CAPÍTULO XI

WHO ARE THEY? THE PERSONA OF INTERNATIONAL FACULTY AT THE VALLEY CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY OF GUADALAJARA

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Abstract

The University of Guadalajara's Valley Campus (Centro Universitario de los Valles – Universidad de Guadalajara), is yet to frame its international faculty, although institutional documents highlight their significance in fulfilling the internationalization agenda. This study is framed by the transformative paradigm, through an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design. Data collection and analysis is orchestrated through cross-tabulation analysis and a survey. The cross-tabulation analysis identifies salient themes in scholarly literature. The themes that emerge from the literature form units of analysis which are used to survey all tenured faculty's portfolios. Findings identified 21% of faculty members who meet at least one of the criteria established by the research instrument. Conversely, the data revealed elements that can identify international faculty but are not accounted for in the literature reviewed. The findings indicated that the data solicited upon hiring is insufficient to fully identify faculty members as international, and even more insufficient to establish the grounds for a desirable profile. This study proposed the founding of the "Intercampus Institute for International Higher Education" with Research Lines and Educational Centers for furthering the internationalization agenda through international faculty engagement.

Keywords: international faculty, internationalization, Valley Center-University of Guadalajara.

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¿QUIÉNES SON? LA ESENCIA DEL PROFESOR INTERNACIONAL DEL CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO DE LOS VALLES, UNIVERSIDAD DE GUADALAJARA

Resumen

Aunque los documentos institucionales destacan el rol del profesor internacional en la internacionalización, el Centro Universitario de los Valles de la Universidad de Guadalajara aún no establece el marco definidor. Este estudio se enmarca en el paradigma transformativo, a través de un diseño exploratorio secuencial de métodos mixtos. La recopilación y el análisis de datos se orquesta a través del análisis de tabulación cruzada y una encuesta. El análisis de tabulación cruzada identifica temas destacados en la literatura académica. Los temas que surgen de la literatura forman unidades de análisis que se utilizan para examinar los expedientes de todos profesores de tiempo-completo. Se identificó que 21% del profesorado cumple con al menos uno de los criterios establecidos. En cambio, aunque no aparecieron en la literatura revisada, los datos revelan elementos adicionales que indican un perfil internacional. Los hallazgos mostraron que la información solicitada al momento de la contratación es insuficiente para identificar plenamente al profesorado como internacional; y aún más insuficiente para establecer las bases de un perfil deseable. Se propuso la fundación del “Instituto Inter-centros de Educación Superior Internacional” con Líneas de Investigación y Centros Educativos para promover la agenda de internacionalización a través de la participación intencionada del profesorado internacional.

Palabras clave: profesor internacional, internacionalización, Centro Universitario de los Valles-Universidad de Guadalajara.

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Introduction: Problematicization and Justification

This research article presents a scholar-practitioner’s perspective of international faculty at the Valley Center (CUValles). The objective of this research is to explore and capture the nuanced manifestations of international faculty at CUValles through scholarly lens. Hence, the research question: Who are they? The persona of International Faculty at the Valley Campus - University of Guadalajara. This process will be guided by desk and field research and the data collected will be analyzed through an exploratory sequential mixed-method design. The outcomes of this research will inform institutional practice through the application of the resultant scholarly framework to

identify international faculty and propose strategies and activities to engage them for the furtherance of internationalization at CUValles.

CUValles is one of 15 Universities, and two Educational Systems that constitute the University of Guadalajara located in Jalisco, Mexico. CUValles is a non-residential, public, tuition-free university campus. It has an enrolment of approximately 5000 students in 18 undergraduate or 11 postgraduate degrees, taught by 400 professors. The Campus is governed by the principles of concentrated decentralization and is guided by a Campus-based Development Plan (*Plan de Desarrollo del Centro Universitario de los Valles 2014-2030*) derived from a global Institutional Master Plan (*Plan de Desarrollo Institucional 2014-2030*). At CUValles, internationalization efforts reside primarily in the Office of the Academic Vice President, who not only provides leadership in policymaking but also determines the related budgetary assignments of the same.

Internationalization is one of the six Strategic Directions for achieving institutional goals in both CUValles' Development Plan and the University of Guadalajara's Master Plan. Some of the initiatives leading to the fulfillment of the Internationalization Strategic Direction include: "Hiring more international scholars and researchers..." (PDI UdeG, 2014, p.75) and "...the internationalization of the curriculum, the fostering of international and intercultural competences in professors" (PDI CUValles, 2014, p. 34). In CUValles, the success of these initiatives rests heavily on the claim that internationalization's key enablers are international faculty (PDI CUValles, 2014, p. 13). However, the relevant institutional policy does not ascertain the nature of international faculty. Therefore, there is inconsistency amongst institutional policy, policy expectations, and literature about; the definition or distinctive characteristics of international faculty (Rumbley & De Wit, 2016), and how their engagement can contribute intentionally to the Strategic Direction of Internationalization (Childress, 2010).

Theoretical framework

The Precursor: Backdrop of International Faculty

Traditionally, the professoriate of higher education was analogous to international faculty. Literature evokes images of bearded sages, armed with scrolls, sojourning

through Asia, Africa, and Europe as early as 700 B.C., in search of deeper meaning and kindred spirits who shared a similar passion (Lulat, 2003; Rumbley & De Wit, 2018). Their quests led them through centers of learning where other knowledge seekers gathered with like goals in mind. This was the forerunner of the modern university, the scholar as a promoter, gatekeeper, and validator of the corpus of knowledge that had been curated through generations (Ben & Zloczower, 1962; Lulat, 2003). Inadvertently higher education faculty was international, in the nature and scope of their vocation (Rumbley & De Wit, 2018).

The advent of the modern university in 1088 —University of Bologna— marked a distinct era for faculty in a less transient role. The demands and dynamics of current academic, scientific, technological and social culture, require a distinction between domestic professors and international faculty; while the persona of international faculty is more hazed, more nuanced and more layered than ever before.

The underlying principle of International Faculty is at best an ambiguous one, beholden to individual, institutional and national policies, practices and interpretations (Childress, 2010; Mihut et al., 2017; Rumbley & De Wit, 2018). Scholarly literature identifies the concept in a variety of terms including; “expatriate faculty”, “foreign academics”, “foreign scholars”, “faculty diversity”, and “international academics” all of which intersect and overlap but are rarely homogeneous in meaning within specific institutional contexts.

The aim of the subsequent thematic literature review is to ...build bridges between related topics... (Cooper 2010, in Creswell, 2014, p. 61) to knit a spectrum that sheds light on the question.

The Persona: Perspectives on International Faculty

Scholars frame international faculty through a variety of modes, taxonomies, classifications, and definitions. The following analysis highlights some of the main criteria used to make this distinction (table 1):

Table 1

Criteria for framing International Faculty

Criteria	Supporting Literature
Length of stay	Mihut et al. (2017); Rumbley & De Wit (2018)
Appointment conditions	Didou (2017); Rumbley & De Wit (2018)
Birthplace	Didou (2017); Mihut et al. (2017); Rumbley & De Wit (2018); Rumbley & De Wit (2017); Teferra (2017)
Citizenship	Mihut et al. (2017); Rumbley & De Wit (2018); Rumbley & De Wit (2017)
Immigration status	Didou (2017); Rumbley & De Wit (2018); Rumbley & De Wit (2017); Teferra (2017)
Professional or academic training abroad	Didou (2017); Rumbley & De Wit (2018); Rumbley & De Wit (2017); Teferra (2017)
Place of residence when hired	Rumbley & De Wit (2018); Rumbley & De Wit (2017)
Descendant of a native	Didou (2017); Rumbley & De Wit (2017)
Foreigner with local academic training	Didou (2017); Rumbley & De Wit (2017)

Source: own elaboration according to the contributions of the consulted authors (2020).

Additionally, CUValles also must be mindful of the subtle variants that arise when these criteria are coupled with factors like; physical or virtual mobility; life stage when migration to or from host occurs, and the anchor between faculty and the host institution (Mihut et.al, 2017). Similarly, the criteria used to frame international faculty underlies the definition of the same at national and institutional levels. Therefore, any combination of criteria employed to define the *persona* of international faculty gives rise to an equal amount of possibilities regarding the answer to the enigmatic; “Who are they?”.

The Practice: Engagement for Internationalization

Adequately framing international faculty in institutional policy, allows for a more succinct exploration of strategies for actively engaging them in the fulfillment of the

internationalization agenda. However, literature confirms that independent of the criteria, their impact on the internationalization agenda is more incumbent upon other factors, “even faculty who have had international experiences may lack the cognitive competence necessary not only to see the connections between these experiences and their teaching, research, and service, but to integrate this international knowledge into their work” (Beltos, 1988; Ellingboe, 1998; Green & Olson, 2003; Miller, 1992, cited in Childress, 2010, p. 37). Said author goes on to state that “...faculty can only play an active role [in internationalization] if an environment is created that ensures that professional development, scholarship, and public service in the international setting are valued” (Childress, 2010 p. 30).

Having established that strategic engagement for internationalization goes beyond the limits of a professor’s identity as compared to their “domestic” counterparts, Mihut et al., (2017) cite research that substantiates some practices that their status facilitates. Firstly, through partnerships and networks international faculty build capacity in their discipline (Docquier & Rapoport, 2009; Fahey & Kenway, 2010; Meyer & Wattiaux, 2006). This contributes to brain-circulation and mitigates the effects of brain-drain. Secondly, international faculty facilitate knowledge circulation through research in marginalized fields or perspectives especially if migrating from an academic periphery to a more internationally recognized university (Mahroum, 2000). Thirdly international faculty provide support to international students seeking mentorship from one that shares their culture (Corley & Sabharwal, 2007; O’Hara). The “internationality” of faculty is vital for the success of the previously stated practices, however for this engagement to be meaningful, they should be carried out within the context a comprehensive internationalization strategy (Childress, 2010; Hudzik, 2015).

The Prospective: Gaps *en route* to Internationalization

“To be sure, the lack of a single definition for international faculty—both in this study and more broadly—is problematic” (Rumbley & De Wit, 2017, p.269). The challenge becomes more layered since: there is limited academic literature on the topic (Mihut et al., 2017); many countries do not collect data regarding international presence in academia (Didou, 2017); and security measures may prohibit the disclosure of faculty’s origin (Teferra, 2017). Despite this limitation, a careful juxtaposition of

the context and the literature shows that CUValles' Development Plan manifests a need for internationalization of the curriculum sustained by an —false— assumption that international faculty are best suited to meet this end. The literature shows that a more holistic approach, like internationalization of the curriculum, will lead to a more sustainable result; one that emphasizes an international and intercultural dimension in the curriculum (Leask, 2015), instead of emphasizing the professor's identity, regarding their place of origin.

Methodological Rationale: A Question of Design

The methodology describes the process of research or inquiry (Creswell, 2014). Accordingly, the methodology selected to design the research process reflects the ontological and epistemological assumptions that frame the worldview from which the research question will be answered. Likewise, the methodological rationale “blueprint” sustains the type of research to be undertaken, the type of data to be collected, and the methods of data collection, analysis, as well as interpretation. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the blueprint proposed to guide a valid and reliable answer to the research question **Who are they? The persona of International Faculty at the Valley Campus - University of Guadalajara.**

The exploratory mixed-methods design proposed by Creswell is most fitted to the research question that spearheads this investigatory process (2014, p. 44). In this design, qualitative data collection precedes a quantitative data collection. Since the qualitative data produces the units of analysis required for quantitative data collection to begin. This type of research design is employed when little is known about the population under study to create the most suitable instruments for quantitative data collection (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

This research design forms the basis for responding to the current research question. In the first instance, scholarly literature on International Faculty is carefully reviewed and coded through cross-tabulation analysis to identify salient themes. For this study, it is recommended that the cross-tabulation analysis be iterative with the thematic literature review to substantiate the discussion on the topic and create units of analysis simultaneously. Secondly, the typology that emerges from the content analysis of the

literature will create units of analysis for a survey of CUValles' International Faculty based on the data kept by its Human Resources Department. Although this research process is presented sequentially, the research process is ideally an iterative one.

Weaving Tapestry: Data Collection, Analysis & Interpretation

As the thread is to a spindle, so is the theoretical framework to research. Therefore, there is a philosophical and theoretical underpinning for decisions made during academic research and these should be consistent with each other. The current study is guided by the transformative framework (Creswell, 2014) or transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2010), metaphysical concepts which will be used interchangeably throughout this text. Merriam & Tisdell (2016) remind us that data collection and analysis are simulations in research that includes qualitative data, including the exploratory mixed-methods design. Hence it is of utmost importance to explain the threads that craft this research (philosophical framework), to give meaning to the holistic and integrative processes of data collection, data analysis, and the ensuing proposal.

Weaving Logic

What is the transformative framework? Mertens (2010) defines it as:

A framework of belief systems that directly engages members of culturally diverse groups with a focus on increased social justice...The axiological belief is of primary importance in the transformative paradigm and drives the formulation of the three other belief systems (ontology, epistemology, and methodology), (p. 470).

Accordingly, the axiological belief of this framework speaks to who participates in the research process, to ensure a representation that procures social justice. The ontological belief contemplates the multiple options that exist on the central theme, with a focus on the one that promotes social justice. The epistemological belief envisions ways to understand the research object, to make the quest for social justice relevant. And, the methodological belief pursues data through the means most likely to ameliorate social justice. In short, social justice anchors the decisions made to adequately respond to the research question. **Table 2** summaries key decisions that ensure the integrity of the transformative perspective throughout this research process.

Table 2

Philosophical framework in practice

Assumptions	Manifestations from a Transformative Perspective
Axiological	Typology of international faculty that represents a diverse spectrum of literature from the global North and South.
Ontological	Survey that contemplates extant data, institutional documents and the participation of Human Resources. Final proposal that includes additional context savvy criteria for typifying international faculty.
Epistemological	Questions on institutional data requested from professors during hiring.
Methodological	Method that connects mixed data through a transformative worldview.

Source: own elaboration according to the research process (2020).

Weaving Relationships

What is the relationship between the transformative framework and international faculty? The relationship is a causal one. In 2015 De Wit et al “upgraded” Jane Knights’ (2004) working definition of internationalization by placing **quality** and **access** as the central motifs of internationalization. In doing so, internationalization ceased to be an end in and of itself and became a means to **intentionally** pursue **quality education and research for all students and faculty**, to make **meaningful contributions to society** (De Wit et al., 2015, p.27). This definition heralded a new epoch of consciousness on the imperative for internationalization and its benefits to become more inclusive and focused on learning outcomes; i.e. less elite and focused on student mobility (De Wit et al., 2015; Huzik, 2015; Leask, 2015). Inherent to this shift in the internationalization rationale is the ensign of the transformative paradigm which “...has relevance for people who experience... the multitude of other characteristics that are associated with less access to social justice” (Mertens, 2010, p. 474). Other scholars whose research sustains that social justice is at the heart of internationalization and thus comparable with transformative paradigm include Hirschy & Wilson (2017); Lawrence (2015); and Valdez (2016).

If internationalization is to be made available to students and professors indiscriminately, it is best provided through the formal, informal and hidden curriculum (Beelen & Jones, 2018; Childress, 2010; Leask, 2015). At the center of the curriculum is “knowledge in and across disciplines” whose principle custodian are professors (Leask, 2015, p.27). The University of Guadalajara (PDI 2014-2030, 2014) and CUValles (PDC 2014-2030, 2014), agree with this stance and go a step further to place international faculty at the helm of it all. In other words, international faculty are the main enactors of internationalization at CUValles, but who are they?.

Weaving Pathways

How is international faculty identified? According to Mertens (2010), a mixed-method approach is the research design most suited to explore issues of a transformative nature. A mixed analysis is the essence of mixed-method research design (Berman, 2017). In other words, this design goes beyond the use of qualitative and quantitative data “it is in the integration or linking of the two strands of data that defines mixed methods research and highlights its value” Berman (2017, p.7).

In this case, the exploratory mixed-method design also called the exploratory **sequential** mixed-method design (Creswell, 2014) is identified as best suited. The sequence adopted to steer this research process is best described by Berman (2017):

In an exploratory design, qualitative data is first collected and analyzed, and themes are used to drive the development of a quantitative instrument to further explore the research problem...As a result of this design, three stages of analyses are conducted: after the primary qualitative phase, after the secondary quantitative phase, and at the integration phase that connects the two strands of data and extends the initial qualitative exploratory findings... (p.6).

Berman, (2017) and Merriam & Tisdell (2016) propose diagrams or models to represent the goings-on of the research process. Figure 1 is an outline of the data collection, analysis and interpretation processes of this exploratory mixed-method design.

Figure 1

Exploratory sequential mixed-method design

Source: adapted from Berman (2017).

For this research, census sampling is carried out using the typology that came out of the qualitative data analysis. The survey comprises of 140 items in 8 categories; the 140 items representing all the full professors, while the 8 dimensions represent the criteria for framing international faculty.

Results: Weaving Numbers with Words

How is quantitative data collected and analyzed? Robson (2002) argues that a survey is a general research strategy as well as an instrument used to collect data. The author goes on to say that due to the ubiquitous nature of surveys they should be defined by the presence of three distinctive characteristics within the research scenario. One, the use of a fixed quantitative design; two, the collection of a small amount of data in a standardized form; and three, the selection of representative samples of individuals from a population (Robson, 2002, p. 230). This survey collects ordinal scores from extant data and documents made available by the Human Resources Department of CUValles. Table 3 represents the survey used and the descriptive statistics obtained.

Table 3
Survey of International Faculty

Criteria	# Tenured Professors	Supporting Literature
Length of stay	0	Mihut et.al, 2017; Rumbley & De Wit, 2018
Appointment conditions	1	Didou, 2017; Rumbley & De Wit, 2018
Birthplace	5	Didou, 2017; Mihut et.al, 2017; Rumbley & De Wit, 2018; Rumbley & De Wit, 2017; Teferra, 2017
Citizenship / Immigration status	3	Didou, 2017; Mihut, de Gayardon, & Rudt, 2017; Rumbley & De Wit, 2018; Rumbley & De Wit, 2017; Teferra, 2017
Professional or academic training abroad	25	Didou, 2017; Rumbley & De Wit, 2018; Rumbley & De Wit, 2017; Teferra, 2017
Place of residence when hired	1	Rumbley & De Wit, 2018; Rumbley & De Wit, 2017
Descendant of a native	0	Didou, 2017; Rumbley & De Wit, 2017
Foreigner with local academic training	4	Didou, 2017; Rumbley & De Wit, 2017

Notes:

5 professors met **more than one criterion** for framing international faculty.

25 professors met **only one criterion** for framing international faculty.

110 professors **did not meet any criterion** for framing international faculty.

Source: own elaboration from survey results (2019).

Table 3 also reflects the traditional tendency that equates internationalization to mobility (De Wit et.al, 2015; Hudzik, 2015) and defines international faculty by place of birth and nationality. The more nuanced areas of the typology for identifying international professors are unidentifiable in the data that the institution requests from professors upon hiring. Conversely, the institutional data analyzed contains elements

that can contribute to the making of an international professor. However, these elements are not accounted for in the qualitative analysis and so the quantitative analysis followed suit. These elements of significance include: faculty from out-of-state; local faculty with out-of-state academic training; and the quantity of terminal degrees obtained in another country or state.

Discussion: Weaving Responses from a Scholar–Practitioner’s Perspective

Who Are They? The Persona of International Faculty at the Valley Campus - University of Guadalajara is reflected **in 21% of the full professors (30 professors) that meet at least one of the criterion established** by the research instruments. Though the data responds to the research question, albeit in traditional terms, it also reflects the expediency with which the CUValles must “reframe” its notions of international faculty if it is to harness the benefits of internationalization. From a similar perspective, scholars maintain that having international experiences is no guarantee of faculty engagement in internationalization. Rather, cognitive competencies, affective competencies and attitudinal competencies are key if international faculty plan to engage in transformative teaching and learning through internationalization (Childress, 2010; Hudzik, 2010; Leask, 2015; Ortiz et.al, 2019; Taylor, 2009).

Internationalization is the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of post-secondary education, to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society (De Wit et.al, 2015, p.29). The foremost concern for the fulfillment of this mandate is the creation of an institutional figure, equipped with senior-level faculties, and fitted to enable internationalization from academic and administrative forefronts: including decisions related to international faculty and their optimal engagement. Thus, from a scholar-practitioner perspective, the proposal made to CUValles in this specific context should not only highlight the **persona** of faculty that embodies internationalization in its truest form, but should also translate this knowledge into working practice (Edwards, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Rubio et.al, 2019). The academic unit most equipped with financial, and strategic instruments to make meaningful use of the research results to fulfill this purpose is that of a research institute (Coordinación de Investigación, Posgrado y Vinculación, 2019).

Hence, this study proposes the founding of the **“Intercampus Research Institute for International Higher Education”** based in CUValles. It aims to consolidate and mobilize the current internationalization agenda, as well as provide the backdrop for integrative growth, at CUValles and within the University Network. Specific issues related to international faculty and their engagement can be addressed as one of the central Research Lines or as an Educational Center within the Institute (options A & B respectively).

Salient topics that frame the baseline for enriching and guiding a more nuanced response to the research question; and increasing the likelihood of international faculty fulfilling the vision that the institution currently holds include:

A. A Context Savvy Framework – Strengthening the Structural Knowledge

A revision of the documents required from professors when they are hired shows that the data requested by CUValles is insufficient to identify them as “international faculty”, and even more insufficient to establish the grounds for a desirable profile. Therefore, **the objective of this proposal is to identify additional elements in professors’ background that can contribute to the international, intercultural or global dimension of CUValles.** They include: Ancestry (2 / 3 generations); Third culture kids; Primary or secondary education abroad; Primary or secondary education at a local institution with an international curriculum; Advanced knowledge of another language; Foreigners with academic training abroad (outside of Mexico and country of birth); Locals with local academic training in another language.

B. Building Intercultural Competence

Intercultural competence is as important or even more so that structural criteria, in identifying professor’s likeliness to engage in internationalization. Thus, **the objective of this proposal is to foster the competencies required to contribute to the international, intercultural or global dimension of CUValles.** This could be done through: 1). Assessment of intercultural competence with tools like: Intercultural Development Inventory; AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Value Rubric; Global Perspectives Inventory; Global Competencies Inventory; Global Competence Aptitude

Assessment; and Questionnaire on Internationalising the Curriculum. 2). Rewarding intercultural skills development. 3). Embedding intercultural competence in learning outcomes.

Similarly, an extension of the proposals and an imperative product of exploratory sequential mixed-methods design are areas for future research (Berman, 2017). The additional themes for future research that emerge from this research are:

1. The crafting of a system of institutional rewards to stimulate professors' engagement in internationalization.
2. A study of the elements which are not accounted for in the reviewed scholarly literature, but are likely to contribute to the criteria for identifying international faculty.

Conclusion: The Future of the Tapestry

What do the threads say? The paradigm and the purpose that guided this research reveal the relationship between conceptualizing the key enablers of institutional policy and the institution's ability to fulfill institutional plans. In the current scenario CUValles' inability to define International Faculty, limited its ability to intentionally harness insights that can impact the fulfillment of its goals.

In closing, the dimension of the problem, the limited scholarly literature available, and the results underscore the scalability of this research. CUValles' is part of a University Network. Thus, the knowledge gained, and future research opportunities highlighted in this research can facilitate informed decision-making in the other institutions of the Network on a local scale. They are also replicable and applicable in institutions of a similar nature within Mexico and Latin America.

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