



INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN LIGHT OF UPPSALA THEORY: CASE STUDIES IN BUSINESS SCHOOLS

 **Patricia Mara Simões Andrade**¹  **Marcello Romani-Dias**²  **Caio Sousa da Silva**³

¹ Master, Positivo University – UP. Curitiba, Paraná – Brazil. patymasa@yahoo.com.br

² PhD, Positivo University – UP. Curitiba, Paraná – Brazil. marcello.romani@up.edu.br

³ Master, Fundação Getúlio Vargas – FGV. Rio de Janeiro – Brazil. caio.silva@fgv.br

Abstract

Objective: To propose an unprecedented initial categorization structure on the internationalization process of Brazilian HEIs, according to the Uppsala model.

Methodology: With the qualitative method, we carried out semi-structured interviews with HEIs' representatives, reviewing and articulating the literature with content analysis of all data.

Originality: The study relates a classic approach to internationalization with the current reality of higher education institutions. Therefore, we expect to achieve a new conception on how HEIs can optimize their strategies for international insertion.

Main results: We analyze the internationalization of HEIs by three main categories of elements: i) drivers; ii) enablers; and, iii) obstacles, each with their specific characteristics.

Theoretical Contributions: The paper presents a conceptual categorization of the essential factors of the HEIs' internationalization; this articulation allows advancing the literature on internationalization, in addition to management models for higher education institutions.

Keywords: Internationalization of higher education institutions. Internationalization of university education. Uppsala Internationalization Theory.

A INTERNACIONALIZAÇÃO DAS INSTITUIÇÕES DE ENSINO SUPERIOR À LUZ DA TEORIA DE UPPSALA: ESTUDO DE CASOS EM ESCOLAS DE NEGÓCIOS

Resumo

Objetivo: Propor uma estrutura de categorização inicial inédita sobre o processo de internacionalização das IES brasileiras, segundo o modelo de Uppsala.

Metodologia: Com o método qualitativo, foram realizadas entrevistas semiestruturadas com representantes das IESs, revisão e articulação da literatura com análise de conteúdo em todos os dados obtidos.

Originalidade: O estudo relaciona uma abordagem clássica da internacionalização com a realidade atual das instituições de ensino superior. Deste modo, espera-se que haja uma nova concepção sobre como as IES podem otimizar suas estratégias de inserção internacional.

Resultados principais: A internacionalização da IES pode ser analisada por três principais elementos categorizados, são eles: i) os impulsores; ii) viabilizadores e, iii) obstáculos para internacionalização das IES, cada um deles com suas características específicas.

Cite as / Como citar

American Psychological Association (APA)

Andrade, P. M. S., Romani-Dias, M., & Silva, C. S. (2021). Internationalization of higher education institutions in light of Uppsala theory: case studies in business schools. *Iberoamerican Journal of Strategic Management (IJSJM)*, 20, 1-19, e18153. <https://doi.org/10.5585/riae.v20i1.18153>.

(ABNT – NBR 6023/2018)

Andrade, Patricia Mara Simões; Romani-Dias, Marcello; Silva, Caio Sousa da. Internationalization of higher education institutions in light of Uppsala theory: case studies in business schools. *Iberoamerican Journal of Strategic Management (IJSJM)*, v. 20, p. 1-19. 2021. <https://doi.org/10.5585/riae.v20i1.18153>.

Contribuições Teóricas: A pesquisa apresenta uma categorização conceitual dos fatores essenciais da internacionalização das IESs; essa articulação permite avançar na literatura sobre internacionalização e também sobre os modelos de gestão de instituições de ensino superior.

Palavras-chave: Internacionalização de instituições de ensino superior. Internacionalização do ensino superior. Teoria de Internacionalização de Uppsala.

INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN DE LAS INSTITUCIONES DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR A LA LUZ DE LA TEORÍA DE UPPSALA: ESTUDIOS DE CASO EN ESCUELAS DE NEGOCIOS

Resumen

Objetivo: Proponer una estructura de categorización inicial original sobre el proceso de internacionalización de las IES brasileñas, según el modelo de Uppsala.

Metodología: Con el método cualitativo se realizaron entrevistas semiestructuradas con representantes de las IES, revisión de literatura y articulación con análisis de contenido sobre todos los datos obtenidos.

Originalidad: El estudio relaciona un enfoque clásico de la internacionalización con la realidad actual de las instituciones de educación superior. Así, se espera que haya una nueva concepción de cómo las IES pueden optimizar sus estrategias de inserción internacional.

Principales resultados: La internacionalización de las IES se puede analizar por tres elementos principales categorizados, que son: i) los impulsores; ii) facilitadores y, iii) obstáculos a la internacionalización de las IES, cada una con sus características específicas.

Aportes Teóricos: La investigación presenta una categorización conceptual de los factores esenciales de la internacionalización de las IES, esta articulación permite avanzar en la literatura sobre internacionalización y también sobre los modelos de gestión de las instituciones de educación superior.

Palabras clave: Internacionalización de las instituciones de educación superior. Internacionalización de la educación superior. Teoría de la internacionalización de Uppsala.

1 Introduction

In recent years, especially since the 1980s, the phenomenon of higher education internationalization has gained strength, both in the practical context and in the academic research environment. Despite this dissemination, Internationalization of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) lacks theories that could help deepening its understanding.

In effect, we notice that Brazilian HEIs have not yet reached a level of internationalization consistent with the country's potential, regarding the size of its economy and global relevance. Low internationalization leads to the loss of economic and scientific opportunities for the country. Faced with these issues, this study presents an unprecedented initial categorization structure on HEIs' internationalization process.

The first step had a mostly inductive character, through six interviews with experts, whose central goal was to understand the internationalization process of a higher education institution. In the second stage, we made four more interviews, based on a semi-structured script built from the principles of the Uppsala Internationalization Theory and the literature on higher education internationalization. This cutting allowed achieving the main objective of the study, as well as proposing theoretical and empirical contributions on the investigated topic.

The internationalization processes of Brazilian Higher Education Institutions have gained strength in the last decades. For Morosini and Dalla Corte (2018), recent changes in the economy have driven actions for the Internationalization of HEIs that seek to answer the demands of the local and global markets. In this scenario, some factors emerged to foster, and others to hinder internationalization (Lima & Contel, 2011). With the movement of research and cultural exchanges, in the face of new relations between countries, there is a need for investigation, identification, and systematization of elements that act as enablers, obstacles, and drivers of HEIs' internationalization process.

Altbach and Knight (2007) observe that the international activities of universities have dramatically expanded in volume, scope, and complexity over the last two decades; however, there are still demands to meet, given the quick development of the sector.

Therefore, and in order to organize the study, we started from the Uppsala theory (Vahlne & Johanson, 2017), which proposes a gradual internationalization, that is, by knowing the new scenarios, language, culture, and processes. This theory also shows the relevance of relationship networks for internationalization to achieve its goals, which go beyond territorial extent and work transfer, but as a cultural, cognitive, and social exploration (Kovacs, Moraes, & Oliveira, 2007).

2 Uppsala internationalization theory

Swedish researchers Johanson, Wiedersheim-Paul, and Vahlne directed their interest toward studying companies' internationalization process. At the time, in the mid-1970s, they

focused their studies on Swedish manufacturing firms. The Uppsala model defines internationalization as a strategic expansion of organizations, a gradual learning process that takes place in the fields of knowledge, language, culture, research, professionalization, and science. It starts with an extension pole of the company in a chosen country, until it reaches the dimension of an autonomous business unit in that country (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977).

In this sense, Borges and Amal (2016) carried out a study with seven *stricto sensu* courses of a university located in southern Brazil. After data categorization, researchers arrived at a very interesting result: psychic distance might not determine the strategy of international expansion. According to them, the network of relationships could be the factor of choice for HIEs' internationalization actions. Opposite to the Uppsala theory, they also showed that *stricto sensu* courses are established abroad according to HEIs' knowledge areas, initially with a low level of expertise, and gradually expanding their knowledge and competencies; at this point, both HIEs' internationalization and Uppsala model converge.

The network concept based on the Uppsala theory, also observed in the case study by Borges and Amal (2016), is widely used in the organizational context, stimulating learning and commitment, which happen gradually, making the model dynamic and evolutionary. The network relationship comprises the process of internationalization, trust, and commitment between what makes up the network and its parts, in a growing spiral. In this process, both learning and building commitments act in strategy management, especially in the realm of uncertainties embedded in wider business networks (Vahlne & Johanson, 2013).

These authors state that internationalization is an aspect of the development of opportunities that emerges from the interaction between organizations, and it is a process. Santos (2011) follows this same thought when arguing that building a plan with a clear view of the risks and uncertainties offers more security in organization's decision-making, because it provides more knowledge of the target market and the potential investment. Hence, internationalization coexists in two intertwined sub-processes: learning, mainly experiential learning, and commitment building.

3 Internationalization of higher education

The concept of Higher Education Internationalization emerged from the historical context of internationalization, with initial practices for the implementation of National Universities, until today, with the academy in the global scenario, with international proposals. These mean strengthening the economy, the so-called knowledge economy, and the mobility of students, researchers, schools and programs. Higher education across countries by knowledge areas consists of international initiatives that enable these practices effectively (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

The global context of Higher Education, regarding HEIs' Internationalization practices, comprises the scenario of new Higher Education providers of transnational demands, the evolution of the relationship between HEIs, market, and the state, qualified labor, and accreditation movements between countries (Souza, 2008). Thus, despite its complexity, as well as the categories and axes for the internationalization of Higher Education, the establishment and alignment of interests in the bases and in curricula gain importance, as they bring the involved countries closer together.

The State proposes institutionalization of the process of HEIs' Internationalization through two models, either assuming an active or a passive character. The focus is on actions that favor or stimulate higher education programs from different sources. These actions give the State the possibility of establishing regulatory actions, by formulating strategic educational policies, with programs that configure active and passive internationalization, and strengthen the field, also committed to social and political inclusion and regional integration (Lima & Contel, 2011).

Internationalization actions of HEIs can be wider and more subjective, with at least two main concerns: learning actions, to mitigate the negative experiences of cross-cultural adaptation, and cultural and linguistic immersion. Welcome actions, such as housing and teaching the language and culture, can enhance international students' learning (Callaghan & Collins, 2018).

In addition to issues related to the country's culture, language, and image, Cordeiro and Watanabe (2012) state that internationalization practices mostly depend on HEIs' own resources, as well as their institutional will. This fact is one of the obstacles for partnerships in this process. Gonçalves and Riche (2012) mention the lack of partnerships, where difficulties identified in the internationalization process included, in some cases, the lack of support from the university itself, problems caused by shortage of vacancies at the host institution, and difficulties for entering the target country.

Partnerships are very relevant to HEIs' internationalization practice, and the lack of them can lead to another barrier, excessive bureaucracy. Thus, conventional procedures such as documentation and certificates, both institutional and physical, can present obstacles. In addition, research itself can face bureaucratic processes for recognition and validation in the countries involved. Brazil, despite showing a relevant participation in the internationalization of Higher Education, still has bureaucratic hurdles related to the acknowledgement of studies carried out in another country (Gonçalves & Riche, 2012).

Therefore, in order to minimize these obstacles, seen as bureaucracy, partnerships are opportunities for new fusions and curriculum alignment. In addition to the links or synergies, economic issues are also motivations for internationalization, such as economic competitiveness, national security, promotion of peace and good relations between nations, self-development and financial reduction, due to the increase of academic entrepreneurship (Veiga, 2012). Other driving aspects include the mobility and exchange of students and professors for collaboration in teaching

and research, academic standards and quality, market view of employability, and research projects (Huang & Turner, 2018).

Internationalization also allows for the diversification of income sources and cultural and linguistic improvement. Some universities, such as Buenos Aires, Nacional de Córdoba, and Nacional del Litoral, offer courses in Spanish and in Latin American and Argentine culture for foreigners, receiving students from different countries in their campuses. Others offer on-site graduate courses for the external audience. In addition to diversifying the faculty, these strategies bring the additional benefit of generating resources for the institution, since most courses are paid (Cordeiro & Watanabe, 2012). Therefore, when these actions for HEIs' internationalization are properly promoted, the links and benefits provided by educational institutions to students represent a very satisfactory experience, mainly due to the value of employability, seen as a future achievement. In this sense, study abroad programs can serve as an important tool to increase retention and the overall recruitment of students (Curtis & Ledgerwood, 2018).

Among the measures for establishing partnerships, we can mention the incentive for indexing Brazilian journals in the ISI database or other representative databases, by seeking collaboration from the Brazilian Commission of University Libraries and the Brazilian Institute of Information in Science and Technology [IBICT]. Such partnerships are a good trigger, because all areas could have their Brazilian Journal in electronic format, published in two languages, English and Portuguese, for example, in the countries that adopted internationalization. In addition, the establishment of partnerships between university publishers in Brazil and abroad for the release of books and financial support are opportunities for international businesses (Fiorin, 2007).

Given the challenge regarding the internationalization scenario as a driving measure, especially for federal universities, SESu (Secretariat of Higher Education) hosted, in September 2013, the Conference on the Internationalization of Higher Education, with the participation of 11 federal universities. The result was the elaboration of five strategic axes of action, to be further discussed by SESu and Andifes (National Association of Directors of Federal Higher Education Institutions) (Ministry of Education [MEC], 2014). That project gave priority to internationalization practices related to structure, training, languages, mobility, and curricular use. Currently, SESu has four internationalization initiatives: a) the Undergraduate Student Agreement-Program, which promotes students' exchange, with a focus on receiving them; b) the Program 'Languages without Borders', which prepares members of the academic community to study abroad, through language teaching; c) the promotion of higher education, comprising initiatives for the exchange of regional knowledge; and d) federal universities with an international vocation.

For establishing good partnerships, contracts and socio-economic incentives can contribute to internationalization. According to Veiga (2012), internationalization partnerships

and programs, by increasing international income from teaching and investment in research, offer higher education institutions the possibility of economic movement that generates resources. Governments tend to give institutions considerable autonomy, and seek to ensure the reputation of their higher education sector and protect foreign students, as a strategic measure. This approach results in a significant increase of students and strong involvement in international education, through the institution's program of income generation and mobility.

Such scholarship programs encourage HEIs, as well as academic training programs, to work for enterprises, often under government regulation that ensures compatibility with building the nation and its economy. Reasons for internationalization are the strengthening of the institution's reputation, outcomes of students' learning, revenues and markets, research and scholarships, service, commitment, and building global bridges. Thus, they group the motivations for internationalization into four categories: social/cultural, political, economic, and academic. These form a set of multi-level reasons that evolve over time, in response to changes in international needs and trends (Veiga, 2012; Blasco & Tackney, 2013).

According to Lima and Contel (2011), on the analysis of the higher education internationalization scenario, based on data and documents, there is a growing number of people and countries involved with internationalization. The authors highlight the active or passive role that different countries play in the new geopolitics of knowledge, showing the associated benefits, losses, and risks. In the case of Brazil, we can mention some elements as enablers. From the year 2000 onwards, international cooperation programs progressed significantly, with emphasis on the formation of research groups and granting scholarships for doctorate programs abroad, in areas considered strategic and innovative.

For Morosini (2011), HEIs' internationalization is circumstantial, even when data point to the growing practice of internationalization in research and graduate studies in a country. These practices also show two models: what the author calls the International Cooperation model (CIT), based on competitiveness and occupation of spaces in the globalized market, and the Horizontal International Cooperation model [CIH], based on international awareness and strengthening of scientific capacity between institutions. On one side, we have a program of academic cooperation, professors and students coming and going to take disciplines, the creation of federal public universities, and the commercialization of educational services. On the other, we are dependent on academic and market drivers, like the international insertion of *stricto sensu* graduate programs and the acceptance of new models that aim to promote the competitive differential of institutions and courses.

According to Lesjak and Anussornnitisarn (2017), teaching and research in higher education institutions depend on some factors, especially those that involve collaboration programs with foreign institutions, and, consequently, the mobility of foreign professors, researchers, and students. The study, carried out with students, professors, researchers, and other

employees showed that learning also takes place through training between peers, and through teaching and research by the foreign visitor. In order to keep or achieve a good quality of internationalization practices and international attractiveness of HEIs, study programs must be in a foreign language, for the potential of internationalization to occur. Despite possible local impediments, sometimes cultural or bureaucratic, internationalization certainly brings benefits, like the promotion and strengthening of educational institutions, through the consolidation of *stricto sensu* graduate programs - master and doctorate - besides contributing to improve scientific education of teachers and researchers. In addition, it also strengthens projects that produce science, teacher training in foreign languages, and technology, capable of increasing the expertise required by the economic development of the countries involved.

From the Uppsala theory, the context of higher education internationalization, and studies on this topic, and considering the enablers, obstacles, and drivers, we defined the theoretical basis, and some elements emerged from this process. Table 1 shows the eight stages, according to Johanson and Vahlne (1977), pioneers of the studies that later resulted in the Uppsala theory, and the parallel of these categories found in the literature review on HEIs' internationalization.

Table 1

Convergence of Uppsala and HEIs' internationalization strategies

UPPSALA	HEIs' INTERNATIONALIZATION
1. Market analysis and psychic distance	Strategic planning for internationalization (Altbach & Knight, 2007).
2. Exploratory direct export	HEIs' internationalization actions broader and more subjective; there are at least two main concerns: learning actions to mitigate negative experiences of cross-cultural adaption, and cultural and linguistic immersion. Welcome actions such as housing and learning the language and culture can enhance learning for international students (Callaghan & Collins, 2018).
3. Companies invest in a foreign market at an increasing pace	Teaching and research in higher education institutions depend on some factors, especially those that involve collaboration programs with foreign institutions, and, consequently, the mobility of foreign professors, researchers, and students (Lesjak & Anussornnitisarn, 2017; Foster & Carver, 2018).
4. Sales office	Government programs and scholarships (Bertazzo, 2012, p. 283; Cordeiro & Watanabe, 2012, pp. 20-21; Gonçalves & Riche, 2012, p. 45; Lima & Contel, 2011).
5. Investment abroad	Institution's reputation/image: outcomes of students' learning, revenues, markets, scholarships, service and commitment, and building a global bridge, national image (Veiga, 2012, p. 17; Mariutti, 2017).
6. Knowledge - if the perceived risk of investing abroad is lower than the perceived risk of not investing abroad	On one side, we have a program of academic cooperation, professors and students coming and going to take disciplines, the creation of federal public universities, and the commercialization of educational services. On the other, we are dependent on academic and market drivers, like the international insertion of <i>stricto sensu</i> graduate programs and the acceptance of new models that aim to promote the competitive differential of institutions and courses (Morosini, 2011).
7. Gradual accumulation of knowledge reflected on the behavior of foreign investment	Investment strategy with links between countries, the proximity of goals favor research (Altbach & Knight, 2007).
8. Greenfield establishment (production in the new market)	Academic standards, opening of HEIs abroad, quality, market vision of employability (Huang & Turner, 2018).

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

In the described processes, as well as the above-mentioned theoretical analysis, we see elements that are drivers, obstacles, and enablers of HEIs' internationalization.

Table 2

Drivers, obstacles, and enablers of HEIs internationalization

DRIVERS	OBSTACLES	ENABLERS
Scholarships and vacancies (Alves, 1998, p. 6); Partnerships with universities and foreign language acquisition (El Debs & Hugueneu 2012, p. 63).	Cultural aspects, language barriers, and translation (Fiorin, 2007, p. 272; Veiga, 2012, p. 21; Pudelko & Tenzer, 2019).	Partnerships (Fiorin, 2007, p. 277; Cordeiro & Watanabe, 2012, pp. 20-21; Gonçalves & Riche, 2012, p. 47; Lima & Contel, 2007; Rossato, 1998). Programs and Partnerships (Souza, 2008; Maranhão & Lima, 2009).
Professional enhancement and global insertion (Fiorin, 2007, p. 263; Gonçalves & Riche, 2012, p. 46; Bertazzo, 2012).	Language barriers: capable and fluent professionals (Veiga, 2012, p. 24); Fiorin, 2007, pp. 272-273; El Debs & Hugueneu, 2012, p. 69).	Contracts and incentives - socioeconomic – contribute to consolidate internationalization (Alves, 1998, p. 2; 5; Blasco & Tackney, 2013). Accreditation (Souza, 2008).
Partnerships: internal availability of additional funds, skilled team (Veiga, 2012, p. 24); Bertazzo, 2012, p. 281; Cordeiro & Watanabe, 2012, p. 19; Gonçalves & Riche, 2012, p. 46).	Qualification and fluency in the language of the countries involved (El Debs & Hugueneu, 2012, p. 69); Passive internationalization (Capes, 2018; Maranhão & Lima, 2009).	Profitability: the possibility of generating resources becomes one of the big enablers in this process (Veiga, 2012).
Links between countries: act as drivers; in addition, the proximity of goals favors research (Altbach & Knight, 2007).	Bureaucracy for acknowledging studies done in other countries (Gonçalves & Riche, 2012, p. 46).	Institution’s reputation: students’ learning results, revenues, markets, scholarships, service and commitment, and building a global bridge (Veiga, 2012, p. 17). Academic standards (Huang & Turner, 2018).
Economic competitiveness, of earnings (Veiga, 2012, p.15).		Government programs and scholarships (Bertazzo, 2012, p. 283; Cordeiro & Watanabe, 2012, pp. 20-21; Gonçalves & Riche, 2012, p. 45; El Debs & Hugueneu, 2012, p. 61; 74; Lima & Contel, 2011, p. 160); PrInt Program (Capes, 2019; Curtis & Ledgerwood, 2018).
Professional strategy: to increase universities’ productivity and impact (Bertazzo, 2012, p. 285).		Students and researchers/professors exchange (El Debs & Hugueneu, 2012, p. 66); Academic mobility (Morosini & Dalla Corte, 2018, p. 99); P.R.I.D. (Romani-Dias, 2018).
Improve foreign language and social integration (Callaghan & Collins, 2018). Professional motivation/Globalization (Pena, 2019; Chang, Fung, & Yau, 2018; Gonçalves & Riche, 2012, p. 46; Verger, Novelli, & Altinyelken, 2018).		International Certification Program (Outhwaite, 2018). Relationship networks (Borges & Amal, 2016). Mobility of Professors and Researchers (Lesjak & Anussornnitisarn, 2017)

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

From the study that resulted in the theoretical framework, we continued to the next stages of the research, which we describe in the section Methodology, followed by a preliminary analysis of what we identified in an exploratory way.

4 Methodology

We chose the qualitative method for the research. We carried out in-depth interviews, which we recorded, transcribed and analyzed, based on the Uppsala theory and other studies on the internationalization of Higher Education, with its enablers, obstacles, and drivers (Corbin & Strauss 1990). We conducted case studies, and used content analysis for processing the information collected in the interviews (Creswell, 2010; Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Bardin, 1977).

According to Creswell (2010), qualitative research allows the use of a theoretical basis to support the collection, categorization, and analysis of data that emerge from the literature review, interviews, or from the researched set. For Bardin (1977), content analysis is mainly understood through a critical look on the presented content, and then, through literature research, it is possible to find categories such as those described in Table 2.

The main contribution of the qualitative-based case study, during the process of analyzing the collected information, regards the so-called insights (Eisenhardt, 1989) that arise from the analysis, characterized here as drivers, obstacles, and enablers of Higher Education Internationalization. The proposal for analyzing the interviews followed the script that allows the collection of information that emerge from field surveys (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 2002). This complexity of research elements during the analysis of interviews is crucial to promote the so-called insights, as mentioned above, which emerged from the interviewees' speech, to enrich the analysis framework (Miles & Huberman, 2002).

In a non-systematic way, in order to explore data on the investigated topic, we held meetings with people involved in the internationalization process of HEIs. For this first exploratory stage, we did not use any specific research tool, as it was a preliminary analysis of spontaneous information. In addition, we presented and discussed the topic of this paper at a scientific conference for professionals in the education area, which also contributed to bring, although in an inductive way, relevant insights to understand the investigated phenomenon.

Based on the exploratory analysis, according to the Grounded Theory technique, in order to understand the phenomenon of HEIs' Internationalization preliminarily, we did four interviews, two face-to-face and two by Skype, in 2019. We recorded and later transcribed all interviews, to assist the first exploratory phase of the analysis, which interviewees agreed to.

The interviews followed a semi-structured script, based on the Uppsala theory; in addition, we built the script based on articles that we found on HEIs' internationalization. Respondents met the profile of people who directly handle internationalization practices, as they work in the coordination, direction, and management of internationalization practices at Higher Education Institutions.

Table 3

Interview script

Uppsala Model (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977)	HEIs' Internationalization	Interview Script (Bardin, 1977)
Market analysis and psychic distance	Strategic planning to internationalize (Altbach & Knight, 2007).	What is your professional trajectory until starting to work with HEIs' internationalization? General reading of the collected material (Bardin, 1977).
Exploratory direct export	HEIs' wider and more subjective internationalization actions: learning actions as a mitigation of negative experiences of cross-cultural adaptation, and in cultural and linguistic immersion. Host actions such as housing, language and culture teaching (Callaghan & Collins, 2018).	How would you describe the internationalization practices of your HEI? How are these actions structured in the HEI strategic plan? (Codification to create analysis categories, using the theoretical framework and indications from readings (Bardin, 1977).
Companies invest in a foreign market at an increasing pace.	Teaching and research at HEIs involve collaboration programs with foreign institutions; hence, they include the mobility of professors, researchers, and students (Lesjak & Anussornnitisarn, 2017; Foster & Carver, 2018).	What are your strategies to contact and select the target HEIs abroad? (Cutting the material into registration units (words, sentences, paragraphs) comparable and with the same semantic content) (Bardin, 1977).
Sales office	Government programs and scholarships (Bertazzo, 2012, p. 283; Cordeiro & Watanabe, 2012, p. 20-21; Gonçalves & Riche, 2012, p. 45; Lima & Contel, 2011).	Which are HEI's partnerships or programs? (Establishment of categories that are thematically different in the registration units. The creation of these categories follows the principles of mutual exclusion, of homogeneity, of pertinence in the conveyed message, of fertility and objectivity) (Bardin, 1977).
Investment abroad	The institution's reputation/image: results of students' learning, revenues, markets, scholarships, service and commitment, and building a global bridge, national image (Veiga, 2012, p. 17; Mariutti, 2017).	How does the investment in internationalization actions of the HEI where you work take place?
Knowledge: if the perceived risk of investing abroad is lower than the perceived risk of not investing abroad.	On one side, we have a program of academic cooperation, professors and students coming and going, to take and give courses, the creation of federal public universities, and the commercialization of educational services. On the other side, we depend on market and academic motivating factors, such as the international insertion of <i>stricto sensu</i> graduate programs, and the acceptance of new models that aim to promote the competitive differential of institutions and courses (Morosini, 2011).	What are the investment criteria, and which elements do you consider for establishing them? (Grouping of registration units in common categories; 7) progressive grouping of categories (initial → intermediary → final) (Bardin, 1977).
Gradual accumulation of knowledge reflected on the behavior of foreign investment	In an investment strategy with cross-country links, similar objectives favor research (Altbach & Knight, 2007).	Which factors does the HEI where you work consider for internationalization: Geographical proximity? Similar curriculum? Similar policies? Cultural proximity? (Inference and interpretation, backed by the theoretical background) (Bardin, 1977).
Greenfield establishment (production in the new market).	Academic standards, opening of HEIs abroad, quality, market vision of employability (Huang & Turner, 2018).	In the internationalization process of the HEI where you work, what are the main drivers, obstacles, and enablers? (Inference and interpretation, backed by the theoretical background) (Bardin, 1977).

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Those selected for the interviews had undergone international experiences at Higher Education Institutions in master and doctorate programs. They are professionals who already work as coordinators of master and doctorate programs in Brazil, and have experience in these study and research practices at international level; therefore, information collection was deeper, because the interviewees' profile is linked to the field and object of analysis (Creswell, 2010; Miles & Huberman, 1994, 2002).

Table 4

Interviewees' Profile

Interviewees' names <u>stage I</u>	Higher Education Institution/ Nationality	Position	Type of Interview Remote/face-to-face	Duration
Luis	Private SP - BRAZIL	Academic Director	Skype	60 min.
Dylan	Private PR - BRAZIL	Academic Director	Face-to-face	50 min.
Kevin	Private PR - BRAZIL	Academic Director	Skype	30 min.
Marie	Private PR - BRAZIL	Coordinator	Face-to-face	80 min.
Paulo	Private PR - BRAZIL	Coordinator	Face-to-face	80 min.
João	Private PR - BRAZIL	Coordinator	Face-to-face	70 min.
Interviewees' names <u>stage II</u>	Higher Education Institution/ Nationality	Position	Type of Interview Remote/face-to-face	Duration
Julia	Private PR - BRAZIL	Coordinator	Face-to-face	32 min.
Luis	Private SP - BRAZIL	Academic Director	Skype	40 min.
Paulo	Private PR - BRAZIL	Coordinator	Face-to-face	30 min.
Kevin	Private PR - BRAZIL	Academic Director	Skype	40 min.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

We interviewed six people face-to-face, and four by videoconference (HEIs' Directors and Coordinators). Each interview lasted between 30 and 60 minutes. This action was more like a dialogue, with a conversational tone, to make the analysis more effective (Morgan & Smircich, 1980).

We chose the content analysis technique for analyzing the information obtained. Its main advantage is to deal with the complexity of analyzing information from an interview, which certain software cannot make. According to Bardin (1977), in a study carried out on content analysis, the criteria for guiding the analysis are: a) pre-analysis, b) exploration of the material, and c) result processing.

After systematizing information, some elements, both from the literature and from the first stage interviews, of exploratory preliminary order, showed convergence; these elements were organized into categories with the main points found in the study on drivers, obstacles, and enablers, which we also explored and noticed in the research development.

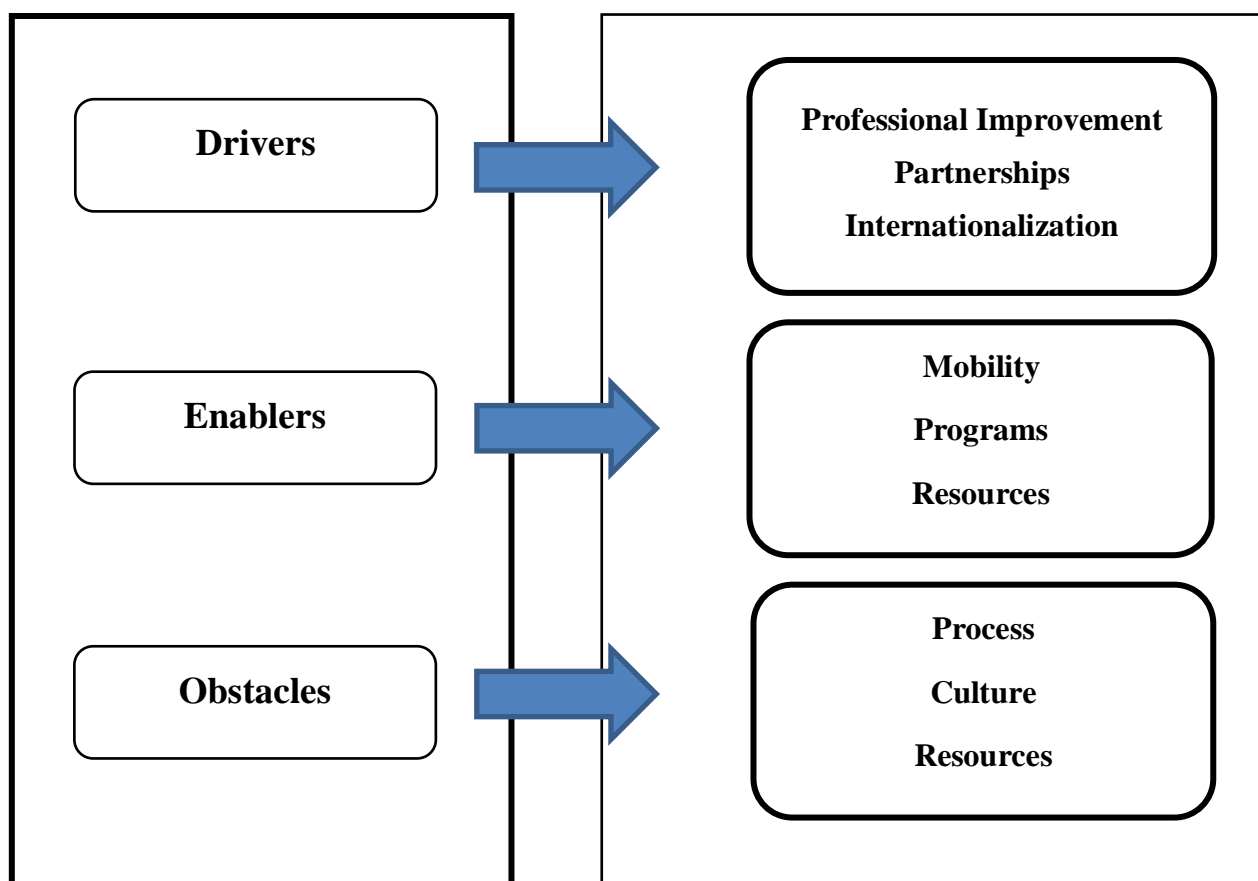
5 Results and discussion

In order to synthesize the elements that emerged from our research on the internationalization of higher education, according to the Uppsala internationalization model of organizations, Figure 1 presents the main characteristics of this process, with the drivers, enablers and obstacles, through the propositions of that theory and the case studies resulting from the interviews.

Regarding the main elements that comprise the internationalization process, we used the Uppsala model as a supporting theory, and both the analysis of the articles on higher education internationalization and the information collected in the interviews. Hence, the elements involved in this process consist of three main groups, in the macro sense of the internationalization action: obstacles, drivers, and enablers.

Figure 1

Categories: Drivers, Enablers, and Obstacles for HEIs Internationalization



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

According to that categorization, the internationalization of higher education institutions relies on three main elements: i) drivers – these are the factors that foster, such as professional improvement, partnerships, and the decision to internationalize; ii) enablers – these are the factors that make

internationalization possible, that facilitate it, which are student mobility, programs, and resources. In addition, iii) obstacles – they are elements that can prevent the actions of HEIs' internationalization to occur, here called process factors, cultural factors, and resources.

As we saw, on the subject Internationalization of Higher Education, there are many categorizations for building the concept; therefore, due to the new characterizations, some new formats consolidate; they are examples of this new reality - new types of movements, global policies for the sector, and foreign direct investments from universities (Contel & Lima, 2007).

For Romani Dias (2018), the Internationalization of Higher Education takes place according to four dimensions named P.R.I.D. (Place, Relationship, Impact, and Dissemination). Internationalization happens when, in the *place* dimension, the researcher takes the empirical field of his research to other countries. The *relationship* dimension, when a full-time academic researcher relates with colleagues, in his/her own country or abroad, in professional activities.

In the *impact* dimension, knowledge produced, in the form of articles and books (or book chapters), is widely adopted by the academic community and by different audiences from other countries, such as students, managers, public policy makers, or other society members. Finally, in the *dissemination* dimension, researcher's articles and books spread to other countries, as digital or printed material. For Altbach and Knight (2007), this is cross-border higher education: growing areas are international higher education initiatives that allow these practices of duplication, called “gemination”.

In this regard, most of the authors mentioned, such as Veiga (2012) and Bertazzo (2012), state that partnerships depend on the availability of internal funds, as well as a qualified team and, mainly, on the alignment of interests between the institutions, resulting in in scholarships and consolidated programs.

The driving aspects comprise three main axes - professional improvement, economic resources, and partnerships. First, regarding professional improvement, Fiorin (2007), Gonçalves and Richie (2012), Cordeiro and Watanabe (2012), and El Debs and Hugueneu (2012) consider it as the main driving factor for internationalization, in the sense of improving the quality of academic performance, besides the quality of research, due to the proximity of goals.

For these authors, a driver such as professional improvement covers foreign language learning and improvement, and, therefore, culture and research. However, it is difficult to establish these professional improvements because of differences in culture and curriculum between the institutions; hence, it is necessary to align with regulatory bodies such as the AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business), the world's leading accrediting association for business schools. As for economic resources and partnerships, they act as drivers when establishing links between countries (Alves, 1998; El Debs & Hugueneu, 2012); thus, there is a possibility of businesses that may involve other resources, including financial, as well as professional and research development. Development programs can act in this direction, increasing motivations when there is synergy between those involved.

On the one side, interviewees observed that a great challenge for internationalization is the lack of resources and standardized criteria; on the other, several aspects enable it, such as classifying contracts, experiences, and resources, in addition to institutions' image (Fiorin, 2007; Cordeiro & Watanabe, 2012; Gonçalves & Richie, 2012; Alves, 1998; Veiga, 2012; Bertazzo, 2012; El Debs & Huguency, 2012). These authors claim that actions aimed at socio-economic partnerships and contracts between countries are very relevant, as well as government programs and scholarships that favor the development of research, actions that allow the exchange of students, researchers, and professors.

For these authors, through the enablers of the internationalization process, the possibility of generating profit in some of the procedures can also be a mechanism for opening up contracts and partnerships, whether governmental or private. The learning outcomes of students or researchers, as well as revenues and markets as global bridges, favor the image and reputation of the institutions and researchers involved.

As we saw previously, the Internationalization of Higher Education Institutions happens if we take into account some elements that are obstacles, drivers, and enablers. We identified them in this study by cultural aspects, that is, language, social interaction through contacts and reception, the age of students or professional researchers, and by resources, which can be a qualified team, scholarships and partnerships, exchange, and costs.

In addition, the main drivers of this process include professional improvement, economic resources, and professional and cultural bonds. There are still factors understood as enablers of this scenario. As we have mentioned, they are the professional image, resources, internationalization experience, and partnerships that can result in global bridges and higher mobility of scientific research.

6 Final remarks

In the context of internationalization, higher education institutions represent one of the main fields for actions in teaching and research. They also influence or allow a cultural, social and economic movement, which makes this phenomenon a great competitive differential for Higher Education Institutions. From this study, the main obstacles to HEIs' internationalization are culture and language; resources for the whole movement of internationalization; and the process, that is, bureaucracy, validation, and acknowledgement of these actions. We identified the drivers as professional enhancement, partnerships, and internationalization through scientific research. We identified categories such as resources, programs, and mobility as enablers of HEIs' internationalization. Data categorization allowed understanding the obstacles, drivers, and enablers in the actions of higher education internationalization, along the lines of Uppsala theory, and contributing to research in this area.

Once identified, these elements can be treated and understood as strategic means of HEIs' expansion. According to the Uppsala theory, internationalization is gradual, with different stages, which

take into account the psychic distance, and comprise the growing accumulation of knowledge, sending agents and establishing business poles, until establishing the enterprise itself in the target country.

Some weaknesses of the study were due to the need to expand the research with more higher education institutions, with different internationalization proposals, or even with more case studies of HEIs in early stages or without an internationalization strategy, so that they could understand the Uppsala theory to assist them in this process. Another fragility of the study was the sample composition, which only included private Higher Education Institutions.

Despite these issues, the paper may lead to further in-depth research on the internationalization of higher education institutions according to Uppsala, by establishing comparisons, for example, between the internationalization of public and private HEIs, given the systematization of the main propositions identified in this research, from the theoretical and empirical surveys of the main enablers, obstacles, and drivers.

We suggest that further studies expand the HEIs' base, so that the categories found seek scale validation. Thus, new implications may be found, and more HEIs can improve their internationalization methods, according to their drivers, enablers, and obstacles. Despite the limitation of the investigated sample, the study contributes to a new categorization, relevant for advancing the knowledge on HEIs' internationalization. Hence, we expect that managers and researchers on the subject use this paper for developing new strategies of international insertion.

References

- Altbach, P. J., & Knight, J. (2007). The internationalization of higher education: Motivations and realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11(3-4), 290-305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315307303542>
- Alves, L. (1998). A internacionalização do ensino superior em Cabo Verde e sua importância no seu desenvolvimento. *Millenium*, 11. <https://repositorio.ipv.pt/handle/10400.19/798>
- Bardin, L. (1977). *Análise de conteúdo*. Lisboa: Edições 70.
- Bertazzo, J. (2012). A internacionalização do ensino superior como receita para o sucesso – a experiência do Reino Unido e sua relevância para o Brasil. *Mundo Afora*, 9, 276-285. https://sistemas.mre.gov.br/kitweb/datafiles/Oslo/pt-br/file/09_Cultural/09-10-Mundo_Afora_09.pdf#page=277
- Blasco, M., & Tackney, C. (2013). “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”: Internationalisation and the erosion of the positive hidden curriculum in Danish higher education. *International Journal of Management in Education*, 7(4), 341-359. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJMIE.2013.056640>
- Borges, G., & Amal, M. (2016). Internacionalização de cursos stricto sensu: Uma investigação sobre a distância psíquica e as práticas adotadas. *Revista Gestão Universitária na América Latina - GUAL*, 9(2), 260-281. <https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=319345782013>
- Callaghan D., & Collins, H. (2018). The role of Action Learning in supporting cross-cultural adaptation of international students. *Action Learning: Research and Practice*, 15(3), 267-275. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767333.2018.1510633>

- Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior [Capes] (2018). Internacionalização do Ensino Superior. <https://www.capes.gov.br/sala-de-imprensa/noticias/8621-internacionalizacao-do-ensino-superior-precisa-avancar-sugere-estudo-da-capes>
- Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior [Capes] (2018). Programa Institucional de Internacionalização. <https://www.capes.gov.br/cooperacao-internacional/multinacional/programa-institucional-de-internacionalizacao-capes-print>
- Chan, K. C., Fung, H., & Yau, J. (2018). Advancing learning in international business related to a global mindset: An introduction. *Journal of Teaching in International Business*, 29(1), 1-3. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08975930.2018.1455878>
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (1990). *Noções básicas de pesquisa qualitativa: Procedimentos da teoria fundamentada e técnicas*. Sage.
- Cordeiro, E., & Watanabe, Y. (2012). No caminho da internacionalização: Desafios e oportunidades do ensino superior na Argentina. *Mundo Afora*, 9, 18-27. https://sistemas.mre.gov.br/kitweb/datafiles/Oslo/pt-br/file/09_Cultural/09-10-Mundo_Afora_09.pdf#page=19
- Curtis, T., & Ledgerwood, J. R. (2018). Students' motivations, perceived benefits and constraints towards study abroad and other international education opportunities. *Journal of International Education in Business*, 11(1), 63-78. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIEB-01-2017-0002>
- Creswell, J. (2010) *Projeto de pesquisa: métodos qualitativo, quantitativo e misto* (3a ed.). Artmed.
- El Debs, C. & Hugueney, C. (2012). A internacionalização do ensino superior na China: entre a massificação e a excelência. *Mundo Afora*, 9, 60-76. https://sistemas.mre.gov.br/kitweb/datafiles/Oslo/pt-br/file/09_Cultural/09-10-Mundo_Afora_09.pdf#page=61
- Eisenhardt, K.M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14 (4). <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4308385>
- Fiorin, J. L. (2007). Internacionalização da produção científica: A publicação de trabalhos de Ciências Humanas e Sociais em periódicos internacionais. *Revista Brasileira de Pós-Graduação*, 4(8), 263-281. <https://doi.org/10.21713/2358-2332.2007.v4.133>
- Foster, M., & Carver, M. (2018). Explicit and implicit internationalisation: Exploring perspectives on internationalisation in a business school with a revised internationalisation of the curriculum toolkit. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 16(2), 143-153. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2018.02.002>
- Gonçalves, J. C. Z., & Riche, F. E. (2012) A Áustria e a internacionalização do ensino superior. *Mundo Afora: Políticas de Internacionalização de Universidades*, n. 9, p. 45-48. Ministério das Relações Exteriores. <https://pt.slideshare.net/lsathler/politicas-de-internacionalizacao-de-universidades-ministerio-das-relaes-exteriores>
- Huang, R., & Turner, R. (2018). International experience, universities support and graduate employability—perceptions of Chinese international students studying in UK universities. *Journal of Education and Work*, 31(2), 175-189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13639080.2018.1436751>

- Johanson, J., & Vahlne, J. (1977). The internationalization process of the firm - a model of knowledge development and increasing foreign market commitments. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 8(1), 23-32. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jibs.8490676>
- Kerlinger, F. N., & Lee, H. B. (2000). *Foundations of Behavioral Research* (4th ed.). Holt.
- Kovacs, E. P., Moraes, W. F. A., & Oliveira, B. R. B. (2007). Redefinindo conceitos: Um ensaio teórico sobre os conceitos-chave das teorias de internacionalização. *REGE Revista de Gestão*, 14(1), 17-29. <https://doi.org/10.5700/issn.2177-8736.rege.2007.36579>
- Lesjak, D., & Anussornnitisarn, P. (2017). Internationalisation - professors' mobility and teaching in foreign languages in Slovenian higher education. *International Journal of Innovation and Learning*, 22(3), 340-352. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJIL.2017.086734>
- Lima, M. C., & Contel, F. B. (2007). Aspectos da internacionalização do ensino superior: origem e destino dos estudantes estrangeiros no mundo atual. *INTERNEXT – Revista Eletrônica de Negócios Internacionais da ESPM*, 2(2), 167-193. <https://doi.org/10.18568/1980-4865.22167-193>
- Lima, M. C., & Contel, F. B. (2011). *Internacionalização da educação superior: Nações ativas, nações passivas e a geopolítica do conhecimento*. Alameda.
- Maranhão, C. M. S. A., & Lima, M. C. (2009). O sistema de educação superior mundial: entre a internacionalização ativa e passiva. *Avaliação*, 14(3), 583-610. <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/aval/v14n3/a04v14n3>
- Mariutti, F. G. (2015). Reflexão sobre a missão desafiadora do constructo marca-país na área de negócios internacionais. *Internext*, 10(3), 58-70. <https://doi.org/10.18568/1980-4865.10358-70>
- Mariutti, F. G., Tench, R., Giraldi, J. M. E., & Montanari, M. G. (2017). ‘If I huff and I puff’. Foundations for building Brazil’s image: Evidence from an international systematic review (2001 to 2015). *Internext*, 12(2), 58-73. <https://doi.org/10.18568/1980-4865.12258-73>
- Ministério da Educação[MEC] (2014). *A democratização e expansão da educação superior no país 2003–2014*. http://portal.mec.gov.br/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=16762-balanco-social-sesu-2003-2014&Itemid=30192
- Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994) *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Sage.
- Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (2002). *The Qualitative Researcher’s Companion*. Sage.
- Morgan, G., & Smircich, L. (1980). The case for qualitative research. *Academy of Management Review*, 5(4), 491-500. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1980.4288947>
- Morosini, M. C. (2011). Internacionalização na produção de conhecimento em IES brasileiras: Cooperação internacional tradicional e cooperação internacional horizontal. *Educação em Revista*, 27(1), 93-112. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0102-46982011000100005>
- Morosini, M. C.; Dalla Corte, M. G. (2018). Teses e realidades no contexto da internacionalização da educação superior no Brasil. *Revista Educação em Questão*, 56(47), 97-120. <https://doi.org/10.21680/1981-1802.2018v56n47ID14000>
- Outhwaite, D. (2018). Identifying the research process to analyse the adoption of the International Baccalaureate’s Diploma Programme in England. *Management in Education*, 32(1), 13-18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0892020617748142>

- Pena, R. A. (2019). *Primeira fase da Globalização*. <https://brasilecola.uol.com.br/geografia/primeira-globa.htm>
- Pudelko, M., & Tenzer, H. (2019). Boundaryless careers or career boundaries? The impact of language barriers on academic careers in international business schools. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 18(2), 213-240. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2017.0236>
- Romani-Dias, M. (2018). *Internationalization in higher education: The fundamental role of faculty* (PhD dissertation). Fundação Getúlio Vargas/EAESP, São Paulo. <http://bibliotecadigital.fgv.br/dspace/bitstream/handle/10438/25711/Thesis%20-%20Romani-Dias%20%282018%29%20-%20Final%20Version.pdf>
- Rossato, R. (1998). *Universidade: nove séculos de história*. EDIUPF.
- Santos, F. M. (2012). Análise de conteúdo: A visão de Laurence Bardin. *Revista Eletrônica de Educação*, 6(1), 383-387. <http://www.reveduc.ufscar.br/index.php/reveduc/article/view/291>
- Souza, E. P. (2008). *Mapeando os caminhos da internacionalização de instituições de ensino superior no Brasil* (Dissertação de Mestrado). Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo. https://www.teses.usp.br/teses/disponiveis/12/12139/tde-16012009-122855/publico/EPinheiro_dissert_2008.pdf
- Vahlne, J. E., & Johanson, J. (2013). The Uppsala model on evolution of the multinational business enterprise—from internalization to coordination of networks. *International Marketing Review*, 30(3), 189-210. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02651331311321963>
- Vahlne, J. E., & Johanson, J. (2017). From internationalization to evolution: The Uppsala model at 40 years. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 48(9), 1087-1102. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-017-0107-7>
- Veiga, R. (2012). *Internacionalização das instituições de ensino superior em Portugal: Proposta de metodologia para a construção de indicador do grau de internacionalização* (Tese de Doutorado). Instituto Politécnico de Leiria, Portugal. <https://iconline.ipleiria.pt/bitstream/10400.8/544/1/MNI%20Rita%20Veiga.pdf>
- Verger, A., Novelli, M., & Altinyelken, H. K. (2018). Global education policy and international development: A revisited introduction. In A. Verger, M. Novelli, & H. K. Altinyelken (Eds.). *Global education policy and international development - New agendas, issues and policies* (2nd ed.). Bloomsbury Publishing.