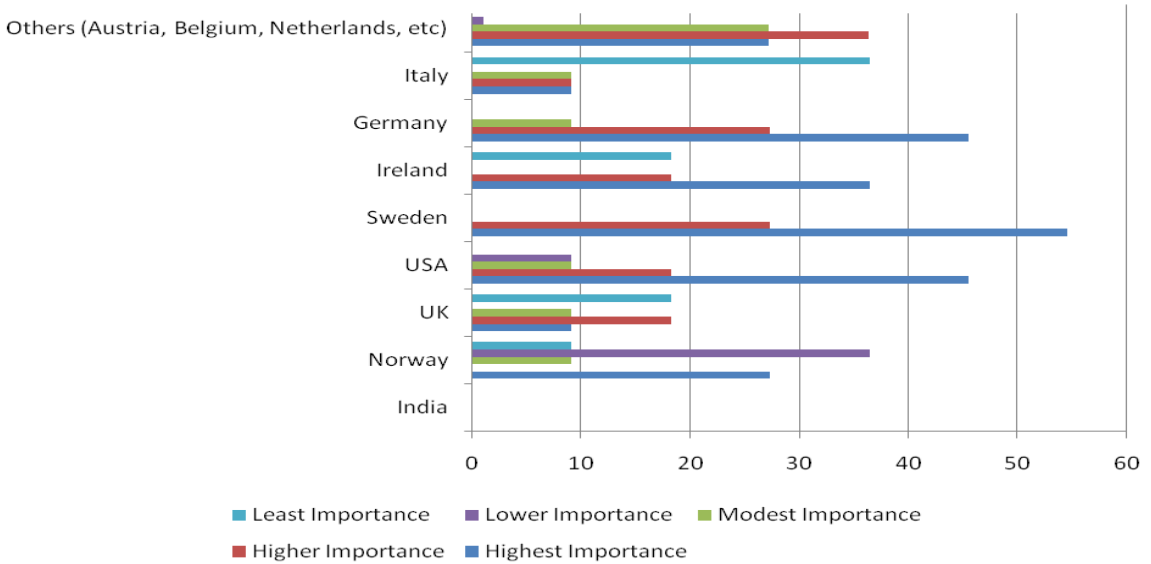
Diagram 9: Geographic Priority of Internationalization Strategy
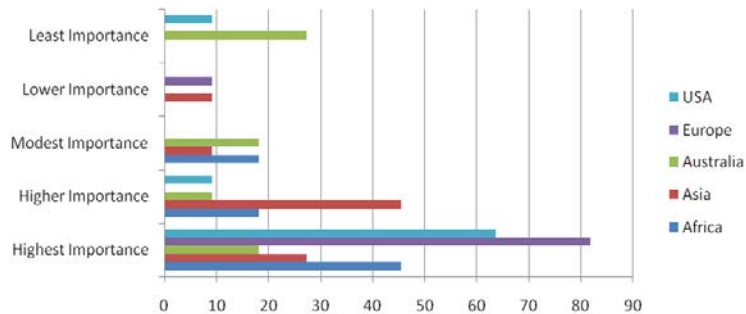
At continental level, the three top priorities (in descending order) appear to be the US, Europe and Africa although this priority should be expected to change at the level of individual institutions.

*Diagram 10: Geographical Origin of Major Academic Partnering Institutions*

At the level of individual countries Sweden, USA and Germany take the lead.

UK does not appear to be in the leading groups- perhaps an indication that UK universities have to do a lot in this regard. What drives these particular geographic choices at regional and/or country level is not clear requiring further research on the area.

A further attempt to explore if the internationalization efforts of Ethiopian higher education institutions were more directed at chosen disciplines and/or programs revealed additional results.

Diagram 11: Degree of Internationalization of
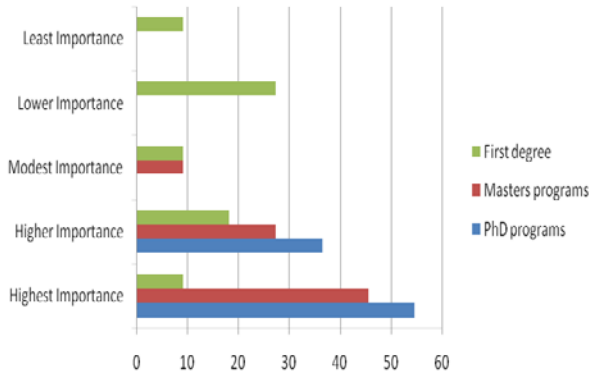
In terms of academic programs and disciplines, the degree of internationalization exercised at Ethiopian HEIs is still indicative of their embryonic stage. Accordingly, the highest importance in terms of the degree of internationalization is given to PhD programs and Masters Programs in that order where there are recognizable deficiencies in terms of having qualified people.

**Diagram 12: Degree of Internationalization of Academic Disciplines**
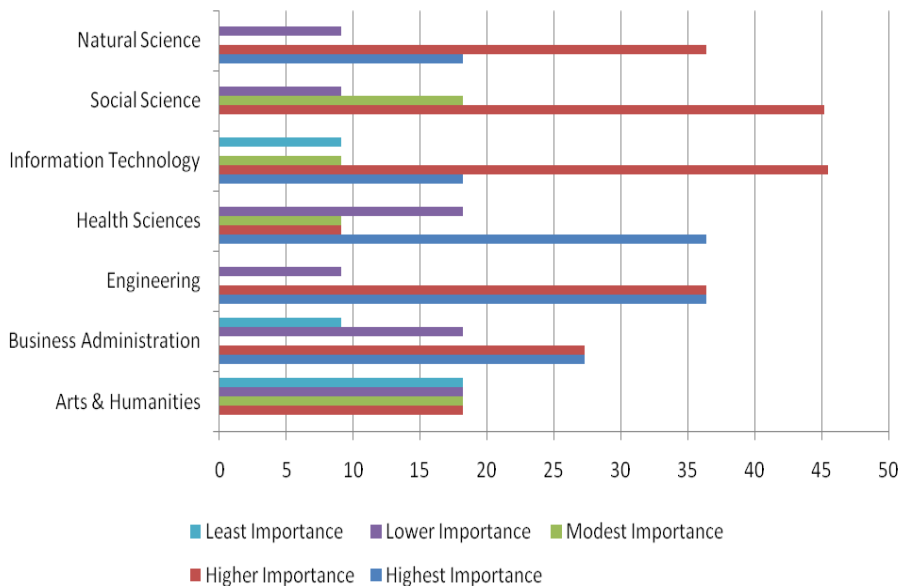
In terms of academic disciplines, such areas as Engineering and Health Science take the lead. These are areas where the system's deficiency is noted and assistance is widely sought (cf. MoE 2008). The interview with HERQA's Director also ascertained the fact that cross-border higher education is mainly encouraged in Ethiopia due to its potential to fill in the existing void in the areas where the higher education sector is deficient.

4.3. Benefits and Risks of Internationalization

Respondents were further asked to identify what they consider to be the major benefits and risks of internationalization. The results obtained are briefly discussed below.

The results pertaining to benefits indicate that the majority of respondents perceive teaching and learning, student and teacher development, and standards and quality to be the major benefits of internationalization. This concurs with IAU's (2003) finding where 'human development' was found to be more important as compared to 'economic development'. Such areas as cultural awareness and competitiveness are given least importance indicating the level of priority attached to them within the Ethiopian higher education sector.

**Diagram 13: Major Benefits of Internationalization**
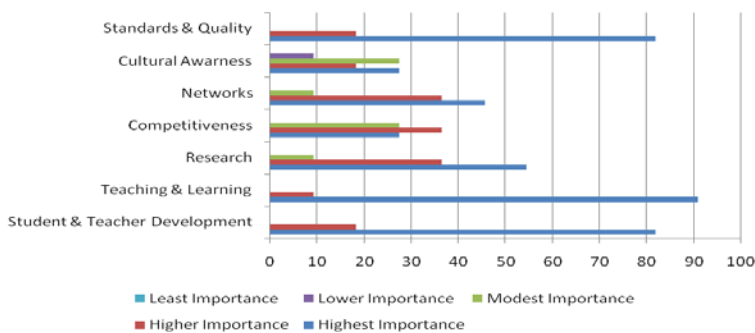
The major risks associated with internationalization are brain drain, increased costs and loss of cultural identity. The first two reasons were repeatedly emphasized during the focused group discussion. This is

contrary to IIE's (2011) finding where the risk of scholars' non-return was not mentioned as a potential hindrance.

Diagram 14: Risks of Internationalization
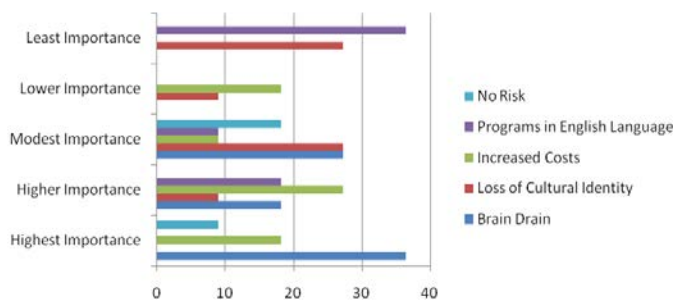
4.4. Policies, Institutional Frameworks and Regulatory Regimes

4.4.1. Policies and Strategies

The data obtained through the focused group discussion, interview and questionnaire indicated that there is lack of clear policies and strategies on internationalization both at national and institutional level.

Although the lack of policies at national level is discernible, it should also be noted that some policy documents indirectly refer to the needs for activities pertinent to internationalization. Article 25.5 of the Higher Education Proclamation (2009), for instance, states the need for developing a Research & Innovation Fund both through local and foreign sources. In a similar vein, one of the responsibilities of the Higher Education Strategic Center, (HESC) has been stated as fostering "cooperation among national institutions, and maintain contacts with institutions of other countries which are in charge of issues of higher Education" (Articles 90.12).

Furthermore the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) since 2010 has been encouraging international collaboration between Ethiopian and foreign institutions. ESDP VI is especially very strong on this and sets specific targets for the types of efforts to be made by Ethiopian HEIs:

- Share of joint academic programs with international partners will be 10 %;

- % of foreign staff will increase from 8% to 10%;
- Share of joint research programs undertaken in collaboration with non-Ethiopian universities will be 20%.

The specific strategies set to accomplish the above targets are also identified as:

- Preparing and receiving approval for a national policy and strategy on higher education internationalization;
- Establishing national unit or body for marketing, monitoring and evaluating internationalization of Ethiopian higher education;
- Developing and implementing strategy for attracting foreign students including through border universities and branch campuses;
- Supporting teaching staff to undertake exposure visits and students to engage with international exchange programmes.

The above looks a significant move from earlier practices although how much these plans will be translated into reality is yet to be seen.

Currently institutional policies and strategies at the sample HEIs do not seem to have been directed at internationalization as such. Most often, they fall under what institutions call 'partnership schemes' which are usually stated in the missions, strategic plans and directions of the sample institutions studied. The following two examples from Adama University and St. Mary's University may highlight the case.

> Enhance links with national and international universities, research institutions, industries and the private sector to address quality of education, good governance, and cross-cutting issues, such as safe environment, gender and special needs students, and HIV/AIDS (Taken from the Mission statements of Adama University)

"Enhance link and partnership with local and international institution" (Strategic Direction 6 of St. Mary's University)

4.4.2. Institutional Frameworks

Although the lack of clear policies and strategies at institutional level is observable, in most of the institutions there are offices and a budget line

allocated for the purpose of promoting internationalization activities. The following table summarizes the situation at the sample institutions.

Table 3: Availability of Office and Budget in Sample HEIs

No.	University	Responsible Office	Budget
1	AAU	External Relations Office	Birr 14,963,250
2	Adama	Office of International Relations	—
3	Admas	V/P for Business Development	Birr 140,000
4	Arba Minch	Corporate Communication Directorate	—
5	Bahir Dar	Vice President for Information & Strategic Communication	—
6	Gonder	—	—
7	Haramaya	Office of External Relations	Birr 200,000
8	Hawassa	Corporate Communication and Marketing	NR
9	International Leadership Institute	Internatinal Office	NR
10	Jimma	Office of External Relations	Birr 350000
11	Mekelle	Corporate Communication and Marketing Office	—
12	SMUC	Office of Outreach Services	Birr 400,000
13	Sri Sai	—	USD 12,000

4.4.3. Regulatory Regimes

As noted earlier, one major means of addressing the acceptance of qualifications obtained through cross- border education is what is known as academic recognition of qualifications and equivalence arrangements made in many countries.

In Ethiopia such an arrangement has been in place for many years now. This function has for too long been performed by the Ministry of Education which has developed a list of institutions from all over the world to provide equivalence to degrees obtained abroad. For institutions which are not listed, the Ministry has the experience of gathering information about their accreditation status at their respective countries (through Ethiopian Embassies and other means) after which the equivalence may be granted. This allows graduates to be accorded the status and benefits given to local qualifications at a similar level. Employers (especially those in the public sector) usually request for equivalence of qualification for employment and promotion purposes. As stipulated in HEP 2009, the role of developing guidelines on and determining the equivalence of higher education

qualifications is now given to the Higher Education and Quality Assurance Agency (Article 89. 14) which has been performing these functions in the last few years.

4.4.4. Accreditation of Cross-border Higher Education

In Ethiopia, the role of accrediting cross-border education providers is also relegated to the national Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency which is entrusted with the task of supervising the quality and relevance of higher education provided by any institution (HEP 2003). The Agency is given the mandate "to ensure that foreign institutions or their branches operating in Ethiopia are accredited in their country of origin and comply with the relevance and quality standards set by the Proclamation" (Article 89.12). The Agency is also given the role of collecting and disseminating information about the status, standards, and programmes of study offered by foreign institutions (Article 89.13). HERQA currently publishes the list of institutions providing CBHE and avails the same information on its website.

In a position paper it developed on Cross-border Higher Education in 2008, HERQA identifies the development of this form of provision as an area of concern for the government, HEIs, student bodies, accreditation bodies, employers and the public at large. The position paper established the need for the Ministry of Education and HERQA to work together in setting up a legal framework that would facilitate the operation of cross-border education providers in Ethiopia. This has lately culminated in the development of Guidelines for the Accreditation of Cross-border Higher Education in Ethiopia (HERQA 2011) which outlines the need and conditions for quality assurance and accreditation of CBHE.

In stating the needs for the guideline, HERQA (2011:4) notes the following:

Recently, the number of local and foreign HEIs applying to engage in cross-border higher education (CBHE) especially at Master's degree level has increased. In addition, there is increasing need for qualified personnel capable of implementing the Growth and Transformation Plan of the country. The Agency therefore, with the aim of meeting the needs of its

stakeholders, has developed these guidelines for the accreditation and quality assurance of CBHE.

The purposes of the guideline have also been identified as

- Providing a framework for quality provision in CBHE;
- Protecting students and other stakeholders from low-quality provision and disreputable providers;
- Enhancing the development of quality cross- border higher education that meets the nations human, social, economic and cultural needs;
- Supporting and encouraging international cooperation and enhancing the understanding of the importance of quality provision in cross-border higher education; and
- Providing a scheme of application, accreditation, monitoring and evaluation of programs delivered by a Foreign Higher Education Institution overseas through CBHE (HERQA 2011:6-7).

The guideline requires that foreign institutions must subscribe to some conditions before they operate within Ethiopia. This, among other things, includes the condition that their programs must be accredited in their country of origin; and they must subscribe to the rigors of the quality assurance schemes laid down by the Agency.

In terms of program and curriculum standards, foreign providers must ensure the relevance of their programs to Ethiopian customers; degrees awarded in Ethiopia should be equivalent to those awarded in the provider country; and the foreign institutions should ensure academic standards and quality of learning opportunities.

Foreign institutions are also required to meet such financial requirements as having the right working capital and tangible assets as required by the relevant regulation for foreign investment in higher education (Ibid:10). Such institutions are also required to have the appropriate facilities and environs to run their programs as stipulated by HERQA.

The guideline identifies what it calls the Branch Campus Model, the Franchised Model, the Twinning Model and the Distance learning Model all of which should be accredited by HERQA before the commencement of

academic operations. In reality it is the distance learning model that seems to be dominant in Ethiopia now followed by the Branch campus model.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This research was conducted to identify the major manifestations of internationalization in the Ethiopian context. It specifically focused at outlining the rationales, aspects, benefits, risks, policies, strategies and institutional frameworks pertinent to the internationalization efforts of nine public and six private higher education institutions selected as samples of the study. The results obtained through questionnaire, interview and focused group discussion indicated a variety of patterns and features.

It has been found that the sample HEIs consider internationalization as an important activity for the purposes of teaching and resource collaborations, international resource projects, academic quality and standards. The manifestations of internationalization in the sample institutions appears to be in the areas of international development projects, strengthening international research collaboration, and joint academic programs with international partners.

The overall benefits of internationalization as identified by sample institutions relate to facilitating teaching and learning, academic standard and quality, and student and faculty development. Such concerns as brain drain, increased costs and loss of cultural identity are identified as major risks of internationalization.

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following conclusions and recommendations may be offered:

1. In most of the sample universities studied internationalization is more of an ad hoc activity and less of an organized and carefully administered component of institutional activities. This is evidenced through the lack of pertinent national educational policies and strategies that address the issue. It is thus high time that these deficiencies are rectified through governmental and institutional efforts and benchmarking of foreign institutions.

2. The need for improved communication and knowledge management system pertaining to internationalization is widely felt especially at the bigger universities. The lack of information on who is doing what seems to pervade most of the HEIs studied. Our HEIs should thus seek ways of addressing these challenges by creating institutional arrangements for the initiation, organization and dissemination of their internationalization efforts.

3. The need for improved performance in managing signed MoUs, selecting partner institutions and forging relations that lead to mutual benefits is widely felt. This again requires setting institutional priorities and making organized moves in the direction of envisaged objectives.

4. Above all, the need for resources, support and strategic direction both at national and institutional levels should be given a serious emphasis if Ethiopian higher education institutions are to perform well on international fronts.

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