

## A Mature Institutional Management Model of Internationalisation in MENA Universities

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### Abstract

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An internationalization management model for higher education institutions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is developed in order to provide appropriate means to improve the sustainability of the international dimension. The model aims at improving the institutional management processes through establishing governance procedures that enhance internationalization within the university hierarchy. Capacity building of MENA region universities in internationalization is another important objective of the proposed model, in addition to sharing best-practices and developing strong partnership worldwide. The management framework may also empower MENA region higher education institutions with references and guidelines in alignment to international practices, standards and norm.

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**Keywords:** Internationalization, Higher Education, University, Management Model, MENA Countries

### Introduction

Education has become a regionalized public good aiming at preparing highly qualified human resources that meet society's needs. Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries have responded to the increasing social demands at all levels and in all forms of higher education by granting national universities greater autonomy and by accrediting joint programmes with overseas universities thereby becoming an attractive alternative centre of higher education in the region for many students from many different countries (Mahani and Molki, 2011; Vardhan, 2015). In fact, MENA universities have long been on the path of internationalization as most of its scholars and professors were educated in the western hemisphere. Several universities have established international offices, or appointed advisors

to presidents or vice-presidents for international affairs and are involved in international activities in some form or another such as mobility exchanges for staff and students, joint degrees and programmes with universities from all over the globe, joint research projects and scientific conferences. European Union (EU) programmes, in particular, have attracted many institutions and academics alike to become actively and deeply involved in the internationalization process of higher education.

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At the heart of all this lies the necessity to formulate an internationalisation strategy and design an efficient management model of governance at the institutional level, including participation in educational and research projects, exchange of students and staff, and launching joint or double postgraduate programmes. In order to reach this objective, the strategies and the models for an integrated internationalisation management should take into account the regional needs and learn from international partners, and to contribute to the enhancement of efficient structures that will improve governance procedures within university hierarchy. In this paper, an internationalisation management model in MENA higher education institutions is presented in order to provide appropriate means to improve international activities. The model is based on the analyses of needs and capacities in several universities and the experiences and best practices from several EU universities. The process of measurement internationalisation in MENA universities is initially described and comparative analysis to international processes is provided. The degree of internationalisation in several MENA universities was first measured, areas for improvement identified, guidelines established, required infrastructure created, including virtual tools, a roadmap drafted and internationalisation strategy designed and implemented. This has actually led to producing a set of principles, priorities, guidelines and procedures to support universities to improve the management process of internationalisation at the institutional level.

## 1. Higher Education in the Arab World

Higher education is deeply rooted in the history and societies of the Arab World (El-Baz, 2007). Al-Zaytounah University in Tunisia, founded in 734, University of al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco, founded in 859, Al-Azhar University in Egypt founded in 970, and Al-Mustansiriya University in Baghdad established in 1227, are known to be the first established universities in the world with endowment funding or Islamic Waqf. They had actually initiated an intellectual movement which nurtured the subsequent flourishing of Western scholarship and established and disseminated educational standards that are still applied in present-day universities. MENA higher education has however experienced a state of slackness and paralysis, and it was not until the middle of last century that the Arab World has witnessed a new era of higher education development, with only 14 universities existing in 1953, mostly foreign ones established by European and American missionaries in the early nineteenth century. For example, in Lebanon there were two pioneering institutions, namely the American University of Beirut in 1866 and Saint Joseph University in 1875. With independence of MENA countries after WWII, higher education institutions and student enrolment quickly multiplied and public state-run institutions and universities were largely dominating the landscape.

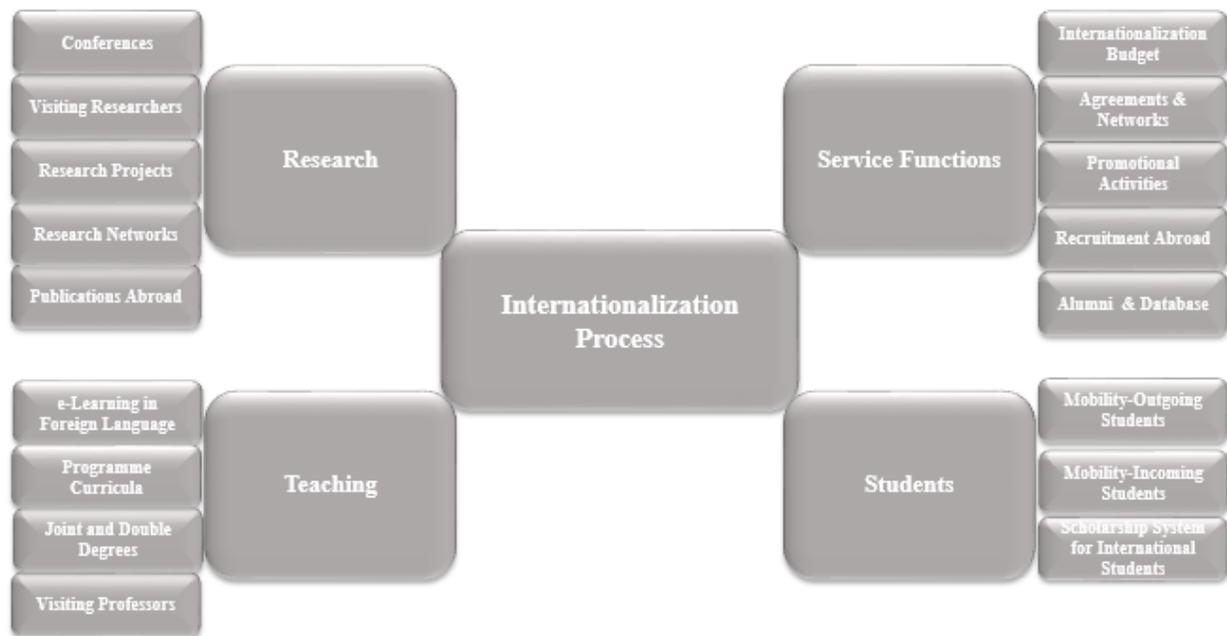
Reform in Arab higher education began in the early 1980s and continuing today, including increasing privatization, greater access, fulfilling needs and demands of society, matching educational “outputs” with labour market needs, and negotiating a competitive global education market. During the last twenty-five years, the number of universities in MENA countries has increased rapidly from 14 universities in 1953 to over 500 universities in 2016, with more than 250 private ones representing 50% of the total, while student enrolment has now exceeded 13 million and the number of faculty members reached 350,000. Furthermore, 11 universities from Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Oman and Qatar were ranked among the best 500 universities worldwide in 2016 as recorded in QS World University Rankings.

Despite over a decade of dramatic achievement, reform and expansion, higher education in the Arab World continues to fall far short from fulfilling the needs of society and to meet the growing demands of MENA youth. In addition, most MENA universities lack key human and physical resources and suffer from overcrowding and poor quality. Moreover, the MENA educational system is currently producing graduates with skills and competences that do not match the needs to succeed in the modern global economy as reflected by high unemployment among university graduates. In addition, the quality of MENA higher education has not kept pace with international standards (Elias Mazawi, 2005). This dual challenge of quantity and quality requires a comprehensive reform agenda for the higher education system to address the skills gap, fuel economic development, and put the region on better footing for advancement and competition in a technologically driven, knowledge-based world. Thus, MENA higher education still has a critical role to play as the engine of social and economic progress particularly in restructuring itself and breaking free from of the obstacles that have held back meaningful educational changes in the past.

## 2. Internationalisation Management Model

International actions may span over a wide spectrum of activities within the university including teaching, research, students and service functions (Altbach and Knight, 2007; Mertkan, Gilanlioglu, and McGrath, 2016), as depicted in Fig. (1).

Research activities include proposal writing, project management, establishing networks and alliances with reputed universities and centres, organizing of and participating in international conferences, visiting professorship and joint publications. Teaching activities, on the other hand, span over joint or double degree programmes, curricula development, capacity building and exchange projects, eLearning and foreign language teaching and visiting professors. Mobility, both incoming and outgoing, exchange projects, scholarships and internships are only few of the many activities that concern students. Finally, the functions provided by the university to serve research, teaching and mobility, are also important, including cooperation agreements, networking and promotion, recruitment and alumni, which all need a special budget specifically allocated for internationalisation activities.



**Fig. (1) Common International University Activities.**

It is thus practically impossible to develop one uniform model to manage the process of internationalisation which fits the needs and expectations of all universities due to the very diverse profile and different levels of progress in the field. Instead, it is recommended to develop a framework model combining all major aspects of internationalisation process common to MENA universities, corresponding to general trends in the field of internationalisation. In fact, an internationalisation management model is a result of different influences and interactions, and depends on a variety of different constraints including administrative, financial, and organizational, all of which have to be taken into account in its development and implementation. The level of sophistication and scope of activities implicates the need for detailed managerial effort and higher budget. Local, national and regional circumstances as well as university's strategic and operational goals should be reflected in the model.

At the institutional level, budget constraints, lack of qualified staff, attitude of university management, bureaucracy and regulations and development strategy play an important role in the adaptation of the model. Furthermore, national higher education law, regulations, policy of ministry of internal affairs, immigration, international and EU-supported programmes, financial guidelines, international partnership agreements, political situation in the region are all examples of national and international factors that may influence the choice in determining and designing the model. It is therefore important to tailor the model to reality identifying real needs, plans, and environment and align it to support the teaching process, research activities and institutional support and service functions.

A management model is proposed relevant to the spectrum of internationalisation activities exercised currently and planned for the future at six MENA universities in Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco, representing varying profiles as follows:

1. Princess Sumaya University of Technology, Jordan, non-for-profit, small (~ 3500 students and 3 Schools), focus on engineering, information and business technology.

2. Yarmouk University, Jordan, public, large (~ 40000 students, 9 faculties).
3. Modern University for Business and Science, Lebanon, private, small (~ 2600 students), focus on business, computer science, education and health sciences.
4. Lebanese University, Lebanon, public, large (~ 70000 students, 16 faculties).
5. Ibn Tofail University, Morocco, public, large (~ 34000 students, 3 faculties and 2 schools).
6. Abdelmalek Essaâdi University, Morocco, public, large (~ 34 000 students, 3 faculties and School of Applied Sciences).

In order to identify their needs and current status in the field of internationalisation, the following activities have been performed within an EU TEMPUS project entitled: “Modernisation of Institutional Management of Internationalisation (MIMI), [www.mimiproject.eu](http://www.mimiproject.eu):

1. Desk research with review of websites of all 6 universities, analysis of other information available online.
2. As coping questionnaire addressed to management, academic staff, students, alumni and parents has been sent to all 6 universities. A detailed analysis of their responses was conducted.
3. All 6 universities have been asked to prepare a so-called internationalisation policy statement (IPS) in order to assess their current status and to identify strategic goals in the field of internationalisation.
4. Roundtable grouping of all 6 universities with moderated discussion that unveiled some problems and needs.
5. Site visits by European internationalisation experts to all 6 universities.
6. Matching exercise and tuning internationalisation goals.

Partner universities indicated some core areas of internationalisation where the need for improved management was in their opinion evident:

1. **Internationalisation at Home** including integrating international and intercultural dimensions into teaching functions, internationalisation of curricula (e.g. courses in English), staff training, integration of international staff and students, benchmarking against international standards, distance learning and support for language courses.
2. **Mobility** of students, academic and administrative staff and scholarship programmes for study abroad.
3. **International Studies** including student recruitment/admission, joint and double degree programmes and international accreditation.
4. **Research Cooperation** including coordination, support and promotion of international research, integrating international and intercultural dimensions into research functions, establish links with renowned research centres worldwide, scientific events, EU research projects and technology and knowledge transfer
5. **Institutional Support** for integrating international and intercultural dimensions into service functions, international marketing and promotion, search for funding, running international relation office, international and regional organizations and networks and managing EU projects.
6. **International Partnerships and Networks** including development in international relations and partnerships, international collaboration agreements.

Diagnosis on the current situation and future development of internationalisation has been conducted based on sources of information that included the internationalisation policy statement, roundtable groups discussions, site visit notes, desk research, measuring and profiling internationalisation and other meeting outcomes. The results showed that universities were fully aware and convinced of the importance of internationalisation process in terms of teaching and research as well as institutional support to process implementation. The motivation factors and drives for internationalisation were mainly the need for better visibility of the university on the higher education scene in the region and worldwide as well as the need to improve the teaching process in terms of quality, methodology together with socio-cultural and intercultural dimension of teaching. Other motivations towards internationalisation included chances to upgrade their research in volume and quality, better preparation of their students for the challenges of globalized labour market and consequently enhance employability, and the need for extra funds coming from international projects.

However, most MENA universities do not have an internationalisation strategy in form of independent document or as a part of the university development strategy. Furthermore, MENA universities were not fully prepared institutionally to cope effectively with future challenges in the field of internationalisation as no staff was allocated or dedicated for this purpose. Though international mobility of students and staff was one of their top priorities, communications with students and academic staff seem insufficient.

In addition, all universities were fully convinced that internationalisation of research was an indispensable and highly demanded factor in their research activities. The EU with all educational (Erasmus+) and research (Horizon 2020) programmes was being seen as the most strategic partner in the field of international activities. Almost all of them identified a number of limitations and obstacles not allowing at the moment for the progress of the process in accordance with their ambitions and expectations.

The most important obstacles were lack of funding with no sufficient budgets for international activities, lack of staff professionally trained and prepared for organizing the process properly, lack of awareness on opportunities addressed to their countries by EU-supported programmes, lack of reliable and really cooperative partners in the region and worldwide ready to exchange good practices and help in implementation of international activities. Insufficient communications between students and academic staff and between the management and academic staff was another major barrier. The political situation in the MENA Region also played an important role in hindering progress in internationalizing MENA universities.

### 3. Framework of Internationalisation Management Model

A framework for an internationalisation management model is proposed for MENA universities to organise and efficiently manage their international activities. The model is composed of five core modules containing managing international research, teaching process and exchanges, partnerships and networks, promotion and marketing and institutional support including organization, human resources and financing, as shown in Fig. (2). Each module is discussed below in details.

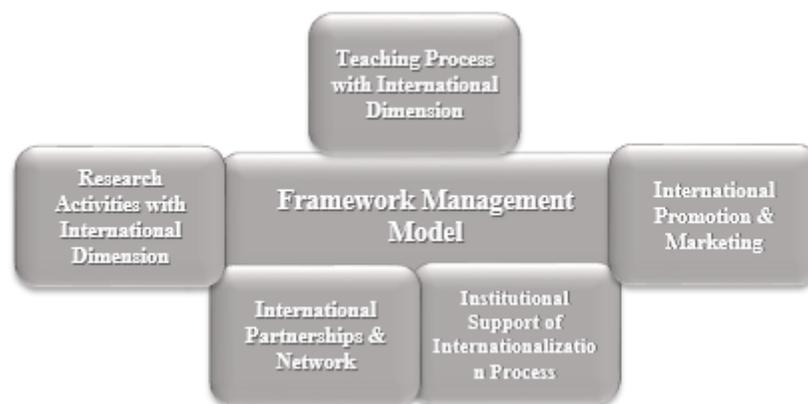


Fig. (2) Core Managerial Functions of Proposed Model.

#### 3.1 Research

The basic condition to expand research cooperation internationally is the research capability and knowledge production of the university, being seen as attractive by partners abroad. International cooperation is not a goal in itself, rather it brings researchers together based on the added value to be achieved and shared in each case of research cooperation. Furthermore, the internationalisation management model is not focused on research itself but on the mechanisms supporting international collaboration in research. It is well known that researchers are not really willing to be involved with administrative and organizational issues of research and largely appreciate any kind of support in this regard particularly information on opportunities arising in international research such as calls for proposals, advertisements in research journals, information on grants by local research authorities or ministries, guidelines on EU research programmes, international research conferences, seminars, study visits, and the like.

This may require the creation and maintenance of a database of research projects and designing training programmes addressed to researchers and focused on raising awareness on international research project management in all aspects including research team management, scheduling, monitoring and evaluation, financial management, project closing, writing and submission of proposals, intellectual property rights, knowledge and technology transfer and university-business cooperation, and research terminology in foreign language obligatory in a given research project/programme. Researchers may also need guidance in budgeting, financial controlling, accounting in accordance with programme and project rules, financial reporting, and so on. In most cases, the requirements for international projects differ compared with the rules applied locally at the university administration as well as assistance in project closing the related audits both financial and technical.

The cost of the international management activities must be embedded into budgets of realized research projects. There are two options on who should perform all these services and activities, one may be a special and dedicated section established as a part of the international relation office (IRO). The other option is to delegate the responsibilities to the university research authority or vice president for research where a group of specialists with fluent knowledge of foreign language, formed as international research section, is dedicated to the support of international projects and programmes. There is no universal solution in this regard, however, based on practice of many universities worldwide, such a support/service/guidance is a sort of “condition sine qua non” for successful international collaboration in research. A simplified model of support and guidance in international management of research is illustrated in Fig. (3).



**Fig. (3) Simplified Model for Support in International Research**

### 3.2 Studies and Exchanges

Internationalisation of teaching is a very demanding, challenging and multidirectional process. In case of advanced universities, it comprises a number of sub-processes, activities and functionalities. For most of such activities, the leadership and responsibility are designated to faculties. However, some need an effective support from IRO as well as university administration. It is extremely important and vital for the success of internationalisation that all entities cooperate smoothly and effectively on daily basis while the internationalisation strategy should play a sort of cementing factor in this regard since sub-processes and activities in internationalized teaching require different and varying managing schemes.

In case of large matured university, it may be assumed that support to teaching and exchange schemes is assigned to IRO capable of absorbing them. It is not always a case of small university with moderate progress in internationalisation having in their structure a small IRO with limited resources and capability such as MENA universities which represent a wide spectrum of capabilities and approaches to organization of international activities whether its internationalisation at home or student exchanges and internships. Therefore, the presented model has to be looked at as an example of two extremes, from within a university may find its optimal solution.

### 3.3 Partnerships and Networks

Every university in the world should have a policy for establishing international partnerships and networks which is compliant with its institutional internationalisation strategy. It is also obvious that the establishment of a new partnership or membership in the new network should make sense only if it is evidently benefiting the university in at least one of their international activities. Few examples of such benefits may increase the volume and/or quality of student and staff exchanges, volume of research cooperation between partners (e.g. new joint research projects or initiatives), increased number of degree-seeking students (incoming and/or outgoing), numbers and values of educational projects (e.g. Erasmus+ or regional initiatives), and “import” of good practices (both directions) in the area of institutional support to internationalisation process. The selection of partners is however a sensitive issue. Potential partner’s “value” and position on higher education market and/or in research must be relevant to the scope of planned collaboration.

There should be no space for incidentally signed agreements with no practical chances for fruitful cooperation. Furthermore, before signing a cooperation agreement, it is necessary to decide and to agree with the partner on scope and areas of practical cooperation, duration and time-schedule of cooperation agreement, approach to coordination and appointment of local coordinators, estimated costs of cooperation activities for both parties and sources of funding, progress indicators to be jointly monitored as the measure of success. Each new partnership agreement or network membership which implicates any financial obligations is subject to decision by appropriate committees set up by the university management.

The database of all signed agreements has to be properly maintained and updated by IRO or equivalent unit set up for institutional coordination of internationalisation process. It is important to systematically monitor progress indicators and expiry dates of signed agreements and to initiate renewal procedures if justified by cooperation results.

Very practical guidelines in the subject with a number of aspects which should be taken into consideration when looking for a prospective partner include questions on whether the institutions cover the same groups of disciplines, have similar specializations and overlap, common language of instruction and research, approved reputation of disciplines, stakeholders in the institution who have an interest in this partnership, availability of financial resources and personnel to cultivate such a partnership, and key to open the door to start negotiations.

### 3.4 Promotion and Marketing

The international visibility, popularity and position in domestic and international rankings and international research reputation are key-importance factors for each and every university having ambition and potential to exist on the international scene. The international promotion and marketing of the university offer has to be carried out in accordance with its plan of promotion and marketing, assisted by appropriate budget, and should constitute a sort of framework for all activities in this regard. Such a plan should be prepared and updated on yearly basis to correspond with the dynamic changes on higher education market.

The promotional and marketing activities must be compliant with the university internationalisation strategy. It has to be very clear which geographical directions and countries are strategically important for the university in terms of international research and studies and other internationalisation aspects. At this point, all political, cultural and economic circumstances have to be carefully analysed to avoid failures. In addition, all promotional and marketing activities have to be efficiently coordinated at university level. Individual actions undertaken by particular faculties or departments must comply with the agreed and approved university standard. In particular, it relates to university official website, university's presence in the most popular social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn, language of international communications since it is important that websites and promotional materials are prepared not only in the local language but in at least one foreign languages relevant to cooperation links with the outside world, e.g. Arabic + English or French or both, promotional and marketing activities abroad such as participation in international fairs and conferences or in international recruitment actions.

Appealing visual identity helps to attract and more importantly, retain students, faculty, donors and partners. It is therefore recommended that each university develop its own standard for promotional materials to be used at home and internationally. Usually it is done in the form of brand book, at least bilingual, and comprised, as a minimum, of official university logo or emblem, logos of faculties, departments or schools, template for presentations, website, and stationary, recommended graphics and colours for other promotional materials such as brochures, folders, banners, and newsletters.

### 3.5 Institutional Support

The model of institutional support to internationalisation process depends largely on two main factors, the size of the university and the progress in implementation of internationalisation process. In general, there are three approaches to that issue:

- a centralized model with most responsibilities allocated to adequately developed, centrally structured IRO collaborating with faculties/departments and supervised by the VP for international affairs,
- a semi-centralized model, where responsibilities are logically shared between reasonably developed IRO and faculties or other university units; in this case the function of VP is not always in place,

- a de-centralized model (dispersed), with most of responsibilities allocated to properly prepared faculties/departments and evidently limited role of central IRO; in this case the supervision is allocated mostly with faculty deans. The commonly shared opinion is that the centralized model is proved in practice for universities which are at the initial stage of implementation of internationalisation process, while a de-centralized model is adequate for those who are really matured and advanced in this regard. It is not necessarily always true as there are also other factors influencing the institutional approach of a given university, for instance, volume of foreign students and exchanges, approach to funding of internationalisation activities, level of university commercialisation, and number of international projects in research and educational areas.

### 3.6 Estimation of Workload and Staff

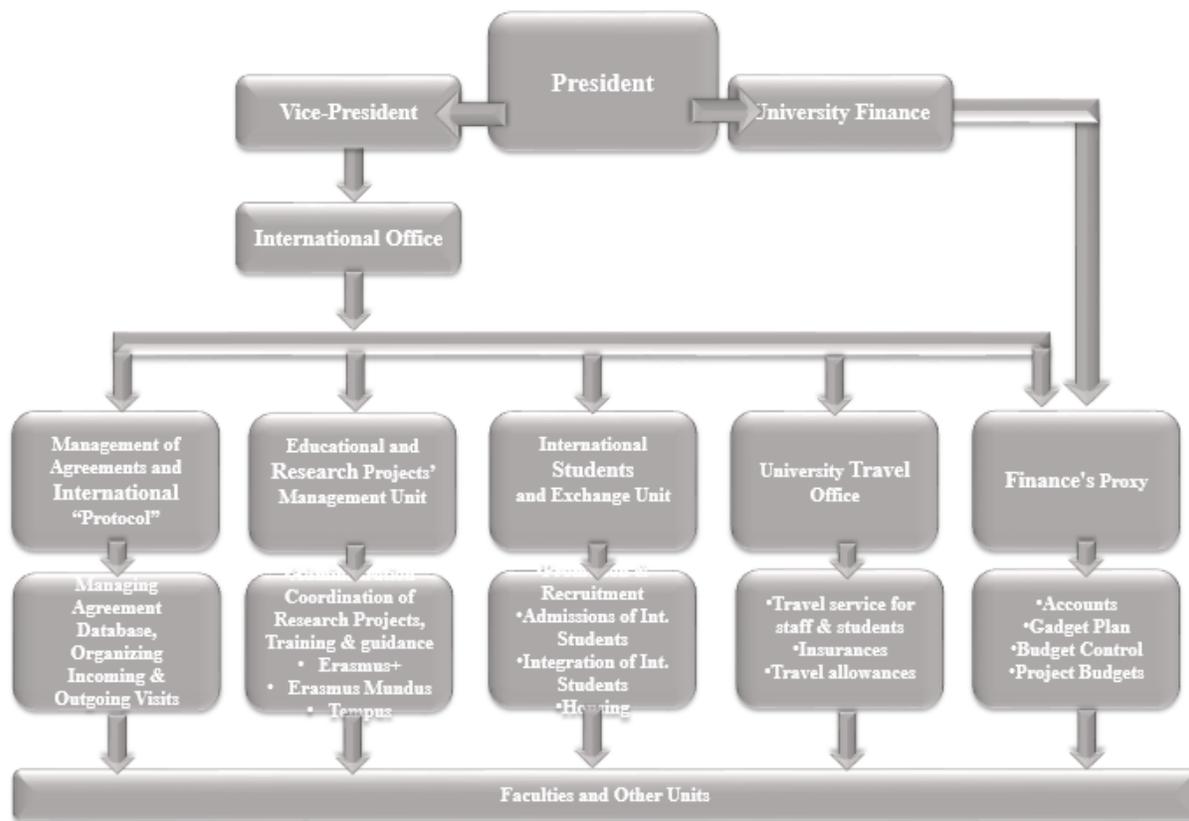
It is difficult to estimate the expected workload and required number of staff to manage international activities properly and effectively. A very rough estimation for universities which are moderately advanced in internationalisation process are given in the table (1). For research, the personnel needed must be highly specialized and trained while for students' exchange, personnel are required to work in close cooperation with faculties. All personnel may work on the basis of shared responsibility and in part-time involvement. The work load shown in table (1) gives an estimation of the number of hours amount hand relates to IRO staff only. In most cases it is supplemented by the additional workload of dedicated staff at faculties/departments.

Management Module	University Size	Workload (hours a month)	Staff Number
Support to Research	Large	400 and up	3 and up
	Medium	280	2-3
	Small	180	2
Studies and Exchanges (staff and students)	Large	480	4 and up
	Medium	360	3
	Small	240	2-3
Partnerships and Networks	Large	100	2
	Medium	70	1
	Small	50	1
Promotion and Marketing (websites, fairs, exhibitions, promotional materials)	Large	180	2 and up
	Medium	150	1-2
	Small	120	1

**Table (1) Estimates of Workload and Required IRO Personnel for Managing Internationalisation Activities.**

### 4. Implementation of the Model

An example of the implementation of a customized structure for management of internationalisation, Princess Sumaya University for Technology has actually opted for the semi-centralized structure as shown in Fig. (4), based on the experience of Warsaw University for Technology which follows a similar model with around 20+ staff employed with an additional function of dean's proxy for international cooperation that exists at each faculty of the university. An IRO was established at PSUT as a response to its new strategy which places international relations at the top of its priorities. This strategy recognizes that internationalisation stretches across all university portfolios with the objective of developing an internationalisation culture and institutional capacity through the transfer of know-how and good practice. Strong international relations greatly assist the innovative reach of PSUT and enable it to formulate meaningful research and exchange partnerships that provide access to resources and knowledge from the best institutions the world over. The IRO main objective was to encourage the participation of all university members in international activities; such as in students and teaching staff exchange programs, and inter-university cooperation for development, which provide quality service to university members through which any student, professor or administrative staff will obtain information, help and service to fulfil their academic and professional goals on an international level.



**Fig. (4) One Proposed Management Model for Internationalisation.**

The IRO was affiliated directly under the Vice President for Internationalisation. Its main aim was to answer to the needs of students, faculty and staff with services in the field of national and international collaboration. The IRO currently oversees and manages agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) and constantly seeks new international linkages and partnerships. It also attends to the procedure, registration and continuation of agreements in the academic, cultural and research fields that are part of PSUT, in addition to management of international mobility programs. The office also carries out a number of activities which include the organization of quality conferences, workshops and seminars which complement its main role as a key driver of internationalisation strategies for the university. Furthermore, the IRO also houses an exchange service unit (ESU) whose main functions lie in serving incoming and outgoing students, faculty and staff, and a project management office (PMO) which works on externally funded projects such as Erasmus+ projects.

Independently of the model, selected for institutional support, it is highly recommended to use the university website as a "Virtual" International Relations Office. The content presented there should include all contact data for staff as well as their functions and allocation of responsibilities, university regulations related to international activities (procedures for signing agreements/MoUs, regulations on travels abroad, procedures for managing projects, in addition to student and staff mobility with associated opportunities, programmes, requirements, recruitment procedures, application forms, financial support, student reports. Information service for incoming foreign students including exchange and degree-seeking students as well as short-term visitors. The website should also exhibit information on international partnerships with a database one ducational and research agreements/MoUs, information on international projects, completed and currently realized, educational projects (descriptions, partnerships, expected results, newsletters) and research projects (descriptions, project consortiums, publications).

## 5. Performance Monitoring

The internationalisation process must be properly monitored and trends systematically analysed by university management (Jiang and Carpenter, 2013; Jiang, 2008). It is not an easy task in case of a large university and developed internationalisation activities. The best and most efficient solution is to apply a special performance measuring system, based on key performance indicators (KPIs).

The number of indicators and their types have to correspond with internationalisation strategy adopted by the university. In general, the number of indicators grows with increased internationalisation activities. The following approach is recommended for selection of performance indicators: All selected indicators have to comply with so-called SMART principle. It means that they have to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-based.

- Specific: well defined and clear to anyone that has a basic knowledge of the process. It should include measurable assumptions and definitions that can be easily interpreted.
- Measurable: can be quantified and compared to other data. It should allow for meaningful statistical analysis.
- Achievable: doable under given conditions at the university
- Realistic: within the availability of resources and knowledge. It should fit into the university's constraints and be cost-effective.
- Time-based: doable within the realistic time frame.

Example 1:

How to measure the progress in knowledge of English for students?

Indicator: "The number of students who completed English courses" is not SMART.

Indicator: "The number of students who completed B2 or higher courses in English at the Faculty of Biochemistry and got B2 or higher certificates, compared with the total number of students at the Faculty" is SMART.

Example 2: How to measure the progress in internationalisation of curricula? Indicator: "The number of courses in English and French" is not SMART.

Indicator: "The number of ECTS points allocated to Master courses in English and French at the Faculty of Mechatronics in the academic year 2015/2016, compared with total number of ECTS points allocated to all Master programs at the Faculty" is SMART.

- a) The selected indicators must be relevant to strategic and operational objectives and expected outcomes specified in the internationalisation strategy adopted by the university. Planned outcomes/ strategic goals are decisive about practical approach and implemented activities (top-bottom approach).
- b) The selected indicators must be adequate to the measured areas of internationalisation process, i.e., to teaching or research or institutional support. In most cases, the measuring system is spread over all these areas to provide a complex picture of internationalisation status.
- c) The performance measurement has limited sense if done only once. Systematic measurements (e.g. once per academic year) make possible to analyse trends, identify weak points and evaluate the progress.
- d) There are some specialized tools available on the market to measure the effectiveness and outcomes of international activities such as the MEMO TOOL developed by CHE Consult for monitoring exchange mobility outcomes, [www.che-consult.de/services/memoc/](http://www.che-consult.de/services/memoc/). It measures and analyses the outcomes and added value of student mobility for both incoming and outgoing exchange students. It also helps to check if objectives of student exchanges have been achieved and to what extent.

## 6. Quality Assurance

Internationalisation is not free of threats and unwanted effects. Some possible traps and failures of internationalisation process may be encountered if not being subject to quality assurance. However, to be sure that quality aspect is not forgotten in the framework management model of internationalisation there are few basic remarks addressed to quality issue. The process, as a whole, should be subject to periodical qualitative evaluation by evaluators appointed by university management. It is important to know if and how the university is benefiting from the internationalisation, if all inputs, activities and outputs are contributing to the internationalisation strategy. All aspects should be taken into account in this regard including quality of internationalized teaching, quality and effectiveness of international research, social and cultural benefits of internationalisation, economic benefits, and effectiveness of recruitment. The achieved results should be compared with original assumptions and expectations.

The qualitative evaluation of some major "products" of internationalisation process is obligatory. Among others, it relates to internationalized curricula and all related didactic materials such as textbooks, laboratory manuals, and lecture.

In addition, double-degree programmes agreed between partners, content and functionality of on-line platforms dedicated for e-learning for international students, major results of educational projects realized within Erasmus+ or regional initiatives and major results of research projects realized within Horizon 2020 or other EU-supported or regional initiatives, are all examples of activities that should be evaluated regularly.

The “success ratio” i.e. the percentage of international students who successfully completed their studies versus all admitted to the university is a very critical qualitative measure. It shows clearly if admission policy applied to international students is correct and if internationalized curricula are corresponding with the preparedness and quality of international candidates.

A periodical survey, at least one per academic year, conducted among international students to register their opinions on teaching process, academic staff and institutional support provided by the university should become a routine. The database of partnership agreements must also be periodically evaluated in terms of collaboration results. All “dead” agreements should be terminated or not renewed. The database of collaboration agreements must be maintained properly and kept in “healthy” condition.

### Conclusions

An internationalisation management model was proposed for MENA universities in order to empower them with appropriate means to improve their international activities and profiles. The model aspires to improve the institutional management processes through establishing governance procedures that enhance internationalisation within the university hierarchy. The management framework may also equip MENA higher education institutions with references and guidelines in alignment to international practices, standards and norm. The degree of internationalisation in several MENA universities was assessed in order to develop the internationalisation management model and its implementation was achieved through capacity building activities and improvements in infrastructure, in addition to sharing best-practices and developing strong partnership worldwide.

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