



VIRTUAL INTERNATIONALIZATION (VI) CONTRIBUTIONS TO STRENGTHENING THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION (IOHE) IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

CONTRIBUIÇÕES DA INTERNACIONALIZAÇÃO VIRTUAL (IV) PARA O FORTALECIMENTO DA INTERNACIONALIZAÇÃO DO ENSINO SUPERIOR (IES) NO SUL GLOBAL

CONTRIBUCIONES DE LA INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN VIRTUAL (IV) AL FORTALECIMIENTO DE LA INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN DE LA ENSEÑANZA SUPERIOR (IES) EN EL SUR GLOBAL

ABSTRACT

Objective: To investigate whether Virtual Internationalization (VI) can help universities in the Global South overcome the challenges of internationalizing higher education and strengthen institutional strategies.

Design/methodology/approach: A bibliographic and documentary review was conducted, selecting two lines of investigation across three databases (Web of Science, Eric, and Scopus). The analysis focused on identifying trends and impacts of VI in higher education institutions in the Global South.

Results: Three main findings emerged: i) VI initiatives enhance teaching quality and global perspectives, as well as improve teaching policies, research collaboration, and institutional networks; ii) the increasing use of online platforms supports international cooperation in teaching and research; iii) the persistent North-South technological divide hinders equity in access and implementation of VI.

Research limitations: The study reveals a gap in the literature on VI's effects in Latin American and African countries, emphasizing the need for inclusive policies tailored to local contexts.

Originality/value: This research highlights VI as a strategic tool for reducing inequalities in higher education, fostering collaboration, and strengthening institutional development in the Global South.

Key-Words: Global South. Internationalization of Higher Education. Virtual Internationalization. Virtual Exchanges.

 Jan Krimphove

DBA Candidate

University of Bath - United Kingdom

Universidade Christus

International01@unichristus.edu.br

 Italo Cavalcante Aguiar

Master's

Universidade Feral do Ceará - Brazil

Universidade Christus

Italo474@gmail.com

 Luciane Stallivieri

PhD.

Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina - Brazil

lustalliv@gmail.com

Submitted on: 05/24/2025

Approved on: 06/18/2026

How to cite: Krimphove, J., Aguiar, I. C., & Stallivieri, L. (2026). Virtual internationalization (VI) contributions to strengthening the internationalization of higher education (IOHE) in the global south. *Alcance (online)*, 33(2), 78-96. [https://doi.org/10.14210/alcance.v33n2\(maio/ago\).p78-96](https://doi.org/10.14210/alcance.v33n2(maio/ago).p78-96)





RESUMO

Objetivo: Investigar se a internacionalização virtual (IV) pode auxiliar universidades do Sul Global a superar desafios da internacionalização do ensino superior e fortalecer suas estratégias institucionais.

Design/metodologia/abordagem: Foi realizada revisão bibliográfica e documental, com a seleção de duas linhas de investigação em três bases de dados (Web of Science, Eric e Scopus). A análise buscou identificar tendências e impactos da IV em instituições de ensino superior do Sul Global.

Resultados: Três achados principais foram identificados: i) iniciativas de IV contribuem para a qualidade do ensino e ampliação de perspectivas globais, além de melhorias em políticas pedagógicas, colaborações de pesquisa e redes institucionais; ii) o uso crescente de plataformas digitais evidencia apoio à cooperação internacional em ensino e pesquisa; iii) a divisão tecnológica Norte-Sul permanece, dificultando a equidade no acesso e implementação da IV.

Limitações: O estudo destaca a escassez de literatura sobre os efeitos da IV em países latino-americanos e africanos, apontando a necessidade de políticas mais inclusivas e adaptadas às realidades locais.

Originalidade/valor: O estudo contribui ao demonstrar que a IV pode ser uma ferramenta estratégica para reduzir desigualdades no ensino superior, ampliar a colaboração internacional e promover o desenvolvimento institucional no Sul Global.

Palavras-Chave: Sul Global. Internacionalização do ensino superior. Internacionalização virtual. Intercâmbios virtuais.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Analizar si la internacionalización virtual (IV) puede ayudar a las universidades del Sur Global a superar los desafíos de la internacionalización de la educación superior y fortalecer sus estrategias institucionales.

Diseño/metodología/enfoque: Se realizó una revisión bibliográfica y documental, con la selección de dos líneas de investigación en tres bases de datos (Web of Science, Eric y Scopus).

El análisis se centró en identificar tendencias e impactos de la IV en instituciones de educación superior del Sur Global.

Resultados: Se identificaron tres hallazgos principales: i) las iniciativas de IV contribuyen a la calidad de la enseñanza y la ampliación de perspectivas globales, además de mejoras en políticas educativas, colaboración en investigación y redes institucionales; ii) el uso creciente de plataformas digitales muestra apoyo a la cooperación internacional en docencia e investigación; iii) persiste la brecha tecnológica Norte-Sur, dificultando la equidad en el acceso y la implementación de la IV.

Limitaciones: El estudio destaca la escasez de literatura sobre los efectos de la IV en países latinoamericanos y africanos, señalando la necesidad de políticas inclusivas adaptadas a las realidades locales.

Originalidad/valor: El trabajo aporta al demostrar que la IV puede ser una herramienta estratégica para reducir desigualdades en la educación superior, promover la colaboración internacional y fortalecer el desarrollo institucional en el Sur Global.

Palabras Clave: Sur Global. Internacionalización de la educación superior. Internacionalización virtual. Intercambios virtuales.

INTRODUCTION

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Global South struggle with various difficulties. This is particularly true given the evolving nature of Internationalization of higher education (IoHE).

As globalization continues to impact the educational landscape, higher education is increasingly considering the international dimension in its teaching, research, and service functions. However, achieving comprehensive internationalization (ACE, 2024; Hudzik, 2011) is difficult for HEIs in the Global South, as these institutions face multiple challenges, including limited resources, lack of planning, funding, and professional management, as well as quality issues in research and teaching, and linguistic and cultural barriers (Stallivieri 2019; Gacel-Ávila & Rodriguez-Rodriguez 2019; Marinoni & Cardona, 2024). In response to these obstacles, there



has been a growing interest in exploring novel approaches to internationalization, with Virtual Internationalization (Bruhn-Zass, 2020; Bruhn-Zass, 2022) emerging as a possible solution.

Virtual Internationalization (VI) offers HEIs in the South a potential path to overcoming the issues associated with IoHE and enhancing their efforts to become international. Using digital technologies and online collaboration spaces for internationalization, VI attempts to increase the international dimension of teaching and research while allowing students and faculty to participate more directly. In other words, VI “can serve as a tool in order to achieve a comprehensive and inclusive internationalization practice” (Bruhn-Zass, 2022, p.256). Additionally, virtual internationalization has the potential to promote more equitable collaborations between universities in different environments, including South-North partnerships, which can address issues of imbalance and lead to mutual benefit (De Wit & Altbach, 2021).

The international education literature has examined the digital dimension of IoHE through partially overlapping but distinct constructs. Virtual Exchange and Collaborative Online International Learning (O'Dowd, 2018; Rubin, 2017) have been studied largely as pedagogical innovations within the curriculum, while Internationalization at Home (Beelen & Jones, 2015) and Internationalization of the Curriculum (Leask, 2015) have provided broader institutional frames. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated empirical research on these constructs, particularly in the Global North, where studies have documented gains in intercultural competence, expanded participation of non-mobile students, and the consolidation of post-pandemic hybrid mobility schemes (De Wit & Altbach, 2021; Helm & O'Dowd, 2020). More recently, Bruhn-Zass (2020, 2022) consolidated this dispersed body of work into a comprehensive notion of Virtual Internationalization that articulates seven categories of institutional internationalization with the use of digital technologies.

Despite this expanding literature, three gaps justify the present study. First, empirical work on VI is overwhelmingly produced by and focused on Global North institutions, with the

experience of Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean remaining dispersed and under-systematized (Marinoni & Cardona, 2024; Avolio & Benzaquen, 2024). Second, when VI is examined in Southern contexts, the analysis often remains confined to single pillars, typically the curriculum through VE/COIL case studies, and does not engage with the full multi-pillar scope of the Bruhn-Zass framework or how VI intersects with structural barriers and academic-colonialism dynamics that shape IoHE in these regions (De Sousa Santos, 2018; Buckner & Stein, 2020; Tight, 2024). Third, normative claims commonly associated with VI – inclusion, equity, partnership, and democratization, circulate widely but are rarely tested against empirical patterns in the Global South, where power asymmetries may enable VI to reproduce rather than mitigate existing inequalities (Helm & Guth, 2021). The present study addresses these gaps by synthesizing empirical and conceptual evidence on VI across these three regions through the Bruhn-Zass categories and a decolonization lens.

Because of the significant importance of this emerging paradigm in the international education sphere, the primary goal of this research is to explore VI's potential in addressing the challenges associated with IoHE in the Global South. To achieve this goal, it aims to answer the following research question: Under what conditions does Virtual Internationalization (VI) strengthen the internationalization capabilities of HEIs in the Global South?

Through a comprehensive study of recent academic literature and the synthesis of existing evidence, this study aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of VI as an approach and tool to advance IoHE. It focuses particularly on increasing international activities in teaching and research and developing more equitable collaborations between HEIs across diverse

This paper makes three specific contributions to the literature on IoHE in the Global South. First, it provides a systematic synthesis of empirical and conceptual evidence on VI across Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean, filling a gap in a literature that remains scattered and disproportionately produced by Global North institutions. Second,



it applies the Bruhn-Zass (2020, 2022) VI framework as a multi-pillar analytical lens to assess how digital technologies intersect with all dimensions of institutional internationalization, rather than limiting the analysis to curricular innovations alone. Third, it explicitly introduces a decolonization perspective to the assessment of VI, identifying where VI has the potential to reconfigure power asymmetries in IoHE and where it may instead reproduce them, thus responding to calls for more value-driven, ethical, and equity-oriented approaches to internationalization (De Wit, 2020; Healey, 2023; Jones et al., 2021). contexts. The paper attempts to provide a holistic perspective on the possibilities and limitations of VI for HEIs in the Global South.

Global South

The concept of the “Global South” emerged primarily from postcolonial and development studies scholarship, as well as from geopolitical discourse. It gained prominence after the end of the bipolar world system, replacing the terms “Third World” and “Developing World” in the academic and political debate (Wolters et al., 2015). The term is attributed to countries and regions of the world that were/are most affected by colonialism and post-colonialism and are today economically less developed than other world regions: Sub-Saharan Africa, parts of Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean (Leal et al., 2022). According to Eriksen (2015), the term “Global South” refers to the parts of the world and societies that are the victims of the globalization process of the past 30 years and the current neoliberal capitalist world economy, whereas the “Global North” represents the benefactors.

It is important to remember that the concept of the “Global South” is not a strictly geographical term – important and populous countries such as India covered by the term “Global South” are actually located in the northern hemisphere – but a metaphor for the poorer, socio-economically less prosperous parts of the world; So, in its essence and in combination with the complementary notion “Global North” the concept of “Global South” is a relational term that points to the relation of inequality between more developed and less developed parts of the world (Leal et al 2022, p.4). Arguably and pointing to

the issue of attributing a label to a whole country or society, one can even claim “the existence of the Global South in the Global North” (ibid.) and vice versa, especially in highly unequal societies such as the United States or Brazil (Eriksen, 2015).

Acknowledging the complexity and limitations of the concept “Global South,” we decided, for the present study about IoHE in the Global South, to use the term with caution and to focus on HEIs in (Sub-Saharan) Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Our rationale for this decision was that these world regions were and are most heavily impacted by (neo)colonial relations with the Global North. With Eriksen (2015), these regions tend to be victims rather than benefactors of the neoliberal capitalist world economy, especially when compared to emerging countries in Asia (India, China) that have largely benefited from the globalization process since the 1990s and are nowadays relevant geopolitical players.

The decision to focus on these three regions does not imply they share a homogeneous reality. They differ considerably in colonial histories, linguistic configurations, institutional maturity of HE systems, and levels of digital infrastructure. Latin American HEIs operate within relatively consolidated national systems, while many Sub-Saharan African HE systems remain shaped by post-colonial legacies, fragile public funding, and brain-drain pressures (Marinoni & Cardona, 2024; Garwe & Thondhlana, 2020). The Caribbean adds further heterogeneity through small-state vulnerabilities and multilingualism. This regional diversity is a methodological premise: the contributions of VI are analyzed in relation to each region’s specific structural conditions, rather than aggregated into a single Global South narrative.

Challenges of IoHE in the Global South

Since the 1990s, internationalization has evolved from a marginal to a strategic activity for many HEIs in various contexts around the world (De Wit & Altbach, 2021). This trend is not only evident in governmental and institutional policies and funding programs, but it also has a significant impact on the production of academic literature (Lee & Stensaker, 2021). Critical scholarship problematizes the Western-



centric understanding of IoHE (e.g. Marginson, 2023). The overly commercial, competitive, and elitist character of IoHE benefits a small minority of institutions and individuals from the (English-speaking) Global North to the detriment of the large majority of institutions, students, and faculty elsewhere. It reproduces and reinforces historical inequalities between the North and the South (Latorre et al., 2024; Marginson, 2023; De Wit & Altbach 2021; Buckner & Stein, 2020). As a consequence, there are growing claims for more value-driven, ethical approaches to IoHE (De Wit, 2020; Stallivieri, 2019) that should “reinvent[...] international higher education for a socially just, sustainable world” (Healey, 2023) and encourage HEIs to “enact [...] their global social responsibility through internationalization” (Jones et al., 2021, p.1). Moreover, scholars both from the Global South and from the Global North advocate for less market-driven and more equitable and sustainable, “decolonized” relations between academic institutions and individuals from the Global North and the Global South as well as the promotion of non-western epistemologies (De Sousa Santos 2018; Tight 2024, Leal et al., 2022; Buckner & Stein, 2020).

The challenges for IoHE in the Global South in the current global HE landscape remain indeed manifold and complex (Leal et al., 2022). With Stallivieri (2019), we can distinguish challenges at the conjunctural (context), structural (institutional), and individual (actors) levels. Insufficient external funding is clearly seen as the most important external barrier to internationalization in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean (Marinoni & Cardona, 2024, p. 78). This correlates with the fact that in most Latin American and African countries, IoHE is not considered a national policy priority, and – with a few exceptions (e.g. Colombia) – the countries have no national strategy for the internationalization of their HE systems (Abdulrahman et al., 2020; Gacel-Avila 2020).

Further structural and conjunctural factors that may hamper IoHE, especially in countries in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa, are their geographic and, more importantly, geopolitical positioning in the global periphery (subordinated to the Global North) and the socio-economic vulnerability of their societies. and geopolitical

tensions in parts of those regions, especially in parts of Africa. What is more, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, “brain drain” as a negative impact of IoHE is perceived as a major risk of IoHE for the societies (Marinoni & Cardona, 2024, p. 24; Garwe & Thondhlana, 2020, p. 464)

Institutional barriers to IoHE in the Global South comprise economic and administrative issues, namely the scarcity of resources (Marinoni & Cardona, p. 82), the lack of a strategic, proactive, and comprehensive approach to IoHE and the lack professional management of the internationalization process (Gacel-Avila, 2020, p.286; Abdulrahman et al, 2020, p. 586). In addition, academic quality issues in research and teaching (mainly a consequence of lacking resources) (Gacel-Avila, 2020, p. 290) limit the possibilities of HEIs in the Global South to actively engage in international collaborations and perpetuate them in a position of dependence and inferiority in collaborations with more prestigious, better funded and more productive HEIs in the Global North. Finally, linguistic and cultural barriers hamper international collaborations (Stallivieri, 2019), especially when it comes to the use of English as the dominant language in science/knowledge production and in international education.

Evidence from top-tier Latin American universities suggests, however, that organizational-level factors can also work in the opposite direction, helping institutions offset external constraints. Even under conditions of scarcity, universities that establish dedicated internationalization offices, define explicit strategic objectives, and adopt systematic monitoring indicators for mobility and international partnerships tend to be better positioned to advance their internationalization agendas (Labraña et al., 2024). Institutional strategy, resource allocation, leadership commitment, and organizational priorities also play a decisive role in shaping how virtual internationalization initiatives are implemented (Bruhn-Zass, 2020, 2022), often allowing institutions to translate limited material resources into meaningful international engagement. In this sense, institutional strategy may help offset the weight of contextual and conjunctural factors in determining internationalization outcomes.



The inequalities discussed above can be synthesized under the notion of academic colonialism. Following De Sousa Santos (2018), Tight (2024), and Buckner and Stein (2020), academic colonialism refers to the structural and epistemic asymmetries through which Global North institutions, languages, funding regimes, and indexing systems operate as universal benchmarks against which HEIs and scholars from the Global South are measured. It manifests in the unequal valuation of Southern knowledge production; in collaboration patterns where Southern partners contribute data while Northern partners retain conceptual leadership; and in mobility flows that disproportionately benefit Northern HEIs. Crucially, academic colonialism is not external to IoHE: it is partly produced and reproduced through internationalization processes themselves.

As a reaction to the multifold challenges, South-South collaborations in HE are gaining importance, indicating a shift away from simply reproducing the Western model of internationalization. More and more HEIs in the Global South understand that their internationalization efforts need to take into account and address the diversity and needs of their local communities. (Avolio & Benzaquen, 2024; Jones et al., 2021). In this context, developing a global perspective is crucial to internationalizing the region. However, this necessitates a significant alteration not only of the prevailing educational paradigm but also of the way HEIs define their mission and responsibility in a world where the local, regional, national, and global spheres are increasingly connected.

Finally, it is precisely against this backdrop that Virtual Internationalization (VI) becomes analytically relevant for HEIs in the Global South. The structural challenges outlined, restricted funding, weak national IoHE policies, peripheral geopolitical positioning, resource scarcity, brain-drain risks, and linguistic barriers, converge to limit Southern HEIs' ability to participate in IoHE on equal terms. By lowering the financial and logistical cost of international collaboration and enabling participation without physical mobility, VI offers strategies that intersect directly with the dimensions of inequality and academic colonialism discussed above. The next section

introduces VI as a conceptual and strategic response to these challenges.

VIRTUAL INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Virtual Internationalization

Digital Information and Communication Technologies (DICT) can support IoHE in many ways. Digital technologies have been used for international collaborations in (higher) education for more than 20 years, following a methodological approach that is today most commonly known as Virtual Exchange (VE) (O'Dowd, 2018) or Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) (Rubin, 2017). For more than a decade VE/COIL programs have already been considered a promising tool to support Internationalization at Home (Beelen & Jones, 2015) and Internationalization of the Curriculum (Leask, 2015) and to develop intercultural competences among non-traveling students (De Wit & Altbach, 2021; O'Dowd & Dooley, 2020; De Wit, 2016; Villar-Onrubia & Rajpal, 2016). However, it was the COVID-19 pandemic that revealed the full potential of DICT to sustain different aspects of international collaborations in HE. With traveling and face-to-face activities being suspended, virtual modes of collaboration in education and research became more widely accepted and the "new normal" for students, lecturers, and researchers (Hudzik, 2020). DICT based collaborations have gained momentum in world regions that were hesitant to implement them, such as Latin America, most visible through the creation of the regional LatamCOIL network aiming to strengthen virtual exchange programs among HEIs in the region¹. The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of technology and stimulated the creation of new formats of digital international cooperation in education and research, such as mirrored classrooms, virtual mobility, virtual internships, virtual guest lectures, or online scientific conferences (Avolio & Benzaquen, 2024; Bruhn-Zass, 2022). With the return to physical mobility, virtual and mobile components can be combined to create new, hybrid, or blended formats, such as a virtual exchange anteceding short-term

¹ <https://www.uv.mx/coil/>



mobility (Helm & O'Dowd, 2021). Finally, given the multifold current global challenges and crises such as growing nationalism and protectionism, geopolitical tensions, and armed conflicts, and the accelerating climate crisis, HEIs around the world need to consider DCIT as a meaningful option to support sustainable international collaboration efforts in the future.

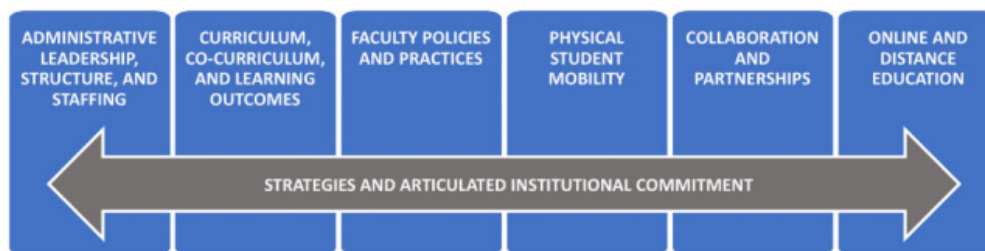
To capture "the entire scope of possibilities to internationalize higher education with the help of ICT" (Bruhn-Zass, 2022, p. 241), the researcher Bruhn-Zass has proposed the concept of Virtual Internationalization (VI) (Bruhn-Zass, 2020; Bruhn-Zass, 2022). Her concept builds on the Comprehensive Internationalization model of the American Council of Education (ACE) that was initially developed by John Hudzik for NAFSA (Hudzik, 2011). Comprehensive internationalization (CI) is considered to be "a strategic, concerted approach in HEIs that combines policies, programs, initiatives, and

participants in order to promote a more globally oriented and interconnected environment in college and university settings" (ACE, 2024). The CI model identifies six "target areas" that are central to the implementation of comprehensive internationalization in HEIs: Institutional Commitment and Policy, Leadership and Structure, Curriculum and Co-curriculum, Staff and Faculty support, Mobility, and Partnerships (ACE, 2024).

Bruhn-Zass's VI concept in its turn, provides a framework to analyze how DICT may support internationalization in each of these areas. Bruhn-Zass identifies "strategies and articulated institutional commitment" as a transversal, institution-spanning category rather than one of the pillars. In addition, the author includes a new target area or, as she calls it, "category" to her VI model: Online and distance education (Bruhn-Zass, 2022; cf. figure 1).

Figure 1

Six parallel and one transversal category of virtual internationalization



Note. Source: Adapted from Bruhn-Zass (2020, p. 131).

Bruhn-Zass's model thus analyzes the interplay and intersection between DICT and all aspects and dimensions of internationalization in HEIs at different organizational levels.

While the use of DICT in the Curriculum, Co-Curriculum, and Learning Outcomes category, i.e. the teaching mission of HE, is probably the most well-known (e.g. use of virtual global learning environments and methodologies such as virtual exchanges, COIL or online mobility), the intersection may be less obvious in the other categories. However, Bruhn-Zass identifies how technology can support internationalization in each of these areas; DICT in Administrative Leadership, Structure, and Staffing may comprise the use of online tools in the international office or online training programs for international office staff or other management functions (Bruhn-Zass, 2022, pp. 248-49). With regards

to Faculty Policies and Practices, DICT can help include faculty in global research communities or prepare lecturers to teach in global virtual classrooms or transnational online courses (ibid, p. 250). To support (traditional) Physical Student Mobility, DICT is used for marketing, recruitment, and preparation of international students as well as to support students during their mobility abroad (ibid., p. 251); for the Collaboration and Partnership category, the author mentions the joint provision of e-learning platforms and joint online or hybrid degrees as examples how HEIs can make use of DICT to strengthen international partnerships (ibid., p. 252); finally, regarding the new category Online and Distance Education (ODE), Bruhn-Zass concludes that the interplay of DICT and internationalization can serve both domestic ODE students – to add an international dimension to their studies, e.g. through virtual



collaboration projects with students abroad – and international students, by creating interculturally sensitive and save online environments for transnationally delivered ODE programs (ibid., p. 253)

According to Bruhn-Zass, the VI concept “broadens the perspective beyond virtual exchange and the curriculum by including the administration, faculty, physical mobility, and collaboration and partnerships” (ibid., p. 241) in a framework that investigates the intersection of internationalization and technology in HE. She concludes that VI “can serve as a tool in order to achieve a comprehensive and inclusive internationalization practice” (ibid., p. 256).

The selection of Bruhn-Zass’s VI framework over alternative conceptual models warrants explicit justification. Earlier frameworks in the IoHE literature, such as Knight’s (2003) internationalization cycle or De Wit’s (2020) ethical internationalization model, focus primarily on institutional strategies and normative dimensions without systematically addressing how digital technologies interact with each domain of institutional activity. The Comprehensive Internationalization model (Hudzik, 2011; ACE, 2024) provides a robust multi-pillar structure but does not account for the digital dimension. The Bruhn-Zass VI framework is therefore the most appropriate analytical choice for this study because it is, to date, the only framework that systematically maps the intersections between

DICT and all six dimensions of comprehensive internationalization. This enables the analysis to go beyond virtual exchange in the curriculum and assess VI’s contributions to administrative leadership, faculty policies, physical mobility, partnerships, and online distance education as distinct institutional domains, while retaining a single coherent architecture that allows for cross-regional comparison.

METHODOLOGY

The current study draws on a review of recent literature considered relevant to answer the research question of whether VI may help HEIs in the Global South overcome the challenges of IoHE and strengthen their internationalization efforts. By “strengthen,” the authors understand, firstly, an increase, through the use of DICT, in the number of international collaboration projects (and individuals involved) in teaching, research, and other domains of internationalization, and secondly, the creation of stronger and more equitable and sustainable partnerships with HEIs abroad.

The body of literature encompasses writings published between January 2019 and March 2024 and thus includes experiences and knowledge built up during the COVID-19 pandemic. To identify relevant literature, the authors used two search strings in three widely used databases for peer-reviewed academic publications: Web of Science (WoS), Scopus, and ERIC.

Table 1
Literature review - Search strings and results.

Search string 1:	Search string 2:
international* AND universit* OR higher education AND virtual OR online AND Global South OR Latin America OR Africa	virtual OR online AND collaborat* OR cooperat* OR partnership AND research OR education AND north-south OR Global South
WoS: 292 results	WoS: 732 results
ERIC: 286 results	ERIC: 371 results
Scopus: 201 results	Scopus: 147 results

Note. Source: Research data.

The authors also tested the search strings on Google Scholar and in other languages across the databases, namely in French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese, to ensure not to miss any relevant publication in the literature review. Moreover, semantically related terms such as “research networks,” “international conferences on research,” “ICT use in higher education,” “COIL,” and “decolonization” were searched in the three

databases. However, these complementary queries did not yield any significant new results in terms of identifying more or other publications that would be relevant to the present review. After removing duplicates, systematically screening titles and abstracts, and, finally, doing full-text assessments for eligibility, 31 publications were included in the study.



The selection procedure followed a four-stage systematic screening protocol to ensure rigor and replicability. Stage 1 involved the removal of duplicate records across the three databases. In Stage 2, titles and abstracts were screened against explicit inclusion criteria: (a) the publication addressed internationalization of higher education in the Global South (Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, or the Caribbean); (b) digital technologies, virtual collaboration, or virtual internationalization were central to the study; (c) the publication date fell between January 2019 and March 2024; and (d) the full text was available for assessment. Publications were excluded when they focused exclusively on e-learning or distance education without an internationalization dimension, or when the Global South was invoked only rhetorically without institutional or geographic grounding. In Stage 3, full texts were assessed for eligibility by members of the author team independently, with disagreements resolved by consensus. Stage 4 consisted of content analysis of the 31 included publications, using the Bruhn-Zass VI categories as an organizing framework, as described in the following paragraph.

Using content analysis techniques (Krippendorff, 2018) the selected studies were categorized and organized. The first step of the data analysis consisted of organizing the body of literature according to the following criteria: form, year, language and geographical scope of the publication, and the distinction between theoretical and empirical studies. Subsequently and diving deeper into the content analysis process the researcher team thoroughly and repeatedly read the selected publications to search for evidence that would help answer the research question. The categories of Bruhn-Zass' VI model were used as a framework to organize themes that emerged from the literature and present the results of the analysis as six distinct findings contributing to answer the research question. To reduce bias and assure rigor and quality in the analysis and presentation of the findings, the authors discussed the results in several meetings between April and July of 2024.

Two methodological remarks are in order. First, the resulting corpus of 31 publications is regionally concentrated in Latin America (19

publications), with 7 publications focusing on Sub-Saharan Africa and 7 on more than one than one region or global/non-region-specific contexts. This distribution reflects the current state of the indexed peer-reviewed literature on VI in the Global South, which remains scarce and disproportionately produced by Latin American (especially Brazilian and Mexican) scholars and based on Latin American case studies (De Wit & Altbach, 2021; Marinoni & Cardona, 2024). Because of this imbalance, the findings reported in section 5 are interpreted with caution: claims that derive predominantly from Latin American evidence are signaled as such, contrasts and silences regarding the African and Caribbean contexts are made explicit, and no inferences are drawn about a homogeneous "Global South" experience of VI. The scope of the study is therefore better understood as exploratory and as an invitation to expand the empirical base on VI in under-represented Global South regions, rather than as a definitive account of VI in the Global South as a whole.

Second, the relationship between VI and decolonization, central to the research question is operationalized analytically through three observable dimensions drawn from the postcolonial IoHE literature (De Sousa Santos, 2018; Buckner & Stein, 2020; Leal et al., 2022; Tight, 2024): (i) reciprocity and equality of agency in the South-North and South-South collaborations enabled by VI, including how curricular co-design, authorship, and decision-making are distributed between partners; (ii) visibility and circulation of Southern epistemologies, languages, and scholarship in virtual learning, research, and dissemination spaces, including the role of non-English languages and locally relevant content; and (iii) access conditions, including infrastructure, digital literacy, and institutional capacity of Southern HEIs to design, govern, and sustain VI initiatives rather than to merely host them. Each of the six findings presented in section 5 is read against these three dimensions and against the relevant categories of the Bruhn-Zass framework, so that the analysis can distinguish where VI contributes to a decolonizing reconfiguration of IoHE and where it remains compatible with, or even reinforces, the asymmetries described in section 2.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The 31 publications composing the body of literature include 24 articles from peer-reviewed journals, six book chapters, and one conference paper. A large majority of the publications, 24 out of 31, are written in English (from authors based in Latin America, Africa, Europe, and North America); three papers were published in Spanish (from Mexico and Colombia), three in Portuguese, and one in French (all published by Brazilian researchers).

The main geographical scope is in Latin

America (19 papers), and in particular Brazil and Mexico. Seven studies focus on virtual internationalization efforts involving African HEIs, mainly from South Africa. Seven papers discuss global projects involving several continents, including Africa and Latin America, or not confined to any particular geographical area.

Eight of the publications approach VI from a theoretical or conceptual angle, and the other 23 studies included empirical data; e.g. case studies about COIL collaborations in different academic fields.

Table 2
Characteristics of the publications included in the literature review.

Characteristic	n
Form of publication	
Journal articles	24
Book chapters	6
Conference paper	1
Language of publication	
English	24
Spanish	3
Portuguese	3
French	1
Year of publication	
2019	3
2020	4
2021	6
2022	15
2023	2
2024	1
Geographical scope	
Latin America	19
Africa	7
Global or not specific	7
Type of study	
Theoretical/conceptual	8
Empirical	23

Note. Source: Research data.

Compared against the categories of Bruhn-Zass’ VI model, 26 articles focus on the integration of VI in the curriculum/learning activities as well als student mobility. Nine articles investigated the connection between VI and faculty policies and practices, namely studying how virtual technologies influence faculty roles, research partnerships, and academic processes. Five articles cover other aspects of VI, including collaborations and institutional strategies. Some

of the articles deal with more than one of the aforementioned topics.

The content analysis of the selected publications, using the VI model as framework and guide, resulted in six main findings. These findings, presented and discussed subsequently, allow looking at the research topic from different angles, providing complementary elements of answer to the research question.



VI contributes to strengthening Internationalization at home in the Global South, allowing HEIs to build a more inclusive internationalization model

Virtual Internationalization contributes significantly to the success of Internationalization at Home (IaH) in the Global South. Different studies have come to the conclusion that virtual formats in teaching (Virtual Exchange (VE), Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), virtual mobility, and mirrored classrooms, among others) and research (joint research projects, virtual events, and virtual research stays) support a more inclusive internationalization model in the Global South and provide opportunities for international and intercultural exchange and learning for the vast majority of non-mobile students ². (Amador-Fierro, 2022; Helm & Guth, 2021; Cunha et al., 2022; Finardi et al., 2020; Neria-Piña, 2022; Leon & Ramirez, 2022; Woicolesco, Cassol-Silva & Morosini, 2022, Gómez López, 2020). New models and formats of virtual collaborations in teaching and research, such as virtual internships, have emerged and been tested during the pandemic (e.g. Echeverría-King & Lafont Castillo, 2020). A study about an online collaboration between Pharmacy students in the United States and South Africa highlights the advantages of virtual exchange in comparison to in-person exchange programs: "Through technology, more students in diverse geographic locations can be exposed to various perspectives and healthcare experiences with international students." (Perumal-Pillay et al., 2023, p. 896).

And carrying the idea of multiple perspectives and the exchange of different knowledge further, a group of Brazilian authors emphasizes virtual projects in education involving HEIs located in the Global South may contribute to strengthening non-Western epistemologies: "COIL has the potential to foster internationalization at home in a non-hegemonic format in the Global South" (Hildeblando Junior et al., 2022, pp. 253-254).

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the implementation of VI strategies in HEI in the Global South, and this trend seems to continue

² Less than 1% of all tertiary level students in Latin America, for example, participate in any kind of international mobility during their studies, compared to about 5% in North America and 15% in Europe (UNESCO, 2023)

in post-pandemic times (Amador-Fierro, 2022; El Kirat et al., 2022; Oanda et al., 2022; Stallivieri et al., 2022). Apparently, and as a consequence of the travel restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, more HEIs in the Global South comprehend the value and virtues of (virtual) internationalization at home activities. This finding corroborates the results of Avolio & Benzaquen's (2024) study about internationalization strategies in non-Western HEIs. The authors conclude that technology-driven modes of virtual internationalization "are important opportunities for non-Western HEIs to foster a more inclusive and less elitist internationalization process" (Avolio & Benzaquen, 2024, p. 1092).

Curricular VI practices, and in particular VE/COIL, contribute to creating more equitable collaborations of exchange between South and North

The implementation of curricular VI practices and, in particular, virtual exchanges and COIL collaborations can positively contribute to creating fairer partnerships between the Global South and North based on reciprocity. De la Garza & Maher (2022) analyze how North-South collaborations (in their case between Ireland and Latin America in the field of film studies) can be used as a tool to empower learners in the Global South and to decolonize curricula in the Global North:

The features of COIL, namely collaboration, online delivery, and international scope, make it an ideal means to decolonise the curriculum in film studies, when working in South-North partnerships with Latin America [HEIs ...] the collaborative nature of the engagement is based upon reciprocity, redressing the traditional neo-colonial relation of North-South academic collaborations. Moreover, online technology is often perceived as having an equalising impact, leveling up the learning field for learners in the Global South that have been disadvantaged. (De la Garza & Maher, 2022, p. 39)

The outcomes of two practice examples of virtual North-South collaborations confirm the expectations regarding the "equalising impact"



of these types of collaborations. Wimpenny et al. (2022) emphasize how a COIL program involving students from Brazil, the UK, and South Africa created a non-hierarchical space for exchange and joint learning: "COIL can support a new ecology of learning in the Third Space to de-center hegemonic western attitudes and encourage awareness and respect for pluralistic ways of knowing, being, relating and expressing" (Wimpenny et al., 2022, p. 291).

Three authors from the Durban University of Technology, South Africa, report how the use of virtual exchange principles and methodology contribute to decolonise the curriculum and making African voices heard in a collaboration project involving several HEIs from South Africa and Europe: "VE has been identified as having the powerful potential to be the nexus between internationalisation and decolonisation in curriculum design, development, and delivery. [...] A VE project [...] achieves one of the key principles of decolonisation – [...] that African knowledge and perspectives have equal status with those from other contexts." (Cooke et al., 2019, pp. 41-42)

Thus, VE/COIL initiatives enable the creation of a virtual level playing field that allows students and faculty from HEIs in the Global South and North to participate and exchange on equal terms.

VI may strengthen South-South partnerships and regional HE networks

The third finding infers that VI is likely to stimulate South-South partnerships and the creation of new regional HE networks as well as strengthen existing ones. In Latin America, the pandemic has incited the launch of several new regional virtual exchange and virtual mobility programs and networks, notably LATAMCOIL, e-MOVIES, and INILATmov (Amador-Fierro, 2022; Neria-Piña, 2022; Oanda et al., 2022; Gómez López, 2020). With regards to existing HE networks in the region, DICT played a crucial role in maintaining and even extending collaborations when face-to-face activities and traveling were impossible: "With the pandemic outbreak, collaboration among the members of the network [of Catholic Latin America and Caribbean universities] was

enhanced. Participants highlighted the work of such a network to face the challenges together and move forward with IHE" (Neria-Piña, 2022, p. 89).

Several authors expect that trends in HEIs to use DICT to support internationalization and to join regional and inter-regional HE alliances will reinforce each other in the future. Woicolesco et al. (2022, p. 234) assert that "models of internationalization of higher education based on regional cooperation networks and that use DICT will be the most driven in the next decades [...] A window of opportunity opens for the Internationalization of Sustainable Higher Education: the virtualization of network-based IaH." (Woicolesco et al., 2022, p. 234). El Allame et al. point to the role of VI in fostering HE collaborations between different regions of the Global South: "Increased opportunities for collaboration within, between, and beyond Asia and Africa are being provided by technology-enhanced collaborative modes. Undoubtedly, information technology and the Internet will play a greater role in international academic collaboration in the post-pandemic era." (El Allame et al., 2022, p. 56)

In short, VI is seen as having the potential to support and strengthen South-South collaborations and regional networks in HE through the development of cooperation and concerted efforts that allow for overcoming common problems and reaching shared goals.

VI may have the potential to enhance research cooperation and create more equitable and sustainable North-South and South-South relationships in research

The 4th finding of this literature indicates that the use of DICT may facilitate research cooperation and joint knowledge production in North-South and South-South partnerships and thus help address issues of hegemony and inequality in global science.

The members of the already mentioned network of Catholic Latin American and Caribbean universities, for example, learned with the pandemic "that DICT could not only be used to provid[e] virtual activities for students but also



[to] generat[e] joint research" (Neria-Piña, 2022, p. 89).

Oanda et al. (2022), in an article about more equitable global research networks published in the *International Journal of African Higher Education*, showcase how DICT can be effectively used in research collaborations: "[T]he ASEA-UNINET Virtual Collaboration Project [...] proposes activities such as sharing "virtual and remote laboratories," "joint supervision of graduate students" [...] and "faculty exchange for remote teaching" (Oanda et al., 2022, p. 95)

A strong example of how virtual environments can contribute to overcoming hegemonic structures and western-centrism in global science is given by Egid et al. (2021). The authors investigate the effectiveness of online research methods for shared learning and knowledge generation. As a part of a global research project, they conducted five online workshops with scholars from 24 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas to explore questions of power in participatory health research. While acknowledging the limitations and risks of reproducing inequalities in the virtual space, the authors emphasize the inclusive potential of virtual environments: "Increasing access to online platforms creates opportunities for collaborations with groups of people that are typically underrepresented in the generation of new knowledge." (Egid et al. 2023, p. 205). They go on to say that "[o]nline workshops can provide a space for global interaction, enabling researchers from different contexts to build connections with each other while contributing to the production of diverse knowledge systems" (ibid.) and thus strengthen voices from the Global South in research scholarship.

VI may contribute to de-commercialize international collaborations in HE and democratize the access to knowledge

Authors from Latin America also express the hope that VI may serve to transcend the dominating market logic in IoHE and open new ways to democratize access to knowledge. The following account from a Mexican university referring to an online seminar series with speakers from different Latin American countries, the U.S., and Germany – offered as a response to the sus-

pension of face-to-face activities at the university in 2020 – Illustrates this expectation well:

The development of the international collaborative online teaching-learning project allowed the participation of high-quality speakers and opened opportunities of access to participants of different countries, thus providing high-quality education for all applicants, free of charge. [...] These impacts keep the hope alive that it is possible to democratize opportunities for a relevant education for everyone and access to universal knowledge through a digital platform. (Ceballos et al., 2022, p. 173)

Similarly, the Brazilian researchers Finardi & Guimaraes (2020) conclude in their paper "Internationalization and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities for the Global South" that VI may open new spaces for cooperation and equitable partnerships in HE and empower HEIs located in the Global South:

The orientation shift afforded by the pandemic, from a competition/academic mobility orientation to a cooperation/virtual mobility orientation may be inductive of a more balanced internationalization panorama in the world [...] enabling more cooperation and active roles for universities in the Global South. (Finardi & Guimaraes 2020, p.11)

These accounts and the positive experience of a "flattened (virtual) world" during the pandemic when solidarity and cooperation among HEIs prevailed over competition and market imperatives may encourage HEIs in the Global South to take a more proactive stance in international collaborations with the aim to increase equal access to education and reduce excessive marketization. On the other hand, the return to "business as usual." i.e. a market-driven IoHE after the end of the pandemic (Latorre, Brandenburg, De Wit, 2024) raises the question of how sustainable this trend will be in the future. In addition, "technology [...] alone does not democratize internationalization" unless it is linked to the "international teaching, research, and service missions" of HE in a meaningful way (Avolio & Benzaquen, 2024, p. 1094).



Limitations and risks of VI for HEIs in the Global South

On a different note, the last finding discusses some of the constraints and risks associated with VI for HEIs in the Global South, which are mentioned in the publications in this literature review. A frequent problem is the “digital divide”, i.e. issues with access to technology and to the Internet and concerns with digital literacy in the Global South (Helm & Guth, 2021; DeWinter & Klamer, 2021; Egid et al., 2023; Woicolesco et al., 2022). Several publications also alert that, instead of creating a more equitable “Third Space” (Wimpenny et al., 2022) for North-South collaborations, VI may, on the contrary, reproduce and reinforce existent and historical power imbalances and inequities between HEIs in the Global North and Global South. Helm & Guth (2021). Egid et al (2023) warn that “the use of online platforms can limit who is able to participate and can reinforce existing power inequities if these limitations are not recognized and addressed at the structural level” (Egid et al., 2023, p. 205). Cordova et al. (2021) see the risk that online or hybrid educational programs offered by top institutions in the Global North might jeopardize the offer of HEIs in the Global South; the authors thus point to the fact that an open global virtual educational space is not only a space for cooperation but also for competition.

Other issues mentioned in the literature include the resistance of students to participate in virtual programs due to digital fatigue and the perception of online offers as being less valuable (Oanda et al., 2022), and the risk that virtual collaborations in research may be negatively affected in their output and quality of scientific knowledge (Cordova et al., 2021).

All in all, “virtual internationalization [...] may not be as fantastic as it looks” (ibid., p. 505). Thus, it is crucial to recognize and address limitations and risks related to VI to ensure the effective and inclusive deployment of DICT in HEIs.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The findings of the present literature review reveal that VI has the potential to support and strengthen internationalization efforts in

HEIs in the Global South in various forms despite inherent limitations. With regards to the six categories of Bruhn’s VI concept, there is clear evidence that VI initiatives such as VE and COIL programs can enhance teaching quality and develop intercultural skills and a global outlook among students and thus positively impact the curriculum (internationalization) and learning outcomes. Moreover, VI can also be beneficial for faculty policies and practices, enhancing teaching and research opportunities with foreign partners through the use of DICT. From an institutional perspective, VI can strengthen existing partnerships and networks – by augmenting the possibilities of interaction and collaboration between HEIs at a low cost and risk – and even help build up new partnerships that would not necessarily exist outside the virtual space. Given this potential, a growing number of HEIs in the Global South recognizes the value and virtues of VI practices to promote a more inclusive internationalization (at home) model within their institutions, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the other hand, even though the use of DICT for IoHE is becoming popular, one should not overlook its inherent limitations in dealing with deep-rooted inequities in the global higher education scenario. Problems related to technology access and issues of power imbalances, for example, do not seem to go away any time soon and pose serious challenges to virtual North-South collaborations in HE. Digital transition alone cannot address long-standing infrastructure, resources, and prestige disparities between Global North and South institutions. These inequities require a more holistic approach to addressing systemic issues that restrict access to equitable opportunities among all HEIs.

Hence, while VI can be used as a powerful tool to improve IoHE in the Global South, it depends on ensuring balance and a fair approach in North-South partnerships. By acknowledging and actively addressing existing challenges, HEIs will be able to unleash VI’s full potential of facilitating inter-institutional collaborations and strengthening educational quality and inclusivity in the global HE community. As a contribution of this research, it is possible to highlight the evidence of progress in virtual internationalization



in various academic scenarios in the Global South and the strategies for minimizing the limiting factors of this form of internationalization at home.

VI offers clear advantages over the traditional mobility-based IoHE model: substantially lower financial costs, broader access for non-mobile students and HEIs with limited budgets, faster scalability once digital infrastructure is in place, and a smaller environmental footprint. It also enables South-South partnerships historically hindered by limited mobility funding. However, its drawbacks are equally documented: loss of the immersive cultural experience physical mobility affords; reduced interpersonal depth when interaction is screen-mediated; the risk of platform-mediated coloniality whereby Northern technological standards become normalized as the default infrastructure (Helm & Guth, 2021); and the persistent digital divide that may exclude the very students VI is meant to include (Egid et al., 2023). VI is therefore neither a strict substitute nor a complement to physical mobility: its contribution to equitable IoHE depends on deliberate institutional choices.

For these advantages to materialize, VI must be carefully structured at the institutional level. Implementation challenges consistently reported in the corpus involve coordination across partner institutions: synchronization of academic calendars, learning outcomes, assessment criteria, and faculty workload recognition (Wimpenny et al., 2022; Hildebando Junior et al., 2022). Asymmetric institutional commitment, where only one partner is genuinely invested, tends to make initiatives dependent on individual champions and collapse when those individuals move on. VI in the Global South contributes to IoHE not as a technological artifact but as the product of deliberate governance choices about coordination, partnership design, infrastructure investment, and language and platform politics.

Several limitations of this research should be acknowledged, as they directly shape the scope of the conclusions presented above. The most relevant is the modest size and regional imbalance of the reviewed corpus: of the 31 publications included, 19 focus on Latin America (predominantly Brazil and Mexico) and only

7 on Sub-Saharan Africa, while the Caribbean and Lusophone Africa are particularly under-represented. This imbalance constrains the generalizability of the findings to the Global South as a whole and led the analysis to give more weight to the Latin American experience, treating evidence from other regions as illustrative rather than systematic. The search strategy was also restricted to three databases (Web of Science, ERIC, and Scopus); incorporating regional databases such as SciELO, Redalyc, AJOL, or institutional repositories of African and Caribbean universities would likely have expanded the African and Lusophone evidence base and is a methodological choice to be revisited in future iterations of this research agenda.

Building on these limitations, future research should prioritize: (i) corpus replication with an African- and Caribbean-focused design drawing on regional databases such as SciELO, Redalyc, and AJOL; (ii) in-depth multi-site qualitative case studies tracking how each Bruhn-Zass pillar operates under different structural conditions and how the three decolonization dimensions unfold in concrete VI initiatives; (iii) longitudinal studies assessing whether VI strategies become institutionalized or reabsorbed into market-driven logics after the COVID-19 pandemic (Latorre et al., 2024); and (iv) examination of the political economy of VI, including platform providers, language regimes, and Northern funding mechanisms shaping which Southern voices circulate in virtual spaces.

REFERENCES

- Abdulrahman, H., Garwe, E., Thondhlana, J., & Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2020). Conclusion: The State of Internationalization of Higher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. In J. Thondhlana, E. Garwe, H. de Wit, J. Gacel-Avila, F. Huang, & W. Tamrat, (Eds.). *The Bloomsbury Handbook of the Internationalization of Higher Education in the Global South* (pp.585-595). Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Amador Fierros, G. (2022). E-mobility as a tool to support students' international experience during the pandemic: The case of CETYS University. In S. Castiello-Gutiérrez, M. P. Pantoja Aguilar, & C. E. Gutiérrez Jurado (Coords.), *Internacionalización*



de la educación superior después de la COVID-19: Reflexiones y nuevas prácticas para tiempos distintos (pp. 177–186). UPAEP.

American Council of Education (ACE) (2024). Comprehensive internationalization framework. Retrieved from: <https://www.acenet.edu/Research-Insights/Pages/Internationalization/Comprehensive-Internationalization.aspx>

Avolio, B., & Benzaquen, J. (2024). Internationalization strategies for non-Western higher educational institutions: a systematic literature review and conceptual framework. *International Journal of Educational Management*.

Beelen, J., & Jones, E. (2015). Redefining internationalization at home. *The European higher education area: Between critical reflections and future policies*, 59-72.

Bruhn-Zass, E. (2020). Virtual internationalization in higher education. *wbv*.

Bruhn-Zass, E. (2022). Virtual Internationalization to Support Comprehensive Internationalization in Higher Education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 26(2), 240–258.

Buckner, E., & Stein, S. (2020). What counts as internationalization? Deconstructing the internationalization imperative. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 24(2), 151-166.

Ceballos, A., Cuevas Muñiz, A., & Amador Fierros, G. (2022). Internacionalización virtual: Semana virtual internacional como herramienta innovadora. In S. Castiello-Gutiérrez, M. P. Pantoja Aguilar, & C. E. Gutiérrez Jurado (Coords.), *Internacionalización de la educación superior después de la COVID-19: Reflexiones y nuevas prácticas para tiempos distintos* (pp. 163–177). UPAEP.

Cooke, L. A., Lungu, B., & Samuels, L. (2019). Virtual engagement: A nexus between internationalisation and decolonisation of the curriculum in the PEESA III project. *Balkan Region Conference on Engineering and Business Education*, 3(1), 35-46. <https://doi.org/10.2478/cplbu-2020-0005>

Cunha, T. C., Asik, A., & Finardi, K. R. (2022). Virtual exchange contributions to the development of intercultural competence: A Brazilian higher education institutions' perspective. *Actualidades*

Investigativas en Educación, 22(1), 312–336. <https://doi.org/10.15517/aie.v22i1.47481>

De la Garza, A., & Maher, C. (2022). Decolonising the film curriculum through South-North collaborative online international learning (COIL) initiatives. *Film Education Journal*, 5, 34-40. <https://doi.org/10.18428/28096851>

DeSousa Santos, B. (2018). *The end of the cognitive empire: the coming age of epistemologies of the South*. Durham: Duke University Press.

DeWinter, A., & Klamer, R. (2021). Can COIL be effective in using diversity to contribute to equality? Experiences of iKudu, a European-South African consortium operating via a decolonised approach to project delivery. In *Virtual exchange: towards digital equity in internationalisation*. Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2021.53.1287>

De Wit, H., & Altbach, P. G. (2021). Internationalization in higher education: Global trends and recommendations for its future. *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*, 5(1), 28-46.

De Wit (2020), *Internationalization of Higher Education: The Need for a More Ethical and Qualitative Approach*. *Journal of International Students*, 10(1).

De Wit, H. (2016). Internationalisation and the role of online intercultural exchange. In R. O'Dowd & T. Lewis, (Eds.), *Online Intercultural Exchange: Policy, Pedagogy, Practice* (pp.69-82). Routledge.

Echeverría King, L., & Lafont Castillo, T. I. (2020). El impacto del Covid-19 en la internacionalización de la Educación Superior colombiana. *Revista de Estilos de Aprendizaje*, 13(Especial), 95–114. <https://doi.org/10.55777/rea.v13iEspecial.2246>

Egid, B., Ozano, K., Hegel, G., Zimmerman, E., Lopez, Y., Roura, M., Sheikhattari, P., Jones, L., Dias, S., & Wallerstein, N. (2023). Can everyone hear me? Reflections on the use of global online workshops for promoting inclusive knowledge generation. *Qualitative Research*, 23(2), 195-216. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14687941211019585>

El Kirat El Allame, Y., Dunrong, B., Anas, H., Jie, M., Amutuhair, T., Yifan, H., Elghazali, O., & Jingran, Y. (2022). Academic collaboration in Africa and Asia: Current status, challenges, and emerging trends and strategies. *International Journal of*



African Higher Education, 9(3), 37-61. <https://doi.org/10.6017/ijahe.v9i3.16041>

Eriksen (2015). What's wrong with the Global North and the Global South? In A. Hollington, T. Salverda, T. Schwarz, & O. Tappe (Eds). Concepts of the Global South - Voices from around the world. Cologne: Global South Studies Center (GSSC).

Finardi, K. R., & Guimaraes, F. F. (2020). Internationalization and the Covid-19 Pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities for the Global South. *Journal of Education, Teaching and Social Studies*, 2(3). <https://doi.org/10.22158/jetss.v2n3p1>

Gacel-Ávila, J. (2020). Conclusion: Latin America and the Caribbean Internationalization Process. In J. Thondhlana, E. Garwe, H. de Wit, J. Gacel-Avila, F. Huang & W. Tamrat, (Eds.). *The Bloomsbury Handbook of the Internationalization of Higher Education in the Global South* (pp.279-296). Bloomsbury Publishing.

Gacel-Ávila, J. & Rodriguez-Rodriguez, S. (2019). The Internationalization of Higher Education in Latin America and The Caribbean. An Assessment [Online]. UNESCO-IESALC/Universidad de Guadalajara. Retrieved from: <http://obiret-iesalc.udg.mx/en/publicaciones-propias/internationalization-higher-education-latin-america-and-caribbean-assessment>.

Garwe, E. & Thondhlana, J.. (2020). Introduction: Internationalization of Higher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. In J. Thondhlana, E. Garwe, H. de Wit, J. Gacel-Avila, F. Huang & W. Tamrat, (Eds.). *The Bloomsbury Handbook of the Internationalization of Higher Education in the Global South* (pp.461-469). Bloomsbury Publishing.

Gómez López, P. (2020). ¿Qué sucederá con la internacionalización de la educación superior y la movilidad estudiantil después del COVID-19? *Revista Digital de Investigación en Docencia Universitaria*, 14(2), e1348. <https://doi.org/10.19083/ridu.2020.1348>

Healey, N. M. (2023). Reinventing international higher education for a socially just, sustainable world. *Perspectives: Policy and practice in higher education*, 27(4), 169-178.

Helm, F., & Guth, S. (2021). Internationalization

at home through virtual exchange. In D. K. Deardorff, H. de Wit, B. Leask, H. Charles, & F. Marmolejo (Eds.), *The handbook of international higher education* (2nd ed., pp. 229-248). Stylus Publishing.

Hildeblando Junior, C. A., Finardi, K. R., & El Kadri, M. (2022). Affordances da COIL para a internacionalizacao do ensino superior: um estudo de caso. *Revista da ANPOLL*, 53(1), 253-272. <https://doi.org/10.18309/ranpoll.v53i1.1615>

Helm, F., & O'Dowd, R. (2020). Virtual exchange and its role in blended mobility initiatives. UNICollaboration Position Paper.

Hudzik, J. K. (2020). Post-COVID higher education internationalization. *NAFSA Trends & Insights*, (September 2020), 1-7.

Hudzik, J. K. (2011). *Comprehensive internationalization*. Washington, DC: NAFSA, The Association of International Educators.

Jones, E., Leask, B., Brandenburg, U., & De Wit, H. (2021). Global social responsibility and the internationalisation of higher education for society. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 25(4), 330-347.

Knight, J. (2003). Updated internationalization definition. *International Higher Education*, (33), 2-3. <https://doi.org/10.6017/ihe.2003.33.7391>

Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. Sage publications.

Labraña, J., Henríquez, A., LaTorre, P., Puyol, F., Gómez, M. R., & López, N. (2024). New public management and internationalization in Latin American top-tier universities: A multiple case study. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 28(4), 568-587. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10283153231221652>

Latorre, P., Brandenburg, U., & de Wit, H. (2024). Can We Still Stop the End of Internationalization?. *International Higher Education*, (117), 22-23.

Leal, F., Finardi, K., & Abba, J. (2022). Challenges for an internationalization of higher education from and for the global south. *Perspectives in Education*, 40(3), 241-250.

Leask, B. (2015). *Internationalizing the Curriculum*. Routledge.



Lee, J. J., & Stensaker, B. (2021). Research on internationalisation and globalisation in higher education—Reflections on historical paths, current perspectives and future possibilities. *European Journal of Education*, 56(2), 157-168.

León, M., & Ramírez, C. (2022). Internationalization at home through virtual exchange: Experiences from Latin American higher education institutions. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 114, 101984

Marginson, S. (2023). Limitations of the leading definition of 'internationalisation of higher education: is the idea wrong or is the fault in reality?'. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 1-20.

Marinoni, G., & Pina Cardona, S. B. (2024). Internationalization of Higher Education: Current Trends and Future Scenarios. *International Association of Universities (IAU)*.

Neria-Piña, L. (2022). Internationalization of higher education in universities associated to ODUCA during COVID-19. *Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education*, 14(3B), 77-93. [https://doi.org/10.32674/jcihe.v14i3\(Part2\).4406](https://doi.org/10.32674/jcihe.v14i3(Part2).4406)

Oanda, I., Jon, J.-E., & Blanco, G. (2022). Mobility for academic collaboration post-COVID-19: Rebuilding towards more equitable networks. *International Journal of African Higher Education*, 9(3), 83-104. <https://doi.org/10.6017/ijahe.v9i3.16047>

O'Dowd, R., & Dooly, M. (2020). Intercultural communicative competence development through telecollaboration and virtual exchange. In *The Routledge handbook of language and intercultural communication* (pp. 361-375). Routledge.

O'Dowd, R. (2018). From telecollaboration to virtual exchange: State-of-the-art and the role of UNICollaboration in moving forward. *Research-publishing.net*, 1, 1-23.

Perumal-Pillay, V. A., Bangalee, V., Oosthuizen, F., Andonie, G., & Rotundo, H. (2023). Shared learning experiences: Pilot study of an online exchange project between pharmacy students in South Africa and the United States. *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*, 15(10), 896-902. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cptl.2023.06.021>

Rubin, J. (2017). Embedding collaborative online international learning (COIL) at higher education institutions. *Internationalisation of Higher Education*, 2, 27-44.

Stallivieri, L. (2019). Internacionalização da educação em contextos (des)favoráveis. [Paper presentation]. VIII Jornadas Binacionales de Educación. 4-6 Septiembre 2019, Rivera, Uruguay.

Stallivieri, L., Wimpenny, K., & Finardi, K. R. (2022). Responsible internationalization during the pandemic and beyond: Latin American and European perspectives. In F. Helm & R. O'Dowd (Eds.), *Blended Mobility and Virtual Exchange in Higher Education* (pp. 47-62). UNICollaboration.

Teferra, D., Sirat, M., & Beneitone, P. (2022). The Imperatives of Academic Collaboration in Africa, Asia and Latin America. *International Journal of African Higher Education*, 9(3), 13-35.

Tight, M. (2024). Decolonization and higher education: A critical review of a contemporary concern, policy and theory. *Higher Education Policy*, 37(1), 59-72.

Thondhlana, J., Garwe, E., de Wit, H., Gacel-Avila, J., Huang, F. and Tamrat, W., 2020. *The Bloomsbury Handbook of the Internationalization of Higher Education in the Global South*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

UNESCO, Institute of Statistics. (IOS), 2023. Global Flow of Tertiary-Level Students [Online]. Available from: <http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow>.

Villar-Onrubia, D., & Rajpal, B. (2016). Online international learning: Internationalising the curriculum through virtual mobility at Coventry University. *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education*, 20(2-3), 75-82.

Wimpenny, K., Finardi, K. R., Orsini-Jones, M., & Jacobs, L. (2022). Knowing, being, relating and expressing through Third Space Global South-North COIL: Digital inclusion and equity in international higher education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 26(2), 279-296. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10283153221094085>

Woicolesco, V. G., Cassol-Silva, C. C., & Morosini, M. (2022). Internationalization at home and virtual: A sustainable model for Brazilian higher education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 26(2), 222-239. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10283153221094085>



org/10.1177/10283153221076898

Wolvers, A., Tappe, O, Salverda, T., & Schwarz, T. (2015). On the Global South. In A. Hollington, T. Salverda, T. Schwarz, & O. Tappe (Eds). Concepts of the Global South - Voices from around the world. Cologne: Global South Studies Center (GSSC).