

# Internationalization in Higher Education and Brazil as a Case Study

## *Internacionalização no Ensino Superior e o Brasil como Case Study*

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### ABSTRACT

The objective of this article is to make a diagnosis of internationalization of higher education institutions, HEI, using Brazil as a case study. The techniques of content and document analysis were used to analyze the data collected, with Atlas.ti software support. The comparison and qualitative understanding of internationalization involved three types of Brazilian Universities: a Private non-profit, confessional and philanthropic HEI; a Federal Public HEI and a Private HEI for profit. There are convergences between the interviewees' perceptions about the internationalization of Brazilian HEIs. However, there are peculiar perceptions regarding the types of HEI. In the public sector, the importance of data and internal policies in relation to internationalization has been leveled, not only by an international conscience, but by the influence of internal and external evaluations or rankings. The vision of the philanthropic IES specialist is that internationalization in Brazil has a long way to go, in the sense of being more widespread and of having universities working towards the real meaning of going international. It is perceived in the Private HEI, a greater direction for academic mobility actions, and that internationalization is being worked on in two well-categorized and defined ways: commercial and academic internationalization. The novelty of the study lies in the diagnosis and comparison of internationalization between different types of HEI.


Key-words: Internationalization, Higher Education, Brazilian Universities, HEI Classification.

### RESUMO

O objetivo deste trabalho é realizar um diagnóstico da internacionalização no ensino superior tendo o Brasil como *case study*. As técnicas de análise de conteúdo e documental foram utilizadas para analisar os dados coletados, com auxílio do software *Atlas.ti*. A comparação e compreensão qualitativa da internacionalização envolveu três tipos de Universidades Brasileiras: uma IES Privada, sem fins lucrativos, confessio-

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## RESUMO

nal e filantrópica, uma IES Pública Federal e uma IES Privada com fins lucrativos. Verificam-se convergências entre as percepções dos entrevistados sobre a internacionalização das IES brasileiras. Porém, há percepções peculiares no que tange os tipos de IES. No setor público, a importância dos dados e políticas internas em relação a internacionalização tem se nivelado, não apenas por uma consciência internacional, mas por influência das avaliações internas e externas (*rankings*). A visão do especialista da IES filantrópica é que a internacionalização no Brasil tem muito a caminhar, no sentido de estar mais disseminada e de se ter as universidades trabalhando na direção do real significado de se internacionalizar. Percebe-se na IES Privada, um direcionamento maior para ações de mobilidade acadêmica, e que a internacionalização está sendo trabalhada de duas formas bem categorizadas e definidas: a internacionalização comercial e acadêmica. O ineditismo do estudo está no diagnóstico e comparação da internacionalização entre tipos distintos de IES.

Palavras-chave: Internacionalização, Ensino Superior, Universidades Brasileiras, Classificação de IES.

## Introduction

Knowledge is produced collectively in the 21st century. Scholarships no longer arise from singular and isolated sources of deep knowledge, but from international partnerships, exchange communities and interdisciplinary conversations. The image of an isolated scholar theorizing alone is increasingly unusual. Knowledge comes to be understood as a form that flows quickly through systems, networks and borders. Students are expected to acquire skills that will allow them to access this flow of knowledge. Knowledge is most desired for what it can do not necessarily for what it is. Instead of the more traditional emphasis based on “what” is learned, today higher education is increasingly concerned with “how” things are learned. Knowledge production is also an active and applicable process that involves interconnections, plurality, relativity, collaboration and engagement with the world. Therefore, learning has become more collaborative, international and global (KAHN; AGNEW, 2017).

However, for Kahn and Agnew (2017), although the focus of learning has expanded and shifted to the learning process, higher education institutions (HEIs) have been slow to respond to this new reality. Disciplinary boundaries, campus

organizational units, time-honored governance structures, traditional approaches to studying the world, and anchored identities of the educator and student still harbor many approaches in territorially bounded definitions of scholarship and knowledge production.

The international dimension of the curriculum has progressed from an area of study and a foreign language approach to the integration of international, global, intercultural and comparative perspectives in the teaching and learning process and in the content of the program. Academic mobility has moved from student to provider and program mobility. Cross-border education has gradually changed from a cooperation structure to the development of a partnership model. This new model is instigated by commercial competition (KNIGHT, 2012).

Given this, through a qualitative study, using primary and secondary data and techniques of content and document analysis, the present study aims to make a diagnosis of the internationalization of higher education institutions in three types of Brazilian Universities. This article evolves from the introduction to the theoretical and contextual foundations that supported the development of the research. Then, the methodological path adopted is described. Afterwards, the results are discussed. Finally, the final considerations and the references used are presented.

## Universities as Complex Organizations

According to Junior (2016), universities are identified by different authors as differentiated organizations, being characterized as highly complex systems. These organizations bring together many areas of knowledge and highly qualified professionals, forming different interest groups, which according to Meyer, Pascucci and Mangolin (2012), materialize in institutional strategies. For Alsharari (2018), an area of concern is systems governance to ensure high quality for universities that can be public, private or with international branches.

Universities are classified as complex organizations and have a special way of acting, due to the multiplicity of their objectives, combined with the heterogeneity of their professional group. Universities are atypical organizations, which have characteristics that are distinct from other traditional bureaucracies. They have conflicting,

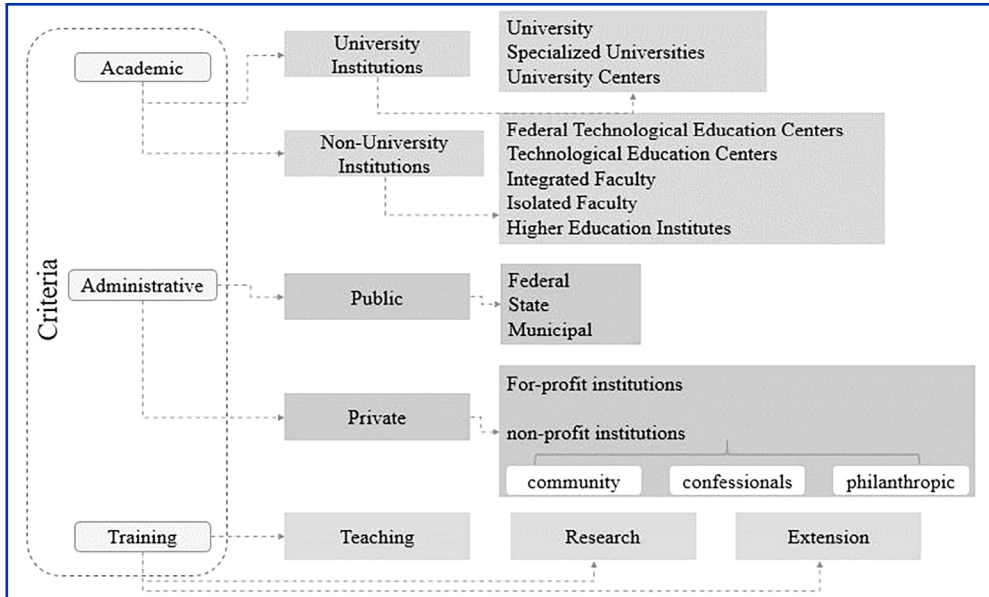
diffuse and ambiguous objectives. Universities deal with knowledge, an essentially qualitative and intangible asset. They have multiple technologies and are highly sensitive to environmental factors that interfere in the strategy (JUNIOR, 2016).

For Moritz et al. (2012), HEIs are organizations with different objectives, multidisciplinary, that manage intellectual resources, that generate and disseminate knowledge, propagate debates, art and music, making their objectives extensive and complex, creating difficulty in managing it. According to Margon and Poubel (2016), these organizations are inserted in a complex context because they are characterized by their autonomy, non-linearity and ambiguities. Like universities, hospitals are complex institutions since their decisions and actions are influenced by divergent interests between the groups that compose them, each with sufficient power bases to ensure that their objectives are legitimate for organizational purposes. For Pascucci and Meyer Jr (2013) a challenge that precedes the development of the strategy in such organizations is to be able to integrate objectives, which are often conflicting.

## **CLASSIFICATION OF BRAZILIAN INSTITUTIONS**

Higher Education Institutions are classified by Act 9.394/96, and are organized according to the following criteria: academic, administrative and training. Figure 1 organizes the classification of Higher Education Institutions.

**Figure 1** Classification of Higher Education Institutions



**Source:** Elaborated by the author based on Act 9.394/96

Regarding the academic organization, the Ministry of Education of Brazil (MEC) classifies HEIs in two types: university and non-university institutions. University institutions are divided into: (i) universities; (ii) specialized universities; (iii) and university centers. Non-university institutions involve: (i) Federal Technological Education Centers (CEFET); (ii) Technological Education Centers (CET); (iii) integrated faculties; (iv) isolated faculties; (v) and higher education institutes.

In the administrative organization, the classification is presented according to the legal nature of its maintainers, in public and private. Public institutions are maintained and managed by the Government and are classified into: Federal, State or Municipal. Private institutions are maintained and managed by individuals or legal entities under private law and are organized in private institutions with or without profit.

Private for-profit or private institutions in the strict sense are established and maintained by one or more individuals or legal entities governed by private law. Private non-profit institutions are organized in terms of their social vocation in: (i)

Community-based - established by groups of individuals or by one or more legal entities, including cooperatives of professors and students that include community representatives in their sponsoring entity; (ii) Confessionals - constituted by confessional or ideological motivation, or (iii) Philanthropic - institutions of education or social assistance that provide services for which they were established and make them available to the population in general, complementary to the activities of the State. The organization of training involves the Brazilian higher education levels and is based on the tripod: teaching, research and extension.

## **INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

According to Knight (2012), the term internationalization started to be widely used by the higher education sector in the 1980s to promote international studies, educational exchange and technical assistance. Since then, there has been an explosion in the number and types of international initiatives undertaken by institutions, organizations and governments.

As the 21st century progresses, the international dimension of higher education has become increasingly important and, at the same time, more complex. According to Maranhão, Dutra and Maranhão (2017), there is a widespread dissemination of the internationalization topic in higher education, however the understanding of its effectiveness is much more complex than it actually is. For Mok (2018), the promotion of the internationalization of HEI brought the globally connected phenomenon with regard to inter-university collaboration and student mobility across national borders. However, it brought a locally divided phenomenon when people question the value of international education, given that there is an increasing number of people who believe that the call for the internationalization of education has favored the elite and the rich people, marginalizing the poor.

For Knight (2014), internationalization has become a comprehensive term to describe anything and everything remotely related to the global, intercultural or international dimensions of higher education and, therefore, is losing its way. Due to such complexity, the author emphasizes the importance of reviewing the fundamental values that support internationalization, such as cooperation, partnership, exchange, mutual benefits and training, which are increasingly being characterized by competition, commercialization, self-interest and status construction.

There are several ways in which HEIs can internationalize (GUO; GUO, 2017; MENG, ZHU, CAO, 2017; BEDENLIER; KONDAKCI; ZAWACKI-RICHTER, 2018; WIHLBORG; ROBSON, 2018). According to Alsharari (2019), opportunities to accelerate internationalization in HEIs include general improvement in the quality of education, diffusion of technology and creation of a competent workforce globally.

For Altbach and Knight (2007), international activities have expanded dramatically in terms of volume, scope and complexity. These activities involve everything from traditional exchange programs, enabling students to learn about other cultures, to providing access to higher education in countries where local institutions cannot meet the demand. Other activities update international perspectives and students' skills, improving foreign language programs and providing cross-cultural understanding.

With the objective of investigating the internationalization theme of the HEIs in terms of developed research, Romani-Dias, Carneiro and Barbosa (2019) identified the main characteristics of the researchers that influence the internationalization of the HEIs, such as: (i) international academic experience of the researchers; (ii) insertion in international collaboration networks; (iii) international co-authorship; and (iv) international experience in publications. According to these authors, these are the four main factors that emerge at the individual level (researcher) and that positively impact HEIs.

Morosini and Dalla Corte (2018) analyzed the internationalization of higher education in Brazil, aiming to establish interrelationships with the context of knowledge production and emerging contexts. Theses and dissertations available in the database of the Brazilian Institute of Information in Science and Technology were searched. In the perspective of expansion, the main elements that constitute internationalization were identified, for example, the formation of research networks, international cooperation, academic mobility and institutional strategies.

Ramos (2018) researched the logic and mechanisms of internationalization of postgraduate studies in Brazil. Through the application of a questionnaire with 322 graduate coordinators, the prevalence of an internationalization concept oriented to activities such as academic mobility was identified. This mobility is seen as the main mechanism of access to international experience, the formation of networks and the establishment of international collaborations in research. This study also points out

the lack of national strategy and the lack of adequate administrative systems and institutional policies in most of the country's HEIs, making it difficult to develop these ties in a more significant and sustained international cooperation process.

## Methodological Procedures

In view of the classification of HEIs by Act 9.394/96, the data collection of this research covered three institutions chosen in a non-random way located in the state of Paraná in southern Brazil. As for the academic criteria, they are classified as university institutions. As for the administrative criterion, they are: a Private, non-profit, confessional and philanthropic HEI; a Federal Public HEI, and a Private for profit HEI. As for the training criterion, the tripod Teaching, Research and Extension is considered in the research, due to the understanding that internationalization is institutional and transversal. For ethical reasons, the identities of the HEIs involved in this research were not disclosed. For analysis purposes, anonymous names were given: Federal HEI, Philanthropic HEI and Private HEI.

The Federal HEI is a public Federal Technological University. This HEI has 13 campuses in Paraná, with 48 undergraduate courses, 100 specialization courses, and 72 master's and doctoral programs. It currently has 31.013 enrolled students, 2.549 professors and 1.176 technical-administrative employees. Its mission is to develop technological education of excellence, to build and share knowledge aimed at solving the real challenges of society. Its vision is to be an internationally recognized university for the importance of its work in favor of regional and national sustainable development.

The Philanthropic HEI is a Catholic, private, confessional and philanthropic university. It is located in 4 cities in Paraná State, has more than 50 undergraduate courses, 150 Continuing Education courses and 16 master's and doctoral programs that comprise different areas of knowledge distributed in 8 Schools: Business, Communication and Arts, Architecture and Design, Education and Humanities, Life Sciences, Medicine, Law and Polytechnic School. It currently has more than 28.600 students and 1.550 professors. Its mission is to develop and disseminate knowledge and culture, in addition to promoting the integral and permanent training of citizens



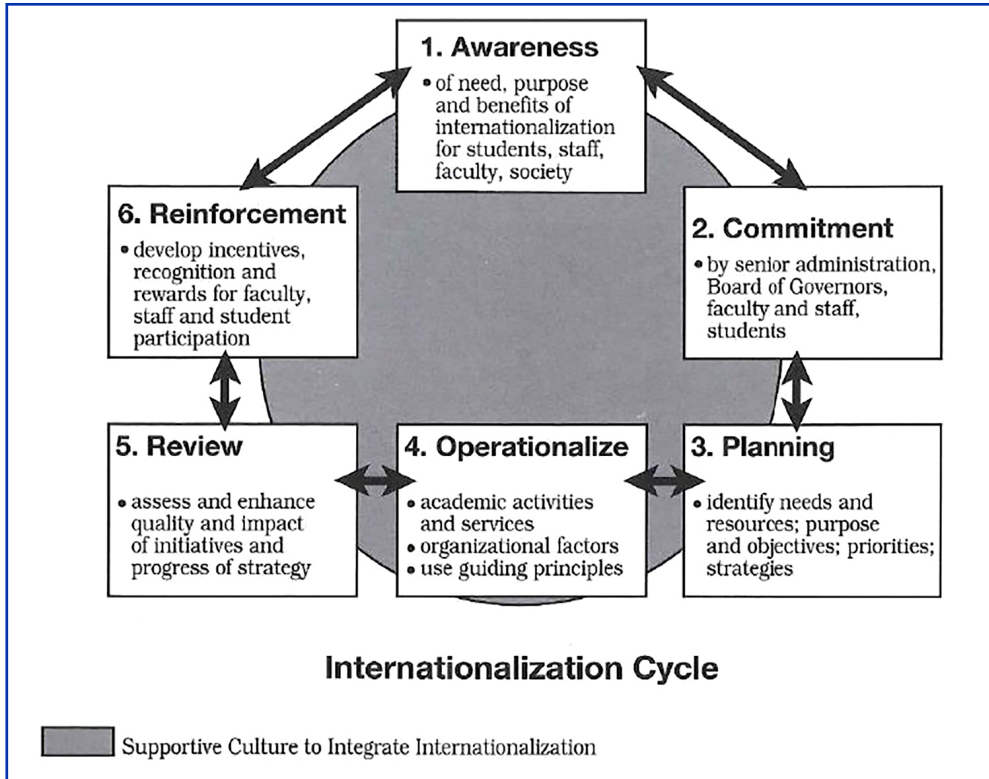
and professionals committed to life and the progress of society. Its vision is until 2022, to consolidate itself as a world-class institution with excellence in teaching, in the production of knowledge, in the provision of services and in social relevance.

The Private HEI is a University Center and for-profit. It is present in 1.000 on-site support centers spread over more than 700 cities in all Brazilian states, with more than 400 undergraduate, post-graduate and extension courses, including 3 master's and doctoral programs. It currently has more than 250 thousand students and 2,200 employees. Its mission is to develop and transform people through education. Its vision is to be recognized as an organization of excellence to study, work and invest.

The interviewees were chosen intentionally and are currently collaborators and professors in the researched institutions. The selection was made considering that the universe of chosen interviewees can offer necessary contributions to answer the research objective. Initially, nine invitations were sent, with a negative return and directed to another possible participant and for four of them, there was no return after three sending attempts. There was also no return for the forwarded invitation. There was a positive return for four invitations, which referred to specialists in the field at the three institutions. At the Federal HEI, the International Relations Advisor - Rectory was interviewed. At the Philanthropic HEI, the Internationalization Director was interviewed. At the Private HEI, the Coordinators of the Strategic Directorate of International Relations were interviewed. All respondents are at the strategic level and fully involved with the institutions' internationalization strategies and processes.

Data were collected from two evidence sources: primary sources, which involved semi-structured interviews and secondary sources, referring to the institutional documents made available by the cases. It was chosen the use of open questions that provide a broader information from the interviewees. 19 questions were elaborated according to the steps contemplated in Knight's model (1994): awareness, commitment, planning, operationalization, review and reinforcement. The original script applied can be found in Appendix A. The questions were formulated based on Knight's (1994) "Internationalization Cycle" model, shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Internationalization Cycle



Source: KNIGHT (1994, p. 12)

The interviews were previously scheduled and carried out in the months of June and July 2020 and applied online, in view of the pandemic period caused by the Coronavirus - COVID-19. The interview time totaled three hours and ten minutes. In order to seek convergence and validation to corroborate the internal documents and the interviews, the evidence was transferred to the Atlas.ti version 8 content analysis software, where they could be compared, initiating the analysis of the results.

For the processes and qualitative analyzes, the following techniques were used: content analysis and document analysis. According to Bardin (2011), content analysis is the presence or absence of a given content characteristic or set of characteristics in a given message fragment that is taken into account. The document analysis technique is defined as an operation or a set of operations that aims to

present the content of a document in a different way from the original, in order to facilitate, in an immediate state, its consultation and referencing.

Content analysis comprises message analysis techniques through objective and systematic methods, which allow for inference related to the message content. Content analysis is a set of communication analysis techniques. It is an instrument that assists in obtaining scientific rigor, delimited in a variety of ways and adaptable to a very large field of application: communications (BARDIN, 2011).

According to this author, there are fundamental differences between the two techniques. Document analysis works with documents and content analysis with messages. The purpose of document analysis is the condensed representation of information for consultation and storage. The content analysis aims to manipulate messages, to interpret them and to infer from them the meanings that extrapolate their manifest content by polishing subjective elements (BARDIN, 2011).

According to Bardin (2011), the content analysis technique is organized around three chronological poles: pre-analysis, exploration of the selected material and results treatment. Pre-analysis is the stage of organization of the selected documents that are organized in the Atlas.ti software and grouped in a single project in this software also called as Hermeneutic Unit. The material selection followed the principles of representativeness, relevance and exclusivity.

The answers obtained from the semi-structured interviews were all recorded and later transcribed. Thus, a set of twelve files, totaling 109 pages, were inserted in Atlas.ti, also called P-docs in this software. The use of Atlas.ti facilitated the process of analysis, storage and control. The software was used for data processing in August 2020.

The material exploration stage essentially involves the possibility of coding excerpts from the text, including comments and building networks between the codes created by the researcher and networks between the relevant quotations of the collected data. After the inclusion of the P-Docs, the codification process started. All interviews quotations and documents excerpts linked to the objective of this research were coded. The use of Atlas.ti facilitated the coding process, as it made it possible to analyze and create codes from one document after another. Therefore, once a code was created, it could be used in other quotations deemed relevant for this study.

In the first coding cycle (Bardin, 2011) it was necessary to create 40 codes, which were used in 390 citations. In this first moment, no relations were attributed between the codes and the quotations. For the second code cycle (Bardin, 2011) in order to refine codes and quotations, it was necessary to create 27 relationships between codes, also called links on Atlas.ti, and it was necessary to create 6 new codes totaling 46, employed in 425 citations, representing an index of 9.23 citations per code.

For Bardin (2011), the content analysis last stage, results treatment, involves data inference and interpretation. At this stage, the researcher makes inferences based on the relationships between codes and quotations made in the previous stage, logically deducing knowledge about the emitter of the message or facts about his environment. In this stage, the networks were generated in Atlas.ti that allowed the visualization of the established analytical relationship: codes and quotations were connected graphically in networks. The main networks that assist in achieving the objective of this research are presented in the next section.

## Results Presentation And Discussion

The word cloud is a resource available on Atlas.ti that makes it possible, quickly and visually, to have a general idea of a text document content. Therefore, it is possible to observe the frequency of the most cited words in the documents used for analysis. The words frequency can also assist on the relationship between codes. Figure 3 shows the word cloud extracted from the 12 files used to perform the analysis in this software.



The internationalization awareness and culture can be understood as the importance and impact of the problem. This awareness and culture are the first steps, however they are not enough. Internationalization cannot be owned by a single group, as it needs to act in an inclusive manner. Therefore, discussions across the campus on the topic need to be stimulated to address issues such as the need, purpose, strategies, questionable issues, implications and benefits (KNIGHT, 1994).

It is possible to identify, in the internationalization policies, plans and resolutions made available by the HEIs, that the concept of internationalization, awareness and culture is more present in the Federal HEI and in the Philanthropic HEI. In the resolution presented by Private IES, a greater focus on the regulation of academic activities, projects, rules, proposals selection, operation, accountability and internal stakeholders competencies are perceived. The general objectives of the Private HEI involve: ensuring internationalization, international partnership, fostering exchange, training of professors, students and employees, research, scientific collaboration and curricular innovation.

The main objective presented in the policy of the Federal HEI is to seek to expand the international insertion of excellence of the institution, as well as to internationalize the importance of a multicultural university connected with world demands. The policy of this HEI is based on the definitions of: interculturality, internationalization, international insertion and a world-class university. As for the Philanthropic HEI, its policy is: to have internationalization as a strategy to improve the quality of teaching and research, as well as to increase the reach of its social impact. The policies of these two HEIs present, as base concepts, the transversality and the non-dissociation between teaching, research and extension, and have structured strategic points, such as the mission, vision and values. The concepts presented in the plans and policies of these HEI corroborate with Knight's studies (1994; 2015).

Therefore, through policies, plans and resolutions, a similarity in the structure, guidelines, strategies, indicators, paths and understanding of internationalization between the Federal HEI and the Philanthropic HEI were perceived. There is a greater focus on the regulation of internationalization activities in the Private HEI. The greater focus on international activities corroborates the findings of Altbach and Knight (2007), who claim that international activities have expanded drastically in terms of volume, scope and complexity over the past two decades.

The interviewees listed the main internationalization activities of their institutions, such as: academic mobility, dual degree, special programs (such as: Internationalization Agent, American Academy, Global Classes, Ambassador), internationalization at home and scholarship program.

The Philanthropic HEI presents some programs considered very special for the University, as reported by the Internationalization Director of this HEI:

(1) The Schools' internationalization plans, which are special programs, such as exchange programs, double degrees, short-term programs, super special programs, such as the American Academy at the university, Global Classes, the AGI's, you know, I don't know no other Brazilian HEI that has this figure of the Internationalization Agent in Schools, working in Schools. All of these programs are very special for us and have worked very well to create this culture of internationalization that is becoming more natural today at the university. Global Classes, which is the program that introduces English into the classroom [...]. I think that today, concerning the implementation, I would say that Global Classes, AGI which is this program that consolidates the internationalization agent as a manager within the structure of the Schools, and the American Academy, are jewels in our crown. These are the most eye-catching internationalization programs we have. (Interviewee 2)

For the Federal HEI, double diplomacy is an internationalization activity that this HEI has managed to develop very well. According to the International Relations Advisor at this HEI, the main internationalization activities involve:

(2) Double Diplomation, Ambassador, who is the professor who goes out there to play the role of approximation visibility [...] I would say that now, despite being very small, it is the internationalization at home, which is one of the new initiatives and which is emerging several partners [...]. I would say that if the university was seen from the outside, I say like this: oh, what are you good at internationalizing? I would say: double diploma. So, I would say that [this] is our specialty, and there are few. We are still modest in terms of internationalization, but it is something that we have managed to develop well, which is the functioning of double diplomacy. (Interviewee 1)

For the Private HEI, since it is a for-profit HEI, the positioning towards internationalization is perceived in two ways: as a commercial internationalization, which is more related to branding, profits and hubs opening; and as an academic internationalization, which is more linked to internationalization activities, and according to the interviewees: (3) *"the institution's awareness of what internationalization is still linked to mobility"*. (Interviewees 3 and 4)

Therefore, the main internationalization activities of the private for-profit HEI, as reported by the Strategic Directorate Coordinators for International Relations, involve: academic mobility, the ‘Santander Universidades’ scholarship program and the creation of a new Directorate that will assist these and new international activities. Throughout the analysis, it is possible to verify the emergence of internationalization activities for distance learning, or Remote Learning, in the three investigated institutions (TRESHCHEVSKY; IGOLKIN; SHATALOV, 2019).

## INTERNATIONALIZATION STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES

This section presents the main results and discussions on the following codes: Institutional Priority; Internationalization Strategies; Branding and International Communication and Visibility.

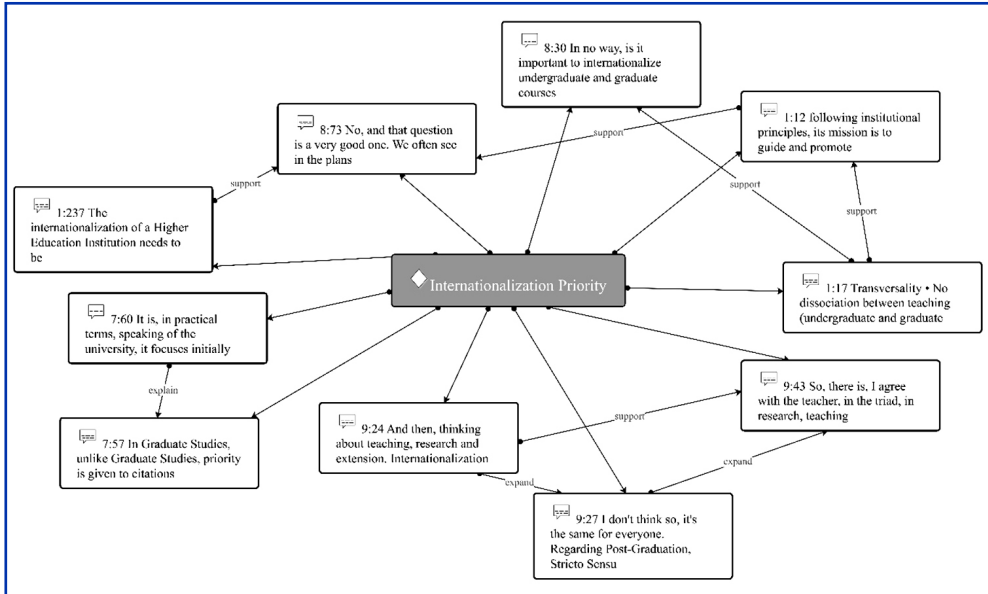
The internationalization priority is perceived in different ways for the three institutions. For the Federal IES, regarding the priority between teaching, research and extension, in practical terms, the university initially focuses on improving international rankings, to increase its visibility. For this HEI, the programs need to be internationalized in such a way that they have an effective scientific production with international partners. Another perceived relevance of internationalization by this HEI is to give access, to employees and students, to cultural differences and that they have access to productions with international partners. For the International Relations Advisor:

(4) This difference in methodology greatly enhances the student’s ability to research and produce in the future. So, this is one of the big goals of internationalization, which is to make students have this worldview, even without leaving their cities. (Interviewee 1)

Regarding the education levels, for the Federal HEI there is no priority, but different needs for post-graduate and undergraduate courses. For post-graduate studies, the internationalization priority is related to international citations and research partnerships. For undergraduation, the internationalization priority is linked to double diplomacy. The Private HEI has teaching and extension as priorities. In this HEI, all internationalization decisions must involve Post-graduation and undergraduation. Figure 4 shows the code, the quotations and the relationships between them.



**Figure 4** Internationalization Priority



**Source:** Research data obtained with the support of Atlas.ti software

For the Philanthropic HEI, there is no dissociation between the levels of education, research and extension. For this HEI, the internationalization of a university needs to be perceived and experienced at all levels of the institution, as a fundamental tool in contributing to achieve excellence in its academic and administrative activities, from the simplest to the most complex. For the Internationalization Director:

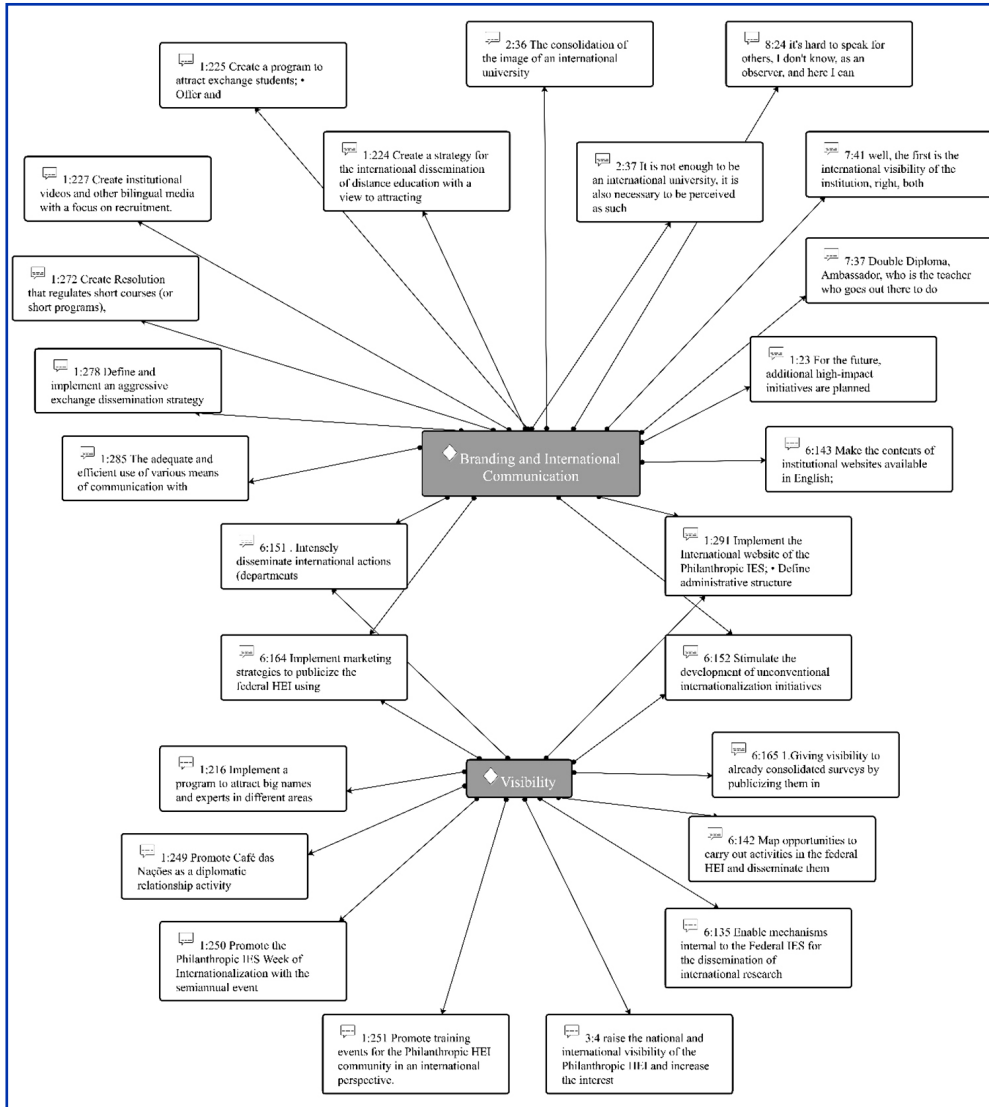
(5) In no way, it is important to internationalize undergraduate and post-graduate courses and following the same orientation and the same concept [...]. We often see that the other universities do not even have plans for internationalization, or not all do, just a few have plans. So, usually the plans [at other universities] are like this: internationalization of undergraduate courses to one side, and the internationalization of research goes to the other side. We deliberately decided not to do it that way. We think that internationalization is transversal. It covers all of these aspects and the university, as an institution, can develop a plan that impacts on all of these aspects at the same time. So, we don't feel the need to compartmentalize in this way or to prioritize one area or another. (Interviewee 2)

According to Ayoubi and Massoud (2007), some factors need to be included for the development of the international strategy, such as: teaching programs, partnerships, student and employee exchanges, research activities, new disciplines, customer service and marketing skills, cost-benefit and risk analysis, identity and regulation, specialization and the increased use of brands to exploit reputable assets.

The internationalization strategies observed in the institutional documents of the Federal HEI and the Philanthropic HEI were identified. There are similarities between the strategies presented by these two HEIs and the theoretical foundation (EGRON-POLAK, 2007). Some of the strategies involve: promoting the visibility of HEI internationally; promote the internal internationalization of sectors, processes, people and infrastructure; expand international cooperation in research and innovation; internationalization of curricula; and encouraging double or multiple degree initiatives.

Knight (2014) explains that increasing internationalization is being characterized by competition, marketing, self-interest and status building. This point of the theoretical foundation is directly related to branding, communication and international visibility. By analyzing the data, it is possible to identify 25 quotations directly linked to Branding and International Communication and Visibility codes. Figure 5 presents the network of these codes, as well as the relationship of the quotations of these codes.

**Figure 5** Branding and international communication and visibility



**Source:** Research data obtained with the support of Atlas.ti software

The common activities mapped to the codes (branding and international communication and visibility) are related to the Federal HEI and the Philanthropic HEI. These activities mainly involve the intensive dissemination of international actions

and the implementation of marketing strategies for the dissemination of these HEIs using internal mechanisms, such as pages, website and other dissemination materials. Although quotations have not been mapped for these codes in the Private HEI, one of the forms of internationalization of this HEI is the commercial one. Therefore, it is understood that these aspects are intrinsic to it.

## INTERNATIONALIZATION AT HOME

This section presents the main results and discussions on the following codes: Internationalization at home; Internationalization of Professors, Students and Administrative Staff; Incentives and Rewards; Strategic Partnerships and Agreements; Academic Mobility (incoming and outgoing); Integration and Infrastructure.

Internationalization at home - internationalization regardless of international mobility - is a concept that is increasingly emerging when it comes to the internationalization of HEIs. For Knight (2012), the evidence of this change occurs in the bifurcation of internationalization in two interdependent pillars: “at home” and “abroad”. Corroborating with this theoretical foundation, for the Philanthropic HEI the real transformation happens from the inside out.

(6) Democratize internationalization through a broad and transversal action of internationalization at home, whose objective is to favor the inclusion of the academic community of students, professors and collaborators in the global environment regardless of international mobility. (Interviewee 2)

For the Federal HEI, internationalization at home is a very important mission of the HEI. For the Private HEI, internationalization at home happens through an internationalization working group, which involves the Rector, School Directors and Professors, who think and approve internationalization activities for the entire academic community.

According to Huang (2017), institutional internationalization is considered an important aspect in the development of HEI today. The development of intercultural competence needs to be considered as an important result of the institutional internationalization of students. For this author, teaching English and related actions are easily accessible resources that can be fully used to promote intercultural competence of students at universities.

As for the internationalization actions, for the Private HEI, they involve: (i) meeting the need for training and qualification of professors, students and employees; (ii) incorporate the academic person in activities, voluntary or not, linked to negotiation and cooperation with international universities, providing opportunities for the consolidation of academic training for professors, students and employees, for the development of joint research, of management partnerships and development of technologies jointly; (iii) comply with the Professors Qualification Plan, generating opportunities for professors to have conditions to deepen or improve their scientific, technological and professional knowledge and language courses.

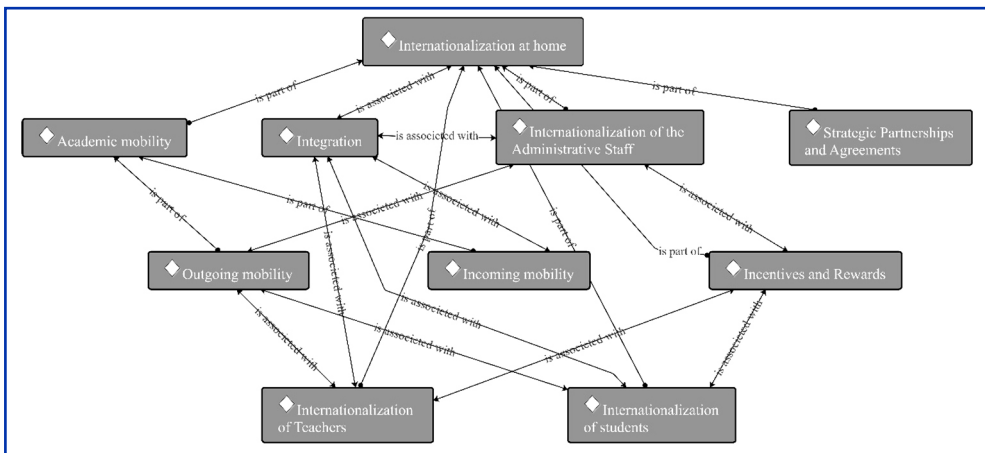
For the Philanthropic HEI, the internationalization actions involve: (i) the systematic offer of English courses with the objective of having this language as a second HEI language for professors, students and collaborators; (ii) the study of the feasibility of an internal mobility scholarship program for students of all levels, professors, researchers and collaborators; (iii) the promotion of the dissemination and training programs in the concept of English as Media of Instruction - EMI. According to Valcke, Murphy and Costa (2017), in the last two decades, EMI has emerged as a tool for the internationalization of higher education as a necessary response to the forces of globalization. As a result of the development of higher education in Europe and the rest of the world, EMI has become an increasing trend (Valcke et al., 2017).

For Federal HEI, internationalization actions involve: (i) the development of international partnerships that facilitate the mobility of employees and students; (ii) stimulating professors and administrative technicians in training, studies and research outside Brazil; (iii) train professors and administrative staff for the internationalization of activities; (iv) support to the employees in the participation of International Calls; (v) identification of demands for language courses for professors, other employees and students; (vi) offering opportunities to students of the IES to participate in simple mobility actions or double-degree actions, of at least one semester, with universities from other countries, with recognized academic prestige; (vii) prospecting for internship opportunities for students of the Federal HEI in other countries; (viii) enabling students of the Federal HEI to participate in distance courses offered by universities in other countries; and (ix) offering opportunities for technological entrepreneurship, creation of startups or international acceleration programs.

The incentives and rewards related to internationalization actions are different in the three HEIs. At Federal HEI there are no rewards or compensation programs. It is perceived the existence of incentive and motivation for these actions, the valorization of the professor and the administrative staff in international activities, such as, a tribute to a researcher with international prominence. The offer of scholarships for language courses in the Philanthropic HEI and Private HEI is verified for the entire HEI community. At Private HEI there is an academic mobility scholarship program for students, financial remuneration for professors who have scientific production and there are incentives for professors to participate in international events and congresses.

At the Philanthropic HEI, professors in the master’s and doctoral programs are paid for high-impact publications and have assistance with publishing and professional review of articles in English. This HEI works with scoring in the university career progression program for professors who adhere to Global Classes, and there is remuneration for professors who reach level III of the program. This HEI is studying ways to expand incentive programs to the academic community, which includes the administrative staff and students. Figure 6 presents the graphic representation of the Internationalization at Home code, and the direct relationship of this code with the other codes.

**Figure 6** Internationalization at Home



**Source:** Research data obtained with the support of Atlas.ti software

Regarding strategic partnerships and agreements, the three HEIs perceive a desire to establish partnerships and agreements that are productive, that actually promote research potential, academic mobility, innovation, international visibility. These HEIs aim to have this type of partnership not only in greater quantity, but also in higher quality.

Snodin (2019) researched the mobility experiences of international students in Thai higher education. The results showed, as important factors, the availability of scholarships, “word of mouth” references and the geographical and cultural proximity of a country of origin. Personalized academic life and strong support for research in school subjects have also emerged as strengths for academic mobility.

In the three institutions, strategies and objectives related to mobility were perceived. Academic mobility is linked to incoming and outgoing mobility. It was possible to identify that the Federal HEI is more effective with outgoing mobility and explains the low incoming mobility due to the lack of international visibility in Brazil, which consequently generates a lack of interest. Private HEI also presents stronger points related to outgoing mobility. In Philanthropic HEI, it was possible to perceive points related to the two mobilities.

Internationalization at home is directly related to integration. The integration is directly related to incoming mobility, that is, the promotion the integration of foreign professors, students or professionals into Brazilian culture, increasing and facilitating their interaction with the local community. Infrastructure is a point that arises and is related to this in the plans and policies of the Federal HEI and the Philanthropic HEI. This infrastructure ranges from equipment made available to foreign researchers, its own headquarters for internationalization programs, the creation of international microenvironments to favor integration and university residences.

## MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

This section presents the main results and discussions on the codes: Management and Performance; Internal and External Stakeholders; Internationalization Indicators; Revenue and Investments; and Academic and Administrative Processes.

The activities and roles of the international areas management in the investigated HEIs involve: (i) mapping the demands; (ii) definition of policies; (iii) budget forecast; (iv) management of international programs; (v) facilitate academic and ad-

ministrative processes; (vi) encourage, motivate and guide. Among the main internal stakeholders, are: the Rectory, the Pro-rectories, the Schools, administrative and academic departments.

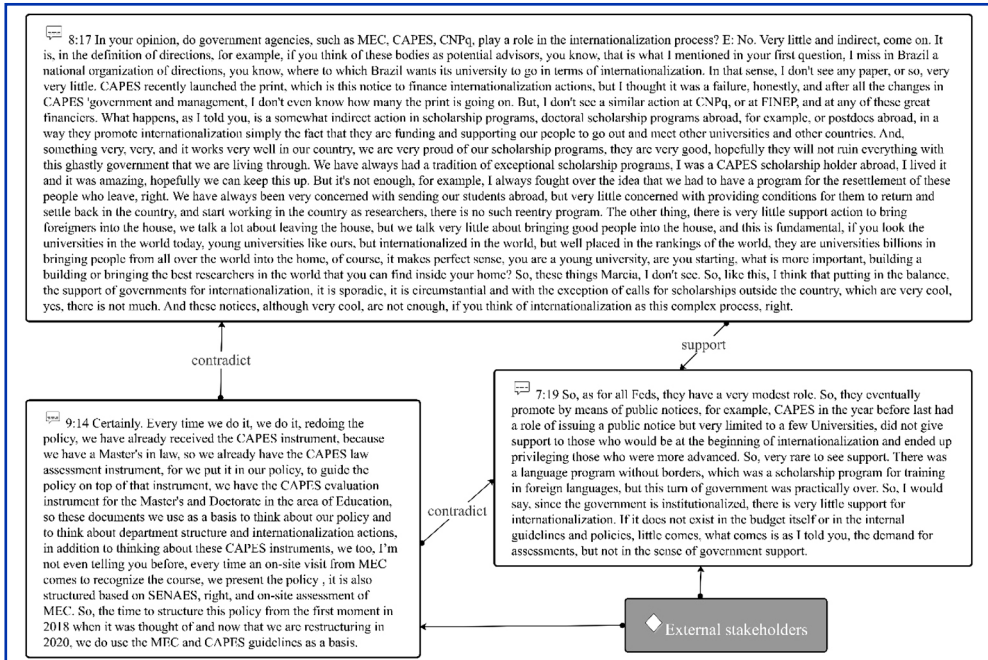
The management performance of the Internationalization Directorate of the Philanthropic HEI involves the autonomy and responsibility to define the direction of internationalization at this University. The performance of the Private HEI involves an Internationalization Working Group, where internationalization actions are discussed and approved by the company Maintainer. The management performance of the Federal HEI involves guiding, raising awareness and supporting internationalization initiatives, as well as operationalizing such initiatives together with the International Office of the Rectory.

Respondents were asked about the role played by government agencies in the internationalization process of HEIs in general. The Federal and the Philanthropic HEIs share the same opinion when saying that this role is small, modest and often rare. These HEIs state that government support, eventually, takes place via scholarship notices, and although it is interesting, the occurrence of these notices is low and uncertain. Therefore, government support is sporadic and circumstantial. For the Private HEI, this role is configured through evaluations, instruments and guidelines of the Ministry of Education of Brazil - MEC, the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel, from the Brazilian acronym CAPES, and the National Higher Education Evaluation System, from the Brazilian acronym SINAES.

The results of the research by Prolo et al. (2019) reveal that the 'Science without Borders' program has enhanced the exposure of Brazilian universities in the international environment, favored the creation of international academic partnerships and networks, and influenced the definition of the higher education internationalization model desired by the Brazilian Government. According to these authors, to the extent that 'Science without Borders' contributed to a learning curve and influenced the decision to move forward in a broader and more organized internationalization process, it expanded the conditions that create an international environment within Brazilian universities. It is observed that the interviewees' perception contradicts the results of the research by Prolo et al. (2019). Figure 7 presents the interviewees' perceptions, as well as the relationships between the quotations.



**Figure 7 External Stakeholders**



**Source:** Research data obtained with the support of Atlas.ti software

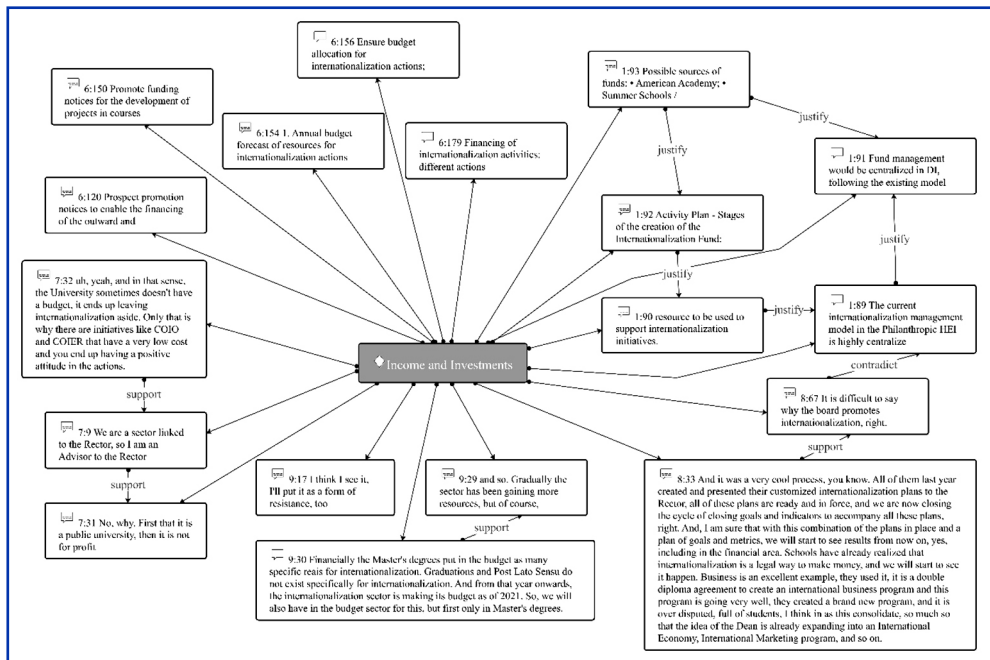
According to Patel (2017), internationalization has become more than a “buzzword” in recent years. This concept has become an important investment, generating substantial revenues, and is considered an imperative in its relationship with brands and classifications in international higher education. The issue of revenues and investments for internationalization has different aspects between the HEIs studied. According to the International Relations Advisor at IES Federal, since it is a Public University, there is a budget that fluctuates, that sometimes zeroes and sometimes there is money left over, since there is no prediction of when it will come or when it will be cut. The perception below answers the question about financial impact due to internationalization:

(7) [We are] a public university, so it is not for profit and no sector collects any resources. The University did not start to have more budget because of that [internationalization]. There was a government initiative, called PDU, which was a budget that came to help in international offices. That was small and it's over. So, in financial terms, it is just a deficit,

because if the University does not take out of its own pocket, its own budget for flight tickets and international events, it does not have internationalization. So, in that sense it is negative. (Interviewee 1)

The Philanthropic IES has a budget that is discussed and approved annually for investment in internationalization actions, whose budget is matrixed and decentralized. For the Private HEI, the budget for internationalization actions has always been geared towards master's and doctoral programs. With the arrival of the Strategic Relations Directorate and planning aimed at internationalization, this budget will exist for the other levels of education from 2021. Figure 8 presents the graphical representation of this comparison.

**Figure 8** Income and Investments



**Source:** Research data obtained with the support of Atlas.ti software

According to Bas, Boquera and Carot (2017) measuring the internationalization of higher education institutions is complex, since many parameters need to be taken into account in addition to the compilation of data. According to Seeber

(2019), the context of higher education has specific aspects that can make comparisons difficult and the political and social processes that occurred in the last decades have further increased the complexity. The increasing availability of data on higher education systems, institutions and their members creates opportunities for comparative research that takes a quantitative approach. The value of future studies depends crucially on the ability to recognize and address some of the main methodological challenges that exist in quantitative comparative research in higher education. Such fundamentals corroborate with the interviewees' perceptions about the HEI internationalization performance indicators. For the interviewees, the indicators are fundamental, as they offer monitoring tools with the main objective of knowing what is working and what is not. Such indicators motivate and are great enhancers of internationalization activities.

The plans and internationalization policies of the Federal and the Philanthropic HEIs present internationalization indicators for the measurement of all the proposed strategies. The Private HEI resolution does not present internationalization indicators. For the Internationalization Director of the Philanthropic HEI, three internationalization indicators are considered transversal: (i) scientific production with an international impact; (ii) subjects in English or greater presence of English in academic routines; and (iii) international incoming mobility. The Federal HEI measures internationalization by monitoring all rankings, filling in the information in the rankings and making the markings, checking in which dimensions the HEI has improved or worsened each year. For the Private HEI, the indicators are important for obtaining input from HEIs in relation to internationalization and for presenting evidence to government agencies.

The technical-administrative and academic processes related to international actions will be better developed if the international member is treated under equal conditions by students, professors and local collaborators. There is, for example, the concern of the interviewees regarding the international suitability for legal, financial, technological, personnel management, communication and marketing processes, and regarding the procedures for validating credits from other countries. These procedures will be more successful as they are fully incorporated into the routine of the processes. The technical-administrative and academic processes in the three HEIs involve: (i) the enrollment of international students; (ii) academic mobility; (iii)

double diplomacy; (iv) the management of subjects offered in other languages; (v) the issuance of academic documents; and (vi) selection processes based on international programs.

## **QUALITY IN TEACHING, RESEARCH AND EXTENSION**

This section presents the main results and discussions about the codes: Quality in Teaching; Research and Extension; Research Potential; Innovation in the Curriculum; Language and Subjects in Other Languages.

The internationalization of higher education institutions is directly related to the “Quality in Teaching, Research and Extension”. The three institutions investigated present aspects related to this code. Quality in teaching is linked to innovation in curricula, to the offer of courses in other languages and to the languages themselves. Quality in research is linked to its potential for international development, and quality in extension is linked to the offer of courses in other languages, to language courses and short-term programs.

Regarding the influence of internationalization for innovation in the curriculum, it is possible to perceive in the Resolution made available by the Private HEI, the incentive for the approximation of curricular structures, which includes the equivalence and mutual recognition of credits obtained in partner institutions. The Coordinators’ perceptions present this evidence, more precisely as regards subjects in English and extension courses in other languages:

(8) [...] it is more difficult to perceive the direct link between internationalization and updating the curriculum or methodologies. But, I think there is a little bit. I think there is, for example, [...] XXXX just asked to record a discipline from the Law School in English and I did all the revision and I think that, in one way or another, this happened, from the perspective of internationalization of the institution. The International Relations and Foreign Trade course also has a subject in English and this has a direct impact on internationalization. So, I do see those points. We are, of course, still walking in a timid manner, but there is internationalization in methodology, in the curriculum of the courses because we have subjects in English being included and extension courses in other languages [...]. (Interviewees 3 and 4)

This is also identified in the Internationalization Policy made available by the Federal HEI, with actions that involve: (i) the expansion of the internationalization modality of subjects and basic contents and specific segments; (ii) updating the



Similarly, actions were identified regarding curricular innovation influenced by internationalization in the Philanthropic HEI, such as: (i) favoring the use and dissemination of other foreign languages besides English in the curricula; (ii) and the implementation of a partnership with internal areas to offer workshops for the dissemination and application of the internationalization concepts of the curriculum.

## **RESISTANCE, DIFFICULTIES, RISKS AND BENEFITS**

This section presents the main results and discussions about the codes: Resistances and Difficulties; Risks; and Benefits.

Lustrea, Sava and Borca (2017) carried out a research with the objective of providing a better understanding of the needs for a better internationalization of teaching and research, and provided some possible explanations about the difficulties and resistance regarding international activities. The internationalization process difficulties perceived in the investigated HEIs resulted in heterogeneous points. Although fluency in English has been cited as a pro-internationalization factor, it is also present in many perceptions as a barrier to internationalization. The issue of accessibility for international students and staff was also mentioned. Additionally, a low competence in establishing and maintaining international relations was perceived. The main perceived advantages regarding internationalization are: (i) the increase in institutional visibility, attracting resources, both human, material and informational, creating international research teams that attract substantial resources; and (ii) the fact that it can be a source of validation of individual competences. The data of the present research corroborate the results of Lustrea et al. (2017) research.

At the Federal HEI, according to the International Relations Advisor, there was resistance in relation to double diplomacy and the opening of covalidations, mainly related to the change of concept regarding the equivalent workload and content:

(10) [...] we started to realize that we needed to change the concept of covalidations, what the equivalent workload was, what the equivalent content was. Until then, our professors or coordinators had only validated the workload, what the student did out there was equal to or greater than 75% and the content had to be practically the same. But if you are going to do it out there, what you do here has no advantage. So we spent a few years adapting to be able to have this large volume of students doing double diploma [...]. Before, with the vision and regulations that we had, there was resistance from people. Before it was not allowed to make the agreement with reciprocity because afterwards

when you have to covalidate both for foreign student who studies here and for ours who come back and covalidate the subjects in blocks, not item by item of the syllabus as they thought. (Interviewee 1)

Also according to this Advisor there is also an inertia. Therefore, there is no perception of the community to be against internationalization, however, there are people who care little about researching abroad or about interactions with outsiders. The difficulty of the language is also presented, mainly to employees and students. Financial difficulties are also perceived in terms of internationalization, as many leave the possibility of an international exchange for financial reasons remote. According to this Advisor, internationalization goes through a change of mindset and a shift towards greater flexibility in the way of thinking.

For the Director of Internationalization of the Philanthropic HEI, resistance has already existed in HEI, however, currently the scenario is favorable:

(11) I think it was worse. Today the scenario is very favorable, it is very positive. It is very positive because I think we managed to reverse it. In fact, it is not reversing. We managed to implement this internationalization culture at the university. When you talk about resistance, for me it has two aspects: either it is resistance like a cultural change, and people are naturally resistant to changes in culture, for obvious reasons. They are used to their culture, they were born and raised in a particular culture. When you impose a cultural change or intend to make a cultural change, resistance is natural. Fear of the unknown. After all, we are comfortable with what we know very well. So this is one thing. The other is that I, as a manager, believe that people have to be protagonists of changes. They cannot be reactive to changes. So, since I took over the board, I've been doing a job of convincing people to jump on the bench with me. So, instead of imposing actions, imposing processes, and then imposing goals and metrics to monitor these processes, we spent a lot of time, even years, many years, trying to convince our community that internationalization is a cool thing for everyone. It's cool for the student, for professors, for managers. So it is good for the university as a whole. It will increase the quality of our teaching, it will increase the quality of our research. It will bring resources to university. It will help to retain student, to attract student. So the university will become more sustainable, more profitable. Anyway, it's good for everyone when it [internationalization] is done well. Of course, in the beginning there was resistance, but I am also happy to tell you that today I realize the opposite [...]. Today the demand is coming from the community and not the other way around. (Interviewee 2)

For the Coordinators of the Strategic Directorate of International Relations at Private HEI, perhaps the term is not resistance, but an expectation of the academic community that associates internationalization only as mobility. For these inter-

viewees, this community treats internationalization as an erroneous concept, since mobility is part of internationalization, but it is not just that. Another perceived point involves financial aspects that represent a limitation:

(12) [...] I see that there is a little limitation in the sector’s performance because it is a private and for-profit HEI. Because internationalization is going to make a profit that is subjective. It is a gain in the expansion of research, a gain in the training of students, in the training of professors, a gain in terms of the expansion of professor training. But there is no return, no profit. I don’t have a cipher. I have to put money for this to work. I see some resistance in this aspect from the maintaining company. (Interviewees 3 and 4)

It is possible to verify a contradiction between the perception of the Philanthropic HEI and the perception of the Private HEI regarding the financial aspects. In Private HEIs, profit is subjective and in Philanthropic HEIs, internationalization will bring tangible resources to the university and make it more sustainable and more profitable.

Respondents were also asked about the risks and benefits of internationalization for HEIs in general. The results presented for these codes - Risks and Benefits - are shown on Table 1, in which it is possible to verify a comparison between the three HEIs studied.

**Table 1** Risks and Benefits

Institutions	Risks	Benefits
Federal HEI	No risks identified	International Visibility Beacon Double Diploma
Philanthropic HEI	Branding Escape of talents Accreditation and rankings industry Disregard the local context	Training of professionals and global leaders Quality tool Inclusion process
Private HEI	No risks identified	Research potential Global experience Languages Science

**Source:** Research data obtained with the support of Atlas.ti software



The interviewees perceive more benefits than risks regarding the internationalization of HEIs, which makes it an advantageous process for them. However, the risks presented are considerable and institutions need to be attentive so as not to make internationalization just a function of: (i) sharing brands; (ii) only serve to rise in the rankings; (iii) of changing plans and policies, neglecting the mission, vision and values, disregarding the local context, losing contact with the community, the neighborhood and the state that is inserted. HEIs also need to be aware of the possible escape of talents, because as HEIs become internationalized, the world becomes the limit for the community of professors, students and collaborators.

## Conclusion

Through a qualitative study, using primary and secondary data and techniques of content and document analysis, the present study aimed to make a diagnosis of internationalization in higher education using Brazil as a case study.

There are convergences between the interviewees' perceptions about the internationalization of Brazilian HEIs. According to the perception of the International Relations Advisor of the Federal HEI, the public sector presents different difficulties and degrees of importance regarding data and internal policies. However, in some way, it has been leveled, not only by an international awareness of the need for internationalization, but also by the influence of internal and external evaluations. There is a charge for being well evaluated in the rankings. However, internationalization brings more benefits than risks. The awareness of those who have a flexible and open mind to explore new knowledge and people outside the country of origin and the awareness of observing what and how it is done elsewhere, supports the process of developing growing institutions to reach better levels. It is possible to conclude that there is a greater focus at the Federal HEI on internationalization activities that involve double diplomacy, as well as research and internationalization at home.

The internationalization level of the HEIs is perceived as very heterogeneous by the Internationalization Director of the Philanthropic HEI, since currently in Brazil there are universities reasonably internationalized and which have different internationalization strategies from each other. On the other hand, there are universities

that do not or little understand the internationalization concept, how it is characterized and what are its impacts. For this Director, internationalization in Brazil is at an early stage, with a lot to go on, mainly in terms of generating greater dissemination and in terms of universities' efforts to work towards the real meaning of internationalization. It is inferred by the interviewee's perceptions that this HEI is structured in two axes: the internationalization of 'gates to the inside', following the premise that the real transformation happens from the inside out, and the internationalization of the 'gates to the outside', following the premise that the other's point of view is also a source of enrichment.

The perception of the Coordinators of the Strategic Directorate of International Relations at Private HEI is that in for-profit institutions, internationalization moves in slow steps, is linked and restricted to the understanding of academic mobility. For these interviewees, the research still does not have the scope so broadened for internationalization to happen through it. In this IES it is inferred that internationalization is being carried out in two clearly categorized and defined ways, with different purposes and objectives: commercial internationalization and academic internationalization. There is a greater focus on international activities involving academic mobility.

The contribution of this research lies in the comparison of the internationalization of higher education institutions from three types of Brazilian Universities, expanding the understanding on the research topic, relating the analysis of institutional documents with the perception of the specialists of these HEIs. A limitation of this research refers to the sample, which did not involve all types of HEI according to the classification of MEC, such as: non-university institutions, state and municipal public institutions and private community non-profit institutions. Another limitation lies in the comparison between HEIs in the same Brazilian state.

As for the originality of the study, there are researches focused on analyzing how the internationalization process in HEIs has been going on, as well as its risks, benefits and actions. However, these previous researches evaluate HEIs individually, without comparatively understanding internationalization in different types of Brazilian institutions and without making a national and international comparison, given that this comparison may present new possibilities for internationalizing HEIs. In times of a pandemic, which emerged in 2020 by the COVID-19 virus, the vaccine

can be mentioned as a major result of international cooperation between research education institutions and private initiatives.

## Future Research Agenda

For future research, studies with quantitative data are suggested using methods to support decision making in order to understand the influence of internationalization for the accomplishment of the mission and vision of Brazilian Universities future. It is also suggested that research be carried out considering all types of HEI according to the MEC classification. It is also suggested comparative research between HEIs from different Brazilian states, and comparisons between HEIs in Brazil and HEIs from different countries.

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## Appendix - Semi-Structured Interview Script

The purpose of this interview script is to: **diagnose the internationalization of higher education institutions among three types of Brazilian Universities**. The information will be kept confidential and the identity of the HEI will not be disclosed.

### Consciousness

In general, how do you assess the issue of the internationalization of higher education institutions?

Is there a formal internationalization policy at the HEI? If so, what is this policy?

What are the institution's remarkable moments related to internationalization and who are the main ones involved?

Is internationalization declared in the HEI's Vision, Mission and Values?

### Commitment

What is the role of your department or School in formulating the HEI's internationalization policy?

Do government agencies, such as MEC, CAPES and CNPq, play any role in the internationalization process of HEI?

Is there any resistance to the internationalization process? If so, where does this resistance come from? (students, professors, administrative staff ...).

### Planning

What are the main reasons, motivations that have led HEI to go international?

What are the priorities in terms of internationalization in your department or School: teaching, research or extension?

Is there a priority area? Undergraduate or post-graduate?

Was there a financial impact on your department or School regarding investments, expenses, or profit from internationalization?

### **Operationalization**

What actions are being taken to internationalize the teaching staff and students at the HEI?

Are there processes in your department or school involved with these factors?

What are the three main internationalization actions promoted by your department or School at IES?

### **Revision**

Did the internationalization process bring curricular updates, new teaching methodologies, inclusion of international content?

What are the three main benefits of internationalization in HEI?

What are the three main risks of internationalization in HEI?

### **Reinforcement**

Are there any initiatives developed or under development regarding recognition and rewards for professors, staff and student participation in relation to the internationalization process at the HEI?

Can performance indicators contribute to the internationalization process of the HEI?

What are the internationalization indicators used in the HEI?