

UNIVERSITY FACULTY POSITIONS ON RESEARCH INTERNATIONAL- SATION MANAGEMENT: A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN THE HONDURAN CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

Aim. The aim of the research is to describe the discursive positions and their corresponding relational structure concerning the management of the internationalisation of research activities among Honduran university professors.

Methods. The study employed a qualitative/structural methodology to analyse the discursive data produced by faculty members in discussion groups, organised according to a predefined structure and sample.

Results. The analysis identified four distinct discursive positions: (A) Centralised Institutional, (B) Anti-Institutional, (C) Non-Institutional, and (D) Delegation or/and University Autonomy. The structure revealed relationships of both affinity and opposition between these positions.

Conclusion. The findings suggest that a synergistic and interdependent interrelation of the positive aspects of each position could enhance the transnationalisation of scientific activity, contributing to reducing the barriers that hinder the internationalisation of university research.

Practical application. Insights from this study may guide policy development and institutional strategies to better support the internationalisation of research in universities.

Keywords: discourse analysis, higher education institutions, Honduras, internationalisation, research, science administration, university faculty

INTRODUCTION

Given the inherently international nature of research, studies that specifically address the internationalisation of research activities, especially in Latin America, are relatively scarce. The concept of internationalisation in higher education has always presented certain challenges for academia. The term ‘internationalisation’ has been employed in various contexts and for different purposes (Mitchell & Nielsen, 2012), encompassing a range of aspects and dimensions with multiple emphases and approaches (Yang, 2002). However, as Zha Qiang (2003) observes, it generally retains the key notion of being a process that occurs between nations or cultural identities.

Jane Knight (1994) defines the internationalisation of higher education as “the process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the functions of teaching, research, and service of the institution” (p. 3). This definition frames internationalisation as an evolving process, rather than a collection of isolated activities, emphasising its complementary nature and the corresponding institutional responsibility to integrate it into the core functions of higher education: teaching, research, and community engagement. In 2015, a group of international higher education experts convened by the European Parliament reviewed Knight’s conceptual framework, defining internationalisation in higher education as

The intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of postsecondary 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 Observatorio Iberoamericano de la Ciencia, la Tecnología y la Sociedad (2018) identifies internationalisation as a central concern in the contemporary university sector. Daniela Perrotta (2016) argues, “Internationalisation occupies a central place in university discourses, scientific and technological policies, as well as in the policies and practices of higher education institutions and their stakeholders” (p. 5). However, as Sylvie Didou-Aupetit (2017) points out, in Latin America, efforts towards internationalisation in higher education institutions are often more incidental than strategic, with few universities adopting a comprehensive approach. John K. Hudzik (2013) defines comprehensive internationalisation as the deliberate commitment and action to embed an international, global, and comparative perspective into the core missions of teaching, research, and community engagement in higher education. This approach aims to enhance learning and discovery outcomes; internationalisation is an institutional imperative rather than merely a desirable goal.

University research is a key element in widely accepted definitions of internationalisation in higher education. Traditionally, institutional initiatives for internationalising research have focused primarily on students rather than faculty, under the assumption that faculty members already possess their own networks of international colleagues and therefore do not require university support or services to pursue international research or related activities (Woldegiyorgis et al., 2018). However, universities now face pressure “to intensify their international dimension as a way to strengthen local academic practices of knowledge production to address the complexity of national, regional, and global agendas” (Korsunsky et al., 2018, p. 17).

As Jocelyne Gacel-Ávila and Scilia Rodríguez-Rodríguez (2018) note, in recent decades, the demands of the knowledge society have accelerated the efforts of higher education systems to foster international scientific exchange. Systemic and scientific collaboration between actors from the Global North and South is essential for a holistic understanding of development challenges and their solutions (Oswald, 2019). The increasing interconnectivities, interdependencies, interactions, and connections that characterise globalisation have also significantly shaped contemporary education (Auzina, 2018), further reinforcing the relevance of internationalisation in research.

In Honduras, most higher education institutions remain predominantly focused on undergraduate education. Despite policy statements that prioritise research, the persistent weaknesses of the National Science and Technology System and the lack of a comprehensive national science and technology plan—under discussion since 1992—have resulted in limited scientific output and low international visibility for Honduran researchers (Zelaya & Montañés, 2021). Between 2015 and 2019, eleven out of the twenty Honduran universities did not publish any research in journals included in the Scopus database, and only four institutions managed to include more than twenty papers in indexed journals (De-Moya-Anegón et al., 2021).

In terms of international collaboration in scientific publications, the 2021 Ibero-American Ranking of Higher Education Institutions showed that 82.54% of the scientific output produced by authors affiliated to Honduran universities included international co-authorships. This figure underscores the crucial role of fostering internationalisation to enhance scientific production in the country.

The aim of this article, as indicated in the title, is to examine the discursive positions regarding the management of the internationalisation of research activities in Honduran universities, based on an analysis of the discourses of Honduran faculty members. Discursive positions are “socially defined typical discursive roles” (Ruiz, 2009, p. 6). These are not merely the opinions of individual subjects but represent social discourses, in the most genuine Durkheimian sense, condensed in the famous aphorism “the whole is in each of the parts because it is in the whole, but it is not in the whole because it is in each of the parts” (Durkheim, 1982, p. 43). Discursive positions comprise elements that, through repetition and consonance, justify their configuration as distinct stances—whether oppositional, different, or aligned

with others. Therefore, they are not merely a collection of viewpoints, but form a coherent relational structure (Lay Lisboa & Montañés, 2013).

Several authors have examined how research internationalisation activities are developed, managed, and implemented. Guy R. Neave (1992) identifies two main axes for structuring different models of university internationalisation: the administrative and organisational orientation of the institution towards internationalisation—, driven either by top leadership or by grassroots units—and the scope of the institutional internationalisation strategy. This scope can be either definitory, where the university community independently establishes its policies and priorities for internationalisation, or elaborative, where it adopts the guidelines set by national higher education authorities.

John L. Davies (1992) contends that the internationalisation policy of a university arises from context analysis and two key axes within the institution. The first axis reflects the level of importance the institution assigns to internationalisation, categorised as either marginal or central. The second axis examines how the institution integrates the international dimension into its activities, either through explicit, systematic, and precise procedures or on an ad hoc basis, where processes are unsystematic and tailored to specific situations. Hans Van Dijk and Kees Meijer (1997) add a third axis, “support,” which involves the entities within the institution that facilitate and assist with managing international activities, either through collaboration among the central, departmental, and individual levels or unilaterally, from central or peripheral administration.

Similarly, Romuald Edward John Rudzki's (1998) fractal process model of internationalisation outlines the institution's approach to integrating the international dimension, which can involve varying degrees of institutional participation in planning, implementing, and managing transnational academic activities. Marijk Van der Wende's (1997) model focuses on how the international dimension influences the key actors shaping the governance of higher education institutions – namely the State, the academic oligarchy, and market forces. By analysing the interactions among these actors within an explicitly international context, universities can better understand how these dynamics shape their transnational academic practices. This allows them to identify new areas of influence and develop strategies for a more effective management and coordination of efforts. Both Knight's internationalisation cycle (1994) and its revised version by Hans de Wit (2002) place the responsibility for internationalising university activities on the institution's central administration.

It is worth noting that the internationalisation models discussed seek to explain the overall academic and administrative activities of universities. However, in relation to the research function, Absael Antelo (2012) observes that few higher education institutions include explicit guidelines for research internationalisation in their academic policies. Antelo proposes a model centred on the research project, shaped by factors such as government policies, institutional directives, and the characteristics of the research team. Marcello Romani-Dias et al. (2019) emphasise the role of researchers at the core of their conceptual model, positioning them as the primary drivers of transnational scientific activity. Similarly, Ayenachew A. Woldegiyorgis et al. (2018) and Marek Kwiek (2020) argue that the internationalisation of re-

search ultimately depends on the faculty. Caroline S. Wagner (2018) describes international research collaboration as an emerging system of self-organised networks, where researchers themselves often determine the choice of partners and environments. Thus, understanding the discourses of faculty members regarding the management of research internationalisation in universities becomes crucial for developing strategies that effectively incorporate the demands, interests, and concerns of researchers into the institutional practice.

METHODS

To achieve the stated objective, we employed a qualitative/structural methodology that guided the design of a structural sample to generate discursive material, which allowed us to identify the various discursive positions. We focused on the discourses of faculty members at the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) as the units of analysis. The article 160 of the Honduran Constitution establishes that the UNAH “holds the exclusive right to organise, direct, and develop higher and professional education in the country” (Constitution of the Republic of Honduras [Const.], 1982, pp. 32-33). UNAH exemplifies the characteristics of a flagship university, as outlined by Philip G. Altbach (2016), not only by regulating the national higher education system but also as the one offering the most diverse range of programmes, with 95,776 students (Banco Central de Honduras, 2019) and contributing 87.3% of the public scientific output indexed in Scopus (De-Moya-Anegón et al., 2019).

We developed the theoretical framework and designed the structural sample by conducting a bibliographic analysis of scientific literature, along with theoretical and empirical studies on the internationalisation of research. We obtained relevant documents from libraries, repositories, and electronic databases using combinations of keywords such as internationalisation, research, higher education, university research management, science, university, and transnational, among others.

We designed a structural sample based on the principle of socio-structural representativity, a methodological device that aims to ensure the presence of all existing discourses (Ibáñez, 1979; Mejía, 2000; Montañés, 2013). Through the literature review on the topic, we identified two structuring axes for the sample: (a) whether the faculty member had completed graduate studies in Honduras or abroad, and (b) the disciplinary area in which they conduct their research, as defined by the Scientific and Technological Research System for Higher Education in Honduras (Dirección de Educación Superior de Honduras, 2020). These structuring axes determined the formation of discussion groups designed to achieve saturation in the production of discursive material (Lay Lisboa & Montañés, 2018).

As shown in Figure 1, we established four discussion groups, based on the criteria of inclusive heterogeneity (Ibáñez, 1979). For axis (a), concerning graduate studies, one discussion group included faculty members who completed their graduate studies within Honduras. The intersection of the disciplinary area axis with those who pursued

postgraduate studies abroad led to the formation of three additional groups corresponding to the major disciplinary fields: (2) Education, Humanities and Arts, Economics and Business Sciences, Social Sciences and Law; (3) Physical, Agricultural, Mathematics and Engineering Sciences; and (4) Biological and Health Sciences.

Figure 1
Structural Sample

GRADUATE STUDIES	In Honduras (1)	Abroad		
	DISCIPLINARY FIELD	Educational Sciences, Humanities and Arts / Economic and Administrative Sciences / Social Sciences and Law (2)	Physical Sciences, Agricultural Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering (3)	Biological and Health Sciences (4)

Source. Own research.

Some might argue that this sample lacks certain discussion groups—specifically three additional groups, if variables were crossed in a manner similar to a stratified statistical sample. However, the structural sample does not involve crossing all possible categories derived from the relevant axes, as it fundamentally differs from a stratified statistical sample. This sample does not rely on stratified statistical criteria or the simple juxtaposition of social structures. Its aim is not to represent the discourses of specific socio-statistical categories; it is not designed to account for the multiple and varied discourses resulting from the intersection of different fields of knowledge and whether their graduate studies were completed domestically or abroad. Instead, it aims to elucidate the discourses that emerge from the structuring axes.

The structural sample focuses on generating discursive material, which, when analysed, provides insight into the social discourses related to these axes. Each discussion group is not necessarily representative of its reference group; rather, the analysis of the discursive material produced by all the groups reveals the discourses defined by the structuring axes. Discursive saturation ensures representativity. As Jesús Ibáñez, the pioneering figure of the discussion group method, explains, the structural sample selects participants based on criteria of comprehensiveness and pertinence, achieving saturation and representativity by including all groups whose discourses reflect significant relationships concerning the issue under study (Ibáñez, 1979).

After generating the discursive material, we conducted the analysis following the approach of Manuel Montañés and Siu Lay Lisboa (2019). We began with a pre-phase that involved transcribing the discussion groups into a single consolidated text. In the first

phase, we highlighted relevant excerpts directly related to the study topic and organised the information through coding and categorisation. The second phase focused on critically interpreting the data through discursive inference. This stage included text exegesis, identifying and conceptualising discursive positions, developing a relational discursive structure, and creating a graphical representation

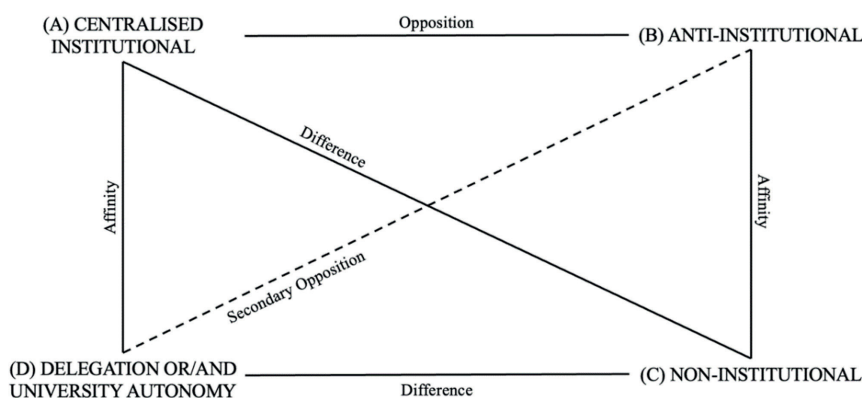
RESULTS

Our study identifies a relational structure, as illustrated in Figure 2, which comprises four discursive positions: (A) Centralised Institutional, (B) Anti-Institutional, (C) Non-Institutional, and (D) Delegation or University Autonomy. These positions define who holds the responsibility for establishing the guidelines that direct transnational scientific initiatives within the university community, as well as who possesses the authority to promote, organise, and support the internationalisation of university research activities.

The Position (A): Centralised Institutional argues that the work, planning, and structure required for the internationalisation of research activities must be integrated into the institution's core policies and instruments of the institution. This position proposes that international scientific collaborations align with the organisation's objectives and be incorporated into the planning of academic units. "We need to start with the concept of internationalisation that the institution uses and the perspectives under which it promotes and directs it, focusing our efforts accordingly [...] (DG.2). We view internationalisation as a central element of our planning (GD.1)."

Figure 2

Relational Polyhedron of Discursive Positions



Source. Own research.

In contrast, Position B: Anti-Institutional does not present an explicit statement. As critical discourse analysis indicates, not everything is conveyed explicitly (Montañés, 2009); therefore, it becomes essential to explore both the explicit and implicit elements (Ruiz, 2014).

The analysis suggests that this position exists by inference, not because of a lack of critical perspective on institutional guidelines, but due to the absence of a clearly approved and established internationalisation policy. The university's strategic plan and normative documents remain vague, lacking specific details, and most faculty members do not know about them. Faculty members show little interest in understanding institutional guidelines and programmes related to research internationalisation, as the provided resources and recognition mechanisms have minimal impact on the international research activities, which often proceed independently of institutional directives. The limited scientific output of universities in Honduras, combined with even fewer research activities beyond national borders, makes it challenging for an explicit anti-institutional discourse to develop.

In our social context, research lacks the prominence we desire as a university and as researchers across most disciplines [...] Even though universities express commitment to research, and developing countries need to promote it, we frequently overlook both research and its internationalisation. (DG.1). Our focus remains on teaching, not research. I am not aware of the institutional guidelines. [...] Many people do not know whom to contact regarding research or who is in charge of managing internationalisation. [...] I am unfamiliar with the institution's policy on research internationalisation. (DG.2)

The absence of an explicit anti-institutional position does not mean that a position advocating for research management outside of the institutional guidelines and procedures does not exist. This perspective aligns with Position C: Non-Institutional, which contrasts with Position A: Centralised Institutional. Position C views internationalisation as an intrinsic aspect of scientific activity, where transnational actions emerge from the informal relationships and networks that researchers cultivate within academic and business circles, independently of the institutional guidelines and procedures. "The international relationships I have developed have emerged naturally. (DG.2) Sooner or later, researchers will engage in international collaborations through friendships or academic connections. (DG.1)."

While informal networks provide support, this position recognises that scientific cooperation stems from deliberate actions by researchers who actively engage with international academic peers. In other words, it views research internationalisation not a matter of chance but as a process systematically pursued over time.

In most cases, I reach out directly to the universities where the researchers are based; I find their email address, and send a message from my institutional account, saying: 'I realise you don't know me, but this is my field, and I am interested in collaborating. What do you think?' [...] He [the international researcher] was visiting Honduras, came to our school, explained

his work and asked who would like to collaborate [...] I took on the task of finding funding for the first project and invited them to work with me (DG.1). Achieving this often involves significant effort from research groups to establish connections. (DG.2)

The faculty members highlight that they often spend more time than they would like on administrative tasks related to the internationalisation of scientific work, reducing time available for scientific production:

It is challenging because we must divide our time between research and management, [...] and most researchers do not enjoy this [...]. It is hard to find colleagues who have enough time to engage in managing internationalisation (DG.1). In reality, we often end up handling the administrative side of research to support others in developing international research and producing outcomes, [...] we stop conducting our own research manage the administration. (DG.2)

This position closely relates to Position B: Anti-Institutional. Rather than directly opposing institutional guidelines and directives, it disregards them when building and strengthening contacts with informal transnational networks that support research activities.

In contrast, the Position D: Delegation or University Autonomy aligns with Position A: Centralised Institutional. Both positions view institutional participation as essential in promoting research internationalisation. However, Position D argues for managing research internationalisation initiatives at the school level, using specific mechanisms and structures tailored to the needs of each academic unit. This position suggests that strategies developed by academic units are more appropriate for meeting the needs of the university community and making a more effective use of partnerships with other institutions.

We manage collaborations at the school level [...] trying to involve all faculty stakeholders: students, of course, the teaching staff, but also the administrative team [...] We have already established the structure of the internationalisation unit within the school (DG.1). At the departmental level, each department has its own contacts, agreements, connections, and alliances [...] The school itself is developing various mechanisms to strengthen the focus on research. (DG.4)

Within this position, two management approaches can emerge within academic units. The first is delegation, which involves replicating the guidelines and directives set by the central university administration, affirming that research internationalisation relies on these units. These units take on the responsibility for establishing the guidelines to promote transnational scientific exchange, defining implementation conditions, approving activities, and leading evaluation processes.

We met with the Dean, and she advised: 'Start with the International Office; that's the right place, not here...' (DG.3). There are institutional requirements that we are responsible for ful-

filling, and we must comply. [...] There is a broader effort across the University, with entities above departments and schools committed to advancing internationalisation. (DG.4)

The other approach is autonomy, which views school deans and directors of regional centres as key figures in initiating, executing, and obtaining institutional approval for transnational scientific initiatives. These academic leaders set the policies and operational strategies for the internationalisation of their units and serve as liaisons between academic units the central administration, simplifying bureaucratic, administrative, logistical, and legal processes related to cross-border research activities.

The connection to the International Relations Office is effectively managed through the Dean, who oversees the entire school [...] The role of deans is essential. [...] The director of the regional centre encouraged me and gave me the freedom to pursue my goals (DG.1). You consult the Dean because he knows the right steps to take. (DG.2)

The central administration participates only in initiatives that require significant financial or human resources for collaborative activities or when a binding legal agreement needs to be signed with the counterpart. "Small projects are handled exclusively at the departmental or dean's office level, while major projects are escalated and formalised through agreements signed by the Rector and the donor (DG.1)."

Additionally, the university administration supports the development of transnational scientific activities led by faculty members. The International Relations Office and other central administrative units coordinate efforts to promote research internationalisation by providing timely information, facilitating logistics, and efficiently managing the administrative processes related to scientific activities.

The administrative sector provides essential support that we must include in internationalisation efforts [...] With a clear institutional vision, we can avoid bureaucratic obstacles. [...] The organisation and support we receive have improved (DG.1). We seek for a good management: quick actions that seize opportunities. For this to happen, administrative management must be highly efficient to prevent missed opportunities. (DG.2)

Strategic and deliberate organisational strategies to integrate the international dimension into the university's mission, policies, and administrative processes involve creating management units such as an internationalisation office, financial administration, or legal advisory services to support resource planning and execution and streamline bureaucratic procedures. However, the discourse indicates establishing these units at the central university level does not guarantee that the international dimension will integrate into the researchers' programmatic activities or that guidelines and mechanisms will effectively address the faculty's needs for their transnational scientific initiatives.

Ensuring coherence between the institutional guidelines, the internal and external contexts of research, and the motivations and objectives of the faculty is essential. The effectiveness and impact of institutional policies for internationalisation rely

on their alignment with the practices and capabilities of the research staff and their operability at the level of the academic units.

The policy might be outlined, it might be established, but its implementation at the academic unit level is still unclear (DG.2). We have institutional requirements that we are responsible for meeting, and compliance is necessary [...] a disconnection between the requirements of the Personnel Office, the department's needs, and our own interests. Something is not working effectively. (DG.4)

This position, while framed within the institutional context, holds a secondary-level opposition relationship to Position B: Anti-Institutional.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The Position A: Centralised Institutional aligns with the models proposed by Knight (1994) and de Wit (2002), which assign university authorities the responsibility for defining and directing the strategies and the actions related to research internationalisation. This position also aligns with Neave's (1992) model, which emphasises the leadership role that institutions must play in the administrative and organisational orientation of research activities. In terms of the support axis proposed by Van Dijk and Meijer (1997), we can characterise this discursive position as unilateral. Position B: Anti-Institutional aligns with theoretical frameworks such as those presented by Didou-Aupetit (2014), and Lucas Luchilo and Mario Albornoz (2008), which interpret research internationalisation through a neo-colonialist perspective (Leenen-Young, 2021) that serves the neoliberal interests of global knowledge centres. Position B: Anti-Institutional corresponds with theoretical frameworks like those presented by Didou-Aupetit (2014), and Luchilo and Albornoz (2008), which interpret research internationalisation through a neo-colonialist perspective (Leenen-Young, 2021) serving the neoliberal interests of global knowledge centres.

The Position C: Non-Institutional aligns with Rudzki's (1998) covert approach, where researchers independently initiate transnational activities without institutional support or oversight. This perspective places the responsibility for promoting, organising, and conducting transnational research activities directly on the researchers, who frequently bypass institutional guidelines and directives. Jarle Trondal (2010) observes that, although universities often create internationalisation policies, the link between these policies and the actions of researchers tends to be weak.

Neave (1992) proposes an institutional model for organising and managing internationalisation, known as the academic consensus model, in which internationalisation initiatives emerge from academic departments. Individual researchers take formal responsibility for developing cross-border academic cooperation. Unlike Position C: Non-Institutional, Neave's model includes the central internationalisation units that actively facilitate and address requests from departments and faculty.

The Position D: Delegation or University Autonomy corresponds with Neave's (1992) academic consensus model. This position argues that the guidelines for transnational scientific initiatives should be established at the intermediate level through mechanisms and structures specifically tailored to the needs of each academic unit. These guidelines function within the broader institutional framework, either delegated from central administrative units or autonomously managed by school authorities. The support and assistance for managing international activities are interactive (Van Dijk & Meijer, 1997), arising from exchanges between the central administration, the school authorities, the departmental heads, and the researchers.

Although the relational structure shows both affinities and oppositions, fostering a synergistic and interdependent relationship among the positive aspects of each position could enhance the transnationalisation of scientific activity, helping to overcome or, at least, mitigate the barriers to the internationalisation of university research. Actions aligned within the Position B: Anti-Institutional, can still provide valuable feedback to other positions, as long as they respect human rights, promote sustainable economic and environmental development, and adhere to ethical research principles. These actions encourage reflection on existing guidelines, directives, and research practices.

The various positions could function within a decentralised network where, depending on the context, any of them might take the lead. The coexistence of these positions in a dynamic of synergistic feedback — where each shares its insights, needs, and demands with the others and receives feedback to ensure effective and efficient management — would promote the internationalisation of scientific activity. Even when international research collaborations arise from the researchers' informal relationships, university authorities need to formally validate these initiatives to grant them institutional recognition, expand their scope, and their outcomes.

In this context, the central administration formalises the research initiatives led by the faculty, guides academic units in complying with regulatory requirements, and manages the administrative processes required for approving and signing collaborations within the legal framework.

The university can help by formalising partnerships that often begin informally, turning them into permanent arrangements [...] The aim is to create a permanent programme within the university and to formalise these partnerships [...] I am the one who initiates the agreement, negotiates it, handles the technical aspects, and consults with the Vice-rectorate of International Relations for guidance on the format. Once everything is structured and negotiated, I bring it to the Director for approval (DG.1). Establishing an agreement for group recognition or to secure validity within the Annual Operational Plan, managing this alliance and institutionalising it, are among the challenges that prevent these groups from becoming fully consolidates. (DG.3)

Informal relationships and agreements that support the international scientific activities of faculty members, as described in Position C: Non-Institutional, can offer valuable insights for the planning efforts of Position A: Centralised Institutional by helping

to create general institutional guidelines that align with the faculty's transnational academic practices. These guidelines and directives could also condition the faculty in their search and selection of transnational networks and topics if the management model outlined in Position A: Centralised Institutional included provisions for recognising international research that positively influences teaching activities.

Similarly, establishing a research agenda with thematic priorities and institutional guidelines for developing scientific cooperation initiatives can help balance the researchers' inclination to knowledge production projects linked to transnational capital and encourage international collaboration that addresses local development needs. This feedback can also help management entities update their services and procedures according to align with the need expressed by researchers. Moreover, it enables academic leaders responsible for management, as indicated in the Position D: Delegation or University Autonomy, to plan their programmes based on the experiences and insights shared by faculty members.

To maintain the productive feedback loop between Position A: Centralised Institutional and Position D: Delegation or University Autonomy, it is crucial to establish a clear institutional vision that considers the specific needs of all academic units within the university in support of a better strategic planning and resource allocation. This process requires a bidirectional channel for the flow of information and suggestions. Institutional policymakers and planners should remain open to the demands and perspectives of university centres and departments, which would facilitate effective management at the intermediate levels and strengthen research overall, particularly its internationalisation.

In summary, for higher education institutions in Honduras, focusing on a single position at the expense of others is not a viable strategy. The coexistence of these different positions, with an emphasis on synergistic feedback among various management approaches, will undoubtedly help to overcome or at least diminish the barriers that hinder the internationalisation of research activities.

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