



# Is Internationalization of Higher Education the Way to Go?

Josephine Oranga, Eliud Nyakundi & Enock Obuba  
Kisii University, Kenya

Corresponding Author: [josephineoranga@kisiiversity.ac.ke](mailto:josephineoranga@kisiiversity.ac.ke)

*Received July 27, 2020; Revised August 21, 2020; Accepted August 23, 2020*

**Abstract:** *Internalisation of higher education has become the trend in higher education yet not many studies have focused on the risks and challenges that may arise from the phenomenon. This paper points out some of these challenges in general and highlights the concerns and risks that may arise from attempts to take education beyond an institution's national borders by examining and analysing literature from different schools of thought. The study adopts Raymond Vernon's theory of International Product Life Cycle in an attempt to highlight the risks and challenges that lie beneath the process of internationalisation of higher education. From the analysis, the main concerns include : maintaining/enhancing quality of programmes, commercialisation of institutions/programmes, rise in low-quality or rogue education providers; domestic employers and institutions' reluctance to recognise foreign qualifications, inability to meet domestic higher education objectives, overuse of English language, financial constraints, ethical, religious and political aspects of the host countries, attitude of staff, lack of institutional preparedness and the challenge of attaining an international curriculum. Recommendations are thereafter given to help minimise the risks and enhance the process of internationalisation. This paper presents the risks and challenges in general, even though the severity of the risks and challenges may vary greatly depending on the economic, political and socio-cultural status of the countries and the stakeholders involved.*

**Keywords:** *Higher Education, Internationalization, Regionalization, Quality Assurance, Globalization, Foreign qualifications*

## How to reference this article (APA):

Oranga, J., Nyakundi E. & Obuba, E. (2020). Is internationalization of higher education the way to go? *Journal of Research Innovation and Implications in Education*, 4(3), 133-144.

## 1. Introduction

Internationalisation has emerged as an important issue in higher education around the globe. However, in spite of the growth of literature in this area, scholars still debate internationalisation as a concept, its characteristics, implications and its barriers and challenges. Several scholars (Jones & Brown 2007, Middlehurst & Woodfield 2007 & Bevis, 2011), contend that the higher education environment worldwide is evolving rapidly due to an increasingly global graduate employment market and an increasing global and regional competition, thus begetting the internationalisation movement. Caruana & Spurling, (2007), however indicate that universities in developing countries are still strategizing on the best ways to internationalise their programmes and increase their presence in the international arena. Thus, there is need

to examine the challenges and risks associated with internationalisation of higher education in light of the various studies that have been conducted with the aim of developing ways of surmounting them in order to strengthen and reinforce the process.

According to Altbach and Knight (2006), initiatives such as establishment of subsidiary campuses, cross-border collaborative programmes, international students' programmes and introduction of English-medium programmes/courses, are some of the internationalisation practices being put in place by many higher education institutions globally. Furthermore, institutional co-operation, development of transnational university networks, remote delivery of higher education and the unification of higher education systems are some of the initiatives towards internationalisation of higher education (Dwyer, 2004).

However, scholars (Bunoti 2010, Mpata 2011 and Daniel et al 2015) indicate that embedded in these initiatives are several risk factors and challenges that threaten the whole process and concept of internationalisation.

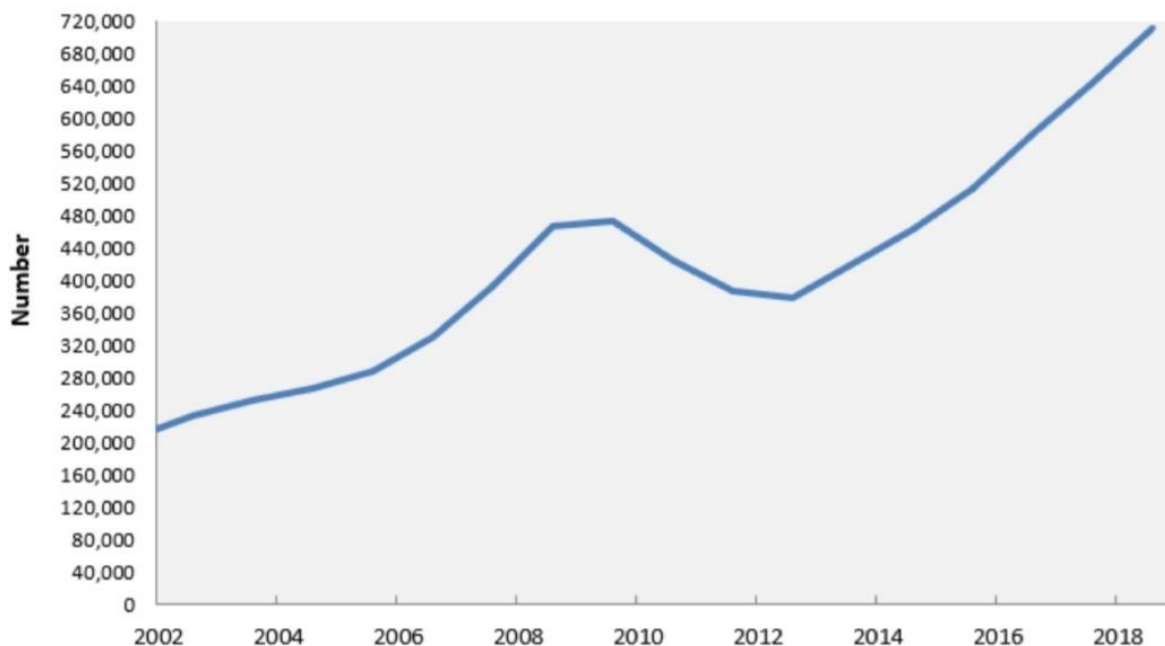
The meaning of the term *internationalisation*, too, has never been agreed upon by scholars due to the diversity and complexity of the concept, its dimensions and stakeholders at the national and institutional levels. As a matter of fact, the terms transnational education, borderless education, offshore education, and cross-border education are used interchangeably with internationalisation (Marginson and Wende 2009). However, this paper adopts the definition by Knight (2005) as it appears more comprehensive and encompassing. Knight (2005) views internationalisation of higher education as the process of integrating global, intercultural or international features into the functions, purposes or delivery of postsecondary education. This article however, singles out university education in particular as the subject of its analysis.

As expected, perceptions differ widely on what constitutes internationalisation, the competencies it promotes, the values it creates, the processes that sustain it and its effects on the core functions of the higher education, namely, teaching, research and service to humanity.

## 2. Literature Review

A number of scholars have explored issues that pose a challenge to internationalisation of higher education (Marginson & Wende, 2009, Caruana & Spurling, 2007, Bevis 2011) and on the whole, agree that the benefits of internationalisation of higher education far outweigh any disadvantages hinged therein, necessitating the need to bring to fore the challenges and risks with the aim of supporting and strengthening the whole process.

Additionally, there is a growing body of knowledge attesting to the fact that higher education institutions in the developed world have grown dependant on high fee-paying international students (Marginson & Wende 2009, Bunoti 2011 Batrikin 2020). Australian Bureau of Statistics (2019) indicates that international students alone contributed \$37.6 billion to the Australian economy in 2018-2019 fiscal years, a \$5 billion growth from the previous year making education the fourth largest export behind only Iron, Coal and Natural Gas and ahead of Tourism, Gold, Meat and Alumina for the second year running. It is noteworthy that education is the country's top service-based export supporting 240,000 jobs, economic growth and business opportunities. Batrikin (2020) indicates that education as an export in Australia has seen remarkable double digit growth, thus, highlighting the strength of Australia's higher education. Figure 1 below shows the international student enrollment in Australia between 2002-2018, thus:



**Figure 1: International student enrolment in Australia between 2002- 2018**

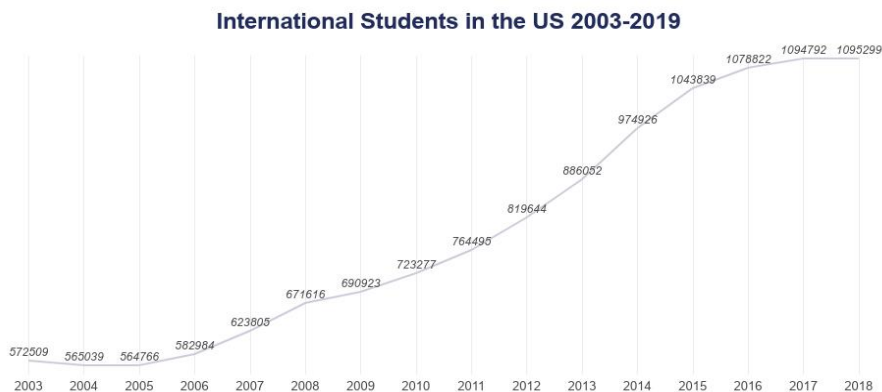
Source: Department of Education, Australia

The United States has also witnessed a remarkable growth in its international student numbers, especially from the year 2003-2017. The country remains the top international student destination despite relative stagnation experienced after the year 2017 attesting to

the fact that internationalisation of higher education faces myriad risks and challenges that can result in loss of marketability leading to ultimate decline. Scholars have attributed the flattening of the curve in the US to myriad factors including adverse political rhetoric

against immigration and enhancement of marketing strategies by universities in other developed countries. It is however, noteworthy that the flattening of the curve does not, in any way, suggest a decline in the number of students seeking higher education outside their national borders. On the contrary, the number of international students has continued to increase gradually with Australia and Canada registering spikes in admissions at the expense of the US, implying that

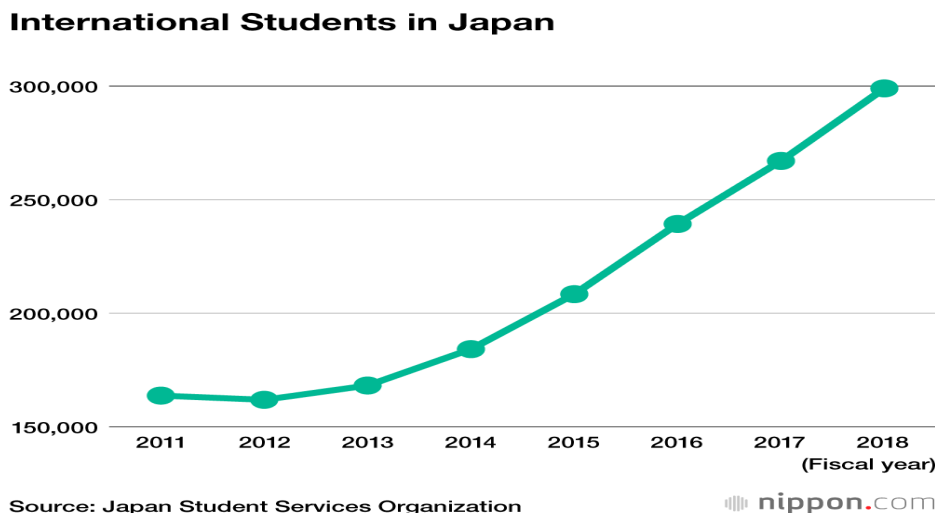
students are still increasingly seeking higher educational opportunities outside their national boundaries. Apparently, Australia, Japan Canada and the UK are continuously repositioning themselves as leading education providers and exporters globally (Bastrikin, 2020). Figure 2 below shows the gradual growth of international students in the United States between 2013- 2018 and the flattening of the curve thereafter, thus:



**Figure 2: Growth from 2003- 2018 of international students in the US**  
Source: [educatiodata.org](http://educatiodata.org)

Figure 2 above indicates that international students' enrollment in American universities was on a gradual increase from 2005-2017 and appears to have reached saturation in the year 2017. According to the Product Cycle Theory by Vernon (1966), product marketability declines after the product reaches maturity and saturation stages.

Consequently, figure 3 below gives a summary of the growth of international students in Japan. From the diagram, the enrollment has been increasing steadily over time. Japanese universities too have opened subsidiaries in other countries (Yuko, 2017). Thus:

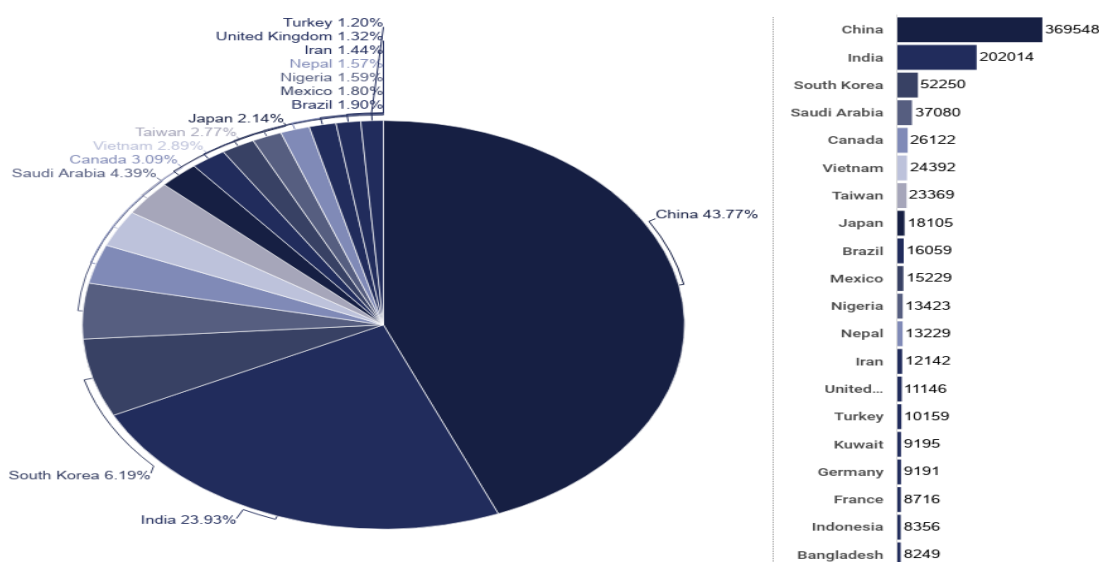


**Figure 3: International students in Japan between 2011- 2018**  
Source: [nippon.com](http://nippon.com)

Consequently, figure 4 below shows the diverse nature of students who seek education in the United States with China, being the top contributor followed by India. Apparently, China and India are the leading contributors

of international students, not only in the US but in all other education exporting countries as well (Marek 2019). Thus:

**Number of International Students Studying in the US by Country of Origin, 2018-2019**



**Figure 4: Nationalities studying in the US from 2018-2019**

Source: [educatiodata.org](http://educatiodata.org)

Apparently, higher education institutions' dependence on international students, more so those from China has taken a new turn with the University of Illinois taking an insurance policy to mitigate against a decline in Chinese students' enrollment (Marek . 2019 and Bastrikin, 2020). This is testimony to the enormity of the role that internationalisation of higher education plays in host country economies, and more so, those in the developed world.

As earlier stated, studies abound that attest to myriad benefits of internationalisation of higher education (Bastrikin, 2020; Bunoti 2011; Babones 2019 & Bevis 2011). The benefits are varied and as diverse as they can get. These include student knowledge of international issues, research collaboration, the commercial advantage, increased access to higher education, strategic alliances between countries and regions, for the production and exchange of new knowledge, movement of graduates and professionals, human resource and institutional capacity building, income generation, improvement of academic quality, increased mutual understanding between universities, language acquisition, enhancement of the curriculum with international content, harmonisation of higher education systems and cultural exchanges/appreciations (Jones & Brown, 2007; Caruana & Spurling, 2007; Knight 2008; Middlehurst & Woodfield, 2007; Universities UK, 2005). Thus internationalisation of higher education stands beneficial, overall when viewed from these perspectives.

In spite of the benefits, there are numerous barriers and risk factors too associated with the process and implementation of internationalisation of higher education. The challenges subsequently limit its expansion and growth and consequently obscure its benefits. According to Middlehurst and Woodfield

(2007), there are numerous challenges that work against the full integration of the concept of internationalisation in institutions of higher learning. Additionally, Marginson and Wende (2009) and Knight (2008) observe that globalisation is both a benefit and a curse to institutions of higher learning.

Daniels, Rodebaugh, and Sullivan (2015) indicate that internationalisation as a business strategy or idea is unique and is dependent on myriad factors, the most significant of which being administrative decisions, business objectives and expected returns. Accordingly, most universities internationalise with the aim of increasing the institutions' incomes.

Babones (2019) indicates that its common practise for Australian universities to compromise standards in order to accommodate international students. Accordingly, the fact that foreign students pay way too much fees as compared to their domestic counterparts propels higher education institutions to dilute admission and academic standards to accommodate them. Furthermore, according to Babones (2019), alternative admissions pathways that allow foreign students to navigate through the English language requirements and the use of commission-based brokerage agents have resulted in intentional academic negligence by a vast majority of Australian universities.

Bunoti (2011), indicates that internationalisation is bound to beget low quality education that is driven only by the need to make profits. Accordingly, the market of low quality higher education is due to the low funding from government, commercialization of education and entry of unregulated private providers, coupled with the high demand for education, especially in developing countries. Additionally, according to the author, low

quality education is also driven by the perception that possession of higher certificates is a gateway to succession life. Mpata (2010) indicates that the rogue education providers come to fill a gap occasioned by the demand due to unplanned release of too many from high school without pre-planned programmes for their absorption.

According to Dwyer (2004) many people seek higher education outside their borders for many reasons, including: failing to get an opportunity in a course of interest, joining relatives already abroad, acquiring a scholarship to study, exploration, lower costs, quality education, to learn a new language among many more; abroad has many benefits both to the students, their country of origin and the world generally. Students who had an outside US experience, on return to the country were more sensitive to multiculturalism, diversity and performed better than those without, had little conflict and had enhanced cross-cultural interactions (Bevis, 2011). This is expected to translate to their places of work, choice of work and interactions at work.

The understanding that the rogue education provider will end up giving a paper certificate that has little skill or knowledge in the area of the certificate should be an opportunity higher education institutions should seize. According to, Basheka, Huhenda and Kittobe (2009), higher institutions of learning should desist from competing in income generation and instead focus on their goals, visions and missions. And the market need not only ask for the qualification of their potential employees, but also seek to identify the skills professed by those certificates. This way, both the citizenry and regulators can get rid of the low quality education in higher education across borders.

Mutula (2002) and Daniels (2015) indicate that the vast majority of cross border seekers of higher education do so because of lack of opportunity at home or cost. In Kenya for example where admission to universities is pegged on a certain minimum grade (and in the past, on available scholarship or bed capacity) a lot of qualified students are left out.

More often than not, on their return home, international higher education certificate holders are perceived as having not met their home country university admission standards, resulting in their certificates being perceived as inferior in terms to quality as compared to the local ones.

To solve this, Gondwe and Walenkamp (2011) contend that for international education to be real, there is need for those who train outside their countries to bring the foreign experience and skills and adapt them to the home situation. Accordingly, there is also need for host countries, especially those offering scholarships to help transfer their novel high quality education by linking their countries curriculum with international students' home country curriculum to a given extent.

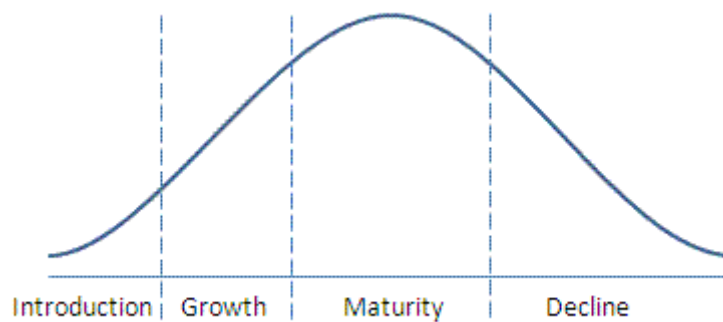
Thus, internationalisation of higher education has its pros and cons that need to be examined keenly by higher education institutions before embarking on it. Also, it is no secret that universities and economies in the developed world have grown totally dependent on high fee-paying international students, more so those from China. As such the economic significance of these students in these universities and countries cannot be overemphasized. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, the extreme dependence on international students has seen universities, for instance, the University of Illinois, begin to take insurance policies to cushion themselves against a decline in Chinese students' enrollment (Marek. 2019 and Bastrokin, 2020)

## **Theoretical framework**

### **Product Life Cycle Theory – Raymond Vernon (1966)**

This paper employs sections of Raymond Vernon's theory of Product Life Cycle (1966) in an attempt to indicate that internationalisation and expansion of markets in higher education is bound to encounter limits and challenges. The theory gives impetus to the fact that internationalisation can be tumultuous and may require careful navigation. This paper is concerned with establishing and analysing the challenges and risks that are hinged in internationalisation of higher education as postulated by different authors. In his theory, Vernon (1966) indicate that at the bottom of every product's development lies the reality of product decline. It is envisaged that by linking this theory to higher education intuitions' internationalisation efforts, the stakeholders would become more wary of the risks and challenges that lie therein and thus develop strategies geared toward lessening the adverse effect of the challenges and risks. Figure 5 below is a diagrammatic representation of the international product life cycle theory by Vernon (1966) thus:





**International product life cycle theory by Vernon (1966)**

Source: education.org

Vernon (1966) contends that a product matures and then declines. The three stages as postulated by the theory include: Product introduction stage, followed by growth stage and consequently followed by the maturity stage. Subsequently the decline stage sets in as a result of product saturation. According to Vernon (1966), the manufacturer then bows out gracefully out of the market if redesign and reinvention of the product is not done timely. Consequently, whatever is left of the market share at this point is thereby divided up between predominantly international competitors. Accordingly, at this stage, the landscape in the host country changes too as people would more likely opt for an imported version of the product than a locally available one.

From the graph, the introduction stage represents the early market period just when the product has been developed or when education is first introduced to the international market followed by growth stage wherein the sales start taking off, education-wise this would see enrollment of international students begin to rise. Subsequently, maturity sets in, and education as the product achieves a stable international market. Consequently, the decline stage sets in at which point sales reduce gradually (Vernon 1966). This marks the end of the product's marketability. From this paper's standpoint, decline could be brought about and/or accelerated by the challenges and risks that are hinged in the process of internationalising higher education.

Vernon (1966) maintains that a market downturn will always occur. Accordingly, products enter the market and gradually lose marketability due to a number of reasons, hence calling for a reinvention and repositioning. A number of impact reduction strategies could also be devised in an effort to reduce the adverse effect of product decline in the international market. Impact reduction strategies would include taking insurance against unforeseen downturn events and other challenges which in this case could result in significant loss of income by institutions of higher education. This, theory thus, serves to enlighten higher education exporters that myriad factors including competition and replication of an institution's programmes by other institutions of higher education could cause a decline in the demand of the institution's products.

Critics, however, observe that Vernon (1966) does not provide timelines and that products do not always die. Accordingly, some products have staved off competition and stayed afloat for a long time. However, the theory vividly highlights the challenge of decline, which is quite relevant as international higher education is market driven. Higher education exporters should realise that players operating in modern economies are faced with uncertainties that come with fluctuation in long-term trends of economic activity that is characterized by periods of both economic growth and decline occurring in phases. This paper thus incorporates sections of this theory in an attempt to explore the risks and challenges that arise from internationalisation of higher education.

Higher education institutions are expected to pay attention to the various stages of international Product Life Cycle and strive to place their institutions at the various stages of the theory as postulated by Vernon (1966), in an effort to cushion their institutions against a changing international market.

### 3. Methodology

Thematic interpretation of various studies conducted in the area of internationalization of higher education was done with the aim of exploring and highlighting the risks and challenges that are hinged in the whole process of internationalising higher education programmes. This paper, thus presents the cross cutting challenges and risks that arise from both the process and the end result of internationalisation of higher education institutions. The question that this paper seeks to address is: What are the challenges and risk factors that form a barrier to the internationalisation of higher education? It is presumed that these challenges, if addressed, would lessen and at the same time, hasten the processes of internationalisation of higher education programmes, consequently resulting in improved educational standards and enhanced sociocultural and economic benefits to all concerned.

### 4. Results and Discussion

The challenges and risks are discussed as follows:

## 4.1 Quality as a challenge

Internationalisation policies and practices face the limits of their development unless the quality challenge is addressed in all its consequences (Daniels et al, 2015, Middlehurst & Woodfield (2007). Decline in academic standards as institutions' of higher education concentrate on economic gains from international students is a reality (Herman, 2007). Apparently, internationalisation of higher education has seen an increase in low-quality or rogue 'education' providers. Furthermore, according to Damme (2001), embedded in all internationalisation initiatives are several issues and challenges, which in one kind or another have direct links to the quality of education being provided by higher education institutions.

Studies (Main 2012 and Lillis et al 2010) maintain that the processes and quality of internationalisation policies and practices is an imperative issue that should be given utmost consideration even as higher education institutions strive to internationalize, failure of which renders the quality of the programmes irredeemably compromised, subsequently impacting negatively on the recipients of such an education programme. Main (2012 ) contends that the issue of quality ,if not addressed in time and consistently, impacts quality and standards of an education system negatively.

According to (Bevis, 2012), the challenge of quality of degrees offered by international universities has resulted in foreign qualifications not being recognized by some domestic employers or education institutions and countries are increasingly drawing a line with regard to which qualifications they deem substantive enough in order to shield themselves against qualifications from rogue universities (Bevis 2012). It has been reported that some rogue universities admit unqualified students as long as they pay the much needed fees (Lillies et al 2010).

The problem of low quality education provision has been worsened by the fact that governments around the world have been reducing funding to public universities in the belief and hope that universities are earning substantial income from high fee-paying international students. This has made universities even more aggressive in inventing ways of attracting international students, sometimes having to compromise standards in order to attract the much needed high fee-paying international students. Consequently, myriad university programmes are funded by the fees that international students pay. This phenomenon in itself kills academic standards and lowers the quality of education offered by international higher education institutions.

Knight and Altbach (2007) indicate that efforts to monitor international initiatives and ensure quality and high standards should be integral to the international higher education environment. Additionally, Mpaata (2010) recommends an integration of internationalisation policies and general quality assurance practices at institutional and policy levels for

the quality to be maintained and enhanced. Quality assurance should, thus, play a leading role in higher education's internationalisation processes. Furthermore, universities which are the expected centres of academic excellence need to be properly focused and well-funded to curb the menace of low quality education providers.

## 4.2 Commercialisation of higher education

An increasing number of countries are viewing internationalisation of education as a service export implying that the amount of income earned from international students including their fees and accommodation may slowly take precedence over educational standards and quality assurance measures if care is not taken. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2019) the value of education exports for Australia in 2018/19, was \$37.556 billion. This encompassed the amount spent on fees and goods and services by students onshore in Australia. Thus, this was the total contribution to the Australian economy from international students studying and living there (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2020). This amount shows that international students serve quite a significant commercial function in the host countries.

As discussed earlier, education is gradually being reduced and turned into an income generating venture with profitability at the apex of its mandate consequently leading to the loss of brilliant students who cannot afford exorbitant fees charged by the vast majority of international higher education institutions. Furthermore, according to Daniels et al (2015), most universities internationalise with the aim of increasing the institutions' incomes and not attracting high achieving students

The findings of a study conducted in the UK (Mains, 2010) ranked availability of international opportunities to students with financial resources as the main risk and challenge to internationalisation of higher education. Furthermore, the findings from Mains (2012) and Fielden (2008) indicate that international programmes are more expensive and most universities pursue economic gain at the expense of the quality of the program or quality of students admitted. Consequently, the whole process of internationalisation initiative locks out brilliant students who lack financial resources.

Herbert (2006) too contends that the whole process of internationalisation leads to commercialisation of education, which in turn results into institutionalisation of a market-driven curriculum . These studies (Mains, 2010 ,Herbert , 2006 and Daniels et al, 2015 ) recommend that a window of opportunity should be left for brilliant students who face financial constraints , by offering them scholarships , intergovernmental grants and exchanges. This would benefit gifted yet economically disadvantaged student as internationalisation should not be seen as a preserve of wealthy or high-end students only. Additionally,

exporters of higher education should be wary of changing market trends that could render them useless if they are solely driven by profit. Reserving spots for brilliant yet financially constrained students would also go a long way in giving these institutions a philanthropic face.

### 4.3 Attitude as a challenge

The attitudes of stakeholders in the field of higher education pose a challenge to higher education institution's internationalization efforts (Hudson, 2004, Aguiler, 2008). Furthermore, studies (Hudson 2004 and Elkin 2008), indicate that stakeholder attitudes towards internationalization are one of the most important barriers. Accordingly, attitude results in resistance from the faculty to implement change in their daily work and course structure leading to stagnation of the whole process. According to Aguiler (2008 and Daniels et al, 2015), modification of attitudes toward internationalisation require spreading the concept of comprehensive internationalisation among all higher education stakeholders, educating them on the benefits and significance and highlighting the steps to be taken and role to be played by each department towards the process of internationalisation. All individual stakeholders should be made to understand that internationalisation is the best way forward for all in order to cope with the challenges of a globalized society and to ensure that graduates become citizens of the whole world and not just citizens of a nation. As postulated by Vernon (1966), product marketability decline is well dealt with if stakeholder attitudes are positive towards the whole process of internationalisation.

### 4.4 Institutional Preparedness

This challenge may likely occur at the introduction stage, when the product is being developed. According to Vernon (1966), the challenge may trickle down and have lasting and significant effect on the product's full cycle. Subsequently, Aguiler (2008) and Hudson (2004) indicate that low institutional preparedness at the introduction stage would result in a lack of institutional policies, strategies and priorities towards internationalisation resulting poor conceptualization of the whole process of internationalisation among the various stakeholders. Consequently, the author contends that the lack of national policies encouraging internationalisation would make the process or any attempts to internationalize unsuccessful. Thus, a connection between international programs and a country's national policies and goals of education should be institutionalised from the beginning in order to enhance the whole process. Kein (2013) also indicates that administrative procedures and barriers to information access might also form a barrier to internationalization as well as insufficient / weak leadership and incompetency of the international office. This barriers and incompetencies could slow, or stop the process of internationalisation altogether. Hence there is

need for proper policy formulation and well defined strategies by higher education institutions in order to ensure successful internationalisation of programmes. Maringe (2000) and Hudson (2004) indicate that incentives, financial resources and a good legal framework are necessary and important prerequisites for effective internationalisation to occur. Accordingly, institutional preparedness encompasses the institutions' financial capability as it would require money to market and set up campuses outside the host country, hence institutions should weigh their financial capabilities prior to embarking on the process. Addressing the challenge of institutional preparedness might help militate against other risks and delay the decline stage as postulated by Vernon (1966), in his theory of international Product Life cycle.

### 4.5 Overuse of English as a medium of communication

The Most influential and esteemed academic journals and scientific websites are in English, thus universities and other institutions of higher education in most parts of the world encourage and frequently demand that their academics publish in these English-medium journals as evidence of quality scholarship. Scholars elsewhere have been coerced by circumstances, to learn and adopt English as the publishing language and to publish in the main English journals, which reflect the values of the editors/ boards in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada and other metropolitan countries (Lillis & Curry 2010). Apparently, the influence of English on scholarship, research and teaching in the 21st century is one of the realities of research institutions' and universities worldwide (Knight, 2007). It is however, very difficult for authors whose first language is not English to have manuscripts accepted in these influential publications and journals. Accordingly, the main challenge is that the top-ranking English journals are becoming increasingly selective, accepting only 5 to 10 % of paper submissions, as universities worldwide continue to demand that their scholars and scientists publish in these journals (Lillis & Curry 2010 and Kein, 2013). Some critics look at the current trend of English becoming the language of academic as neo-colonialism as scholars everywhere in the world are under extreme pressure to conform and align to the aims and values of the metropolitan academic practices and systems that use English (Elkins 2008 and Daniels et al, 2015).

Coupled with the above phenomenon is the aspect of different countries and regions ascribing different meanings for basic terminologies, apparently, agreeing on the meaning of different terminologies and scientific phrases is becoming harder by the day. According to Knight (2010), in a field that is changing as much as international education, the challenge of finding common meanings for the same and similar basic terms will continue. Each country, company, association, or government agency will use terms that make sense from their own perspective since language is a function of culture and environment (Elkin 2008). However, it is



imperative to develop a common understanding of the terms for policy, regulations, research, and data-collection purposes for the sake of uniformity in understanding and synthesis of significant research outputs.

Needless to say, English grew to its present level as the scholarship language without any obvious efforts or manipulation. Acceptance of the status quo has an upside of English being the language that unifies researchers worldwide consequently, leading to greater understanding and cohesion in research world and necessitating wider adoption and comprehension of worldwide of research outputs. Depending on how one looks at it, this state of affairs might call for the growth and adoption of an alternative language by academic institutions which is, to say the least, a tall order.

#### **4.6 Internationalisation of Curriculums- Ethical, religious and political considerations**

Internationalisation calls for a curriculum or syllabi that are responsive and sensitive to the needs of both the local and international educational needs (Middlehurst, 2007). Most institutions find internationalisation of the curriculum quite challenging. Developing and arriving at a curriculum that satisfies the needs of both international and local educational needs is sometimes quite challenging. According to Bastrikin (2020), ethical religious and political considerations of different countries pose a challenge to internationalisation of higher education. Accordingly, local/national educational curriculum always carry aspects of ethics, religion and politics of the local country, which might be totally different from other countries. The curriculum might not make sense to a significant number of international students. Additionally, some local aspects may infringe on the beliefs and ideologies of students from different countries. Consequently, this forces the host countries to modify their curriculum in order to give them an international look by changing and/or removing important aspects of religion, ethics and other values in order to meet the needs of international students (Miget 2001). However, the modified curriculum, in turn, disadvantages local students to whom the removed religious aspects were relevant to resulting in national higher education objectives not being met. A solution to this may be found in the adaptation and adoption of the core-curriculum in response to the needs of both local and international students in order to ensure that local students are not disadvantaged in the processes striving to develop a curriculum that is sensitive to the diverse needs of international students.

#### **4.7 Undercurrents of feelings of local neglect among staff and students**

According to Maringe (2000), undercurrents of feelings of neglect among local staff and students at the expense of global and international attention might pose a

challenge to the process of internationalisation as the staff may not collaborate and cooperate as required while local students might feel less important than their international counterparts. Accordingly, this may lead to low morale and dismal performance by students and staff, eventually forming a barrier to the whole process of internationalisation. Hence utmost care should be taken to ensure that the whole process has the good will of both local staff and students (Miget, 20017& Bunoti 2011). Scholars propose consultation with different stakeholders at different stages in order to include them and have them own the program and thereby work towards its success. Middlehurst and Woodfield (2007) indicate that internationalisation requires support from all staff and stakeholders in the institutions and also recommends involving all stake holders. Accordingly, this would substantially increase the chance that the programme will be successful. Extreme care should also be taken to ensure that the institution does not gain international popularity at the expense of local and national popularity. Local popularity should be the basis of international popularity and one should not take precedence over the other. Maintaining local popularity would cushion the institution against a total downward spiral should product decline set in as postulated by Vernon (1966). Hence the process of internationalization should be all-inclusive.

#### **4.8 Mobility of staff**

Scholars (Marginson & Wende, 2009 and Knight,2008), indicate that internationalisation and globalisation constitute a threat to some higher education institutions in that it acts as the global academic marketplace for professors and students. This means that the best students and staff can be lured away by being offered lucrative scholarships and salaries respectively, by economically advanced countries. Accordingly, internationalisation might lead to mobility of qualified staff (brain drain) to more advanced countries leaving developing countries in perpetual need of experts in certain essential areas. Qualified professors in less developed countries with fewer resources will, more often than not, move to developed countries where a lot of resources are allocated to research and staff salaries. This impacts badly on developing countries as the countries would not be able to retain qualified staff (Middlehurst & Woodfield, 2007). Accordingly, staff mobility is both beneficial and disadvantageous though, depending on the countries involved. It is of great benefit to developed countries which are able to lure well trained staff whom they never participated in training. To help curb this problem, countries may adopt a way of ensuring that dons and scholars work in their local countries for a stipulated number of years before moving to other countries. Additionally, the role that monetary compensation plays should not be underestimated by developing countries even as they devise strategies of curbing brain drain.

## 4.9 Over-reliance on international “core” journals for promotion and research criteria

According to Maian (2012), internationalisation leads to over-reliance on international “core” journals for promotion of academics and for research criteria thus placing professors and other academics in peripheral research universities at a disadvantage even though they might just be as gifted as those in the acclaimed central universities (Bastrikin, 2020). This totally disadvantages hardworking professors in non-core universities, not to mention the fact that getting their quality articles published in journals of repute is usually almost impossible by virtue of the low cadre universities they belong to (Lillis & Curry 2010). To address this challenge, as many journals as possible, which maintain high standards, should receive the recognition they deserve regardless of whether they are affiliated to a core university or not and affiliation to a core university should not be used as criteria for judging journal standards and quality. Furthermore, according to Basheka, et al, (2009), institutions should not rely or insist on publication in certain specific journals as a mark of quality of their academics and professors under examination or promotion as this has proved unfair and unachievable.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusion

The main challenges and risks associated with internationalisation of higher education are: the risk of maintaining/enhancing quality of programmes, the risk of commercialising the institutions/programmes, increase in low-quality or rogue providers; lack of recognition of foreign qualifications by domestic employers and domestic education institutions, domestic higher education objectives not being met, overuse of English, financial constraints, ethical, religious and political aspects of the host countries, attitude of staff, lack of institutional preparedness and the challenge of attaining an international curriculum.

Thus, in order to internationalise, universities should keenly consider their ability to address the above challenges vis-a-vis acquiring an international face. In addition, they should examine their ability to maintain high academic standards in the face of a growing global competition for international students, some of whom did not merit admission in their host countries, shrinking government funding for higher education, notwithstanding.

### 5.2 Recommendations

In view of the challenges and risks aforementioned, the following suggestions would help lessen the challenges and their impact:

1. Higher education sector should endeavour to come up with their own policy for internationalization than rely on locally drawn policies.
2. Institutions could form academic groups that may carry out curricula change.
3. Resources for individuals should be allocated based on their contribution to internationalising institutional policy.
4. Institutions of higher learning could incorporate a component of “international profile” when hiring new staff in order to acknowledge international education and exchange.
5. Governments and higher education institutions should work together towards reducing the gap between national and international policy.
6. Enlightenment and sensitization should be made concerning the urgency of building a global academic community geared towards educating students to be citizens of the world as opposed to being localised citizens of a country.
7. Conducting a needs assessment on the situation of the staff in higher education institutions and establish the sections/ staff that would benefit from retraining to enhance the process of internationalising.
8. Host governments should continue funding higher education even in the face of internationalisation to ensure that universities do not compromise standards in pursuit of money.

## References

- Aguilar, P (2008), Barriers to internationalisation: Attitudes, resources, policy. Rapporteur: Martin Pantoja – Director, International Relations, Universidad de Guanajuato, Mexico.
- Aigner, J. S., Nelson, P. & Stimpfl, J. R. (1992) Internationalizing the University: making it work. Springfield: CBIS Federal.
- Altbach. J & Knight (2007)-The Internationalization of Higher Education: Motivations and Realities: *Journal of Studies in International Education Fall/Winter 11 -3-4*, 290-305.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (2019) 5368.0.55.003 – International Trade: Supplementary Information, Financial Year, 2018-19.
- Babones, S (2019). The China Student Boom and the Risks It Poses to Australian Universities; Analysis paper 5: *The Centre for Independent*. Sydney.
- Basheka B.C., Muhenda M.B., and Kittobe J. (2009) Programme Delivery, Quality Benchmarks and

Outcomes Based Education at Uganda Management Institute: A correlational approach. NCHE, Kampala.

- Bastrikin, A. (2020) International Student Enrolment Statistics: *educationdata.org* MI
- Bevis, T. B. (2002). At a glance: International students in the United States' *International Educator* 11 (3) 12–17.
- Bunoti, S. (2011). The quality of higher education in developing countries needs professional support. Retrieved from <http://www.intconfhighered.org/FINAL%20S arah%20Bunoti.pdf> on 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2020.
- Caruana, V. & Spurling, N. (2007). The internationalisation of UK higher education-a review of selected material: UK: Higher Education Academy.
- Damme, G (2001). Quality issues in the internationalization of higher education by
- Daniels, J.D, Rodebaugh, L.H and Sullivan, D.P. (2015). *International Business Environments and Operations: Global Edition*. 15 Edn. Pearson Education Limited. Edinburgh.
- De Wit, H. (1995). *Strategies for Internationalization of Higher Education: a comparative study of Australia, Canada, Europe and the United States of America*. Amsterdam: European Association for International Education.
- Dwyer, M. M. (2004). More Is Better: The Impact of Study Abroad Program Duration. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 10(1), 151-164. <https://doi.org/10.36366/frontiers.v10i1.139>.
- Elkin, G., Devjee, F. & Farnsworth, J. (2005). Visualising the "internationalisation of universities. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 19 (4), pp. 318-329 [Online]. Available at: [www.emeraldinsight.com](http://www.emeraldinsight.com).
- Elkin, G., Farnsworth, J. & Templer, A. (2008). Strategy and the internationalisation of universities. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 22 (3), 239-250. [Online]. Available at: [www.emeraldinsight.com](http://www.emeraldinsight.com).
- Fielden, J. (2008) *The Practice of Internationalisation: Managing International Activities in UK Universities*. London: The UK HE International Unit [Online]. Available at: [http://www. Universitiesuk .ac.uk](http://www.Universitiesuk.ac.uk).
- Gondwe, M. & Walenkamp, J. (2011). Alignment of higher professional education with the needs of the local labour market: the case of Ghana. Retrieved from: <http://www.nuffic.nl/international-organisations/international-education-monitor/country-monitor/africa/ghana/reports/ghana-country-report.pdf> on 7<sup>th</sup> August, 2020.
- Harrison, N & Peacock, N. (undated). Cultural distance, mindfulness and passive xenophobia: Using Integrated Threat Theory to explore home higher education students' perspectives on 'internationalisation at home'; SRHE paper
- Hudson, R (2014). Why universities want to internationalise; what stops them?
- Jones, E. & Brown, S. (2007). *Internationalising higher education UK*: Routledge.
- Knight, J. (1997). Internationalization of higher education: a conceptual framework', in Knight, J. & deWitt, H. (eds.) *Internationalization of Higher Education in Asia Pacific Countries*. Amsterdam: EAIE, pp. 5- 19.
- Knight, J. (2003). Updating the Definition of Internationalisation', *The Journal of International Higher Education*, 33 (Fall) [Online]. Available at: <http://www.bc.edu/bc>.
- Lillis, Theresa and Mary J. C. (2010): *Academic Writing in a Global Context: The Politics and Practices of Publishing in English* (New York: Routledge).
- Maringe, S. (2000). Strategies and challenges of internationalisation in HE: An exploratory study of universities.
- Middlehurst, R. & Woodfield, S. (2007). Responding to the internationalisation agenda: Implications for institutional strategy. Higher Education Academy [Online]. Available at: <http://www.escalate.ac.uk>.
- Marek, L. ( 2019). Why University of Illinois is insuring itself literally against a drop in Chinese students: *Crain's Chicago Business*. Chicago.
- Marginson, Simon and Marijk van der Wende (2009a): "Europeanisation, International Rankings, and Faculty Mobility: Three Cases in Higher Education Globalisation" in *Higher Education to 2030, Vol 2, Globalisation*, (ed.), Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (Paris: OECD), 109-41. (2009b): "The New Global Landscape of

Nations and Institutions” in *Higher Education to 2030*, Vol 2, *Globalisation*; Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development (Paris:OECD).

Mpaata A. K. (2010). University Competiveness through Quality assurance; The Challenging Battle for Intellectuals.

Mutula, S.M. (2002). University education in Kenya: current developments and future outlook: *International Journal of Educational Management*,16(3),109-119. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513540210422219>.

Scott, R. A. (1992). Campus Developments in Response to the Challenges of Internationalization: the case of Ramapo College of New Jersey (USA). Springfield: CBIS Federal.

Universities UK (2005). Universities UK’s international strategy -London: Universities UK.

Vernon, R. (1966). International Investment and International Trade in the Product Cycle -*The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 80(2), 190–207.

Warner, G. (1992). Internationalization Models and the Role of the University. *International Education Magazine*, p. 21.