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Influence of Higher Education in Portugal on Students Beliefs toward Internationalisation

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Master in International Management

Supervisor: Dr. Álvaro Augusto da Rosa, Associate Professor, Department of

Marketing, Strategy and Operations, ISCTE Business School

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This was definitely the most challenging project I have faced in my academic course. There were many times that I thought that I could not manage to do it and that doing a dissertation is not for me. Thankfully, everything worked out and I managed to overcome my difficulties. The path that I am tracing is getting easier once I face and overcome these types of challenges, which can improve my professional life and acquire new inputs of how I will face future challenges that may arise. The support that I had from my family, friends and co-workers is unaccountable and made me realize that this is for my own benefit. I am lucky enough to have these people behind my own success.

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Resumo

Várias instituições de ensino superior (IES) portuguesas têm como objetivo internacionalizar os seus currículos para fazer face ao avanço da tecnologia e globalização. No entanto, há poucas pesquisas sobre se os alunos dessas IES tornarem-se mais internacionalizados como resultado. Assim, este estudo teve como objetivo explorar a influência do sistema de IES em Portugal nas crenças dos estudantes perante a internacionalização.

Este estudo procura conhecer os pontos de vista de estudantes portugueses a frequentarem vários graus de ensino de Beja e Lisboa para examinar como as estratégias de internacionalização impactam as perceções sobre a internacionalização e os estudos no estrangeiro. A pesquisa teve como premissa a estrutura de dois pilares de Knight (2012) para a internacionalização, que ajudou a fornecer *insights* sobre internacionalização em casa (IAH) e estratégias de educação transfronteiriça para IES. O teste Mann-Whitney U, bem como o coeficiente de correlação de Spearman, foram utilizados na análise de dados quantitativos para estabelecer quaisquer diferenças significativas na implementação de IAH e estratégias transfronteiriças entre as IES nas duas regiões e sua relação com os pontos de vista dos alunos sobre questões internacionais e estudo no exterior.

Os resultados revelaram uma diferença significativa na implementação de estratégias de IAH nas IES das duas cidades. Nenhuma diferença significativa foi encontrada na implementação de estratégias de educação transfronteiriça nas IES entre as cidades. Os resultados indicaram uma correlação positiva entre as estratégias de internacionalização e os pontos de vista dos alunos sobre questões internacionais e atitudes em relação a estudar no exterior. Estes resultados são significativos para os executivos dos IES em Portugal, visto que são os responsáveis por efetuar alterações institucionais e curriculares para melhorar a internacionalização e influenciar a perceção dos alunos.

Palavras-chave: Internacionalização, Educação Superior, Currículo, Educação Transfronteiriça, Internacionalização em casa

JEL Classification System:

I21 Analysis of Education

F55 International Institutional Arrangements

Abstract

Multiple Portuguese higher education institutions (HEIs) have aimed to internationalise their curricula to contend with advancing technology and increasing globalisation. However, there is little research on whether the students of these HEIs have become more internationalised as a result. Thus, this study aimed to explore the influence of the HE system in Portugal on students' beliefs towards internationalisation.

The study sought the views of Portuguese students pursuing various degrees across Universities and Polytechnics in Beja and Lisbon to examine how internationalisation strategies impact perceptions on internationalisation and studying abroad. The research was premised on Knight's (2012) two-pillar framework for internationalisation, which helped provide insights into internationalisation-at-home (IAH) and cross-border education strategies for HEIs. The Mann-Whitney U test, as well as Spearman's correlation coefficient, were employed in the quantitative data analysis to establish any significant differences in the implementation of IAH and cross-border strategies across HEIs in the two regions and their relationship with students' views of international issues and overseas study.

The findings revealed a significant difference in the implementation of IAH strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon. No significant difference was found in implementing cross-border education strategies across HEIs between the two cities. The findings also indicated a positive correlation between internationalisation strategies and students' views regarding international issues and attitudes towards studying abroad. These results have significance for Higher Education executives in Portugal as they are in charge of making institutional and curricular changes to improve internationalisation and influence the student body perceptions.

Keywords: internationalisation, higher education, curriculum, cross-border education, Internationalisation-at-home

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I21 Analysis of Education

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Acronyms

A3ES – Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education

BERA – British Educational Research Association

DGES - Direção-Geral de Ensino Superior

EC – European Commission

ECTS – European Credit Transfer System

EU – European Union

HE – Higher Education

HEI – Higher Education Institutions

HEID – deans/presidents/directors of Higher Education Institutions

IAH - Internationalisation-at-home

MCTES - Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education

MES – Ministry of Education and Science

OECD - Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

SD – Standard Deviation

SPSS – Statistical Package for Social Sciences

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research overview by outlining the background, rationale, research aim, research questions, coupled with objectives. A brief summary of Portugal's historical higher education (HE) systemic changes is discussed in the background, while the need for the research study is described in the rationale. The research aim, questions, as well as objectives, are stated, and the subsequent analysis is outlined in the dissertation structure.

1.2 Background to the Study

The higher education curriculum in Portugal has witnessed a massive transformation over the past few decades. The Bologna process' implementation enabled higher education institutions to adopt a refined system that ensured a higher quality of education, greater student mobility, and increased competition (Fátima & Abreu, 2007). By 2008, a massive influx of Universities and Polytechnics offered a diverse range of courses and programs to more than 350,000 students (Tavares et al., 2008). As it currently stands, according to DGES, there are 67 polytechnics and 39 Government institutions. Although the Bologna process aimed at ensuring a coherent higher education system across different European countries, it did not require similar programmes among member countries. Instead, it facilitated a uniform structure where student qualifications could be compared across Europe, encouraging higher student mobility in the region (Kerklaan et al., 2008). While these reforms were seen as a necessary step to national progress and economic success in Portugal, the internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) was still needed to transform the system significantly by producing students capable of competing on the international stage.

Leask (2009) mentions that HE curriculum's internationalisation promotes new ways of thinking among students, which helps generate practical ideas that ensure the success of the global workforce. Thus, in response to the great need for internationalisation and the requirements proposed by EU educational policies, HEIs in Portugal have been making changes to their curriculum by adopting several internationalisation strategies and measures (OECD, 2006). These strategies focused on nurturing the students' critical thinking skills, literacy, historical comprehension, scientific knowledge, multi-cultural consciousness, and international perspectives (Leask, 2009). Despite these efforts, there have been concerns that the strategies implemented by most HEIs have not been effective in producing graduates with adequate skills to integrate into a global workforce (Veiga et al., 2006). As such, the Ministry of Education and Science in 2014 proposed a systematic national internationalisation strategy that involved measures such as inter-institution collaboration and branding (MES, 2014; Lourenco et al., 2020). Foreign language proficiency was also identified as a vital aspect in internationalising the curriculum within HEIs, with the ministry citing that the multilingual skills of Portuguese students required significant improvement (MES, 2014).

Agnew (2012) notes that organisational and governance structures in HEIs have a critical responsibility in ensuring the attainment of curriculum internationalisation. While these structures have loosened their control in the wake of the 21st century, they still hold the power to make disciplinary-based judgments on the elements to incorporate in the curriculum, leading to the development of global competencies among students (Leask, 2013). Each learning institution has a different understanding of internationalisation, and their strategies may vary widely, influencing students' views and perceptions on international issues and, consequently, their willingness to venture abroad (Agnew, 2012). While study abroad has been acknowledged as a vital gateway to

enhancing student knowledge of the world and promoting further cross-cultural interaction, only a tiny percentage of learners enrolled in HEIs are willing to venture abroad. Macready and Tucker (2011) reveal that only 2% of students worldwide studied in universities outside their home countries in 2007. This aspect warrants the need for HEIs to improve their curricula by infusing international concepts to enable students to gain a better global perspective. HEIs may influence students to participate in international activities and pursue further studies abroad by going beyond traditional systems and fully embracing the proposed internationalisation strategies.

1.3 Rationale for the Study

Higher education is undergoing a radical transformation in the current technological age. The unprecedented growth of this sector has triggered increased rates of student enrolment in various institutions across the country and the implementation of diverse course offerings that aim to satisfy the needs of the labour market (Tavares et al., 2008). The increasing global interdependence among countries and the constantly changing global economy warrants the need for students with an international outlook to work effectively in an international context (Lourenço et al., 2020). Furthermore, due to the stiff competition in the current global workforce, students must demonstrate a high level of international awareness and cross-cultural knowledge to succeed in their various jobs. As such, the researcher deemed it necessary to assess the nature of the HE curriculum in Portugal and investigate how it contributes to shaping the perspectives of Portuguese students on internationalisation and pursuing further studies abroad.

There have been significant efforts by Portuguese HEIs to implement strategies aimed at internationalising the curriculum. However, Government reports have shown these strategies to be incoherent and disorganised, leading to modest results (Veiga et al., 2006). To deal with these shortcomings, the Government, through the MES, established a consistent internationalisation

strategy for HEIs across Portugal coupled with 40 recommendations for improvement (MES, 2014). A further modification of this strategy was carried out in 2016 to align it with Government policies focusing on socio-cultural development (Coelho & Arau Ribeiro, 2018). Since the enactment of these changes, there has been minimal research on the effectiveness of the strategies in shaping the ethos and values of the institutions and imparting global and intercultural skills to Portuguese students.

Mapping the landscape of internationalisation within Portuguese higher education institutions by evaluating student perceptions provides an insight into the usefulness of the strategies put in place and how they can be improved. Despite the massive amount of research discussing internationalisation across HEIs, few scholars have attempted to investigate its influence on students and the extent to which the curriculum affects their outlook on international issues and their willingness to venture abroad. The insufficient evidence base about students' beliefs and perceptions of internationalisation, particularly within Portuguese HEIs, called for further investigation and understanding. Therefore, this study's results could serve as a roadmap for HEIs in Portugal to improve their internationalisation strategies and encourage more students to have a global mindset and pursue further studies abroad.

1.4 Research Aim

To explore the influence of the higher education system in Portugal on students' beliefs towards internationalisation.

1.5 Research Questions

Four research questions were proposed to delve into an understanding of the educational reforms in Portugal, the strategies used by different HEIs to improve internationalisation, and the

extent to which these strategies influence Portuguese students' views on international issues and overseas study.

1. Is there a significant difference in the implementation of Internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon?
2. Is there a significant difference in the implementation of cross-border education strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon?
3. To what extent do the internationalisation strategies across different HEIs in Portugal shape students' views of international issues?
4. How are attitudes towards studying abroad impacted significantly by the implementation of internationalisation strategies across HEIs in Portugal?

1.6 Research Objectives

- To assess the differences in the implementation of internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in Beja and Lisbon.
- To examine the differences in the implementation of cross-border education strategies across HEIs in Beja and Lisbon.
- To analyse the effectiveness of the HE Curriculum in shaping students' views of international issues.
- To determine the views of Portuguese students on studying abroad concerning the internationalisation strategies adopted by Portuguese HEIs.

1.7 Higher Education Context

Since this study dwells on the cities of Beja and Lisbon, an overview of the contextual environment of their higher education is provided. Firstly, according to Borralho et al. (2014), the education system in Portugal adopts a binary system that integrates universities as well as

polytechnics, and these differ dimensionally and in terms of their legal framework. Secondly, the entire education system consists of 127 institutions and five non-polytechnic institutions (Borrvalho et al., 2014). However, according to DGES, there are currently 106 institutions of higher education in 2021, in which, 67 of them are polytechnic institutions and 39 of them are universities. These also split into 70 private institutions and 34 public institutions, while the remaining two are considered public-military institutions. Further, it is reported that public HEIs are territorially dispersed compared to private ones, which are concentrated in Metropolitan regions, including Lisbon and Oporto (Borrvalho et al., 2014). On the other hand, polytechnics are situated in regions that are characterised by lower socioeconomic imperatives coupled with population density as well as further from urban areas (Toscano et al., 2018). However, exceptions to this aspect include the polytechnic institutes of Oporto, Lisbon and Coimbra (Borrvalho et al., 2014). In that regard, Beja has only polytechnic institutes, while Lisbon has both public and private universities and polytechnic institutes (Saude et al., 2014). However, despite the investment differences in higher education between the two cities, it does not imply that Beja cannot offer exemplary internationalisation programs in HE. Beja's polytechnic institutions have the potential to offer internationalisation programs through various capacities that can foster exchange programs and staff exchanges (Del Carmen Arau Ribeiro & Coelho, 2019). Moreover, Dias (2014) reports that globalisation pressures coupled with adjustments of educational policies in Portugal have influenced the continued increase in scientific knowledge's production and dissemination, international mobility of students and staff, and academic cooperation. These phenomena have been witnessed in both universities and polytechnics (Dias, 2014). Therefore, this aspect indicates that the investment differences in polytechnic institutes in Beja do not hamper the city from achieving its internationalisation of HE objectives. Further, according to Toscano et al. (2018),

although Portugal's binary structure in HE influences the prevalence of diversification with regard to the student body, institutional profiles, and the formative offer. This diversification has led to polytechnics having very large enrolment representations, about 34% of the total number of HE students (Toscano et al. 2018). Toscano et al. (2018) further point out that despite these diverse differences among universities and polytechnics, the latter institutions hold a greater potential of achieving the global mission of higher education.

1.8 Dissertation Structure

This dissertation is arranged into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the study topic by discussing the background, rationale, aim, research questions, and objectives. In chapter two, the relevant literature on educational reforms in Portugal is reviewed. The first part defines internationalisation and provides various rationales for the phenomenon. This part is followed by a theoretical framework and a discussion of higher education reforms in Portugal. Finally, strategic management processes utilised by HEIs in the process of internationalisation are outlined. Next, the third chapter discuss the methodology utilised in the study and is divided into nine sections. They include research philosophy, approach, design, methods, data collection tools, sampling strategy, reliability, methodological limitations, and ethics. Chapter four contains a discussion of the study's findings and discussion with minimal reference to the literature. Finally, the fifth chapter provides the conclusions coupled with recommendations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter delineates a review of relevant literature regarding HE reforms in Portugal and the internationalisation of HEIs. The first section gives the conceptual definition of the internationalisation of HE, its rationale, as well as its theoretical framework. The Internationalisation-at-home model and cross-border education are comprehensively discussed. In addition, the strategies adopted for the implementation of internationalisation in HEIs are also discussed. The second part describes the higher education reforms in Portugal and the strategic management processes used by HEIs to internationalise the curriculum. Finally, a conclusion and the research gaps are included in the final part of the chapter.

2.2 Defining Internationalisation of Higher Education

The meaning of the term internationalisation has evolved over the past few years, leading to various definitions by scholars (Zhou, 2016). Despite the prevalent use of the term within political and cultural contexts, there remains a lack of consensus on what it precisely means. Bennett and Kane (2011) note that internationalisation may have many vague and unclear meanings on the institutional level, which tend to differ among scholars worldwide. Furthermore, many definitions are synonymous with the term "globalisation," which, according to Douglas and Selin (2012), is fundamentally different from the internationalisation of HE. As such, it is necessary to delve into some of the relevant and widely accepted meanings before applying the term in this study.

In the Higher Education context, internationalisation is described by Knight (2004, p.2) as "the process of infusing an international element into the higher education activities and services." Knight's definition encompasses three main aspects- purpose, function, and service delivery- in

HEIs' curriculum, teaching, and research activities. Armstrong (2007) noted that Knight's definition fell short in addressing some vital aspects such as inter-institutional partnerships of HEIs, student and staff exchanges, and intercultural learning facilitated by an internationally-framed curriculum. Armstrong's improved definition focused on expanding an institution's teaching and curricula activities across geographical borders through global partnerships with other HEIs, a concept commonly known as transnational education. However, transnational education can only be considered to be a manifestation of the internationalisation of HE rather than its inherent meaning. Altbach and Knight (2007) contend that transnational education is only a form of internationalisation and mostly entails inter-institutional collaboration and joint ventures between HEIs. As such, Knight's definition provides a more comprehensive meaning, involving the incorporation of international and intercultural elements into HEI activities and functions.

2.3 Rationale for Internationalisation of HE in Portugal

In this sub-section, a brief review of HEIs' internationalisation rationales in Portugal is presented. Jiang (2010) refers to rationales for internationalisation as motivating factors that facilitate the integration of a global, multi-cultural dimension into the HE curriculum. These motivations refer to the factors that encourage institutions to adopt curricular changes to promote internationalisation. However, Buckner (2019) notes that while most rationales are relevant on an institutional level, equal attention should be given to nationally-centred motivations. Buckner (2019) further reveals that very few scholars have explored the role of national rationales, which are equally crucial in the internationalisation of HE.

Based on interviews that involved ten participants of Portuguese higher education institutions (HEIDs), Guerreiro and Barros (2018) contend that the last decades have witnessed significant structural, institutional, economic, social as well as demographic changes in Portuguese

HE. Likewise, Magalhães (2011) and Urbano (2011) indicate that there are several transformations that have taken place within the HE context in Portugal, characterised by the modernity of the Portuguese society. Based on an exploratory quantitative study that involved 289 international students in Portugal and Germany, Haase et al. (2019) agree with the assertion above by arguing that internationalisation of HE in Portugal can be attributed to improved conditions of living coupled with cultural patterns' progressive change that was associated with the EU policies. The same authors further state that these improvements have led to increased educational competency levels and new expectations regarding achievement as well as professional appreciation (Haase et al., 2019). In addition, the other reasons associated with HEIs' internationalisation in Portugal include the sector's expansion and massification, democratisation, demographic alterations of the student body, characterised by the increased number of female students and institutional diversification that witnessed the increased entry of private universities into HE (Urbano, 2011). Hence, these factors influenced structural changes that saw the establishment of the binary system of the 1980s (Urbano, 2011). Therefore, these factors influenced the need for the internationalisation of HE in Portugal.

Moreira (2006) states that Portugal's HEIs' internationalisation might be attributed to the Bologna Process' implementation. In agreement with the above argument, Guerreiro and Barros (2018) contend that the implementation of the Bologna process in Portugal resulted in an archipelagic model for diplomas' recognition. Additionally, Haase et al. (2019) approve the latter assertion by pointing out that the Bologna process' implementation also influenced the approval as well as the implementation of HEIs' novel legal system, which decisively impacted the regulatory norms relating to quality and evaluation and alternations in the career of teaching. For instance, the decree-law no. 42/2005 introduced significant HE changes in the Portuguese system

(Guerreiro & Barros, 2018). Adapting to the Bologna Declaration influenced the restructuring of HE in three cycles of study, including defining the objectives underlying each academic degree, thus making them transferable as well as comparable, coupled with ECTS credit units' establishment to foster national as well as international reading (Guerreiro & Barros, 2018). Additionally, the legal diploma further influenced the creation of supplementary diplomas as well as the establishment of a classification comparability scale within the EU (Guerreiro & Barros, 2018). Consequently, in 2007, A3ES was birthed/created -with the sole purpose of evaluating and accreditation of HEIs' study cycles as well as monitor Portugal's performance in European's HE quality assurance system (Sin et al., 2016). As such, the degree of Portugal's HEIs internationalisation is measured and considered under the quality standard terms of the EU. In relation to these assertions, this study documents how Portuguese national policies of HE are aligned with international standards to facilitate exchange programs for both staff and students.

2.4 Strategies for Implementing Internationalisation in Higher Education

Higher learning institutions have a key role in implementing strategies that will lead to an internationally focused curriculum enabling students to be culturally competent and gain a global outlook. Wheelen and Hunger (2012) propose a strategic management model for institutions and organisations composed of four key aspects: environmental analysis, strategy formulation, implementation, evaluation, as well as control. The authors contend that carrying out an environmental analysis should be the first step for every institution and entails scanning for external and internal environmental factors through SWOT analysis. This aspect is followed by formulating an effective strategy that aligns with the institution's objectives and mission statement (Wheelen & Hunger, 2012). In the next step, strategy implementation, institutions are required to initiate the necessary programmes and procedures to facilitate internationalisation, such as foreign

language requirements, courses with globally-framed topics, and joint partnerships. Finally, evaluation and control are carried out to obtain feedback useful for improving the implemented procedures. This strategy was adopted by the University of Aveiro between 2010 and 2018 to foster the achievement of its HE internationalisation objectives (Lourenço et al., 2020).

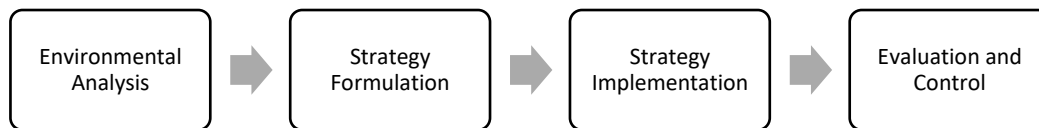


Figure 1. Strategic management model. Adapted from Wheeler and Hunger (2012).

The OECD (2012) asserts that initiating a strategic approach is one way that the HEIs can handle their internationalisation strategies more effectively. It provides a seven-step process for HEIs in effectively developing a strategic approach. The first step of the process involves formulating the main objectives for internationalisation that align with the institution's mission. This is followed by identifying the most suitable strategies for the institution, involving key stakeholders, coming up with an effective business model, networking, monitoring, and evaluation (OECD, 2012). Davies (1992) describes four main strategic approaches that HEIs can incorporate to attaining effective internationalisation. These include the central-systematic, systematic-marginal spontaneous-marginal as well as spontaneous-central strategies.

Hénard et al. (2012) contend that the implementation of internationalisation heavily relies on Government policies since such policies can facilitate or hinder it within the higher education context. Moreover, Soliman et al. (2018), through a case study approach that encompassed four English universities agree with the above argument by stating that Government policy takes centre

stage since national policies of internationalisation could facilitate national competitiveness by attracting global research initiatives, stimulate talent mobility for students and faculty as well as influence corporate partnerships. Therefore, given the national importance of internationalisation, various strategies are deployed to facilitate the practice in higher education contexts in different regions globally. For instance, according to Curtis (2013), initially, there were international offices that facilitated HEIs' international activities. Likewise, Fielden (2011) notes that the use of international offices in the internationalisation of HEIs was particularly pivotal in the recruitment as well as mobility of international students. However, according to Soliman et al. (2018), the use of international offices had drawbacks due to its alignment with student recruitment and mobility because the concept of internationalisation has evolved to include global partnerships and collaborations, global student and staff experience, global learning as well as research and it encompasses the strategic, mission, cultural and structural imperatives of universities. These policies have been successfully applied by the Portuguese Camões Institute to foster international student and staff mobility from Angola and Cape Verde to study in Portugal (França et al., 2018). Related to these assertions, this research demonstrates the attitudes of students in Beja and Lisbon towards internationalisation strategies in Portugal and how this correlates effectiveness of HE internationalisation.

Owing to the increased importance of internationalisation in higher education in relation to competitiveness and sustainability, various strategies, policies, programmes as well as infrastructures have been developed by universities to facilitate it (Soliman et al., 2018). Likewise, Hénard et al. (2012) posit that countries have employed varied approaches to facilitate HEIs' internationalisation, ranging from market reliance on competitive forces to centralised interventions such as enforcing binding Government regulations. These strategies have been

developed domestically in home campuses and abroad as a pathway to implementing internationalisation plans, including international students' recruitment (Huang et al., 2016), curricula internationalisation (Pandian et al., 2016; Magne, 2015), foster the mobility of international research (Jacob & Meek, 2013), integrate international students as well as promote intercultural capabilities (Soliman et al., 2018). In addition, Shams and Huisman (2016) indicate that these strategies further help in opening branch campuses in foreign countries to facilitate the education of students that are not able to seek education overseas due to travelling bottlenecks. An example of where this strategy has been adopted is the Tordesillas Group, which is an academic network with Brazilian, Portuguese and Spanish universities that aim to strengthen and foster exchange programs (Fonseca et al., 2016). Although the issues related to internationalisation strategies vary among countries, typically, similar issues include visas, career opportunities, and security (Hénard et al., 2012). It is therefore evident that the internationalisation strategies employed by HEIs depend on their country-specific considerations. Thus, this study examines Portugal's country-specific considerations when allowing HE internationalisation and whether these promote or hinder the global mobility of students and staff.

Within the Portuguese context, Rendas (Politécnico de Lisboa, 2013) and Guerreiro and Barros (2018), in their exemplary studies indicate that from the point of view of the Council of Rectors of Portuguese Universities (CRUP), the internationalisation strategies adopted include the academic community's mobility; international students' admission; and recruitment of foreign teachers. In agreement with the above assertions, Lourenço et al. (2020) reveal through an exploratory study that Portuguese HEIs have embraced several strategies to internationalise and these range from fostering the mobility of the academic community; attracting foreign teachers; students and researchers; adopting joint degree programmes and supporting global scientific

collaboration. In addition, HEIs in Portugal have been at the forefront in creating a global campus environment via different initiatives that include welcome packages as well as intercultural events (Guerreiro & Barros, 2018). In relation to these assertions, this research examines the attitudes of HE students towards these initiatives and welcome packages in fostering the internationalisation of the country's HEIs. Moreover, according to Lourenço and Pinto (2019), Portugal's HE internationalisation has also adopted other strategies such as fostering the growth of English-medium instructions in order to attract international students and advance their competitiveness in international education rankings. Ferreira et al. (2015) further indicate that the HE sector in Portugal has increasingly invested in international cooperation to enhance Portuguese-speaking nations' development programs. Examples of where these strategies have worked successfully in Portugal include the University of Porto, ISCTE Lisbon, the University of Aveiro, University of Minho and Nova University, among others (Deca, 2020). In relation to this literature, the current study demonstrates how students view these strategies with regard to how they contribute to HE's internationalisation in Beja and Lisbon.

2.5 A Theoretical Framework for Internationalisation

This study adopts Knight's (2012) two-pillar framework for internationalisation, which is composed of "Internationalisation-at-home" and "cross-border education". Despite these two pillars being distinct entities, they portray a close association with each other and "have significant implications for campus-based internationalisation" (Knight, 2012, p.22). Therefore, adopting this framework helped shed light on the impacts of IAH strategies and cross-border education strategies in improving internationalisation in Portuguese HEIs and shaping students' views of international issues.

The highly multifaceted and intricate nature of internationalisation has led to a plethora of information and academic resources to understand the phenomenon more intimately. A vast scope of literature explains the various aspects of this phenomenon within the higher education context while also focusing on applying theory into practice at the institutional level (Rumbley et al., 2012). Scholars have proposed two main concepts or 'pillars' of internationalisation: "at-home" and "cross-border education."

Internationalisation-at-Home (IAH) is a relatively recent concept that focuses on students within domestic environments and aims to impart international and multi-cultural competence by integrating global elements into the higher education curriculum (Beelen & Jones, 2015). It acknowledges that every student needs to be equipped with international and intercultural skills within their home country, even though they may not have the opportunity to venture abroad (Morgado et al., 2015). Therefore, IAH places greater emphasis on strategies that serve to incorporate "an intercultural and global dimension into the teaching and learning process, research activities, co-curricular aspects and positive associations with regional ethnic groups" (Knight, 2012, p.22). Therefore, this study utilised IAH strategies as a framework to understand the extent to which Portuguese HEIs have integrated an intercultural and global element into their curricular content and campus activities. More specifically, it used IAH to grasp the effectiveness of an internationally-framed curriculum in shaping domestic students' views on international issues and the internationalisation of HEIs.

In contrast, cross-border education focuses on "transnational education or the mobility of people, programs, ideas, and policies across national borders" (Knight, 2012, p.4). Students who intend to study abroad may move to a foreign HEI to access international education. This is mainly referred to as cross-border 'people' mobility, and as Knight (2012) notes, there has been a vertical

shift from this approach towards program mobility. The latter approach is seen in the delivery of internationally-framed courses and programs to domestic students within their national borders. People mobility may also involve the movement of faculty and teaching staff across international borders as an internship experience, fieldwork, or exchange programmes. This study focused on the mobility of people by analysing the effectiveness of cross-border student and staff mobility in improving internationalisation within Portuguese HEIs. Student and staff mobility experiences such as short-term exchange programmes and inter-institution collaborative programs were evaluated for their effectiveness in shaping Portuguese students' views towards internationalisation and global matters. This served to answer the research questions and provide further recommendations for the improvement of the strategies.

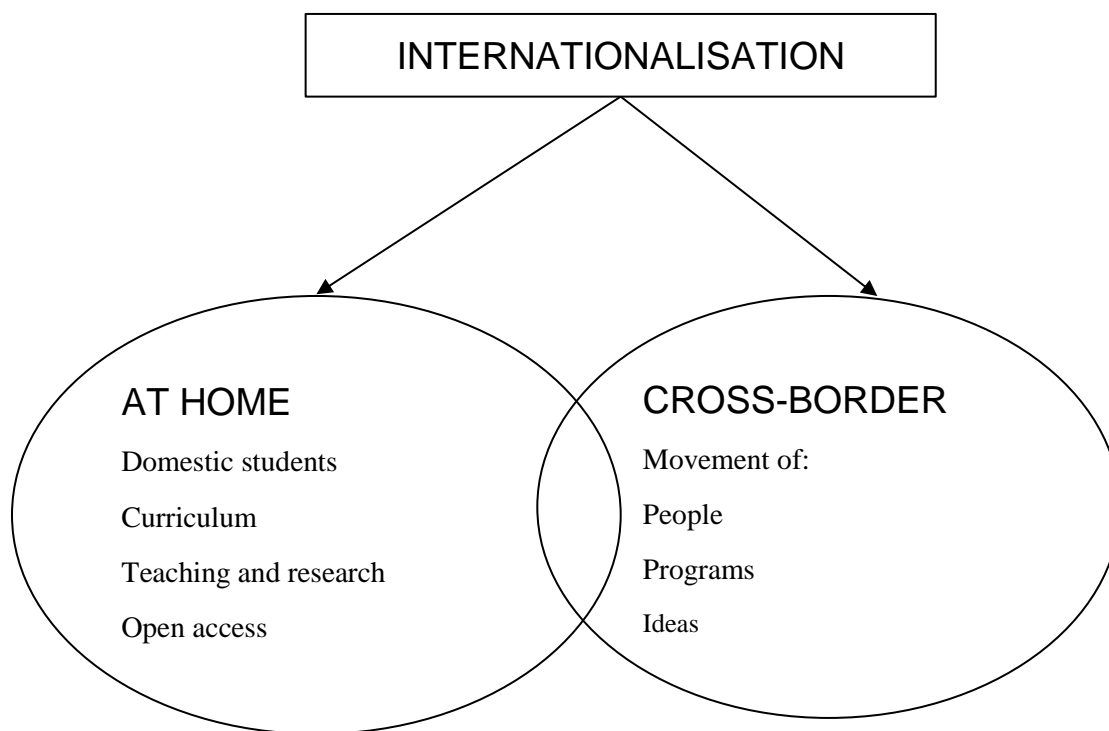


Figure 2. Pillars of internationalisation. Adapted from Knight (2012).

2.5.1 Internationalisation-at-Home (IAH)

The European Commission (2013) listed IAH as one of the critical strategies in transforming HE in the European region. The Internationalisation-at-Home concept is based on international and intercultural learning that encompasses curricular and co-curricular programmes within HEIs (Knight, 2012). At the heart of the model is an internationally-focused curriculum that aims to provide global learning opportunities for domestic students and impart multi-cultural knowledge and skills (Agnew and Kahn, 2014). Bengt Nilsson first proposed the model in 1998, which was further developed by Betty Leask and Jane Knight in the early 2000s.

Leask (2013) emphasised the need for incorporating both global and intercultural aspects in the curriculum and informal student experiences at HEIs. Similarly, Knight (2008) proposed adopting an internationally-framed curriculum in the teaching and research functions of HEIs, adding that it would benefit students and staff regardless of whether they chose to remain within national borders. One of the critical outcomes of internationalisation-at-Home, as Leask (2009) described, is the production of intercultural competent graduates capable of engaging with people across all walks of life on the campus and within the broader landscape. Furthermore, it leads to the generation of new ideas and solutions to national and global issues. The study, therefore, sought to investigate how the implementation of IAH strategies in Beja and Lisbon influenced how students perceive intercultural issues and their attitudes towards studying abroad.

2.5.2 Cross-Border Education

Cross-border education describes "the mobility of people, programs, services, policies, and across national borders" (Knight, 2012, p.23). Chetro-Szivovs (2010) provides a similar definition, stating that it is the movement of people, providers, programs, and curricula across state or regional borders. Students and university staff fall under the 'people' category and tend to be mobile through

exchange programmes and international internship programmes. On the other hand, program mobility refers to delivering programs across geographical borders through forms such as 'franchising' and 'twinning' or joint degree programs (Rumbley, 2012). Such arrangements may be funded by the Government, donors, or other private sources, while the local institution takes charge of teaching and other curricular activities (Knight, 2006). The author states that student mobility is the most commonly acknowledged form of cross-border education and has been classified by Knight (2006) into six key categories. Students may experience mobility in various ways such as:

1. Short-term exchange programmes - In this category, students undergo a short-term exchange programme in a foreign institution affiliated with their home university. This is usually set as a requirement in their degree program and can last for a period of one semester or a year.
2. Inter-institution collaborative programmes - In this category, students are enrolled in a program offered through the collaboration of two or more HEIs. This type of arrangement may be in the form of twinning programs, joint degree programs, or multiple degree programs within the home institution.
3. International internship programmes - This mobility experience may be mandatory or optional and places students in a foreign work environment that will nurture practical skills. The home institution, in this case, is responsible for awarding the credentials to the participating students.
4. Study tours and workshops - This experience may be mandatory or optional and involves the enrolment of students into a summer programme, study tour, academic workshop, or a foreign language course.

5. Research and fieldwork - This is usually a mandatory requirement by the home institution and may be part of the student's degree program.
6. Full degree programmes- These programmes are usually undertaken by students in a foreign country and may last for several years, depending on the host institution's program offering.

The cross-border education theory was found useful for this research as it mainly addresses the extent to which student mobility has been used to promote internationalisation in Portuguese HEIs. Knight's (2006) six categories of student mobility experiences can serve as a framework for determining the extent to which institutions in Portugal prioritise student exchange programmes, international internships, and inter-institution collaboration as a means to improve internationalisation. Furthermore, the framework serves as a basis to establish the willingness of domestic students in Beja and Portugal to pursue further studies abroad based on their mobility experiences.

2.6 Higher Education Reforms and Internationalisation in Portugal

In the past, the HE system in Portugal was characterised by a strong centralised bureaucracy that was more focused on catering to the socially and economically privileged (Correia et al., 2002). In the decades prior to the 1974 Revolution, a small proportion of students were enrolled in an HEI, and even fewer managed to graduate from the Universities and Polytechnics. This situation soon changed in 1974 when the dictatorship was overthrown, and a new regime took charge, causing a massive shift in the education sector (Coelho & Arau Ribeiro, 2018). In the next couple of years, there ensued a massive proliferation of HEIs in the region, leading to increased enrolment rates among students. A report by the OECD (2006) revealed an 800% increase in student enrolment in the next year relative to the student population. Within four

decades, there were approximately 349,658 students enrolled in HEIs across Portugal (Coelho & Arau Ribeiro, 2018).

Furthermore, by 2008, a huge influx of Universities and Polytechnics offered a diverse range of courses and programmes to more than 300,000 students (Tavares et al., 2008). Despite this milestone, there were concerns regarding the quality of education being offered and the internationalisation strategies implemented across many institutions (OECD, 2006). For instance, it was found that there was a lack of consistency in the HE internationalisation policies, which was attributed to the misalignment of Government policies and those of HEIs (OECD, 2006). Owing to these weaknesses, the MCTES authorised a quality assurance body to carry out evaluations across different universities and polytechnics across the country.

The Bologna Declaration of 1999 was instrumental in transforming the HE system in Portugal. The proposed policies aimed at establishing a coherent structure across HEIs that was more internationally-focused and could be compared across the signatory countries in Europe (Lourenço et al., 2020). In the first few years of the millennium, there was increasing pressure to internationalise Higher Education Institutions and create a European region that would produce students who could compete internationally. Increasing globalisation compelled the national Government and HEIs to develop internationalisation strategies to adapt to the continually changing global landscape.

However, Veiga et al. (2006) note that the strategies adopted were incoherent and disorganised, leading to stagnation and modest outcomes that were ineffective. Furthermore, the autonomy of higher education institutions undermined effective adherence (Veiga et al., 2006). Some of the barriers identified in the internationalisation process at the time included a lack of Government support and language barriers (Coelho & Arau Ribeiro, 2018). In 2014, a new strategy

was proposed by the MES, which sought to establish a consistent internationalisation strategy for HEIs across Portugal (MES, 2014). The proposed recommendations included a list of 40 strategies containing four key elements such as collaboration between Institutions, student and staff mobility, joint degrees, and strategic partnerships (MES, 2014). A high priority was also placed on foreign language proficiency and the utilisation of the English language to instruct students (Keerklan et al., 2008),

In 2015, the EC proposed one uniform internationalisation strategy that could be applied across national and institutional levels in Portugal. This entailed careful positioning of all the participants and stakeholders in a way that could catapult them to the international stage (de Wit, 2015). By 2016, the strategies implemented towards the internationalisation of the curriculum began to take shape upon the implementation of Resolution 78/2016 by the Government. The Resolution sought to refine both national and institutional internationalisation strategies to ameliorate the internationalisation of HE and minimise the rapid and unprecedented growth of HEIs (Lourenço et al., 2020). With the Government's full support, higher education institutions could experience an internationally-focused curriculum that would equip them with international and intercultural skills necessary to propel them into the international stage (Keerklan et al., 2008).

2.7 Research Gap

Although the roadmap to effective internationalisation of HEIs is covered in a vast scope of literature, there is still a gap in understanding how different HEIs in Portugal have succeeded in infusing global and intercultural concepts into their curricula and institutional functions (Friesen, 2012). While Portuguese HEIs have made significant strides in implementing the EC's recommendations for internationalisation, scholars have not yet explored the outcomes and impacts on the country's student population. It is also unclear how Portuguese students perceive

the efforts made by their institutions in internationalising the curriculum, seeing that they are the major stakeholders in their institutions (Fit & Gologan, 2018). Moreover, scholars have not yet addressed how cross-border education affects students' and staff attitudes towards studying abroad.

As previously discussed in the theoretical framework, there has been a significant shift from student mobility to program mobility, with many foreign HEIs offering international programmes for domestic students within their own countries (Knight, 2012). However, there is still no research addressing whether this phenomenon has affected students' attitudes towards studying abroad. Therefore, more research is required to gauge the influence of the downward trend towards program mobility on students' attitudes towards studying abroad. Most importantly, scholars need to address more factors that may improve success in internationalisation strategies of HEIs and the impact these factors may have on domestic students.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This section aims to present a comprehensive guide of the appropriate methods and procedures utilised in conducting the research study. As stated in chapter one, the study aimed to investigate the influence of the HE system in Portugal on students' beliefs towards internationalisation. By applying the theoretical underpinnings from the literature review, this research explored how the internationalisation of HEIs in Lisbon and Beja influence how Portuguese students perceive internationalisation and their attitudes towards studying abroad. There are eight sections in this chapter, and each describes a specific component of the methodology. The first section addresses the research philosophy, followed by the research approach, design, hypotheses, data collection tools, sampling strategy, data analysis, reliability, methodological limitations, and ethics. The methodology is formulated to provide answers to the research questions enlisted below:

1. Is there a significant difference in the implementation of Internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon?
2. Is there a significant difference in the implementation of cross-border education strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon?
3. To what extent do the internationalisation strategies across different HEIs in Portugal shape students' views of international issues?
4. How are attitudes towards studying abroad impacted significantly by the implementation of internationalisation strategies across HEIs in Portugal?

3.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy, as stated by Saunders (2009), involves investigating the nature of reality, knowledge, and existence with a view of setting the basis for methodological choices. Merriam (1998) asserts that establishing a philosophical position is crucial in identifying a suitable research design and approach for a study. It serves to frame the research by outlining ontological and epistemological concepts (Saunders & Tosey, 2016). This study took on a positivist philosophical position to set the foundation for the methodology.

Positivism emerges from empiricism and adheres to an objective view of the world through conducting measurements and observations to obtain knowledge of reality (Ryan, 2018). Positivist researchers rely on statistical analyses to prove or disprove the formulated hypotheses and draw quantifiable results. This philosophy was thus deemed suitable for this study as it helped the researcher formulate hypotheses that were tested to determine the influence of the higher education system in Portugal on students' beliefs towards internationalisation. The repeatability of observations and manipulation of variables are key aspects that are considered in the positivist worldview that aims to establish associations between phenomena in reality (Crowther & Lancaster, 2008). This aspect is different from interpretivism philosophy, which takes on a more humanistic view and proposes that reality can only be grasped through subjective interpretation. Thus, the latter involves viewing the world through the lens of the individual rather than factual information from measurement (Hammersley, 2013). On the other hand, positivism relies on quantitative methods of data collection and analysis, which are considered by researchers to be more reliable (Cohen et al., 2007). According to Dörnyei (2007), statistical methods are critical in determining the data's reliability by measurement of internal consistency or utilising Cronbach's alpha coefficient. By conducting empirical tests, sampling techniques, and establishing

associations between independent and dependent variables, positivist researchers can also replicate the research for various subgroups and save time and resources for future research by referring to prior studies (Cohen et al., 2011). The positivist research philosophy was deemed suitable for this quantitative study as it enabled the use of quantitative methods in establishing associations between the internationalisation of HEIs in Portugal and the perceptions of students. Another strength of this research philosophy is that it allows the researcher to generalise the findings to the population in question (Cohen et al., 2007). Furthermore, it ensures validity through the adoption of methods such as surveys and deriving quantitative results that can be used to obtain answers to specific research problems (Cohen et al., 2011). Therefore, the quantitative results derived from this study were useful in comprehensively answering the question of how IAH and cross-border strategies improve internationalisation in HEIs in Portugal.

While positivism provides numerous advantages for researchers, there are a number of limitations that may arise upon the adoption of this philosophy. One weakness is that it may be difficult to determine aspects such as attitudes and thoughts of a target population due to the challenge of observation (Hammersley, 2013). Pham (2017) reveals that this may undermine the capacity of the researcher to examine abstract conceptualisations linked to individual perceptions encompassed within educational contexts. Another weakness of positivism is its inability to associate general findings of the research to local populations (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Pham (2017) claims that due to the high level of generalisability, this method could lead to an inaccurate picture of the research problem or phenomenon. Utilising this philosophy enabled the study to follow a systematic procedure through formulating and testing hypotheses and applying statistical methods to measure the influence of education on student's views on internationalisation.

3.3 Research Approach

The research study employed a deductive approach to generate and test hypotheses based on the internationalisation theories to substantiate the topic's general ideas. Bryman and Bell (2007) describe the deductive approach as one of the primary methods that help guide the researcher in hypothesis testing to either build on or dispute theories. This aspect is different from the inductive approach, described by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) as a "bottom-up" research approach that generates theory based on the research findings. Trochim (2006) distinguishes deductive and inductive research approaches based on their "principles of reasoning." Trochim (2006) prefers the deductive research approach as a method of progression from the general to the specific or a "top-down approach" and the inductive method as a progression from the specific to the general (Trochim, 2006). The deductive approach was found appropriate for this research as it aimed to demonstrate the IAH and cross-border education theory in relation to the quantitative research on the perceptions of Portuguese students on internationalisation strategies implemented by HEIs. The inductive approach was ruled out since the study did not aim to generate a new hypothesis.

Babbie (2010) mentions that deductive reasoning commences with an expected pattern that can be tested against theories, while inductive reasoning seeks to establish patterns from observations and generate a theory. The deductive approach assists the researcher to establish how specific variables are correlated and also enables the application of quantitative research methods (Babbie, 2010). Therefore, the study used a deductive approach to determine correlations between IAH and cross-border strategies (independent variables) and improvement of internationalisation (dependent variable). It also helped the researcher to determine the link between internationalisation strategies (independent variables) and attitudes towards studying abroad

(dependent variable). Additionally, the approach allows for the generalisability of the results and possesses an inherent logic of verifiability (Gulati, 2009). Therefore, this study's results may be generalised to the Portuguese student population to get a clear picture of the phenomenon and formulate recommendations for further improvement. The approach is also convenient for researchers who have less time and resources to carry out their research.

3.3 Research Design

The inquiry utilised a descriptive study design that relied on a quantitative approach to answer the four research questions formulated. Dulock (1993) explains that research design is "the blueprint specifically made to answer the research question and to control variance." According to Saunders et al. (2009), descriptive research accurately depicts a profile of individuals or happenings, enabling researchers to obtain data from a vast array of sample participants on the research problem. As Gay (1992) describes, a researcher employing descriptive research aims to gather data to test hypotheses or provide answers to the questions formulated for the research study. Quantitative research focuses on using statistical methods to understand the association between certain variables, find patterns, and draw conclusions (Babbie, 2010). This quantitative study aimed to measure the influence of HEI internationalisation strategies (independent variable) on the perceptions of Portuguese students (dependent variable) in the cities of Lisbon and Beja in Portugal. Utilising quantitative methods requires that researchers incorporate both descriptive and inferential statistics in data analysis. When trying to establish population parameters and derive conclusions from the data, descriptive statistics are considered appropriate.

Creswell (2005) states that descriptive statistics focus on obtaining central tendencies and establishing the degree to which the data are spread. Measurements such as mean, range, median, variance, and standard deviation are obtained after analysis and may be used to assess sample

characteristics and arrive at conclusions (Creswell, 2005). On the other hand, inferential statistics are suitable for establishing associations or correlations between variables and also build on descriptive statistics. They help researchers draw comparisons on how independent variables influence a population or target group depending on the changes in the dependent variables. Therefore, the descriptive research design was chosen for this study since the researcher focused on using quantitative data to establish meaningful correlations using descriptive statistics. The use of descriptive research also enabled the researcher to compare quantitative data from the two demographic regions of Portugal, Beja and Lisbon, to gain insight into the differences in their internationalisation strategies. Inferential statistics were instrumental in obtaining variability and establishing the associations between internationalisation strategies and perceptions towards international issues and studying abroad.

3.4 Research Hypotheses

The research sought to investigate the influence of the HE system in Portugal on students' beliefs towards internationalisation. Four research questions were instrumental in framing the study.

Research question one: Is there a significant difference in the implementation of Internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon?

Implementation of Internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon differs in the following ways:

Null Hypothesis one (H₀): There is no significant difference in the implementation of Internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon

Alternate Hypothesis one (H-1): There is a significant difference in the implementation of Internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon

Research question two: Is there a significant difference in the implementation of cross-border education strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon?

Implementation of cross-border education across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon differs in the following ways:

Null Hypothesis two (H₀): There is no significant difference in the implementation of cross-border education across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon

Alternate Hypothesis two (H-2): There is a significant difference in the implementation of cross-border education across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon

Research Question three: To what extent do the internationalisation strategies across different HEIs in Portugal shape students' view of international issues?

The HEI internationalisation strategies (independent variable) influence the perceptions of students (dependent variable) as shown:

Null Hypothesis three (H₀): The internationalisation strategies implemented across different HEIs in Portugal have no significant influence on how students view international issues

Alternate Hypothesis three (H-3): The internationalisation strategies implemented across different HEIs in Portugal have a significant positive influence on how students view international issues.

Research question four: How are attitudes towards studying abroad impacted significantly by the implementation of internationalisation strategies across HEIs in Portugal?

Attitudes towards studying abroad (dependent variable) are impacted significantly by the implementation of internationalisation strategies (independent variable) across HEIs in Portugal as shown:

Null Hypothesis four (H₀): Attitudes towards studying abroad are not impacted significantly by the implementation of internationalisation strategies across HEIs in Portugal.

Alternate Hypothesis four (H-4): Attitudes towards studying abroad are impacted significantly by the implementation of internationalisation strategies across HEIs in Portugal.

3.5 Data Collection Tool

The primary data collection tool utilised for this quantitative research was a survey comprising 18 questions. The survey was created using the Google Forms web survey tool and was composed of three sections. Section one contains six questions formulated to assess student demographic information from the participants such as gender, age, education, native language, type of institution, and location of the institution. Section two was composed of a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire comprising ten statements with the following choices: "Strongly Disagree," "Disagree," "Neutral," "Agree," and "Strongly Agree." The purpose of the scale items was to examine the impact of IAH strategies and cross-border education in enhancing internationalisation in Portuguese HEIs. It also aimed to explore how students perceive the effectiveness of the IAH and cross-border strategies in shaping their view of international issues and studying abroad. Neumann (2000) asserts the reliability of the quantitative data obtained from the Likert scale and states its simplicity and ease of use as an advantage for the researcher. The final section was composed of one closed question and one open question to gauge the student's satisfaction with the internationalisation strategies implemented in their respective institutions.

The survey link was emailed to Portuguese students belonging to several HEIs in Portugal and began with an informed consent page and an explanation of the research. Wyse (2012, p.1) acknowledged the convenience of using email surveys citing that, "they enhance accessibility to respondents and enable the researcher to obtain data in a cost-effective manner". Furthermore, the

abundance of free survey software on the internet facilitates effective data collection and analysis, saving time and costs (Wyse, 2012). The duration of the survey was five minutes, and a total of 133 completed questionnaires were obtained after two weeks. For better comprehension and analysis of the quantitative data, the questionnaire was divided into demographic characteristics, and 10 items of the Likert scale were categorised into internationalisation-at-home strategies, cross-border education, perceptions on international issues, and perceptions on study abroad. The survey form is included in appendix A.

3.6 Sample Design and Participants

The sample design adopted for this study was convenience sampling which was used to target the population of undergraduate and postgraduate students across various HEIs in Beja and Lisbon. Dörnyei (2007) explains that convenience sampling is a sampling category where potential participants are recruited for the study based on several established criteria such as their accessibility, availability, and willingness to participate. Taherdoost (2016) states that convenience sampling is the preferred technique for most students due to its simplicity, time-saving capability, and affordability. Therefore, convenience sampling was considered suitable as it enabled the researcher to access Portuguese student participants within a short period to obtain willing participants who were readily accessible from their social network. Furthermore, it enabled the researcher to handle methodological limitations encountered in the study (Taherdoost, 2016). Owing to time constraints and difficulties in accessing the target population due to their location (Portugal), the researcher found it appropriate to reach out to Portuguese students who were part of their online network and administer the survey to willing participants. While the convenience sampling method may be cheap, less time-consuming, and provide easier access to participants, it presents several disadvantages.

Etikan (2016) states that convenience sampling may facilitate bias and undermine the sample's representativeness in the study. Seeing that the study used Portuguese students belonging to the researcher's network, there was a high likelihood for bias. Furthermore, the participants may not have been representative of the student population in both Lisbon and Beja. Another limitation of this sampling strategy is that it poses a challenge for the quantitative researcher as it undermines the generalisability of the results. This occurs as a result of the reduced representativeness of the sample. However, Jager et al. (2017) assert that a convenience sample's generalisability can be enhanced by confining the sampling frame to specific socio-demographic factors such as age, education level, ethnicity, and location. This serves to increase the homogeneity of the sample (Jager et al., 2017). The targeted population was undergraduate and postgraduate Portuguese students from two demographic regions in Portugal, namely Lisbon and Beja. Therefore, the sample was homogenous with respect to demographic region, education level, and age range, which served to enhance the generalisability of the results.

Participants for the study were Portuguese undergraduate and postgraduate students from various HEIs in Lisbon and Beja who were undertaking their respective degrees. The participants were all domestic students belonging to different Universities and Polytechnics in their respective regions. Their education levels ranged from a bachelor's degree to a doctoral degree, and the participant sample was designed to include both male and female students above the age of 18. The native language of most of the participants was Portuguese, with the majority of the students actively residing in Portugal. Out of 150 prospective participants, 133 completed the survey (n=133), reflecting a response rate of 89%. Participants from Lisbon were 72, while those from Beja were 61. The researcher notified them about the study contents and ensured that all their responses were voluntary and anonymous.

3.7 Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was adopted in this study to analyse the quantitative data. Both inferential and descriptive methods were adopted in the analysis. Descriptive statistics were used for each Likert scale question to generate the mean scores, establish the frequency distributions for each item, and calculate standard deviations and percentages. The demographic characteristics of the participants were also analysed using descriptive analysis. Inferential statistics involving Mann Whitney U tests and Spearman's Correlation Coefficient were adopted (non-parametric) to test the formulated hypotheses. The Mann Whitney U test was utilised in the assessment of differences in IAH and cross-border strategies between the two cities of Beja and Lisbon. The p values generated were used to test the null hypotheses derived from the first two research questions to accept or reject.

The Spearman's Correlation Coefficient was used to establish any significant associations between internationalisation strategies and students' views of international issues. It also sought to investigate the correlation between the implementation of internationalisation strategies and students' attitudes towards studying abroad. A correlation coefficient between 1 and -1 on the Likert Scale reveals a perfect positive correlation for the former and a perfect negative correlation for the latter. A 0 value indicated a lack of correlation between the variables. The p values were used to test the null hypotheses relating to the third and fourth research questions. Spearman's values help the researcher establish the association between the variables and determine how they relate.

3.8 Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha (α) was used to test the survey instrument's reliability on SPSS. Cherry (2013) states that an instrument's reliability is the measure of its internal consistency or stability.

The test is widely used to measure an instrument’s reliability by examining the level of correlation between items (Rovai et al., 2014). An alpha coefficient of 0.7 and above shows high reliability of the survey instrument, while that which is below 0.7 reveals low reliability. The 10 Likert Scale items on internationalisation strategies and students’ perceptions were computed, and the alpha coefficient was determined. The alpha coefficient was found to be 0.776, proving that the Likert scale had high internal consistency and was reliable.

Table 1.

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.776	10

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethics were considered during data collection using the web surveys. The BERA Ethical guidelines stipulate that researchers should obtain “written or oral informed consent from research participants” when carrying out primary research (BERA, 2017, p. 44). However, for online surveys, written or oral informed consent may not be mandatory due to the nature of the research instrument (Mahon, 2013). Researchers are advised to include an information sheet alongside the survey that contains a check box to indicate informed consent (Mahon, 2013). To ensure informed consent was obtained, the contents of the study were comprehensively laid out to the prospective respondents, as well as their voluntary participation and their freedom to withdraw their consent whenever they deemed fit. The anonymity of the participants was ensured by excluding any personal identifying information that could be used to track them. The researcher ensured

confidentiality by taking the necessary precautions to protect the participant's data during collection and storage. Therefore, the obtained data was stored in a digital device with a strong password to ensure that access was granted solely to the researcher.

3.10 Methodological Limitations

One of the methodological limitations that came from the research was sample representativeness. Due to time constraints, the researcher sampled participants that were known to them through their social network, making the data subject to bias and undermining the generalisability of the results. Another methodological limitation was the inability to obtain an equal number of participants for both the demographic regions under study, namely Beja and Lisbon. A higher number of responses were obtained from the participants from Lisbon (72) than those from Beja (61), and this significantly undermined the accuracy of the results.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to present the findings from the web surveys and give a comprehensive analysis of the quantitative data to fulfil the study's main aim and effectively answer the underlying research questions. Three sections are presented in this chapter, including descriptive analysis, hypothesis testing, and discussion of the results.

4.2 Demographic Data

The demographic data collected from the web survey included information about the participants' gender, age, education level, type of institution, location of the institution, and native language. The SPSS software was used to carry out a comprehensive descriptive analysis of the students' demographic characteristics, which included the frequency, means, mode, median, and percentages. A total of 133 participants from both demographic regions (Beja and Lisbon) completed the survey (n=133). 45.9% (n=61) of the participants were from Beja, while 54.1% (n=72) of the participants were from Lisbon. The first item in the survey was the gender of the participants. The majority of the student participants were female (75.9%), while 24.1% (n=32) were male. Table 2 shows the frequency of responses according to the participants' gender and their corresponding percentages.

Table 2.

Frequency of the Responses According to Gender

1. Gender:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	101	75.9	75.9	75.9
	Male	32	24.1	24.1	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	100.0	

As Table 2 above reveals, females constituted the majority of the respondents, implying that the study results were based more on survey responses from the female respondents, and therefore, the attitudes of these students towards the internationalisation of HE could not be generalizable.

The second item in the demographic section was the respondents' age range. This was calculated from the whole sample of 133 participants from Beja and Lisbon. The majority of the students were fairly young and were in their early years of HE. Table 3 displays the frequency of the responses according to the age range of participants and their corresponding percentages.

Table 3.

Frequency of Responses According to Age

2. Age:

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18 - 25 years	88	66.2	66.2	66.2
26 - 35 years	32	24.1	24.1	90.2
36 - 45 years	11	8.3	8.3	98.5
More than 46 years	2	1.5	1.5	100.0
Total	133	100.0	100.0	

As illustrated in Table 3 above, the respondents' ages ranged from 18-46 years, with 66.2% falling within the age range of 18-25 years, 24.1% falling within the range of 26-35 years, 8.3% between 36-45 years and 1.5% above 46 years. Therefore, it can be inferred that the study results were based on survey responses mostly from individuals aged between 18-25 years and hence given this young age range, it can be deduced that they were in their earlier years of HE. Additionally, the third survey item was the education level of the participants. All participants indicated their level of education. Table 4 displays the frequency of the responses according to the participants' education level and their percentages.

Table 4.

Frequency of Responses According to Education Level

3. Education Level:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelor's degree	94	70.7	70.7	70.7
	Master's degree	38	28.6	28.6	99.2
	Doctoral degree	1	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	100.0	

As Table 4 above reveals, the majority of the respondents (70.7%) were pursuing a Bachelor's degree (n=94), while 28.6% were pursuing a Master's degree (n=38), and 0.8% were undertaking a Doctoral (PhD) degree (n= 1). In that regard, it can be inferred that the study results were mostly based on Bachelor's degree students.

The fourth survey item was the type of HEI. Table 5 shows the frequency of the responses as per the institution type for participants in Beja and Lisbon.

Table 5.

Frequency of Responses According to Institution Type

4. Type of Institution:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Polytechnic	60	45.1	45.1	45.1
	University	73	54.9	54.9	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	100.0	

In Table 5 above, the results indicate that those who were enrolled in Universities made up the highest number (54.9%, n=73) while those from Polytechnics were the minority (45.1%, n=60). However, it can be argued that the study sample was evenly distributed by recruiting an almost equal number of representatives from each educational context, and therefore, the attitudes of students towards the internationalisation of HE were not biased towards any one group.

The fifth survey item was the location or demographic region of the HEIs. Table 6 shows the frequency of responses according to the demographic region of the participants and their corresponding percentages.

Table 6.

Frequency of Responses According to Demographic Region

5. Location of Institution (City, Country):

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Beja, Portugal	61	45.9	45.9	45.9
Lisbon, Portugal	72	54.1	54.1	100.0
Total	133	100.0	100.0	

According to Table 6 above, it is evident that participants studying in Lisbon were the majority (54.1%, n=72), while those from Beja made up (45.9%, n=61). However, the discrepancy between the study participants from the two regions is negligible, and hence this did not significantly influence discrepancies between the attitudes of the university and polytechnic students towards the internationalisation of HE.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis of Likert Scale Items

The Likert scale items were divided into three sections, each representing a specific variable, namely IAH, cross-border education, and student perceptions. The mean and standard deviation of each of the Likert scale items was determined using SPSS. The results are shown in Tables 15 and 16 (see Appendix B and Appendix C).

The average scores of each of the items in the three sections were calculated. According to Table 15, the majority of the scores were between 3.33 and 4.22, which corresponded to the “Agree” option on the Likert scale. The first factor (IAH strategies) generated an average score of 3.31, which showed that the students agreed that their respective HEIs made considerable efforts

to infuse global themes in the curriculum (Table 15). However, regarding whether the content in the courses focused on nationally oriented issues, the mean (average) response was 2.81, showing that most students disagreed with the statement (Table 15). This demonstrates that Portuguese HEIs had taken adequate measures to implement IAH strategies in their curricula. The second factor (Cross-border) generated an average score of 3.67, corresponding to “Agree” (Table 15). This result shows that the majority of Universities and Polytechnics in the region emphasised student mobility programmes in improving internationalisation as compared to IAH strategies. Finally, the third factor (Student views) generated an average score of 3.76, which corresponded with “Agree” (Table 15). This result demonstrates that all participants were aware of the importance of each of the various internationalisation factors in influencing their views of international issues and studying abroad.

The results from Table 16 show the standard deviations of each of the Likert scale questions (1 – 10) from the sample of 133 responses from Beja and Lisbon. The SD for three of the scale items (Q6, Q7 and Q8) was less than 1, showing a relatively low variation. This result means that 30% of the responses were much closer to the average score of “Agree.” On the other hand, seven of the Likert items (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5, Q9 and Q10) had a standard deviation of more than 1, showing a relatively high variation. This aspect means that 70% of the responses were much further from the average score of “Agree.” These results also demonstrate that the sample did not follow a normal distribution.

4.4 Inferential Statistics

A normality test was carried out for the Likert scale data to establish the type of inferential statistics to utilise. The non-parametric tests were deemed appropriate for the research since the data did not fulfil all the assumptions for normality.

4.4.1 Mann-Whitney U Test

The Mann-Whitney test was used to test the first two hypotheses regarding differences in Internationalisation strategies between the two cities of Beja and Lisbon. In the first question, the researcher sought to establish whether there was a significant difference in the implementation of IAH strategies in the cities of Beja and Lisbon. The Likert scale item measuring course content was treated as the first independent variable, while the city was grouped under the second independent variable. The null and alternate hypotheses were:

Null Hypothesis one (H₀): There is no significant difference in the implementation of Internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon

Alternate Hypothesis one (H₁): There is a significant difference in the implementation of Internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon

The SPSS program was utilised to calculate the significance level and to accept or reject the null hypothesis. The results are shown in table 7 and 8 below:

Table 7.

Mann-Whitney Test Results, IAH Strategies

Ranks

City	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
IAH Beja	61	56.34	3437.00
Lisbon	72	76.03	5474.00
Total	133		

Table 8.

Mann Whitney Test Statistics

Test Statistics^a

	IAH
Mann-Whitney U	1546.000
Wilcoxon W	3437.000
Z	-3.075
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.002

a. Grouping Variable: City

The results reflected in the test statistics show that the p-value Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) was statistically significant ($p = .002$) as it was less than 0.05. This outcome shows that there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. Therefore,

there is a significant difference in the implementation of internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon.

Table 9.

Hypothesis One Testing Summary

Hypothesis Test Summary				
	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of IAH is the same across categories of City.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.002	Reject the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

The second question sought to investigate whether there was a significant difference in the implementation of cross-border education strategies in Beja and Lisbon. The Likert scale item measuring student mobility through student and staff exchange programmes was treated as the first independent variable while the city was the second independent variable. The hypotheses were:

Null Hypothesis two (H0): There is no significant difference in the implementation of cross-border education strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon.

Alternate Hypothesis two (H-2): There is a significant difference in the implementation of cross-border education strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon.

The SPSS program was used to compute the variables in order to determine the significance level and to accept or reject the null hypothesis. The results are displayed in table 10 and 11 below:

Table 10.

Mann-Whitney Test Results, Cross-border Strategies

Ranks

	City	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Cross-border	Beja	61	61.71	3764.50
	Lisbon	72	71.48	5146.50
	Total	133		

Table 11.

Mann-Whitney Test Results

Test Statistics^a

	Cross-border
Mann-Whitney U	1873.500
Wilcoxon W	3764.500
Z	-1.524
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.127

a. Grouping Variable: City

According to the results, the p-value Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) was shown to be statistically insignificant ($p = .127$) as it is more than 0.05 (Table 11). For this reason, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the implementation of cross-border education strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon, was accepted. Table 12 indicates the hypothesis testing summary generated from SPSS.

Table 12.

Hypothesis Two Testing Summary

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distribution of Crossborder is the same across categories of City.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.127	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

4.4.2 Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient

The Spearman’s Correlation Coefficient established the strength of correlation between the variables in research questions three and four, to test the null hypotheses. The third research question investigated the influence of internationalisation strategies (IAH and cross-border) on students’ views of international issues. The Likert items measuring both IAH and cross-border strategies were labelled as the independent variables, while the Likert item measuring the students’ views of international issues was the dependent variable. The data were computed using SPSS, and the coefficient was determined to measure the strength of correlation between the two variables. Finally, the p-value Sig (2-tailed) was used to test the hypotheses indicated below:

Null Hypothesis three (H0): The internationalisation strategies implemented across different HEIs in Portugal have no significant influence on how students view international issues

Alternate Hypothesis three (H-3): The internationalisation strategies implemented across different HEIs in Portugal have a significant positive influence on how students view international issues

The results are indicated in Table 17 (see Appendix D). The results showed a correlation coefficient of 0.391, which reflected a perfect positive correlation between internationalisation strategies and students' views of international issues ($r = 0.391$) (Table 17). The results also showed that the p-value Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) was less than the significance level ($p < 0.01$), providing sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis (Table 17). Therefore, internationalisation strategies implemented across different HEIs in Portugal have a significant positive influence on how students view international issues.

The fourth research question examined the impact of internationalisation strategies across HEIs in Portugal on students' attitudes towards studying abroad. The Likert items measuring both IAH and cross-border strategies were labelled as the independent variables, while students' attitudes towards studying abroad were the dependent variable. The data were computed into the SPSS program, and the correlation coefficient was determined to measure the strength of correlation between the two variables while the p-value Sig (2-tailed) was used to test the hypotheses below:

Null Hypothesis four (H0): Attitudes towards studying abroad are not impacted significantly by the implementation of internationalisation strategies across HEIs in Portugal.

Alternate Hypothesis four (H-4): Attitudes towards studying abroad are impacted significantly by the implementation of internationalisation strategies across HEIs in Portugal.

The results are indicated in Table 18 (Appendix E). According to the results, there was a perfect positive correlation between internationalisation strategies and students' attitudes towards studying abroad ($r = 0.310$). The p-value Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) was less than the significance level ($p < 0.01$), providing sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis (Table 19) (Appendix F). Therefore, students' attitudes towards studying abroad are impacted significantly by the implementation of internationalisation strategies across HEIs in Portugal.

4.4.3 Level of Satisfaction with Internationalisation

In the final section, participants were asked whether they were happy with the internationalisation offered at their respective institutions. The responses were compared between students from the two cities of Beja and Lisbon. The results showed that 67.3% ($n=41$) of the students from Beja were happy with the internationalisation offered at their institution, while 32.7% ($n=20$) showed dissatisfaction. Therefore, since Beja has only polytechnic institutions, it can be inferred that a majority of polytechnic students expressed satisfaction with internationalisation programmes as they offered them the opportunity to learn in foreign contexts, promote intercultural exchange and expand cross-cultural communication imperatives that further expanded their job market base. On the other hand, 80.6% ($n=54$) of the students from Lisbon were happy with the internationalisation being offered at their institution, while 19.4% ($n=18$) were dissatisfied. Similarly, since a majority of HE institutions in Lisbon are universities, therefore, it can be deduced that most university students were satisfied with internationalisation programmes due to the potential benefits leveraged. Overall, this result demonstrates that a majority of both polytechnic and university students have positive attitudes towards HE's internationalisation;

however, the satisfaction level of the latter is higher compared to the former. These results are shown in figure 3 below:

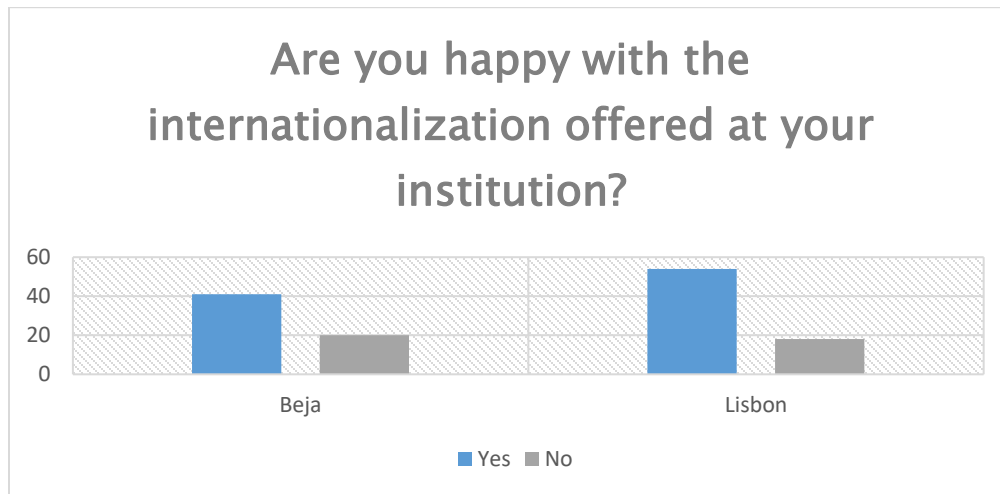


Figure 3. Satisfaction of internationalisation according to city.

To establish whether the differences in satisfaction levels were statistically significant across the two regions, a Mann-Whitney U test was adopted. The results are shown in Table 13 below:

Table 13.

Mann Whitney Test across Beja and Lisbon

Test Statistics

	Satisfaction
Mann-Whitney U	2025.000
Wilcoxon W	4653.000
Z	-.987
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.324

a. Grouping Variable: City

The p-value Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) was not statistically significant ($p= 0.324$) as it was more than 0.05 (Table 13). This result shows that there was no significant difference in students' satisfaction levels of internationalisation between the two demographic regions as the distribution was the same across Beja and Lisbon.

The differences in satisfaction levels across institution types were also measured to determine if students in polytechnics and universities had different levels of satisfaction with internationalisation. According to the results, 68.3% ($n = 41$) of students from polytechnics indicated that they were happy with the internationalisation offered at their institutions, while 31.7% ($n = 19$) were dissatisfied. In comparison, 72.6% ($n = 53$) of students from universities were happy with their institutions' offerings, while 27.4% ($n = 20$) were not happy with internationalisation being implemented at their institutions. The results are illustrated in figure 4 below:

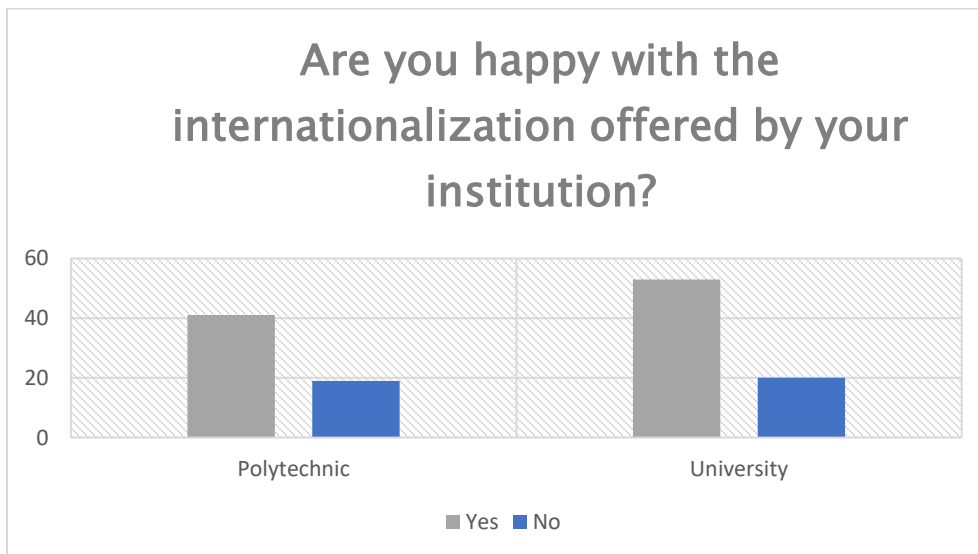


Figure 4. Satisfaction of internationalisation according to institution type.

To establish whether the differences in satisfaction levels were statistically significant across the two institutions, a Mann-Whitney U test was adopted. The findings are shown in table 14 below:

Table 14.

Mann-Whitney Test across Universities and Polytechnics

Test Statistics

	Happy
Mann-Whitney U	2025.000
Wilcoxon W	4653.000
Z	-.987
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.324

The results indicated a statistically insignificant p-value ($p = 0.324$) which showed that there was no significant difference in satisfaction levels across institution types. Therefore, this result indicates that the satisfaction levels were equal among University students and students from Polytechnics in Portugal. In addition, the satisfaction levels were examined across the students' education levels, with those undertaking their undergraduate degrees regarded as young, while the older population constituted of students who were undertaking their masters and PhD studies. According to the Likert scale results, all the younger students indicated that they were satisfied with internationalisation programs, while only three of the older students indicated that they were dissatisfied with internationalisation programs. The results are represented in Figure 5 below:

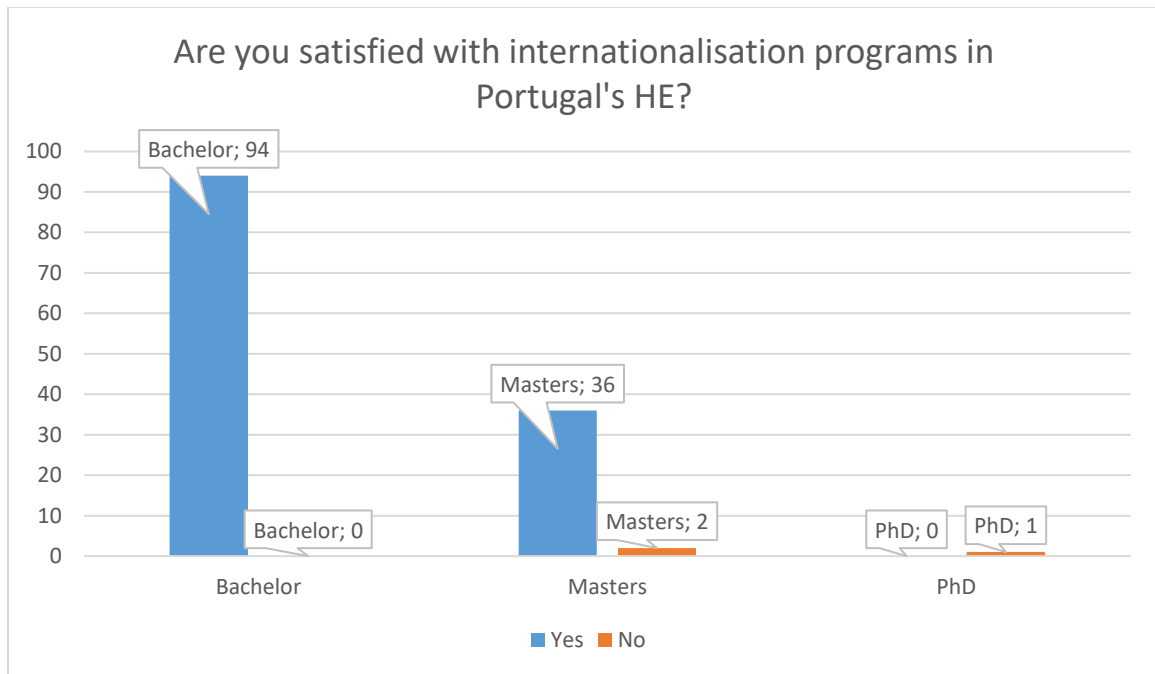


Figure 5. The influence of students' educational levels on their satisfaction.

As shown in Figure 5 above, three respondents who were older were dissatisfied with internationalisation programmes, while the rest were satisfied. This aspect implies that although most of the students were generally and satisfied with the gains that are brought about by the availability of international exchange programs as well as staff mobility, some of them were dissatisfied. The potential reason for this dissatisfaction among the older students could be due to differences in the options of HE internationalisation programmes offered to them compared to the options offered to the younger students. In that regard, the young students unanimously perceived these programmes as beneficial, while a few senior students perceived HE internationalisation to be demanding.

4.5 Discussion

This chapter delineates the findings' discussion by comparing and contrasting them with the reviewed literature from chapter two. In addition, the results are discussed in line with the research objectives of this research to demonstrate how the findings met them.

4.5.1 The Differences in the Implementation of Internationalisation-at-Home Strategies across HEIs in Beja and Lisbon

This study found a significant difference in the implementation of Internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon ($p = .002$). The results demonstrated that curriculum content is the main component of IAH investigated, particularly the infusion of global themes and international issues in the institution's courses. Although the two Portuguese HE contexts have adopted various strategies towards internationalisation, the results indicated the prevalence of outcome discrepancies among institutions established in Beja and Lisbon. Consistent with this result, Veiga et al. (2006) and MES (2014) indicated that the autonomy of HEIs influences their different outcome orientations; thus, this has undermined their effective adherence to the policies of internationalisation. Consequently, this aspect leads to outcome inconsistencies among the two higher educational levels. Therefore, rather than the cities of Beja and Lisbon having coherent strategies that can be adopted by all HE institutions, the present circumstances have witnessed demographic variations with regard to the internationalisation strategies. Therefore, the autonomy of HEIs can be used to explain the significant differences in the implementation of IAH strategies in the two cities of Beja and Lisbon. In addition, the results indicated that HE institutions in Beja and Lisbon embrace varied strategic approaches to internationalisation, and this could significantly lead to outcome variations between the two institutions contexts. The latter result corroborates Wheelen and Hunger (2012), who indicated that since HEIs intend to adopt strategic models that shape internationalisation, they must align these models with their objectives as well as the mission statement. Therefore, as every institution pursues competence and skilled-based programmes that improve its competitive position internationally, it results in different outcomes on the institutional and sub-national levels.

4.5.2 The Differences in the Implementation of Cross-Border Education Strategies across HEIs in Beja and Lisbon

The findings revealed no significant difference in the implementation of cross-border education strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon ($p = 0.127$). Since this study specifically focused on people mobility, student and staff exchange programs were the main cross-border education element examined. Similar findings were established by Knight (2006), EC (2013), Rendas (2013), Guerreiro and Barros (2018) and Alhalwaki and Hamdan (2019), who demonstrated that most cross-border educational strategies adopted by HEIs included the mobility of staff and students, fostering the admission of international students, recruitment of foreign teachers as well as international visibility. Therefore, fostering cross-border mobility of the academic community improves the experiences of students when they are allowed to study in foreign contexts.

4.5.3 The Effectiveness of the HE Curriculum in Shaping Students' Views of International Issues

The results demonstrated that internationalisation is shaped by the views of students, which is influenced by how effective their HE curriculum is in imparting the necessary skills to attract the international academic community. Results also indicated that the cities of Beja and Lisbon strive to have the best curriculum that maximises the HE outcomes of students so that they can improve their competitive positioning globally and consequently foster the mobility of academic staff to their institutions. Consistent with this result, Knight (2004) and Armstrong (2007) pointed that the HEIs' internationally-framed curriculum infuses the educational activities and services that foster transnational education. Therefore, the curriculum plays a meaningful role in influencing cross-border education in HE in Portugal. In addition, this study found that students

held positive perceptions towards internationalisation strategies in their various institutions and were aware of how the curriculum fell short in addressing their internationalisation needs. This result is consistent with Beelen and Jones (2015), who note that positive attitudes towards internationalisation occur when HEIs prioritise internationalisation strategies, more specifically IAH and cross-border education strategies. Therefore, more Portuguese HEIs need to incorporate students' views from surveys or interviews to determine how to enhance internationalisation to meet their needs and to lead to a better international outlook.

4.5.4 Internationalisation Strategies and Students' Views on International Issues

The study found a positive correlation between internationalisation strategies and students' views of international issues ($r = 0.391$, $p < 0.01$). This result shows that improving internationalisation strategies in Portuguese HEIs enhances students' views of international issues and, consequently, internationalisation. The findings also accepted the null hypothesis, which stated that internationalisation strategies implemented across different HEIs in Portugal significantly influence how students view international issues. A large proportion of Portuguese students in Beja and Lisbon agreed that internationalisation had a significant influence in shaping their views on international issues and cultures. Aspects like curriculum content, exchange programs, and international internships were instrumental in influencing a global outlook. These results are consistent with Beelen and Jones' (2015) findings, which reveal that enhancing internationalisation across HEIs boosts students' international outlook and imparts intercultural competence. Similarly, Leask (2009) finds that the internationalisation of HEIs promotes new ways of thinking among students, which helps generate practical ideas that ensure the success of the global workforce. As such, the HE reforms in Portugal focusing on internationalisation have effectively improved the way students view international issues.

4.5.5 Internationalisation Strategies and Students' Attitudes towards Studying Abroad

The findings also revealed a positive correlation between internationalisation strategies and students' attitudes towards studying abroad ($r = 0.310$, $p < 0.01$). This result shows that improving the international strategies by Portuguese HEIs lead to positive attitudes among domestic students towards studying abroad. The majority of students agreed that studying abroad would be a beneficial experience for them. This aspect is due to the exposure of an internationalised curriculum, foreign language courses, and student exchange programs in their respective HEIs. These findings are consistent with Keerklan et al. (2008), who presented that internationalisation within HEIs serves to give students intercultural skills necessary to propel them into the international stage. More specifically, aspects such as the infusion of global elements into courses and student mobility experiences promote a global mindset among students encouraging a large proportion to pursue further studies abroad. Overall, these results sufficiently answered the research questions and met the research objectives, as discussed above.

4.5.6 Implications for Future Practice

The study's findings may help higher education executives in Portugal to make critical institutional and curricular changes to improve internationalisation programs and produce students with a global worldview. The advancement of the global economy warrants the need for revolutionary ideas and innovations that may help solve the world's most pertinent issues. Furthermore, globalisation requires that institutions produce intercultural competent students capable of integrating into the global workforce and becoming global citizens. Therefore, the findings highlight the importance of IAH and cross-border strategies in improving students' views on international issues leading to better attitudes towards studying and working abroad. While there is a great difference in the implementation of IAH strategies across Portuguese Institutions,

HEI executives may ensure consistency by adopting a strategic management model that perfectly aligns with their mission and objectives.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the study and offers recommendations. The first section is the conclusion, which summarises the introductory chapter, the literature review, methodology, data presentation and discussion. The answers to the research questions are restated, and appropriate recommendations are made for future practice and future research.

5.2 Conclusions

This study investigated the influence of the higher education system in Portugal on students' beliefs towards internationalisation. Four research questions were composed to address this research area and understand how the curriculum in Portuguese HEIs affects students' views of internationalisation and their willingness to study abroad. Four specific objectives were also framed from the questions to guide the study, which were examined through survey data involving 133 participants from both Beja and Lisbon.

The first research question aimed to compare the implementation of IAH strategies by HEIs in two demographic areas of Portugal, namely Beja and Lisbon. The results showed a significant difference in the implementation of Internationalisation-at-home strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon ($p = .002$). This was in relation to the aspect of curriculum and course content offered at the various HEIs in these two demographic regions. The study confirmed a significant gap in the implementation of IAH strategies, particularly an internationalised curriculum on the sub-national and institutional levels. This result was attributed to the autonomy of HEIs in Portugal and the variation in strategic approaches across various institutions.

The second research question sought to compare the implementation of cross-border education strategies between Beja and Lisbon. To answer this question, the results demonstrated

that there is no considerable difference in the implementation of cross-border education strategies across HEIs in the cities of Beja and Lisbon ($p = 0.127$). All institutions had a reasonably coherent approach to implementing cross-border education strategies. This was attributed to a high level of consistency in implementing student mobility programs, mainly student and staff exchange programs.

The third research question examined the influence of internationalisation strategies in influencing Portuguese students' perceptions of international issues. Accordingly, the results showed a positive correlation between internationalisation strategies and students' views of internationalisation issues ($r = 0.391$, $p < 0.01$). This result meant that an improvement in the internationalisation strategies improved how Portuguese students perceived HE internationalisation issues. More specifically, the study found that aspects including curriculum content, student exchange programs, and international internships were instrumental in influencing a global outlook among undergraduate and postgraduate students in Portugal. Therefore, it was argued that the HEIs influences the beliefs of students towards internationalisation by infusing internationally-framed curricula and improving their global rankings in order to build positive images in relation to the standard of HE offered in Portugal. Consequently, such high standards influence positive perceptions and beliefs of students that the internationalisation of HE can help them acquire high-quality education and intercultural competency.

The fourth research question dealt with the attitudes and willingness of students to pursue further studies abroad. According to the results, students' attitudes towards studying abroad are impacted significantly by implementing internationalisation strategies across HEIs in Portugal. Students who possess a global worldview are more open to venturing abroad and exploring educational opportunities that may expand their intercultural skills and make them more adept at

integrating into a global workforce. Furthermore, the exposure to international elements in the HE curriculum encourages students to embrace intercultural learning and skills necessary for global citizenship. Therefore, the internationalisation of HE influences the development of positive attitudes among students towards the acquisition of intercultural skills as well as acquire skills that can help them work in different geographical contexts globally.

5.3 Recommendations and Suggestions for Future Practice

The study showed that both IAH and cross-border strategies positively shaped how students in Portugal viewed internationalisation and their attitudes towards studying abroad. This study results showed that curriculum content and mobility programs offered within various HEIs had sufficient international elements that improve how undergraduate and postgraduate students in Portugal perceive international issues and overseas study. However, several students were dissatisfied with the internationalisation implemented within their respective institutions. They revealed several measures that could improve internationalisation and satisfy the needs of students within the higher education system.

This study, therefore, recommends that HEIs should increase strategic partnerships with other institutions within the country and across international borders to strengthen the outcomes of internationalisation. There should also be an emphasis on the need for institutions to invest in strategic partnerships by offering double degree programs, internships, and service learning. These partnerships would help to foster global education and multi-cultural skills necessary for integration into a global workforce. Secondly, it is recommended that HEIs improve equivalency programs to prepare students to work on the international stage. Infusing international elements and facilitating exchange programs and partnerships in equivalency programs would expose more learners to internationalisation and create an intercultural competent workforce. It would also help

domestic students to adopt a global mindset, participate in global conversations and internet forums with diverse backgrounds. Another recommendation is that HEIs should facilitate more opportunities for staff exchanges, particularly for professors. This aspect would enrich the university teaching staff's intercultural knowledge and enable them to transfer it to domestic students, ultimately leading to a multi-culturally competent student body. Finally, it was recommended that HEIs incorporate cultural events in their campus activities to create opportunities for students to learn about the culture, open their minds to possible integration into a multi-cultural study and work environment.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

The findings of this study can serve as a basis for further research into the perceptions of faculty and teaching staff on IAH and cross-border strategies within HEIs and their impacts on teaching and research. It is thus vital to examine the influence of internationalisation within the staff level to formulate effective changes that fulfil the staff and student needs. Furthermore, the recommendations from teaching staff can help supplement some of the recommendations made by students and improve overall outcomes. Another suggestion for future research is to examine how private and public HEIs in Portugal compare in their internationalisation strategies and how these differences affect the views of students and staff in the two types of institutions. Researchers can also explore the differences in views and perceptions between Portuguese secondary school students and undergraduates regarding the implementation of IAH strategies in their institutions. This aspect may help to establish whether views regarding internationalisation develop from an earlier age and if they have any effect on the development of intercultural competence among graduates. To overcome issues with sample representativeness and bias, researchers may utilise a larger sample and carry out a random sampling strategy to ensure an equal opportunity for selection

for the target population. Furthermore, random samples will ensure that there is minimal margin of error when carrying out quantitative data analysis.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire Form

1. Gender: *

- Female
- Male
- Outra: _____
-

2. Age: *

- 18 - 25 years
- 26 - 35 years
- 36-45 years
- More than 46 years
-

3. Education Level: *

- Bachelor's
- Master's
- Doctoral
- Outra: _____
-

4. Type of Institution: *

- University
- Polytechnic
- Outra: _____

5. Location of Institution (City, Country): *

A sua resposta

6. Native Language: *

- Portuguese
- English
- Spanish
- French
- Outra: _____

7. Rate your level of agreement with the questions provided below:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My institution provides a real opportunity to learn about international issues and different cultures around the world.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A large number of my courses are presented with a wide range of global themes and international concepts.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The content in my courses mainly focus on nationally-oriented issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My institution encourages students to take up foreign language as part of the curriculum.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My institution places a lot of priority on student and staff exchange programmes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Rate your level of agreement with the questions provided below:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
My institution encourages students to take international internship programmes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My institution partners with other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to enhance curriculum development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our course instructors have a deep knowledge of international issues and different cultures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that the higher education curriculum has shaped the way I view international issues and culture.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that studying abroad would be a beneficial experience for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Are you happy/were you happy with the internationalization offered by your institution? *

Yes

No

10. Write here suggestions on how the offer can satisfy your need for internationalization:

A sua resposta

Appendix B:

Table 15.

Descriptive Analysis of Likert Items

Factors	Statements	Mean	SD
Internationalisation-at-Home (IAH) strategies	A large number of my courses are presented with a wide range of global themes and international issues	3.59	1.074
	The content in my courses mainly focus on nationally oriented issues	2.81	1.129
		3.33	1.159
	My institution encourages students to take up foreign language as part of the curriculum	3.50	0.598
	Our course instructors have a deep knowledge of international issues and different cultures		
Cross-border Education strategies	My institution places a lot of priority on student and staff exchange programs	3.41	1.067
		3.74	0.937
	My institution encourages students to take international internship programs	3.86	0.944

	My institution partners with other HEIs to enhance curriculum development		
Students views on Internationalisation	My institution provides a real opportunity to learn about international issues	3.57	1.089
	I believe that the higher education system has shaped the way I view international issues and culture	3.49	1.068
	I believe that studying abroad would be a beneficial experience for me	4.22	1.061

Appendix C:

Table 16.

Likert Item Statistics

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Q1	3.57	1.089	133
Q2	3.59	1.074	133
Q3	2.81	1.129	133
Q4	3.33	1.159	133
Q5	3.41	1.067	133
Q6	3.74	.937	133
Q7	3.86	.944	133
Q8	3.50	.958	133
Q9	3.49	1.098	133
Q10	4.22	1.061	133

Appendix D:

Table 17.

Spearman's Correlation Hypothesis Three Testing

Correlations

			Internationali sation strategies	Student views
Spearman's rho	Internationalisation strategies	Correlation	1.000	.391**
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)		
		N		
	Student views	Correlation	.391**	1.000
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)		
		N		

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix E:

Table 18.

Spearman's Correlation Hypothesis Four Testing

Correlations

		Internationali sation strategies	Attitudes towards studying abroad
Spearman's rho	Internationalisation strategies	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.310**
		N	.
			.000
Attitudes toward studying Abroad	Attitudes toward studying Abroad	Correlation Coefficient	.310**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
		N	.
			.000
		133	133

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix F:

Table 19.

Hypothesis Three and Four Testing Summary

Null Hypothesis	Test	P-value Sig (2-tailed)	Decision
H ₀ The internationalisation strategies implemented across different HEIs in Portugal have no significant influence on how students view international issues	Spearman's rho	0.000 < 0.01	Reject
H ₀ Attitudes towards studying abroad are not impacted significantly by the implementation of internationalisation strategies across HEIs in Portugal.	Spearman's rho	0.000 < 0.01	Reject