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MANAGING INTERNATIONALIZATION OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

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ABSTRACT

University education is the most powerful land critical success factors for individuals and the society. As such universities contributes to the attainment of an efficient global knowledge and economy. One sure way for the universities to achieved the efficient global knowledge and economy is through internationalization. Therefore, this paper examined the concept of university education and internationalization of university education. Also, the paper looked at models of internationalization of university education and the economic rationale for internationalization of university education. It equally discussed the approaches for managing internationalization of university education for economic recovery and the impact of internationalization of university education for economic recovery from two dimensions. Finally, it recommended that internationalization of university education should be encouraged more in Nigeria.

Keywords: Managing, internationalization, university education, economic rationale, economic recovery**.**

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INTRODUCTION

University education as the peak of institutions of higher learning has a major role to play towards the attainment of knowledge economies that encompasses an appropriate economic and institutional regime, a strong human capital base, a dynamic information infrastructure and an efficient national innovative system. Besides, national governments are looking up to universities

to provide the much needed highly skilled human resource to meet national needs and in contributing to an efficient innovative system.

Furthermore, for Nigeria and Nigerians according to Mukoro (2023) to be able to function in the 21st century world of global knowledge and economy, her universities must be responsive to change and innovations going on in the approaches to the provision and delivery of university education. He stressed that new universities are increasingly required to provide education that fosters global knowledge, skills and languages in order to perform professionally and socially in an international and multicultural environment. As such universities are much concerned about their reputation.

One sure way of achieving this may be through internationalization of university education. It is in this light that the National Universities Commission (NUC) created Offices of Internationalization and Development in Nigerian universities, the Directorate of International Cooperation and Liaison Services (DICLS) with the core responsibility of promoting and encouraging internationalization in Nigerian University System (NUS) and Strategic Advisory Committee (STADVCOM) with the mandate for internationalization of university education by promoting ICT-driven universities, fostering skills development and entrepreneurship, expanding access as well as addressing equity and gender issues as the present world was globally interconnected (National Universities Commission, 2018). The NUC, thereafter went on to invite Directors of Office of Internationalization and Development in Nigerian Universities to a retreat on internationalization of university education in Nigeria to sensitize them to take necessary steps to ensure that universities deliberately work towards internationalization by forging and sustaining international partnerships and linkages in universities towards global recognition, global competitiveness and strategizing plans on sustaining international best practices in Nigerian university system in the tripartite mandates of teaching, research and community service.

Internationalization of university education involves the incorporation of global, international, intercultural dimensions into goals, objectives, content and delivery of university education (Knight, 2015). It entails adding global dimension to universities existing teaching, research and service components. It refers to variety of policies and programmes that universities implement to attain international dimension of university education. In the case of the Nigeria university system, this may mean providing international programmes department, cross border education, effective synergy between national and international universities through collaboration and linkages that would lead to excellent teaching and research, and providing support for faculty to enrich the curriculum and harness untapped potentials. It may also include putting university resources into the establishment of programmes to ensure that most undergraduate students have a study abroad experience or that faculty engages in research with colleagues from outside Nigeria.

The importance of university education internationalization has been recognized by various experts, researchers and commissions. For instance, Vavrus and Pekol (2015) opined that integrating international dimension into university education is intended to help students to be more competitive in the global economy, faculty to develop a broader perspective on their disciplines, and the universities themselves to have an international presence, and financially self-sufficient. For example, in Canada, enrolment of international students contributed $6.5billion to her economy (Horden, 2012; Yesufu, 2018) that internationalization helps to seek financial incentives because of the reduction in the source of funding university education from the government. Internationalization makes it possible for universities to improve in the quality

of their academic and research programmes and internationalizes their curriculum, thereby increasing their patronage and improving their world class university status in the academic and industrial environment, nationally and internationally (Ho, 2017). It exposes students to international cultures, training and development as well as gives them access to educational curriculum that meet international standards to quality and content (Soria & Troisi, 2014). Against this backdrop this paper examined the impact of internationalization university education in Nigeria for economic recovery.

Concept of University Education

University is the peak of higher education. The university has been characterized as a place where inquiry is pushed forward and discoveries are verified and perfected and rashness and inoffensive nor capable of causing harm, while error is exposed by the collision of mind with mind and knowledge with knowledge (discourse IX as cited in Mafiana, 2017). In essence universities all over the world are accepted as citadel of learning and development of human resources. The entire intellectual and professional life of a country depends on sound university education that provides quality products (graduates) of international standard (Adeogun et al., 2009). The centrality of university in national development is incontrovertible (Ogbodo et al., 2013) According to them, the primary strategic mission of the university is to promote knowledge, provide vision and translate that vision into a reality via policies and actions (practices) which are purely quality oriented. Ogbodo (2006) posited that university education was meant to explore solutions to the country's problems and assist the larger society in achieving its objectives in the areas of human, social and economic development.

Concept of Internationalization of University Education

Internationalization means cooperating with universities in other countries to reform and modernize curricular and pedagogy (Schoole & Knight, 2013). According to them, it means delivering education to other countries using a variety of face-face and distance techniques and new types of arrangements such as branch campuses or franchises. They emphasized that international development projects or, alternatively, the increasing emphasis on commercial cross-border education is termed internationalization. Schoole and Knight (2013) concluded that internationalization is used to describe regional education hubs, zones, hotspots, education cities, and knowledge villages. They maintained that internationalization is expressed in a diversity of ways but a key principle is that it respects and is guided by local culture values and needs. In essence effective internationalization is considered to include inter cultural learning, creating classrooms, where true inter cultural learning can take place by integrating the cultural inputs of students from different backgrounds as a source of learning and make them view themselves as resources (Njuguna & Itegi, 2013). They noted that the focus of internationalization is to infuse an international dimension into the course content programmes and campus climate. It is a deliberate strategy designed to give universities an international dimension. de Wit et al., (2019, p. 2) highlighted and explained some of the main institutional and national trends in internationalization in tertiary education (university education inclusive) in the past decades. They are:

- A greater focus on internationalization abroad than on internationalization at home, with internationalization at home defined by Beelen and Jones in de Wit et al., (2019) as the

purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments.

- Approaches that are more ad hoc, fragmented and marginal than strategic, comprehensive and central in policies, with comprehensive internationalization described by Hudzik in de Wit et al., (2019) a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international, global and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire higher education enterprise.
- A greater interest in a small, elite subset of students and faculty than focused on global and intercultural outcomes for all.
- Being directed by a constantly shifting range of political, economic, social/cultural and educational rationales, with increasing focus on economic motivations.
- An increasing tendency to be driven by national, regional, and global rankings
- Little alignment between the international dimensions of the three core functions of tertiary education: education, research and service to society.
- Being primarily a strategic choice and focus of institutions of tertiary education and less a priority of national governments.
- Being less important in emerging and development economics and more of a particular strategic concern among developed economics.

Economic Rationale for Internationalization of University Education

Economic rationale can be viewed in terms of long term economic benefits in terms of exchange of skilled human resources (economic growth, labour market, trade, and so on) or short term financial benefits in the form of revenue generation from international students. It is one of the most important motives for all types of universities to get global (Abbas et al., 2018). Tagoe (2012) maintained that economically, the reason for internationalization of higher education may result in skilled human resource development required for international competitiveness of a country, or for direct benefits in the form of institutional income or net economic effect of foreign students. Qiang (2003) opined that the economic rationale refers to objectives related to either the long term economic effects, where internationalization of higher education is seen as a contribution to the skilled human resource need for international competitiveness of the nation and where foreign graduates are seen as keys to the country's trade relations, or the direct economic benefits, for example, institutional income and net economic effect of foreign students, among others. For example, Australia (with 600,000 international students), following graduation in any field of study students can work for two to four years and Canada, with 240,000 foreign students in 2011 offers flexible work permits for students. Furthermore, for Canada, these students contributed $6.5 billion to the economy (Horden, 2012). In the U.S. the 690.923 international students brought in $18.78 billion in the 2009-2010 (NAFSA in Zeleza, 2012). International students contribute over 30.5 billion dollars to the U.S. economy, they also contribute international perspectives through academic interactions with faculty members and peers and enhance their departments' academic reputations, rankings and global connections (Jacqueline, 2018).

Besides, domestic students who may not have opportunities to study abroad, finding having the presence of international students helpful since they enrich their learning experiences and develop their abilities in interacting with diversified individuals. In Australia, education has

become the country's third largest export industry earning the country $18.16 billion in 2009-2010 (Australian Government in Zeleza, 2012). According to Uche and Okon (2013) there are over 75,000 Nigerian students in Ghana spending about ₦160 billion yearly on education. This is even more than Nigeria's budget for education in 2011 and about half of the amount allocated to education in 2012 –₦400 – 15 billion. This is seen in Ghana annual budget to education in the last 10 years between 26% and 35%, which is in line with the UNESCO's stipulated target of 26% for education (Ojudu in Uche & Okon, 2013). On the average, the higher education sub-sector share has been about 12% of the total recurrent education budget (Baryeh, 2009). Some countries are establishing education hubs, which are designated regions, intended to attract foreign investment, retain local students, build a regional reputation by providing access to high-quality education and training for both international and domestic students, and create a knowledge-based economy (Tagoe, 2012). He clarified that countries that establish education hubs may include different combinations of domestic and international institutions, branch campuses and foreign partners. Examples are the Dubai knowledge village (International Academic City) launched in 2003 and has 20 international universities including Cambridge, Phoenix, Exeter, Cornell, etc. (Tagoe, 2012).

Approaches for Managing Internationalization of University Education

Activity Approach: This approach promotes activities such as faculty and student exchanges, technical assistance and curriculum development, which are usually distinct programmes in themselves (Tagoe, 2012). Knight in Doreen (2016) asserted that the activity approach shed light on the tangible and observable initiatives that constitute internationalization. Ahunanya and Igot (2013) averred that the activity approach appears to have been the most prevalent approach to internationalization of university education in the last century and it is still relevant as the incorporation of international dimension into specific educational activities will determine how far the products of the system can be globally acceptable. Knight and de Wit (2004) succinctly described the activity approach thus the activity approach describes internationalization in terms of categories or types of activities. These include academic and extra-curricular activities such as: curricular development and innovation; scholar, technical assistance; intercultural training; international students; joint research initiatives. This approach focuses exclusively on research activities and does not necessarily include any of the organizational issues needed to initiate develop and sustain the activities. It is this approach, however, which is most widely used in the description of internationalization. In this regard, Ekong (2018, p. 3) identified some educational activities amenable to activity approach to include the following: curricle development and exchanges, faculty exchange, technical assistance, Institutional linkages, International students study abroad, networking, development projects assistance, extended campuses and academic mobility

Competency Approach: Knight and de Wit (2004) clarified that the competency approach looks at internationalization in terms of developing new skills, attitudes, knowledge in students, faculty and staff. The focus according to them is clearly on the human dimension not on academic activities or organization issues. Qiang (2003) maintained that the issues central to this approach is how generation and transfer of knowledge help to develop competencies in the personnel of the university so that they become more internationally knowledgeable and inter-culturally skilled. He emphasized that in the competency approach, the development of internationalized curricula and programmes is not an end in itself but a means towards developing the appropriate

competencies in the students, staff and faculty. Qiang (2003) however, argued that while there is a growing interest in the competency approach due to the increasing orientation towards the demands and concern of the labour market, there is an urgent need for further applied research to identify those competencies which help students to be successful national and international citizens and to contribute to local and global wok environments.

Ethos Approach: The ethos approach to internationalization is an attempt to make more explicit in the culture of the institution the international dimension to the delivery of university education (Ahunanya & Igot 2013). They noted that the focus of this approach is on establishing an atmosphere, belief and distinguishing character that encourages and fosters the development of international and intercultural values and initiatives. This approach according to Qiang (2003) acknowledges that the international dimension is fundamental to the definition of a university or any other institutions of higher learning and believes that without a strong belief system and supportive culture, the international dimension of a university will never be realized. Bartell (2003) argued that an institutions artefact, values and beliefs and basic assumptions are very critical in sustaining internationalization. Institutions approach and recognition for internationalization is obvious in mission statements, motivation packages, administrative positions, international student user friendly websites (Siaya & Hayward, 2003).

Process Approach: The process approach claims that internationalization is a sustainable process of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the university (Knight in Delgado-Marquez et al., 2011). In much the same way, Ahunanya and Igot (2013) remarked that the process approach has as to control forms the integration of an international and/or intercultural dimension into academic programmes, as well as the guiding policies and procedures of an institution. The emphasis of the process approach is on policies and procedures put in place to encourage internationalization. This means that to properly integrate an international or intercultural dimension into teaching, research and community service of the university there should be a combination of a wide range policies, activities, practices and procedures.

Impact of Internationalization of University Education for Economic Recovery

In specific terms, internationalization of university education has positive impacts on economic recovery two dimensions such as:

Economy: One way to enhance the human capital stock of a nation is through the preparation of students with relevant skills that will equip them to become competitive at the international scale (The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2020). They noted that in the increasing globalized economy, many of the technical and socio-emotional skills required for higher paying salaries and for the enabling of innovation and entrepreneurship, receive a premium in the labour market, resulting in both higher incomes for individuals and better conditions for the establishing of innovation ecosystems attracting advanced human capital.

Furthermore, student mobility has beneficial effects on the economies of the hosting countries. In effect, foreign students are revenue generating as they usually contribute higher tuition fees, and as they purchase services and goods during their stay such as travel, accommodation, daily living expenses, telephone and internet services, health related expenses,

entertainment among others (Hawawini, 2011). In France the cost of the state of hosting international students was around 3billion euros, while the contribution of these students to the French economy was about 4.65billion (BVA-Campus France, 2014) as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: International Students' Spending in France

Monthly Expenses of International Students from France		
Housing and utilities	£383.15	41.60%
Daily living expenses (meals excluding resto II, clothing)	£202.84	22.00%
Entertainment (sports, social activities etc)	£100.07	10.90%
Transportation	£60.08	6.50%
Resto V (university cafeteria)	£55.99	6.10%
Miscellaneous expenses	£45.97	5.00%
Phone/Internet services	£23.34	3.20%
Health insurance	£25.90	2.8%
Other health – related expenses	£17.32	1.90%
Monthly total	£920.66	100%

Source: BVA-Campus France (2014). Beyond influence: The economic impact of international students in France.

Moreover, in the U.S during the 2017 – 2018 academic year, more than 1 million international students studying at colleges and universities contributed the equivalent of 34.7 billion euros to the national economy and supported more than 455, 622 jobs (https://www.nafsa.org/policy-and-advocacy/policy-resources/nafsa-international-student-economic-value-tool-v2). In Canada, the value of international education services in 2015 as measured by total spending by international student, (the equivalent of 8.4 billion euros), amounted to 12.5 percent of Canada's total service exports to the world. A year later, this value increased to 14.5 percent of Canada's total service exports (www.international.ga.ca/education/report-rapport/impact-2017/index.aspx?lang=eng). In Australia, in 2017, international education contributed over 32 billion Australians dollars (almost 20 billion euros) to the economy, becoming the country's third largest source of export revenues behind only iron ore and coal (www.universitiesustralia.edu.au/media-item/quality-central-to-australias-international-education-success-story/).

In 2008/2009 in the United Kingdom, the value to the country of education exports was estimated to be £14.1billion, with education related projects attracting a total of £9.6 million in Foreign Direct Investment, and with an estimated annual growth rate of approximately 4.0 percent per annum in real terms (UK Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2011). In this respect, Sajna (2019) maintained that bringing international students to the local classrooms for future learning will help in future cooperation and financial relation. Some countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia gain so much money from educating international students (Sajna, 2019). He stressed that the presence of international students is major part of the world's leading universities. The global population of students who are switching to other countries is increasingly working. This is probably why the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank (2020) averred that student mobility in positively associated with competitiveness. Thus, there is likely symmetrical link between internationalization and global competitiveness, as while foreign student, may seek competitive university education system, at the same time, an influx of foreign students is likely to improve the quality of domestic university education.

Employability through Skills Enhancement: The World Bank (2016) acknowledged the significance of socio-emotional "soft", "21st century" skills for employability as globalization, digitalization and the resulting rapidly-changing labour markets are changing both the nature of work and the skills required for entry to the labour force. According to the World Bank (2016) pushing this emphasis on the development of transferable, transversal, employability skills and employers are placing increasing importance on the possession of these skills in their potential employees are the widely expected outcomes of university education and internationalization can have a key role to play in increasing it. Elspeth (2019) identified clear connections between study aboard and the development of employability skills. Elspeth (2019) equally stressed that internationalization "at home" activities increase employability skills. In fact, the UK Higher Education International Unit and British Council (2015) listed the potential personal impact of internationalization on students to include (1) independence, (2) intercultural understanding (3) new social networks (4) self-confidence (5) interpersonal skills (6) interest in global affairs (7) re-evaluation of view of the global world and (8) change in values. Thus, being exposed to internationalized education can enable students to acquire these skills, thereby enhancing their employability (IBRD/WBE, 2020).

The IBRD/WBE (2020) stated that internationalization of university education can give the students the opportunity to build self-confidence, increase interpersonal skills and intercultural understanding, learn languages, build business networks, know more about themselves, and engage with the world beyond their countries' borders. These benefits of internationalization of university education can be seen as motivations for students, but also for nations, as it helps improving their young population skills and employability can be considered as investing in and raising the level of human capital. Internationalization helps faculty become inter-culturally matured through communication experiences with their peers from other countries and cultures. Internationalization efforts lead faculty to understand the importance of environmental, economic, cultural, and social interdependence among nations and, as a result, to strive to improve the academic skills essential for survival in an international environment and context (Mustafa et al., 2011; Knight & Dewit in Veysel, 2017).

The changing global academic environment requires both advanced and multifaceted skills (Vegsel, 2017). Vegsel (2017) stressed that the demand for field knowledge of other countries and foreign language proficiency is increasing in both academia and the market. Yeravdekar and Piwari (2014) stated that internationalization of university education help to developed key competitive and comparative skills formation as well as key skills required by employers across the globe. These competitive and comparative skills formation and the skills required by employers are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2: Key competitive and comparative skills and key skills required by employees

Key Skills Developed Thorough Internationalization	Key Skills Required by Employers
• Self-awareness, self-confidence, sense of identity, and personal independence • Being informed, greater interest in global affairs and cross-cultural perspectives • Organizational skills, project management, decision making, creativity and taking on responsibility • Vision, independence, experience, broader outlook and attitude	• Self-awareness • Initiative and enterprise • Willingness to learn • Planning and organizing • Integrity • Commitment/motivation • Problem-solving • Flexibility • Self-management

• Problem-solving, coping strategies and risk taking. • Patience, flexibility, adaptability, open-mindedness and humanity. • Team work and team leadership skills • Fluency, accuracy and appropriateness of language competence • Mediation skills, conflict resolution, sensitivity, humility and respect • Forging of relationships and networks • Challenges to personal sterotypes, cultural relativism • Enhanced intercultural communication, conducting business inter-culturally • Cultural empathy • Non-judgemental observation, respect for local values without abandoning one's own • Cultural understandings, ways of shifting and adaptation to complex cultural environments.	• Team work • Communication skills • Foreign languages • Networking • Leadership • Customer service • Interpersonal skills • Intercultural skills

Source: Yeravdekar, V. R. and Tiwari, G. (2014). International of higher education.

CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted the meaning of university education and internationalization of university education. It equally identified and discussed the models of internationalization of university education such as the import model, export model, academic joint venture model, academic partnerships model and the foreign campus model. Besides, the paper critically examined the economic rationale and the approaches for managing internationalization of university education for economic recovery. Finally, the paper discussed the impact of internationalization in university education for economic recovery with specific emphasis and on the economy dimension and employability through skill enhancement dimension.

Recommendations

The paper recommends that internationalization of university education should be encouraged the more in Nigeria, taken into consideration the economic rationale. This will definitely improve Nigeria's and the universities income earnings due to the revenue that will be earned for internationalization of university programmes. Furthermore, the Nigeria government and universities should work on the current university curriculum content to stress employability through skills enhancement. Nigeria government and universities should set up and discover inwardly the new technology the foreign universities are equipped with which can enhance the implementation of workable university curriculum.

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