

Book Review: Cross-Border Partnerships in Higher Education: Strategies and Issues

Edited by Robin Sakimoto and David W. Chapman.
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Globalization and internationalization are terms that are used interchangeably by different groups to define the relationships and movements across countries and nations. In higher education, these terms refer to a more narrow meaning that covers postsecondary institutions' inter-country and inter-nation movements, initiatives and both academic and non-academic activities. Today, higher education institutions across the world have engaged in different types of relationships with their counterparts, even their competitors in different countries. The first part of this review summarizes the contents of each chapter. The concluding part provides an overall assessment of the book. In Part 1, Chapter 1 by Robin Sakimoto and David W. Chapman describe the book and provide an overview of individual chapters. In Chapter 2, Jane Knight creates a conceptual framework that analyzes cross-border partnerships among higher education institutions. She proposes a typology and the terminology to analyze cross-border partnerships through explaining the historical development of the subject and emerging trends and issues in today's higher education systems. In her typology, she analyzes cross-border partnerships in terms of "what moves across borders," revealing four categories: "people, programs, providers, and projects/service/new knowledge" (p. 21).

Part 2 contains two chapters that focus on a type of cross-border relationship in which collaborator institutions move campuses instead of leading to any type of student mobility. Specifically, in Chapter 3, Patricia W. Croom analyzes the "branch campus" experiences countries and higher education institutions have had historically as well as today around the world. She discusses US institutions' branch campus experiences in Japan in 1980s, comparing and contrasting them in terms of opportunities and issues with "Education City in Qatar" and "Dubai International Academic City (DIAC)." The final section of this chapter explores branch campus experiences of Western institutions in Japan and the Middle East. Chapter 4 by Jason E. Lane begins with the introduction of international branch campuses (IBCs) and their development and then analyzes two examples of "joint venture" IBCs involving collaboration of

Australian and Malaysian entities. The chapter also addresses the impact of governmental regulations/principles from both Australia and Malaysia, along with consequences of joint governance of IBCs. The author concludes with practical implications for future ventures.

Part 3 addresses higher education partnerships that go beyond instructional purposes. In Chapter 5, Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin discusses the "internationalization of academic research," analyzing student, faculty and program mobility as cross-border partnerships focused on research capacity development efforts in countries and institutions. He argues that "research capacity development" (p. 107) is one essential rationale for governmental support of cross-border higher education in a competitive environment in which countries and higher education systems struggle to compete with their competitors in research and innovation. Chapter 6 by Ann E. Austin and Cheryl Foxcroft describes a long-term collaboration between Michigan State University (USA) and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (South Africa) in a cross-border partnership that contributes to "faculty development and institutional culture" (p. 131) of partner institutions. Their chapter further discusses the "contextual factors" that lead to a successful partnership and the benefits and challenges of this type of collaboration. It is important to note that the authors of this chapter, who are from the case institutions, actively participated in this collaboration effort. Chapter 7 analyzes the higher education system of Oman in which quality assurance and accreditation procedures of private higher education institutions were handled through cross-border partnerships before the establishment of the national accreditation system of Oman. Thuwayba Al-Barwani, Hana Ameen, and David W. Chapman review the higher education system of Oman, one of the fastest growing systems in the world, and its accreditation efforts. In the first section, they introduce background information about the role and effectiveness of a cross-border accreditation system where private higher education institutions establish partnerships with international higher education institutions to assure their quality. Later, the authors

report and discuss the findings of a research study conducted to explore “the extent that leaders of private colleges and universities in Oman supported the move away from the international affiliation system and toward a national accreditation system” (p. 142).

In Part 4, chapters focus on cross-border partnerships in three different fields of higher education. In Chapter 8, Jane C. Shivan and Martha N. Hill begin with introducing the general understanding of a global nursing profession and continue with explaining Johns Hopkins University’s School of Nursing’s participation and effort in contributing to the global nursing field. The chapter later analyses Peking Union Medical College School of Nursing and its partnership with the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing as a case study from the view of mutuality theory. Chapter 9, by Peter Fong and Gerard Postiglione, also focuses on specific academic fields. The authors first introduce Hong Kong and its higher education institutions’ bridge role between China and the Western higher education systems. As case studies, the chapter analyzes three cross-border collaborative programs (one degree based and two non-degree based) in which the University of Hong Kong partnered with Western institutions in the fields of business and public administration. They conclude with the recommendation that planning, selecting the right partner with mutual understanding and goals, creating highly demanded programs in the cross-border education market are required. High program quality and fair financial responsibility models are essential for a cross-border partnership to succeed.

In Chapter 10, Gauri Maharjan and Robin Sakamoto discuss the cross-border partnership between farmers in Nepal and a higher education institution in Japan. While agriculture is the main source of income in Nepal, its primitive/outdated methods do not contribute to the economic development of the country. The proposed web-based plant disease diagnosis mechanism called “image processing” enables farmers in Nepal to take pictures of their diseased plants and get quick responses via email from experts in the institution in Japan. These diagnosis mechanisms, even though they are in the research phase, may help to improve production in those developing countries with these types of cross-border partnerships in agriculture.

Unlike the previous parts, Part 5 goes beyond campus and classroom, focusing on university cross-border partnerships within bigger collaboration settings. Specifically, Ko Nomura, Yoshihiro Natori, and Osamu Abe, in Chapter 11, discuss the role of higher education for sustainable development (HESD) networks/forums as a wider modality for cross-border collaboration. They introduce varying “education for sustainable development (ESD) networks” in the first section. The following section analyzes the role of the Promotion of Sustainability

Postgraduate Education and Research Network (ProsPER.Net) which is supported by an agency outside of the education field in the Asia-Pacific region. The chapter ends with the achievements and challenges of these networks.

Chapter 12 by Christopher S. Collins discusses the role of higher education in countries’ human capital development. Acknowledging the increasing collaboration between higher education institutions and international development organizations, especially the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). The chapter analyses the cases of Thailand and Uganda and their higher education institutions’ partnership with the World Bank in science and technology to help to reduce the poverty through fostering human capacity building and economic growth. In this chapter, higher education was not considered as the main actor in the collaboration, but rather as a tool used by countries and international development organizations to foster countries’ economic growth. In Chapter 13, Jouko Sarvi also discusses postsecondary collaboration with international development organizations, focusing specifically on the Asian Development Bank. In the concluding chapter, Chapman and Sakamoto highlight important issues and give recommendations for future cross-border partnerships in higher education.

Overall, this edited volume is successful in introducing cross-border collaboration in higher education, explaining the key trends and issues supported by case studies in institutional settings around the world. However, some issues can be raised about the design and writing perspective that take the book in a particular direction. One limitation is that the chapters tend to imply the primary purpose of cross-border partnerships involving higher education institutions is to support countries’ economic competitiveness and growth in the world. This purpose, highlighted in many of the chapters, comes from a business perspective that sees higher education as a tradable good in the international marketplace. It is as if the roles of cross-border partnerships of higher education institutions are defined primarily by corporations from a marketing perspective instead of by the academic institutions and their stakeholders who actually participate in the collaboration. The lack of an appropriate focus on intellectual purposes of building cross-border higher education systems is a limitation.

A second limitation is that chapters mainly focus on mobility of programs, services and campuses. Only a few chapters address issues related to cross-border faculty and student mobility. For instance, some countries establish policies and scholarships that enable and encourage faculty and students to study abroad. One suggestion for future research is to include consideration of

faculty and student mobility as a specific subject and take those countries as case studies in explaining the subject.

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