



# Indonesian Journal of Educational Research and Technology

Journal homepage: <http://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/IJERT/>



## Internationalisation of Higher Education: The Activity – Process Approach at Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia

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### ABSTRACT

Internationalisation of higher education definition has evolved and so are the approaches in its implementation. The internationalisation of higher education is executed either one of the two approaches, the activity or the process approach, including in the higher education institutions in Malaysia. By giving the attention on one approach alone could contribute to issues in the less focused approach and hinder institutions from receiving maximum benefit from internationalisation. Thus, this study explores the nature of internationalisation approaches in the experiences of meso-level professionals and individuals in the micro level of the institution, specifically at the Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM). The qualitative case study is adopted to gain adequate information from the internationalisation actors of the institution. The information is collected through face-to-face interviews, participatory observations, and documents analysis. Literature found that most of the higher education institutions practiced the activity approach in the implementation of internationalisation at the majority of higher education institutions. This should also happen to the internationalisation practices at UTHM where the execution is driven by the meso-level professionals of the institution. However, internationalisation experts have long promoted internationalisation practices to be in a dynamic activity – process fashion. Result of this study offers the policymakers, internationalisation key actors and stakeholders, valuable information on the internationalisation approaches to serve

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article History:

Submitted/Received 01 Jan 2021

First Revised 01 Feb 2021

Accepted 9 Feb 2021

First available online 12 Feb 2021

Publication date 01 Mar 2021

#### Keyword:

Activity approach,  
Internationalisation of higher education ,  
Process approach

as a guideline in measuring the internationalisation practices, strategies development and quality improvement in the higher education system in Malaysia.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The internationalisation of higher education definition has evolved and so are the approaches in its implementation. There are many approaches to internationalisation but only two approaches are highly in practiced; the activity approach and process approach [1-4]. By giving the attention on one approach alone is insufficient [5]. This study will explore the nature of internationalisation approaches of the institution. Main originality: (i) Broader literature on internationalisation of higher education, (ii) Quality improvement in the higher education system, (iii) Guideline in measuring the internationalisation practices, and (iv) Assist in re-evaluate and re-improve policies on internationalisation (Knight, 2015).

## 2. METHOD

The experiences of meso-level professionals and individuals in the micro level at UTHM. Qualitative research design: Single case study. Data collection: Interviews, observation, and document analysis. Data analysis: Thematizing (Figure 1).

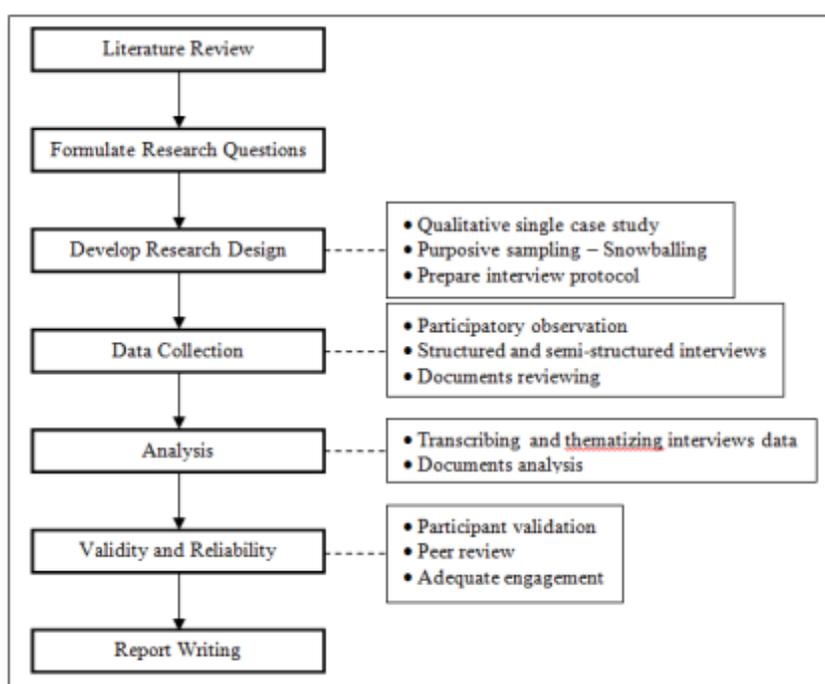
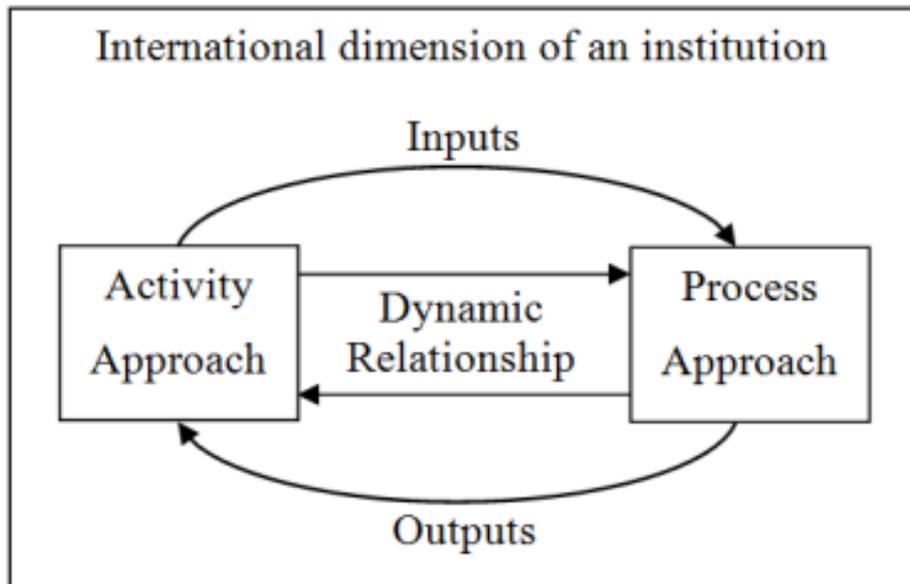


Figure 1. Research flow.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Literature

Evolution on the terminology of internationalisation has brought in the developments of approaches to internationalising the higher education (Cinches, 2017). The expansion of internationalisation from Knight's contextual of internationalisation of higher education. Figure 2 shows the movement of internationalisation from a list of activities to the real process of internationalisation of higher education (Sheng-Ju, 2013).



**Figure 2.** International dimension of an institution.

### 3.2. Expected Results

There has been extensive of research on approaches to internationalisation, and most focused are given to the activity approach or process approach. Past researchers found that most of the higher education institutions practices the activity approach to internationalise their higher education. This possibly that the UTHM also practices the activity approach to internationalising the institution

### 4. CONCLUSION

In internationalizing the higher education institutions, it is now essential to shift the focus on both the activity and process approach, instead of one approach alone, as to gain optimum potential benefits of internationalisation.

### 5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you and gratitude to Research Fund H628, Research Management Centre, UTHM for the support given in making this research a success

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