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Chapter 11

DEVELOPING THE INTERNATIONALISATION RESEARCH COMMUNITY OF INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR TEACHING (ICET)

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INTRODUCTION

The motivations behind the key research problem examined throughout this book include the needs to better understanding internationalisation to assist researchers plan projects, coordinate collaborations and analyse their efforts at internationalisation through research. These needs highlighted a problem linked to the absence of a framework, which enabled researchers to distinguish between and discuss different types of internationalisation research occurring at their institutions. The first step in finding a solution was to create a framework that provided a means for classifying internationalisation research and a vocabulary for distinguishing and discussing different types of internationalisation research. The next step involved collecting the examples of internationalisation research presented in this book from researchers within and outside the ICET research network. The final step involved representing (Cousin, 2009) an account of these activities using the ‘I’ Framework. In using this framework, it is acknowledged this is a ‘constructed’ framework, which reflects some of the inherent limitations associated with the lived experiences and linguistic capabilities of the constructors of the framework.

In this final chapter, we will aim to achieve three things. Firstly, to use the I Framework to discuss the different internationalisation examples presented in the previous chapters. Secondly, we will use the ‘I’ framework to identify potential areas for improving the performance of ICET researchers involved in internationalisation researcher.

Finally, we will aim to contribute to this knowledge by briefly returning to Bernsteinian concepts of knowledge structures (Bernstein, 2000) to present an instructional discourse (Bernstein, 1977) to guide researchers on how they may further enhance their performance in each of the areas.
Distinguishing and Discussing Internationalisation Research

The point of this section is to discuss and distinguish the internationalisation research represented in the previous chapters. This discussion takes the form of an examination of potential ‘blank and ‘blind spots’ (Wagner, 1993) in internationalisation research that may be impacting on the quality of the internationalisation research occurring within and through ICET. Blank spots fill in some gaps about what we ‘know enough to question but not answer’, while blind spots represent what we ‘don’t know enough to even ask about or care about understanding more deeply (Gough, 2002). The discussion in this section involves identifying potential blank spots by questioning the concept of internationalisation through an examination of the internationalisation research practices presented in this book.

The search for blank spots began with an evaluative exercise, which involved the use of the I Framework as a type of Internationalisation research rubric. The intention in adopting this approach was to ‘re-present’ (Cousin, 2009) this knowledge using the I Framework in an attempt to raise awareness of potential blind spots to provide ICET researchers with some answers that may enhance the quality and sustainability of their internationalisation research efforts. These answers represent the last step of King’s (1967) comparative process i.e., generalising by identifying patterns, trends or principles occurring in the current internationalisation efforts of the authors. We anticipate that this information may provide the authors and the readers with some possible answers on how to promote progress towards higher levels of internationalisation research.

The search for answers began with distinguishing between the research efforts presented in the preceding chapters through the lens of the I Framework. The structure of this framework aimed to reduce the weighting of the impact of the journal article to promote the importance of the impact of the academic. The inclusion of the research, collaboration, impact, and sustainability dimensions at each level of internationalisation (see Chapter 2) in effect created a 3:1 weighting for researcher activity and still acknowledged the impact journals and grants play in internationalisation research. The adoption of this approach allowed the separate dimensions of internationalisation to be judges separately (Nikto, 1996). This judgement was based on information about the internationalisation ‘criteria’ (Wiggins, 1996) that needed to be met during ICET internationalisation efforts as well as feedback on the current and desired levels of performance through the use of descriptors (Popham, 2003). The use of separate evaluations of each factor resulted in papers with scores across more than one performance level. This result is expected (Moskal, 2000), and often found when participants move from partial to complete success when learning how to master complex tasks involving several significant dimensions (Arter and McTighe, 2000). The variations in levels and the identification of the criteria required for higher levels of performance provide valuable feedback for improving performance.

Improving performance through feedback is more effective when it involves discovering and celebrating good performances as it creates a climate that encourages individuals to explore possibilities linked to future changes (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005). Examples of researchers demonstrating internationalisation criteria from the I Framework to a desirable level of performance, were evident in all of the previous chapters. There was evidence of
research that involved the creation of new knowledge (Reid) or used knowledge in creative ways (Townsend). These research efforts allowed some ICET members to maintain and expand their research networks (Al Barwani, Van Nuland, and Moh'd Al-Mekhlafi). Among the participating researchers there were homogenous (Assunção Flores, Veiga Simão and Carrasco) and heterogeneous (Hamwaka and O’Meara) groups contributing to a chapter that reflected their collective goals and in several cases the collective goals of the community of authors (O’Mahony and Sillitoe). The inclusion of their work in this book increased the likelihood of the work being cited, which may assist authors attract funding within their institution or region (O’Meara and Ugweugbulam). For those authors collaborating for the first time, the writing project and associated peer review process assisted with developing their existing research networks (Sudhakar and Passornsiri) and in some cases raised the standards of research practice for these authors (Passornsiri and Pasornsiri). Based on these observations, the collective feedback on the group performance is that ICET researchers are currently performing at Level 2 Internationalisation (Collaborative Process – Homogenous Focus) with a high potential for achieving Level 3 Internationalisation (Collaborative Process – Heterogeneous Focus) in future efforts.

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL BARRIERS TO ICET INTERNATIONALISATION RESEARCH

The identification of the current level of internationalisation performance among ICET researchers provided a source of motivation to assist the group achieve a higher level of performance in their next internationalisation research project. Future efforts could benefit from focussed feedback on potential improvements in the areas of the planning and management of intended projects as well as the intercultural development of researchers. The use of the I Framework as a diagnostic tool lead to the identification of four blank spots or potential barriers to improved performance in internationalisation research within ICET. Research planning and management barriers included: a varied application of ethical principles; an absence of institutional processes to sustain future collaborations; and a need for the development of linking capital to attract funding from external bodies. The main intercultural development barrier was the level of awareness of relevant socio cultural dimensions among the researchers collaborating in internationalisation activities. While the identification of these barriers provided some support for the effectiveness of I Framework as a diagnostic tool, there was no evidence to support a claim that the framework could substantially assist researchers in this area by informing the planning and management of intended projects, as well as promoting the intercultural development of those involved in the project. The framework contained information about the desired outcomes however, there was no information available to ICET researchers who needed assistance in the achievement of these outcomes. This realisation at such a late stage in the writing project represented a blind spot the project leaders as the need to create an informational supplement was not identified during the development of the I Framework. In other words the creators of the I Framework did not know enough about ICET internationalisation activities to even ask about or care about understanding how an educational or instructional supplement could assist in
the development of ICET researchers. This blind spot represented both a fifth barrier to improvement and a key step forward in the development of internationalisation researchers within the ICET community.

**Developing a Theoretical Base for Internationalisation Research**

A rationale for the development I Framework was to assist with the development of ICET researchers. While the framework did identify potential internationalisation blank spots, it did to assist individuals create answers for these blank spots. These researchers needed information relevant to their developmental needs. This information needed to include external theoretical knowledge that challenged the current localised understandings and practices (Wheelahan, 2010). In the case of ICET, this information needed to ICET researchers improvement in the areas of the planning and management of intended projects as well as the intercultural development.

The aim in this final section is to present this information, which we will now refer to as an instructional discourse (Bernstein, 1977) to assist with the development of internationalisation researchers within the ICET community. The discourse provides existing and new researchers with an induction into internationalisation research within ICET. To date the internationalisation research activities of ICET had relied in part on individual and localised understandings of the researchers representing this international community. The creation of common, theory-based instructional discourse should help advance the knowledge and subsequent practices of community members (Wheelahan, 2010). The brief overviews that follow are examples of the type of theoretical knowledge that could promote this type of change among the community of ICET researchers.

**Sustainable Change**

The replacement of practices during change efforts is a common and often desirable outcome. If ICET is to avoid similar outcomes to the other development efforts characterised as ‘lost opportunities’ and ‘failed international cooperation’ (Watkins, 2005) the instructional discourse of internationalisation needs to include the idea of sustainability. In the advocated approach, sustainability refers to institutional sustainability (Goldsmith, 1992). This type of sustainability represents the capacity of ICET and the partnering institutions to produce research outputs that are sufficiently in demand so enough inputs (funding and human resources) are supplied to sustain the research program at a steady or growing rate, leading to long-term positive results in developed and developing countries (adapted from Goldsmith, 1992). Jackson (2010) suggests that achieving this type of sustainability requires understanding how institutions create valued knowledge and common practices among the members of their community. Institutional sustainability describes the process where behaviours are institutionalised to the point that leads to their adoption and long-term maintenance within a social group (Schneiberg and Soule, 2005). The success of this process relies on the quality of the ‘discourse’ (Ainsworth and Hardy, 2004) that outlines the expected
knowledge and behaviours to members of this community. This discourse can be captured within three institutional pillars (Scott, 2001) that contribute to the development and achievement of institutional stability.

1. The *regulative pillar* governs the actions of the community members by rewarding actions that align with the other two pillars and with institutional objectives (Maguire and Hardy, 2009)

2. The *cultural-cognitive pillar* provides members with a reference for understanding their environment and their position so they can further develop internationalisation practices at their institution and through their association. (Scott, 2001)

3. The *normative pillar* complements the regulative pillar by defining the appropriate actions of members pursuing the institutional objectives (Scott, 2001).

Collectively, these three pillars outline the structures, knowledge and behaviours, which could be used to represent ICET’s Internationalisation discourse. The regulative pillar, is captured in the I Framework, which identified desirable actions for ICET researchers participating in internationalisation research. Importantly these actions align with both the internationalisation ideals of ICET and UNESCO. In most cases these ideals should also align with the internationalisation objectives of collaborating higher education institutions. The next three sections contain information that relates to the cultural - cognitive and normative pillars. The sections on cultural awareness and quality collaborations represent ICET's cultural-cognitive pillar for the development of intercultural awareness and the establishment of quality collaborations. The section on ethical principles reflects ICET’s normative pillar or ‘institutional conscious’ (Jackson, 2010) to guide the actions of researchers leading or participating in research involving transnational partners.

**Cultural Awareness**

At the university level, a culture includes a collection of accepted values and beliefs of university stakeholders (i.e., administration, staff, and support staff), which is communicated verbally and nonverbally (Bartell, 2003). At the individual level, communicating this culture is a key strategy for developing cultural awareness among colleagues from other universities (Gudykunst and Kim, 1992). Developing intercultural awareness involves building on an existing set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts (Bennett, 2008). Individuals who are effective at this type of development tend to be interested in other cultures and are willing to modify existing behaviours as a sign of respect for the people of other cultures based around their capacity to notice cultural differences. Cultural curiosity and an openness to change enhance effectiveness in working cross-culturally as these types of individuals better understand their own cultural lens and are able to influence across cultures by understanding the other’s cultural lens (Irving, 2010). In the case of researchers, the collection of accepted values and beliefs include assumptions about knowledge, theoretical perspectives, methodologies and research methods (Crotty, 1998). Researchers who are able to understand the cultural and research perspectives of themselves and others should be better placed to create more effective research projects with international partners.
The Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Value Rubric (American Association of Colleges and Universities, 2009) provides a systematic framework for understanding and describing levels intercultural development. The levels of this rubric were based on Bennet’s (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity. The criteria for each of the levels were derived from the consensus model of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006). Modifying these criteria for the ICET context involved providing a framework to assist ICET researchers address any cultural issues that may arise during the various phases of their collaborative research process.

1. Cultural Self Awareness reflects a capacity to

   - explore and recognise her or his views, which include the intentional or unintentional presence of cultural rules and research biases in past or current research designs.

2. Knowledge of alternative cultural views reflects a capacity to

   - understand the cultural (history, values, politics, economy) and research elements (theoretical perspectives, methodologies, methods) important to research partners from another culture.

3. Empathy reflects a capacity to

   - design and implement research projects that reflect prior consideration of how your collaborators would feel if required to generate contextualised findings using the proposed methodologies and methods.

4. Verbal and non verbal communication reflects a capacity to

   - choose words that convey specific and direct meanings, listen carefully and clarify meaning regularly, and consider how colleagues could react to your body language, physical contact, or tone of voice.

5. Cultural Curiosity reflects a capacity to

   - continue to question research and social cultures, seek out and communicate answers to these questions using multiple cultural and epistemological perspectives.

6. Openness reflects a capacity to

   - engage with culturally diverse researchers through interactions that acknowledge cultural difference and suspends judgement until a sufficient amount of information is presented.
These principles characterise the intercultural sensitivity expected of all ICET researchers involved in cross-cultural collaborations. The establishment of these expectations sends a clear message to new and existing members about the need to be interculturally sensitive.

**Quality Collaborations**

Collaborations involve researchers working with one or a limited number of others in a project involving research and or publication activities in which all members receive some form of acknowledgement (Moffitt et al., 2009). The type of relationships formed by the researchers provides a useful language for describing the collaboration. Putnam (2000) defines these relationships or connections as social capital. He believes the social capital generated through these relationships is important for resolving collective problems, developing communities, introducing new perspectives, sharing information and achieving common goals. Social capital within ICET research collaborations should typically take one of the following forms:

1. Bonding social capital refers to relationships amongst members of an ICET research network who are similar in some form, e.g. ethnicity and/or research paradigm. (adapted from Putnam, 2000).
2. Bridging social capital refers to relationships amongst members of an ICET research network who are dissimilar in a demonstrable fashion, e.g. age, socio-economic status, race/ethnicity, career level (adapted from Szreter and Woolcock, 2004).
3. Linking social capital is the extent to which individuals or members of an ICET research network build relationships with institutions and individuals who have relative power over them, e.g. to provide access resources (adapted from Woolcock, 2001).

Researchers who purposefully link to groups outside their existing networks, should increase their chances of attracting the resources to transform a project into an adequately funded program. When identifying and forming research collaborations, ICET researchers should consider how their choices are contributing to the relationships between those within and outside their current networks. ICET researchers collaborating in research projects or programs could make a contribution by participating in one or more of the following activities (adapted from Morse, 2008):

1. *cohesive activities*: individual collaborators contribute to the research and writing activities based on the time they have available for the project;
2. *split activities*: individual collaborators contribute to the research and writing activities based on the topic, participant characteristics and researcher interest;
3. *summary activities*: individual collaborators contribute by conducting interviews and providing reports to the larger group on a particular group of participants within the study;
4. *skills and knowledge development activities*: individual collaborators contribute to the research and writing activities by assigning parts of these activities to research
assistants who may or may not have the experience or theoretical background to meet the aims of the research;
5. *blended activities*: individual collaborators contribute to the research and writing activities by conducting some of the these activities and assigning the rest to these activities to research assistants; and,
6. *outsourcing activities*: individual collaborators contribute to the research and writing activities by outsourcing the work to external parties, which may include competent research assistants.

The Principal Investigator leading a research collaboration may be able to enhance the quality of the collaboration by ensuring that they and their colleagues adhere to the following criteria:

1. **Contribution**: each collaborator offers unique expertise and experience that will add value to the research outcomes
2. **Communication**: each collaborator promotes mutual respect when exchanging information across cultural and geographic boundaries,
3. **Commitment**: each collaborator invests time, energy and resources into the development and delivery of project outcomes.
4. **Consensus**: all members of the collaboration use communication, compromise and negotiation to reach mutually agreeable decisions
5. **Compatibility**: all members have the ability to work together and function effectively as a whole
6. **Credit**: all members, which include research assistants, are recognized for their contributions to research or writing activities.

(adapted from Lancaster, 1985).

Considering the type of relationships, defining the types of contributions and identifying a set of expectations for collaborators are important strategies for enhancing the quality of collaboration. Adherence to these quality criteria during ICET internationalisation research activities should assist ICET researchers strengthen their collaborations and enhance the likelihood of transforming individual projects into long-term research programs.

**Ethical Principles**

The activities and expectations for collaborating researchers, while important should not be the only consideration in internationalisation research. In order for individual projects to transform into long-term research programs similar consideration should be given to promoting a quality experience for the research participants. UNESCO’s Global Ethics Observatory contains a system of databases that provides international perspectives on quality experiences for research participants captured in the various ethical guidelines and legislation (UNESCO, 2010). In September 2010, this database contained 515 perspectives, from 22 countries, which were written in one or more of the six languages represented in the database. This level of diversity posed some barriers to the development of an ICET community
characterised by ethical practices. The development of an ethical community of transnational researchers required a simple set of norms and universally accepted principles that could serve as a guide for those collaborating in ICET research projects. The three major scientific norms chosen from the UNESCO database for ICET researchers were ‘beneficence, respect and justice’ (see Seiber, 1992). Beneficence seeks to maximize the potential for good research outcomes and minimise the unnecessary risk or harm to those involved in the research (Maio, 2002). Respect relates to protecting the autonomy of participants through requirements for informed consent, protection of confidentiality, and protection against coercion to participate or continue participation in research (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2009). Justice or distributive justice forbids research risks and burdens being borne disproportionately by vulnerable groups within society; and discourages the more privileged in society from disproportionately reaping research benefits (Beyrer and Kass, 1992). The promotion of these three norms should assist researchers enhance the quality of the participant experience.

Understanding these norms is an important step in the development of an ethical community of transnational researchers. The implementation of these ethical norms within this community involves ethical decisions, which are individual judgements about appropriate research practices. Freed Taylor’s (2004) analysis of ethical considerations in European cross-national research provides the following seven principles to encourage researchers to base their ethical decisions on both personal values and theoretical knowledge. The following principles represent adaptations of this work:

1. Acceptance of responsibility:
   - Researchers involved in trans-national research should fully understand the ethical issues involved in their proposed research and accept responsibility for reaching mutual agreement when implementing procedures and addressing ethical issues related to the project.

2. Conduct of research:
   - Researchers should maintain the quality of collaboration and sustain the future of the research program by investigating significant research issues, choosing appropriate research methods and tools, and generating results that provide benefits to the participants.
   - Researchers should assess the risks and benefits of the research prior to commencement to minimise unnecessary intrusion and maximise participant protection.
   - Researchers should secure informed consent, ensure confidentiality of records, and protect participant anonymity.

3. Awareness of legislation:
   - Researchers should be aware of, and comply with, the requirements of data protection laws and other relevant legislation from all the collaborating countries.
• Researchers should be aware of and respect the differences in the contents and implementation of national legislation including their impact on research and analysis activities.

4. Provision of information to others:

• Researchers should make available to ethics committees information that allows the assessment of methods and findings as well as highlights the limitations of the research.
• Researchers should use the ICET ethical principles to promote informed collaboration and facilitate the harmonization of ethics across countries.

5. Cross-cultural research:

• Researchers undertaking research with other cultures, countries and ethnic groups should provide colleagues with clear research objectives, consider and respect participant concerns, and maintain ethical standards consistent with the expectations of both the home and host community.

6. Research on groups at risk:

• Researchers should assess the potential issues of consent and risk when investigating individuals or groups in a relationship involving a power imbalance between researcher and participant (e.g. children, employees, students, and, or socially disadvantaged groups.

7. Resolution of conflicts:

• Principal researchers with unresolved or difficult ethical dilemmas arising during the design, implementation or dissemination of the research project should seek to work through the issue with colleagues or if necessary seek advice from the ICET Research and Dissemination Committee.

The ICET ethical principles serve as guidelines to assist ICET researchers make ethical decisions, about appropriate research practices. This may reinforce the status quo, prompt change in research practices, and/or promote the development of mutual accountability among collaborating colleagues. In any or all of these outcomes, the users of these guidelines should experience some form of development in their approach to internationalisation research.

REVISITING THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

The motivation for this writing project was a need to provide a means for distinguishing between and discussing different types of internationalisation research occurring at the
different institutions connected to the ICET community. The outcome of this project was the I Framework that provides the researchers at these institutions with a common language for distinguishing between different levels of internationalisation research that may be occurring at the collaborating institutions. This framework proved a useful tool during the classification of the internationalisation research presented in this book and discussed in this chapter. While this provided an insight into what type of internationalisation research was occurring within ICET, it failed to satisfy the need for a developmental tool that assisted with the enhancement of the quality of research. This need was met in part through the development of ICET’s regulative (the I Framework), cultural –cognitive (Cultural Awareness and Quality Collaborations) and normative (Ethical Principles) pillars which represented a discourse for development through internationalisation. This discourse provided some of the answers to the identified blind and blank spots, which represented barriers to higher levels of performance in internationalisation research conducted by ICET researchers. These answers contain a collection of external theories to prompt the group to revisit and where appropriate replace existing internationalisation knowledge and practices. The frequency and level of change that results from this process should provide some indication of how highly the members of the ICET community value the ICET internationalisation discourse presented in this chapter. If the perceived value among the group is high, then the collaborating researchers should be more motivated towards making changes in their existing practices. The learnings from engaging with this discourse, including any subsequent modification of existing practices should increase the likelihood of ICET researchers institutionalising a common approach to internationalisation research. As this occurs, the need for justifying why ICET research must be ‘sustainable’, ‘collaborative’, ‘culturally sensitive’ or ‘ethical’ should disappear as new and existing researchers come to know and accept that this is the way transnational research is conducted in the ICET community. As this group of researchers begin to model this approach back at their institutions the impact of their efforts and this work should continue to grow.

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