

Strategies and Challenges for Internationalisation of Higher Education through ODL: Meta Synthesis

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the challenges and strategies in internationalisation of higher education (IoHE). The study also examined the role of Online Distance Learning (ODL) in facilitating the internationalisation process. In parallel with the aim, meta-synthesis was used to analyze and synthesize the findings from various studies under the theme of IoHE. Two databases Taylor & Francis and Science Direct were used to search relevant research articles published during 2014 to 2019. This construct was searched by adding the key words “Challenges in Internationalisation of Higher Education”. A total of 4,357 articles were identified. Sample size was selected by using PRISMA flow chart which is specifically designed for meta-analysis and synthesis studies. Only full text articles were selected and excluded by applying inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria include identification of records, screening of record by removing duplicate studies and final screening for relevant content based on themes of the articles. Exclusion criteria include articles dealing other than higher education domain. At the final stage, 21 articles were selected for meta-synthesis. The study concluded that IoHE is possible through using ODL in universities in their research, curriculum and degree programs. Based on the findings, a framework has been proposed for the IoHE through ODL.

Keywords: Internationalisation of Higher Education, Meta-Synthesis, Online Distance Learning (ODL).

Introduction

Internationalization phenomenon is gaining much attention as it is considered one of the elements for successful survival of a country. Universities have to respond to the national and international demands of global market for development (Luxon & Peelo, 2009). Bolsmann and Miller (2008) claimed that across the globe, “university management and policy makers are devising internationalisation policies to bring rapid increase in knowledge economy at higher education level and to foster national development against the backdrop of globalization” (p.1). Thus Chang and Lin (2018) defined internationalisation as “the specific policies and initiatives of countries and individual academic institutions or systems to deal with global trends. Examples of internationalisation include policies relating to recruitment of foreign students, collaboration with academic institutions or systems in other countries, and the establishment of branch campuses abroad”.

IoHE engages variety of stakeholders: governments, institutions, faculty and students. The broad frame work of internationalisation addresses students’ mobility, collaboration of research and academia, cross-border education, internationalisation at home and strategies to implement comprehensive internationalisation (de Wit, 2002). Processes and strategies for internationalisation and globalization can be undertaken by the universities and other institutions of higher education only after defining an umbrella policy by the country (Bradford, Guzman & Trujillo, 2017).

Recently, there is a growing research focus on Internationalisation at Home (IaH), which aims to develop intercultural and international awareness for students within their home country (Heffernan, Morrison, Magne, Payne, & Cotton, 2018). The term Internationalisation at a Distance (IaD), was the first suggested by Ramanau (2016), but has now been defined more comprehensively as all forms of education across borders where students, their respective staff, and institutional provisions are separated by geographical distance and supported by technology.

This study aims to synthesize articles selected after screening process dealing with internationalisation of higher education (IoHE) specifically in the perspective of ODL. Study has identified themes from the articles which are in the form of strategies for internationalisation of higher education and highlight challenges while planning and execution of those strategies. This study presents the extracted strategies and challenges and the proposed framework to overcome the challenges. The study will be beneficial for the policy makers and academic stakeholders of ODL in planning internationalisation of higher education through ODL.

Objectives of the study

This study explores following objectives:

1. To synthesize literature on strategies and processes used for the internationalisation of higher education.
2. To identify challenges faced during internationalisation of higher education process.

Literature review

Internationalisation of higher education (IoHE)

The importance of the IoHE has been recognised since the nineties of the last century. According to Knight (1994), “Internationalisation, is an increasingly important issue in higher education. It typically involves a range of activities, policies and services that incorporate an international and intercultural dimension into the research, teaching and service functions of the institution”.

The latest definition by Knight reflects internationalisation at the national and institutional levels “as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education” (2015, p. 2).

Knight (2008) also specified that “two components are evolving in higher education: (a) internationalisation at home, managing activities that assist students in developing international understanding and intercultural skills (curriculum-oriented) and prepare students to be active in a globalized world; and (b) internationalisation abroad, which includes all

forms of education across borders, including the circulation of students, faculty, scholars, and programs”.

The IoHE has many stages and many forms. The notion of internationalisation was largely established and deliberated in North America, Europe and to some extent in Japan. It has impacted developing and designing the practices of IoHE (de Wit, 2014).

Majee and Ress (2018) conducted a study on colonial inheritances in IoHE . They investigated two case studies, one from South Africa and the other from Brazil. Study recommended that universities should answer the international pressures for internationalisation and local demands for cultural justice. For this purpose there is need to adopt strategic approach with reference to the colonial legacies in IoHE. This study also suggested that successful implementation of internationalisation process needs elimination of political interference which was observed in South Africa and Brazil.

Mittelmeier, Rienties Rogaten, Guntere and Raghuram (2019) studied internationalisation at distance phenomena and argued that academic adjustment in distance learning is predicted by emotional adjustment, attachment towards the institution and access to technology. This study suggested the need to explore internationalisation in distance learning settings with respect to the technological advances and research studies should provide clarity between internationalisation ‘abroad’ and ‘at home’.

Warwick (2014) has taken the perspectives of managers regarding internationalisation of UK universities. This study has highlighted three main challenges faced by the universities during internationalisation process. The challenges were the lack of shared understanding about internationalisation phenomena, the execution of these phenomena in complex professional institutes and lack of managerial skills and experience of international business management.

Tanhueco-Nepomuceno (2019) study identified benefits of internalisation in institutional growth and national economy. In this study various factors were explained that obstruct the internalization process which include “absence of articulated visions, missions, goals, and core values for internationalisation, lack of well-defined strategic plans for

internationalisation, limited internal resources and lack of a supportive culture at institutional level”.

Cahng and Lin (2018) applied a context, input, process, output (CIPO) model for students and faculty to examine IoHE. This study identified that there is a large gap between the importance and practicability of internationalisation in aspect of input and context. Furthermore, students and faculty perceptions were also not aligned with each other. The study found that students were more on favor of implementing CIPO indicators as compared to teachers. Context and Input dimension identifies diversity in the implementation of internationalisation in public and private sector.

Renfors (2017) did internationalisation of curriculum by developing joint tourism program. This study has recommended the strategy to create jointly developed courses to grab the attention of national and international students. According to Lepori, Seeber, Bonaccorsi (2015) characteristics of any country like strong economy and strength of research system are considered as a key component to attract international students as compared to less attractive countries.

Mittelmeiera, Rienties, Tempelaar, Hillaire and Whitelock (2018) studied the effect of internationalisation on virtual “intercultural collaboration” in groups versus local content. Their study inferred that internationalisation of virtual course material encourages individual involvement and decreases the incompatibility of involvement within smaller groups, when the course material is found exclusively appropriate for students’ own education.

Dohse, Fornahl and Vehrke (2018) did their work on nurturing German technology policy by “place-based innovation” and internationalisation. They recommended that this strategy should be implemented to gain long term aims and the success of this strategy depends on local factors like firms, research institutes and cluster managements. The study also highlighted some issues like “barriers to market entry, lack of reliable business partners abroad, lack of experience in managing international activities, lack of financing opportunities, and cultural and language barriers”.

The purpose of this study was to synthesize literature on strategies, processes and challenges faced during the IoHE and to recommend

strategies for IoHE through ODL. After reviewing articles multiple challenges were highlighted followed by the strategies to overcome those challenges to strengthen the phenomena of IoHE.

Methodology

Meta-synthesis research design was used to study the strategies and challenges in IoHE as published articles from 2014-2019. This is an explanatory investigative technique through which findings stated in selected research articles were used to get deeper understanding of specific strategy. All articles were of qualitative and narrative nature so that was the key reason to use meta-synthesis research design.

For this study two databases Taylor & Francis and Science Direct were selected to identify research articles by adding key word “challenges in internationalisation of higher education” and “strategies for internationalisation of higher education”. Total 4,357 references were identified. Sample size was selected by using PRISMA flow chart which is specifically designed for meta-synthesis/analysis and systematic reviews. Firstly, records were identified by removing editorials, conference abstracts and book chapters through which 2903 references were found. Secondly, data screening by removing duplicate studies was done and 2470 records were identified. Further records screening was done by using inclusion and exclusion criteria. Those topics were included which were focusing on “internationalisation of higher education”. Through this screening 75 full length papers from the Science Direct and 145 from Taylor and Francis database were selected. On the subsequent stage, full length articles were assessed for eligibility resultantly; 7 full length articles from Taylor & Francis and 14 full length articles from Science Direct database were screened for further analysis.

Visual representation of methodology

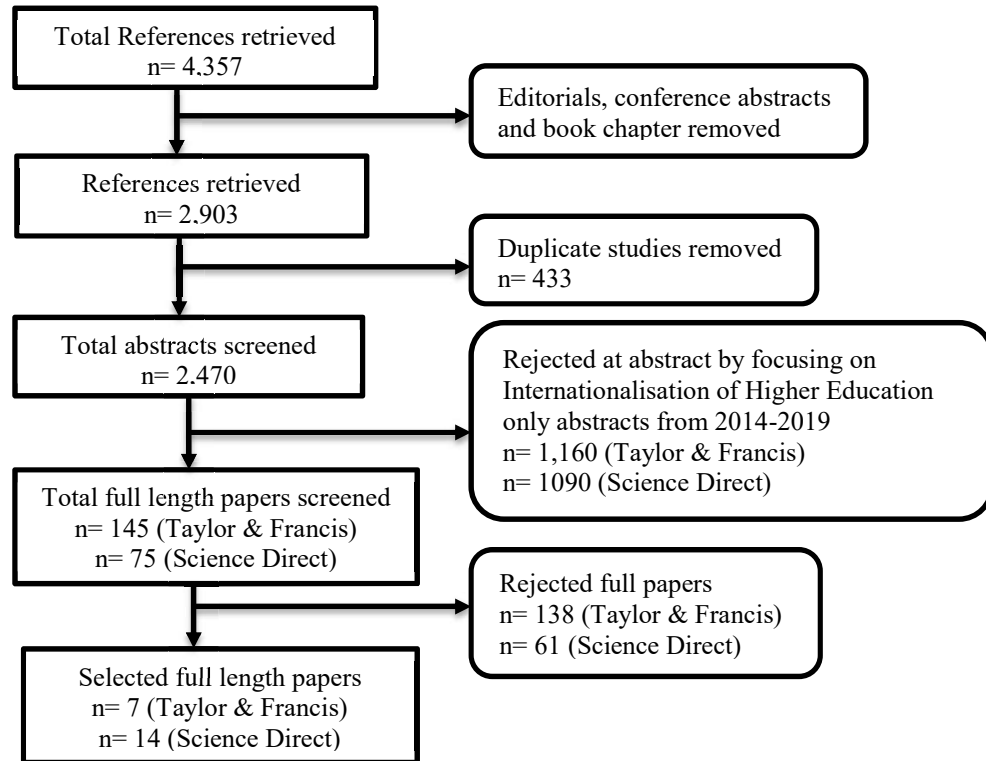


Figure 1: *Visual representation of data screening process*

Distribution of articles

In this study selected articles for meta-analysis were categorized under five main categories. The below table shows the percentages and frequency of articles published under all categories from 2014-2019. It can be observed that more or less all the articles have addressed all five categories

Table 1
Division of articles related to every category

Sr. No	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Student mobility	2	9.5
2.	Scholar mobility and research collaboration	2	9.5
3.	Cross-border education	5	24.0
4.	Internationalisation at home	11	52.4
5.	Comprehensive internationalisation strategies	3	14.3

Data Analysis

Analysis of articles was done in 5 steps:

Step I:

Research articles selected from 2014-2019 were reviewed to extract characteristics by authors, year, subject domain, respondents, methodology and data source. It also identified the category addressed in the article.

Step II:

Codes were extracted from the findings of the articles to identify strategies and challenges faced during internationalisation of higher education.

Step III:

Preliminary themes were extracted with respect to internationalisation of higher education strategies and challenges.

Step IV:

Based on preliminary themes, final themes were generated for further discussion and generation of results.

Step V:

At the end, based on identified strategies and challenges regarding internationalisation of higher education a framework has been proposed for internationalisation through ODL.

Step I of data analysis

For the synthesis of articles, some characteristics mentioned in table 2 such as authors, year of publication, subject domain, respondents, methodology and data sources. It also indicated the category regarding internationalisation of higher education.

Table 2
Characteristics of the studies reviewed in the meta-synthesis (n= 21)

Sr #	Authors	Subject Domain	Subjects	Method	Data Source	Category
1	Majee & Ressa (2018)	Higher Education	International Student	Case study	Two case studies	Type 1
2	Bradford, Guzmán & Trujillo (2017)	Business schools	Business school deans, university boards and educational policymakers	Theoretical approach	Theoretical frameworks that of contingency, isomorphism theories.	Type 5
3	Renfors (2017)	Tourism Education	Development of a joint tourism programme	Case of tourism	Professional education in three Baltic Sea states: Finland, Estonia and Latvia.	Type 4
4	Dohse, Fornahl & Vehrke (2018)	Policy	Firms and research institutes	Survey	Questionnaire	Type 5
5	Sahlin & Styf (2019)	School Development	School Principal and teachers	Case study	Interviews, Observations, Field notes	Type 4
6	Chavez & Gaybor (2018)	Yachay project case	Yachay project employees	Case study	Interviews, Observations Archival Analysis	Type 5
7	Hudson & Hinman (2017)	Liberal arts colleges in the Netherlands	Geography in curriculum	Case study	Integration of Geography in interdisciplinary and international curriculum	Type 4
8	Mittelmeier, Rienties Rogaten, Guntere, Raghuram (2019)	Internationalization at a Distance (IaD)	UNISA students	Survey method	Questionnaire	Type 3
9	Leporia, Seeberb, & Bonaccorsic (2015)	Internationalization of European Higher education	Staff, students,	National statistical sources for the year 2009	601 HEIs in 8 European countries	Type 4

	Warwick (2014)	Management and leadership	VCS, Heads, Academic, Administrative Staff and Representatives of the Students' Union	Multiple study	Case	Interviews	Type 3
10							
11	Rivas & Mullet (2016)	Science without Borders (SwB) initiative	Scientific Program	Mobility			Type 3
12	Abdul-Mumin (2016)	Nursing Curriculum	Nurse/midwife academics	Descriptive		Semi-structured interviews	Type 4
13	Garone & Craen (2017)	Content and Language Integrated Learning	Nursing degree			Model testing	Type 4
14	Felker & Gianecchini (2015)	Business Administration	Students of Business administration	Survey		Structured questionnaire	Type 1
15	Mittelmeier, Rienties, Tempelaar, Hillaire & Whitelocka (2018)	Multi-Disciplinary Statistics Course	Students of first undergraduate term	Robust randomised control method		Group discussion, Discourse and participation in activity	Type 4
16	Chang & Lin (2018)	CIPO model	Students and faculty	Application of CIPO model		Questionnaire	Type 3
17	Tanhueco-Nepomuceno (2019)		Students, Faculty, Administrators	Survey + studies	case	Interview, questionnaire evidence, observations, & focus group discussions	Type 3
18	Foster & Carver (2018)	Internationalisation of the Curriculum	Students, programme leaders and tutors	Survey + studies	case	Questionnaire and examples	Type 4
19	Joseph (2016)	3 Initiatives					Type 4

20	Beloïua, Bostana & Iorgulescua (2015)	Internationalization of educational programs	Author opinions	Project	Type 4
21	Chigisheva (2015)		Russian Science Activity Surveys	Humanitarian Foundation Quantitative Documentary Research Method	Systematise and analyse documentary data sources Type 4

Meta Synthesis of Data

Thematic synthesis (Thomas & Harden, 2008) was done for data analysis in this paper. For generating results data analysis was done in three phases; initially free text codes were extracted from the selected articles then preliminary themes were generated based on those codes to sum up final themes were extracted. In the last phase strategies adopted for the internationalisation of higher education and which challenges highlighted in selected studies were analysed. Moreover, based on the findings how internationalisation through Online Distance Learning can be adopted was discussed.

Table 3

Preliminary and final themes extracted from the selected articles

Authors	Preliminary Themes	Final Themes
Majee & Ressa (2018)	Inbound mobility of students	• Student Mobility
	Internationalisation in post-colonial context	• Internationalisation of Higher Education
	Need to adopt strategic approach	• Political interference in internationalization
	Colonial legacies in Internationalisation of higher education	
	Remove political influence on internationalisation process	
Bradford, Guzmán & Trujillo (2017)	Environmental and accreditation pressures	• Environmental pressures
	Contingency and Isomorphism theories for analysis	• Accreditation pressures
	Address cultural differences through curricula	• Cultural differences through curricula
	Mimetic and Normative isomorphism	• Strategic planning for internationalization
	Crucial factors are students, academic staff and financial resources	• Faculty training
	Strategic alignment of internationalization with general strategic plan	• Qualified faculty

Renfors (2017)	Lack of appropriate qualified faculty	• Mimetic and Normative isomorphism
	Global exposure and training of staff	• Education without borders
	Education without borders	• Jointly developed courses
	Internationalisation of courses	• E-Learning courses
	Jointly developed courses	• Pedagogical content and practices
	Construction of knowledge through joint research projects	
Dohse, Fornahl & Vehrke (2018)	E-Learning courses	
	Pedagogical material, practices and experiences	
	Adopt useful policy measures for internationalization	• Policy Measures for internationalization
	Management of local factors like firms, research institutes and cluster	• Cluster internationalization
	Internationalisation as capacity building	• Developing reliable partners
	Barriers:	• Easy market entry
	Market entry	• Financing opportunities
	Lack of reliable business partners	• Address language and cultural barriers
	Lack of managing international activities	
	Lack of financing opportunities	
	Cultural and Language barriers	
	Strategy:	
	Cluster internationalisation	
Sahlin & Styf (2019)	Internationalisation of business schools	• Internationalisation of Business schools
	Internationalisation as external collaboration tool	
	Internationalisation strengthens internal process (leadership and staff collaboration)	• Internationalisation as external collaboration tool
	Develop collaborative culture	
	Increase collaboration between school and teacher	• Collaboration tool for school and teacher

Chavez & Gaybor (2018)	Yachay project for techno-economic transformation Transformation of economic, political and ideological aspects Strategies with the specific geographic focus Internationalizing academia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yachay project • Ideological transformation • Economic and political transformation
Hudson & Hinman (2017)	Internationalisation of curriculum Interdisciplinary approach to internationalization Link between Campus and community Internationalisation of general nature courses Course design and rebranding Internationalisation across disciplines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internationalisation of academia • Internationalisation of curriculum
Mittelmeier, Rienties Rogaten, Guntere, Raghuram (2019)	Academic adjustment of international students Internationalisation in distance learning Internationalisation abroad and at home Technology can support intercultural and international experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internationalisation in distance learning
Leporia, Seeberb, & Bonaccorsic (2015)	Internationalisation of higher education International mobility of academics Research orientation to attract international researchers Share foreign staff Country attractiveness Teaching and research orientation Urban centrality International co-publications Economic stability of hosting country HEI international network is the key to attract international researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International mobility of academics • Research orientation • Career opportunities for researchers • Economic stability

Warwick (2014)	<p>Queueing model a multi-level structure</p> <p>Career opportunities for young researchers</p> <p>Internationalisation of universities</p> <p>Consideration on implementation strategies</p> <p>Lack of shared understanding on internationalization</p> <p>Execution of internationalization at universities</p> <p>Lack of skilled workers for international business management</p> <p>Change is not imposed rather it is communicated</p> <p>Internationalisation of science</p> <p>Science without borders</p> <p>Scholarships and grants</p> <p>Development of additional skills</p> <p>Language proficiency</p> <p>Long-term professional and institutional relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internationalisation of universities • Shared understanding about internationalization
Rivas & Mullet (2016)	<p>Change is not imposed rather it is communicated</p> <p>Internationalisation of science</p> <p>Science without borders</p> <p>Scholarships and grants</p> <p>Development of additional skills</p> <p>Language proficiency</p> <p>Long-term professional and institutional relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science without borders • Scholarships and grants • Development of additional skills
Abdul-Mumin (2016)	<p>Expectations of an internationalized curriculum</p> <p>Formation of a committee</p> <p>Benchmarking and setting standards</p> <p>Designing the curriculum for internationalization</p> <p>Internationally oriented curriculum</p> <p>Inclusion of students in curriculum design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations of internationalization • Formation of a committee • Benchmarking and setting standards • Designing the curriculum for internationalization
Garone & Craen (2017)	<p>Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)</p> <p>Internationalisation of nursing program</p> <p>Linguistic preparation of faculty</p> <p>Mixing courses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) • Internationalisation of nursing program

Felter Gianecchini (2015)	Internationalisation of English language Collaboration between language and content Clear learning outcomes	
	& Career internationalization Hiring young professionals oriented toward international careers Self-awareness over knowledge and skills Computer supported collaborative learning in blended and online setting Internationalisation of online academic content Group dynamics and individual demographics affected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career internationalization • Computer supported collaborative learning •
Mittelmeier, Rienties, Tempelaar, Hillaire Whitelocka (2018)		
	& Context, Input, Process and Output (CIPO) indicators Implementing internationalization in context and input dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIPO indicators • Implementing internationalization
Tanhueco- Nepomuceno (2019)	Internationalisation for institutional growth Adopt common rationale for internationalization Absence of articulated vision, mission and core values Lack of well defines strategic plans Limited internal resources Lack of supportive culture Adaptation of reflective toolkit Internationalisation of programs Articulating benefits of internationalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common rationale for internationalization • well defines strategic plans • Internal resources • Supportive culture • Adaptation of reflective toolkits for internationalization •
Foster & Carver (2018)		

	Internationalisation of Curriculum reflective toolkit	
Joseph (2016)	Inter professional education (IPE)	• Inter professional education (IPE)
Beloiu, Bostana & Iorgulescu (2015)	Effective international markets	
	Mobility programs	• Mobility programs
	Good methods of teaching	• Good pedagogies for sharing knowledge and ideas
	Sharing of ideas	
	One2one project	
Chigisheva (2015)	Internationalisation of academic research in pedagogy	• Internationalisation of academic research
	Promote joint activities of foundation	• Attract sponsors
	Attract sponsors	• Promote joint activities
	Simple submission process	
	Special activities for young scholars	

Note: Complete table having free codes extracted from articles and final themes is attached in appendix. Here preliminary and final themes are attached.

Table 4
Division of themes under two main umbrellas i.e., strategies and challenges

Strategies	Challenges
Strategic planning for internationalisation	Student Mobility
Shared understanding about internationalisation	Political interference in internationalisation
Faculty training and skills development of students	Environmental pressures
Mimetic and Normative isomorphism	Accreditation pressures
Jointly developed courses	Qualified faculty
E-Learning courses	Education without borders
Pedagogical content and practices	Developing reliable partners
Cluster internationalisation	Easy market entry
Internationalisation of Business schools	Financing opportunities
Internationalisation as external collaboration tool	Address language and cultural barriers
Internationalisation of academia	Research orientation
Internationalisation of curriculum	Career opportunities for researchers
Cultural differences through curricula	Economic stability
Formation of a curriculum development committee	Scholarships and grants
Benchmarking and setting standards	Implementing internationalisation
Designing the curriculum for internationalisation	Well defines strategic plans
Internationalisation in distance learning	Attract sponsors
International mobility of academics & Mobility programs	Joint research activities
Research orientation	
Internationalisation of universities	

Science without borders
Scholarships and grants
Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)
Computer supported collaborative learning
Internationalisation of nursing program
Career internationalisation
CIPO indicators
Effective use of internal resources
Adaptation of reflective toolkits for internationalisation
Inter professional education (IPE)

Findings

Strategies for internationalisation of higher education. Purpose of this study was to extract strategies and processes used for the IoHE. All the final themes were extracted into two broad categories i.e. strategies and findings regarding IoHE. Strategies related to the planning part of IoHE were emphasizing on the need for taking policy measures, adoption of well-defined strategic plan and articulating clear expectations of internationalisation. For the development of strategic plan, an important construct is to deal with economic stability, so that effective execution of all components in internationalisation can be facilitated. By taking internationalisation strategies into account shared understanding regarding this strategy would be developed to attract sponsors. Moreover, approaches related to the execution of strategic plan were addressed as: internationalisation of universities, academia, programs and curriculum at higher education level. Internationalisations of subjects highlighted in the literature were geography, business administration, technology, science and nursing. Internationalisation of curriculum can be adopted by acknowledging the need to address cultural differences. In addition to this formation of committee, designing and rebranding of curriculum based on set standards and benchmarks is suggested. Cluster internationalisation is recommended for the development of strategic plans, e-learning courses, jointly developed courses and execution of these plans, in which multiple bodies when work for the attainment of same goal will lead to the minimization of challenges faced by internationalisation. Furthermore, this will help in overcoming challenges of reliable business partners, managing international activities, cultural and language barriers.

Furthermore, strategy to adopt mimetic or normative isomorphism is also highlighted. Mimetic isomorphism is to adopt strategies of leading institutes. It's not necessary to adopt mimetic activities all the time because various pressures like environmental and accreditation leads towards adoption of similar strategies. Bradford, Guzman and Trujillo (2017) explained that example of accreditation agencies demand the adoption of practices that guarantee a minimum of multicultural and diversity understanding, along with knowledge of domestic and global environments (normative isomorphism)".

Phenomenon of providing education without borders is emphasized by facilitating students' and faculty mobility worldwide, introducing mobility programs and by providing career opportunities to students and faculty members. In addition to this faculty development and international exposure programs, developing skills of faculty members according to the goals of internationalisation were highlighted. The most important aspect in internationalisation is the internationalisation of research by promoting academic research and joint research projects through scholarships and grants.

Execution of internationalisation is provided with multiple strategies which can be taken into consideration for effective and efficient results. For example: effective use of internal resources, adaptation of reflective toolkits for internationalisation, developing supportive culture, considering CIPO indicators and Yachay project can help in implementing internationalisation. It is emphasized that sharing of pedagogy and knowledge through the above mentioned strategies will also produce good results. For example: inter professional education (IPE), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach and by adopting computer supported collaborative learning are suggested for consideration.

Challenges for internationalisation of higher education. Second objective of this meta-synthesis was to highlight the challenges institutes are facing while implementing internationalisation. The challenges faced during the internationalisation of higher education globally are students' mobility i.e. adjustment is an issue sometimes, external factors like political interference and lack of financial resources. Environmental and accreditation pressures are also playing their role as barriers and limiting the implementation process.

Some other challenges related to market and sponsors are also limiting the accomplishment of internationalisation of higher education such as absence of articulated vision, mission and core values, lack of well-defined strategic plans, limited internal resources, lack of supportive culture, lack of shared understanding on internationalisation, lack of skilled workers for international business management, market entry, lack of reliable business partners, lack of managing international activities, cultural and language barriers and lack of financing opportunities.

It was highlighted in the literature that international students face adjustment difficulties when they go abroad. Another challenge was to ensure that students must have the commitment, technical, linguistic and global skills to maximize the benefit of their time abroad (Rivas & Mullet, 2016). This challenge can also be handled through ODL. For example when students will be getting their degree in the perspective of internationalisation of higher education through ODL, it will give them opportunity to polish their skills by overcoming language and other barriers.

Discussion

Internationalisation is a broad and multi-purpose strategy which still needs to be explored for full implementation. Synthesis of selected articles confirmed that still there is no one fit model for the implementation of this strategy because of the cultural, political and economic diversity around the globe. Strategies and models presented in the literature are valuable but some limitations also exist. That is more research is needed to create shared understanding (Warwick, 2014) for its better implementation. Internationalisation is considered as an outcome which needs a robust structure or system (Tanhueco-Nepomuceno, 2019) to achieve its purpose. It is suggested that execution of internationalisation may be dealt by the academicians only because political influence can ruin the purpose. Cultural differences should be mitigated to address environmental and accreditation pressures for successful IoHE (Bradford, Guzmán & Trujillo, 2017). By developing policy and strategic planning (Bradford, Guzmán & Trujillo, 2017) first step can be taken towards internationalisation of higher education. It is strongly recommended that strategic planning should address language and cultural fences. Clear expectations need to be highlighted and then committee can be formed for articulating expectations to the stakeholders. Based on those expectation standards should be set for the internationalisation of academia (Abdul-Mumin, 2016).

Majority of studies suggest the internationalisation of curriculum or academic programs (Abdul-Mumin, 2016) through which many challenges of internationalisation can be sorted out. Some studies have recommended internationalisation of degree programs in business

management (Sahlin & Styf, 2019), nursing (Garone & Craen, 2017), technology and statistics (Mittelmeier, Rienties, Tempelaar, Hillaire, & Whitelock, 2018), science (Joseph, 2016) and geography (Renfors, 2017). By redesigning their curricula or rebranding of those courses, the national and international students can benefit from the same level and quality of education. For internationalisation of curricula, strategies like jointly developed courses, e-Learning courses, pedagogical content and practices can also attract the international community. By adopting content and integrated learning technique, language barriers can also be reduced. Education without borders and strategies of developed countries can play an important role in overcoming the cultural barriers.

For internationalisation there is a need to address international mobility of stakeholders especially the students and the faculty through trainings and international exposure (Abdul-Mumin, 2016). It is essential to hire those staff members who have effective and appropriate skills to deal with the national and the international students. Through this mobility of programs a gateway to international business market and reliable partners will open (Majee & Ress, 2018). Through cluster internationalisation, ideological, economic and political transformations will be addressed. Adaptation of models and reflective toolkits in interdisciplinary education can be used to see goals' alignment with the practices of internationalization (Foster & Carver, 2018).

The literature highlighted that a key component for the promotion and implementation of internationalisation is research and career orientation (Felker & Gianecchini, 2015). Studies recommend that grants and scholarships for promoting research culture among young national and international graduates is necessary (Rivas & Mullet, 2016). A good academic research attracts sponsors and leads to the development of joint activities, which will in return strengthen the internationalisation process (Chigisheva, 2015).

Major hurdles or challenges highlighted during synthesis of articles were related to the strategic planning, students' skills development, research and career orientation. Studies have claimed that there is less understanding about this strategy among all the stakeholders worldwide, due to which this strategy lacks in developing reliable business partners, attract sponsors and have less information regarding international market,

Internationalisation at higher education cannot be executed efficiently due to less collaboration of institutes and financing opportunities (Dohse, Fornahl & Vehrke, 2018). Attracting young international researchers is becoming a big challenge these days. Reasons might be the cultural and language barriers (Bradford, Guzmán & Trujillo, 2017). It might be the challenge that students are not capable enough to maximize their knowledge and skills in a way that they can execute those skills in their context for better future. Another challenge affecting internationalisation process is limited internal resources specifically the finances. Students' mobility is also creating hurdle in the internationalisation of higher education (Tanhueco-Nepomuceno, 2019). The best strategy to address this challenge can be the internationalisation of online academic content, curriculum, or by adopting internationalisation at home or at distance (Hudson & Hinman, 2017).

IoHE is beneficial in multiple ways as this strategy can improve the knowledge sharing process, opening new ways to access academic institutions, financing market, and creating new input markets. Many challenges regarding internationalisation can be minimized through Online Distance Learning.

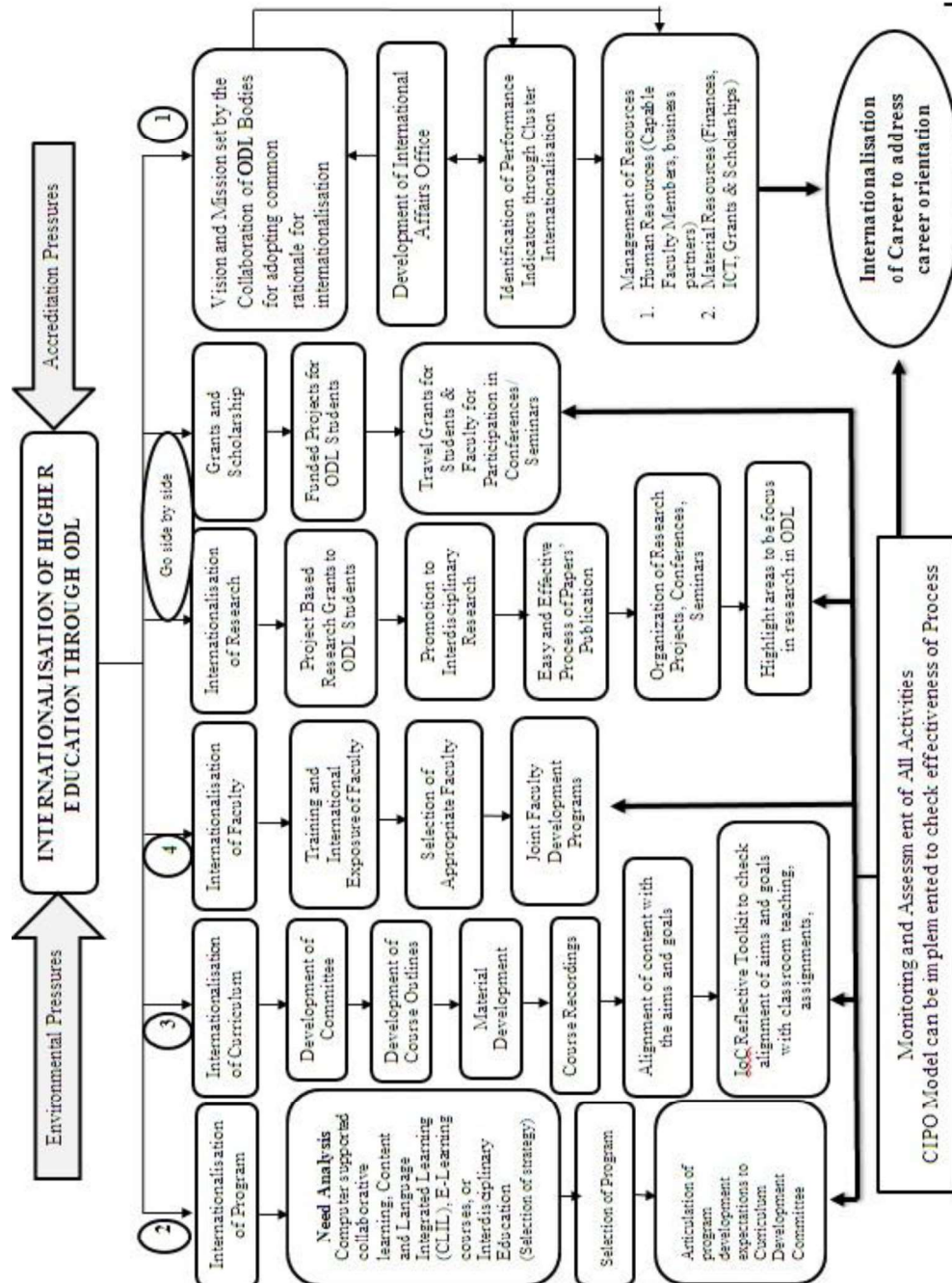
Internationalisation of higher education through ODL

Considering all presented strategies and challenges it is concluded that internationalisation through ODL would be the better approach to cope with the challenges faced by the internationalisation of higher education. Below mentioned picture is the visual representation of all the finding of selected articles relating to developing a strategic plan for IoHE through ODL.

IoHE is the effective strategy for the collaboration of multiple stakeholders and the attainment of broad goals. As it is argued by Sahlin and Styf (2019) that internationalisation strengthens internal process of leadership and staff alliance which leads towards collaborative culture. Through IoHE through ODL can be the key constituent that will contribute in minimizing language and cultural barriers.

This framework addresses the majority of the challenges highlighted by the articles, as it is that limited internal resources including finance are restricting the execution of IoHE. According to this proposed

framework collaboration of all online distance education institutes can make this strategy happen. Another challenge is lack of supportive culture which can be minimized by adopting internationalisation at home (IaH) strategy because IaH aims to develop global and intercultural awareness among students at their place of residence (Heffernan, Morrison, Magne, Payne & Cotton, 2018). When students from diverse cultures will interact with each other in course related discussions, they will learn to acknowledge and accept difference of opinion, this will strengthen their group dynamics and cultural support. IoHE the through ODL will provide opportunity to all the stakeholders of all participating countries to share their skilled human resources that will help in overcoming the challenge of lack of skilled human resource Framework depicting the internationalisation of higher education through ODL is given below.



Conclusion

Strategies and challenges addressed in this study are creating the demand of internationalising research, curriculum, programs and subjects of general nature. The proposed framework illustrates that all components of IoHE can be addressed through ODL approach. Internationalisation of research and joint research projects will contribute in the body of knowledge and open up new ways for the development of IoHE. Furthermore, this framework will be helpful in implementation of the IoHE across the globe and development of higher education sector in the ODL context explicitly. Internationalisation through ODL is a new gateway to attain international education for students globally. Open and distance learning universities such as the Virtual University of Pakistan may use this framework to implement internationalisation of higher education. It is recommended that internationalisation at distance can be a good possibility for the attainment of internationalisation goals.

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