ACADEMICS' BELIEFS AND PRACTICES REGARDING CURRICULUM INTERNATIONALIZATION IN ETHIOPIAN RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO GRADUATE'S EMPLOYABILITY

PhD DISSERTATION

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Academics' Beliefs and Practices Regarding Curriculum Internationalization in Ethiopian Research Universities and its Contributioto Graduates' Employability

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I dedicate this dissertation to my wife, my children, my parents, my colleagues, my friends, and all those who supported me throughout this challenging and lengthy journey.

STATEMENT OF THE AUTHOR

By my signature below, I declare and affirm that this Dissertation is my own work. I have followed all ethical and technical principles of scholarship in the preparation, data collection, data analysis, and compilation of this Dissertation. Any scholarly matter that is included in this Dissertation has been given recognition through citation.

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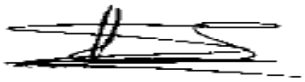

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The author was born on October 7, 1978, in Alibo, Kebele 01, Jardaga Jarte Woreda, Horo Guduru Wollega Zone, Oromia National Regional State, Ethiopia. He attended Alibo Primary and Junior Secondary School, followed by Shambu and Amuru Secondary School.

After successfully passing the matriculation exams, he joined Bahir Dar Teachers' College in 1997, where he earned a Diploma with a major in Biology and a minor in Chemistry. After teaching in primary schools for two years, he enrolled in the Summer Program at Dilla College of Teacher Education and Health Sciences and completed his B.Ed. in Biology in 2004. He then pursued an M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction at Addis Ababa University, graduating in 2009. In 2019, he began his Ph.D. studies in Curriculum Studies at Haramaya University.

In terms of work experience, the author has held several roles in the education sector, including primary school teacher, primary school supervisor, and Woreda Education Office head in Borena Zone (Hidilola) and Guji Zone (Yirba Muda and Bore) in Oromia National Regional State. He has also served as a Teacher Education instructor, Staff Development Unit (SDU) coordinator, teachers' association head, academic dean, and dean at Dembi Dollo College of Teacher Education in Oromia National Regional State. Additionally, he worked as a university instructor, head of the Teacher Education department, and quality associate dean in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences at Wollega University, Nekemte, Oromia National Regional State.

Currently, he is working at the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) Education and Training Authority (ETA) as the desk head for the Ethiopian National Qualification Framework (ENQF). In total, he has 27 years of experience in the education sector.

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I hold you in the highest regard and am forever thankful.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
AMU	Arbaminch University
AUCC	Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
BDU	Bahir Dar University
CI	Curriculum Internationalization
COIL	Collaborative Online International Learning
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease, first identified in late 2019
CR	Classroom
ERUs	Ethiopian Research Universities
ESDP	Education Sector Development Program
ETP	Education and Training Program
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HWU	Hawassa University
IaH	Internationalization at Home
IAUs	International Association of Universities.
JMU	Jimma University
LOs	Learning Outcomes
MKU	Mekele University
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoSHE	Ministry of Science and Higher Education
QIC	Questionnaire of Internationalization of Curriculum
RUs	Research Universities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UoG	University of Gonder

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

Universities are expected to respond to the opportunities and challenges posed by globalization as they increasingly prepare young people for global labor markets and interconnected societies. Hence, this study investigated the beliefs and practices of academics in Ethiopian research universities regarding curriculum internationalization and its contribution to graduates' employability. To do this, a convergent parallel mixed-methods design was employed. The quantitative data were collected through a questionnaire from 415 randomly selected academics across four universities: Addis Ababa University, Jimma University, Hawassa University, and Bahir Dar University. The qualitative data were gathered through interviews, focus group discussions, open-ended survey items, observations, and document reviews and were analyzed thematically. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, as well as inferential statistics including Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (r), two-way ANOVAs, and standard regression. The study found that while academics generally believe in the importance of curriculum internationalization, their practices lag behind their beliefs, particularly in integrating global perspectives into curricula, teaching methods, and assessments. Quantitative results revealed no significant differences in beliefs about curriculum internationalization across different disciplines and universities. However, curriculum internationalization practices varied significantly by discipline, particularly between hard/applied and soft/pure fields. The study also found a negligible correlation between academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI. Nevertheless, CI practices significantly contributed to graduates' employability, accounting for 31% of the variation in the development of graduates' employability attributes. Qualitative findings supported these results, emphasizing the need for a balance between global and local perspectives in the curriculum. The study concludes that despite academics' acceptance and some of their practices regarding curriculum internationalization, significant challenges remain, particularly in fostering practical engagement and ensuring that graduates are prepared for the global job market. Key barriers to curriculum internationalization include resistance to change, limited English proficiency, and resource constraints, while enablers include institutional commitment, internationalization policies, and international collaborations. These findings underscore the need for clearer alignment between curriculum internationalization policies and practices to enhance the international competitiveness of Ethiopian graduates. The recommendations call for Ethiopian research universities to enhance diversity through the recruitment of international academics and students, develop intercultural curricula, and strengthen ties between academia and industry. Both universities and the government should work together to create clear strategies for curriculum internationalization, ensuring alignment between beliefs and practices, and implementing quality assurance systems. The government should support these efforts through funding, policy incentives, and streamlined visa processes. Additionally, future research should expand on this study by including more diverse institutions, conducting longitudinal studies, and exploring the impact of external factors on curriculum internationalization practices.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's world, global trends demand an international perspective in all aspects of life, work, and development, whether at the individual, organizational, or national level. Many human activities, including jobs, markets, services, and the facilities required by countries or their citizens, have become globalized in terms of production, procurement, delivery, or utilization (Reihlen & Apel, 2007). This shift is a result of a phenomenon known as globalization, which Albrow (1990, p. 9) describes as "those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society, a global society".

As globalization progresses, individuals who were once geographically distant have become our students, colleagues, and neighbors. The lines between local, national, and global contexts are increasingly blurred, and our collective and individual futures depend on how adaptable, open-minded, and innovative we are in how we think, live, and work (Leask, 2015). Globalization inherently has its own positive and negative effects. For instance, globalization, as a competition, has even created what Duderstadt (2009) phrased as "Darwinian Competition" in which the fittest would survive and the winner-take-all. The essence is that globalization has intensified competition in such a way that only the strongest or most adaptable participants, whether institutions, businesses, or countries, will succeed.

As a result, in this 21st century, globalization is recognized as "the most important contextual factor shaping the internationalization of higher education" (IAU, 2012, p. 1). That means, globalization impacts how HEIs operate, collaborate, and compete both nationally and internationally. For this reason, universities are confronted with a range of challenges at the local, regional, and global levels, including mass migration, environmental and geographic issues, increasing diversity of student populations, shifts in knowledge paradigms, information overload, and global interconnectedness. Problems and issues in the current socio-economic and geopolitical aspects demand a broader, multi-perspective understanding of the world, life, and work (Gann, 2014).

Consequently, Welikala (2011) argues that universities, as key sites of knowledge creation, have a social responsibility to equip society with the skills and understanding needed to adapt to changes in work, technology, and cultural identities. In the same vein, Nova (2020) stated that universities must respond to the opportunities and challenges posed by globalization, as they are increasingly expected to prepare young people for global labor markets and interconnected societies. This is achieved through a process known as internationalization, where higher education institutions integrate an international dimension into their teaching, research, and service functions. As noted by Knight (2003), unlike globalization, which is a broader economic and political process, internationalization in higher education is a strategic response by institutions to adapt to globalization

In general, as globalization impacts economies and societies, internationalization becomes a strategic response for universities to stay relevant and competitive. By integrating global perspectives into curricula, institutions can better adapt to global trends and expectations. Based on the above-mentioned information, the focus of this study was one of the worldwide priority areas of the time.

Finally, this chapter provided an introduction, background, problem statement, research questions, objectives, significance, delimitations, limitations, definitions of key terms, theoretical frameworks, and the overall organization of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

With globalization, new aims, additional functions, expanded activities, and new actors have emerged in higher education, which has also affected the internationalization of higher education. With the changes in the international context; the purpose, goals, meanings, and strategies of internationalization of higher education also changed (IAU, 2012). For instance, preparing students for the global economy, and promotion multiculturalism, peace, and mutual understanding were some of the key changes (Bulfin, 2009). Hence, internationalization of higher education is broadly defined as a vital “process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension in the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education” (Knight, 2003). It also includes a wider range of

academic-related activities such as student and staff mobility, internationalization and harmonization of curricula, quality assurance, and inter-institutional cooperation in teaching-learning, research, and community services (Vught, 2006).

For a long time, internationalization was associated primarily with recruiting international students and sending domestic students abroad, a notion that is increasingly being criticized. However, the goal of internationalization was making higher education (more) responsive to the requirements and challenges related to the globalization of societies, economy, and labor markets" (Beelen and De Wit, 2012, p.74; Fabricius et al., 2017). Consequently, internationalization is on the agenda of many Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (Kirk et al., 2018; Svensson and Wihlborg, 2010; as cited in Zou et al., 2019). As mentioned by Green and Olson (2003), recently, at the heart of the internationalization of an institution is and will always remain its curriculum. Because the curriculum is an important site of interaction between people, knowledge, values, and action in today's world (Leask, 2015).

Globalization has demanded the internationalization of curricula to prepare students for a globalized workforce and society. Altbach and Knight (2007) argue that universities worldwide are integrating global perspectives into their curricula to ensure that graduates are globally competent. This process, known as curriculum internationalization (CI), involves the incorporation of international content, perspectives, and case studies into courses across disciplines. It is a curriculum for all students, not just for the mobile minority (De Wit & Jones, 2022). Recent studies highlight that CI is now considered essential for fostering intercultural understanding and global citizenship (Leask & Green, 2020). For instance, Beelen and Jones (2015) emphasize that internationalized curricula should not only address global issues but also include diverse voices and perspectives, particularly from non-Western contexts. This shift towards a more inclusive and globally aware curriculum reflects the changing dynamics of global education and the need for universities to produce graduates who can navigate diverse cultural settings.

Numerous researchers, as Williams (2005) acknowledges, emphasize the centrality of the curriculum and CI and teaching and learning processes as critical elements of

internationalization (Bond, 2003a; Bond et al., 2003; Green & Olson, 2003; Knight, 1994, 1997, 2000a; Lemasson, 2002; Paige, 2003; Tonkin & Edwards, 1981). Knight (1994) described the curriculum as "the backbone of the internationalization process" (p. 6). Pieces of literature (Dacre-Pool & Sewell, 2007; Yorke & Knight, 2007; as cited in Tesfamariam & Jeilu, 2021) indicated that curriculum is a key to enhancing graduate employability. Other researchers concur, emphasizing the importance of an internationalized curriculum in providing a student-centered learning experience for all students and in preparing students to be successful in today's increasingly interdependent global society (Bonfiglio, 1999; Leask, 2001; Lemasson, 2002; Schuerholz-Lehr, 2007; Schuerholz-Lehr, Caws, van Gyn, & Preece, 2007). By the same token, Crosling et al. (2008) also pinpointed that CI is a strategy adopted by many universities as they prepare their graduates for employment in the global economy.

Curriculum internationalization is like its super ordinate concept of “internationalization”, it is a multidimensional concept that can be defined and, therefore, approached in several ways. However, CI was very recently defined as “the incorporation of international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods, and support services of a program of study”(Leask, 2015, p. 9; as cited in Simm & Marvell, 2017). The three dimensions of CI in Leask’s definition were summarized pictorially (fig. 1) by Barker (2011), as cited in Simm and Marvell (2017).

Source: Barker, 2011

Figure 1 The three dimensions of CI

Recent global trends in CI have revealed that, for the past 30 years, higher education has largely focused on activities abroad, such as student mobility, rather than integrating international elements within domestic institutions. These efforts have often been fragmented and lacked strategic coherence, benefiting only a small elite of students and faculty (José Sá & Serpa, 2020). As international student mobility faces increasing challenges, the concept of Internationalization at Home (IaH) has gained prominence. This strategy emphasizes incorporating international perspectives into the domestic student experience. By integrating global content into curricula and fostering intercultural interactions on campus, IaH ensures that all students, including those who do not participate in study-abroad programs, are exposed to international viewpoints (Beelen, 2019). Several notable trends in recent years reflect shifts in pedagogy and institutional strategy related to this approach.

One prominent trend involves embedding global competencies into curricula, with a strong emphasis on intercultural skills and global awareness. Institutions are increasingly preparing students to navigate diverse cultural contexts, collaborate internationally, and address pressing global challenges such as climate change and social inequality. This trend underscores the importance of equipping students for complex, multicultural environments (Deardorff, 2020; Leask & Bridge, 2019). Another significant development is the rise of the integration of digital and online learning tools has expanded opportunities for CI. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of online education, allowing institutions to offer international content and collaborative projects without the need for physical mobility (O'Dowd, 2021). Virtual exchange programs and collaborative online international learning (COIL) have become popular methods for enhancing the global dimensions of the curriculum, providing students with cross-border learning experiences even if they are unable to study abroad (Rubin & Guth, 2015).

The focus on inclusion, social justice, sustainability, and global citizenship is also shaping internationalization efforts. Universities are working to ensure underrepresented groups have greater access to global learning opportunities, promoting equity in international experiences (Stein & Andreotti, 2021). Additionally, there is an increasing emphasis on

aligning curricula with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to encourage students to engage with global issues such as poverty and environmental sustainability (Marmolejo, 2020). Furthermore, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches are gaining prominence, with universities blending various academic fields to foster holistic problem-solving and prepare students for the complexities of global challenges (Knight, 2020).

Generally, recent trends reveal that the internationalization of higher education has become a key focus for institutions in Europe, Asia, and America as they seek to enhance their global competitiveness and reputation for academic excellence, research, and innovation (Abdullahi et al., 2007; Poh-Lin, 2004). However, African institutions face significant challenges in this regard. Despite efforts, African universities have not effectively positioned themselves in the international educational arena, partly due to their focus on national development needs and limited marketing of their capabilities (Knight, 2003; Museveni, 1995). While some institutions are shifting towards a nationally oriented curriculum to meet local demands, this approach may not be sustainable in the long run as globalization pressures increase.

In response to these challenges, some universities in Africa, particularly in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, have adopted the Internationalization at Home strategy. This approach involves delivering an internationally relevant curriculum to students without requiring them to study abroad, thereby fostering intercultural competence domestically (Crowther et al., 2001). Although this strategy is seen by some as a cost-effective alternative to student mobility, it reflects ongoing efforts by African universities to adapt to global trends and transform their educational systems to align with international standards (Gwakwa, 2016). Similar trends have been observed in Ethiopia. According to Wondwosen (2015), the degree of internationalization at Ethiopian higher education institutions (HEIs) remains in its embryonic stage.

Therefore, based on the aforementioned information regarding curriculum internationalization, this study is crucial in identifying gaps and suggesting strategies for improvement.

1.2. Statements of the problem

As seen from the discussion in the introductory and background sections, while it is encouraging to note the increased use and attention given to internationalization, there remains significant confusion about its precise meaning. For instance, for a long time, European institutions believed that the mobility (both inbound and outbound) of students was the best way to internationalize higher education institutions (HEIs). Consequently, the issue of internationalizing the curriculum has been overshadowed (Crowther et al., 2000). Even in recent times, studies of the higher education curriculum have been scarce (Barnett & Coate, 2005). Studies on curriculum internationalization (CI) in higher education are even rarer and, with a few exceptions, focus on single institutions and/or disciplines.

Despite much debate, the role and impact of CI are often unappreciated. This has meant that critical questions, including what CI means and how it can be achieved across different disciplines, have not been consistently or strategically addressed. In other words, the concept of internationalizing the curriculum is poorly understood and underdeveloped in practice (Shiel & Takeda, 2008). Moreover, Leask (2012) comments that an internet search, for instance, using the terms “internationalization of the curriculum” and “internationalized curriculum” yields over one million results. There are also links to university websites and scholarly articles, blogs, videos, and online discussions with contributions from all over the world. Nevertheless, further exploration of the results reveals that the internationalization of the curriculum is itself not internationalized. That means there is no shared understanding of what it means to “internationalize the curriculum” or what an internationalized curriculum looks like.

It is obvious that a single definition of “internationalization” and “internationalization of the curriculum” is by no means universally applied by universities throughout the world (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada) (AUCC, 2009). With this regard, AUCC confirmed that there are almost as many ideas about what internationalization of the curriculum means as there are universities. Hence, each university needs to articulate

what “internationalization” and “internationalization of the curriculum” mean for its own teaching/ learning, research and community service activities.

However, Leask (2012) identified several emerging “global points of agreement” on CI, despite varying interpretations worldwide. **Firstly**, it is widely acknowledged that CI is linked to globalization, and universities have to prepare graduates for a global society. **Secondly**, academic staff are crucial in this process because they control the curriculum, including what is taught and how it is assessed. Consequently, addressing the challenges and facilitators of academic staff engagement is key. **Lastly**, there is variation in how CI is approached across disciplines; "hard" disciplines like science and mathematics often view knowledge as culturally neutral and universal, while "softer" disciplines like nursing and education are more open to recognizing the cultural dimensions of knowledge.

Despite the aforementioned agreements, the ability of universities to produce employable graduates in the competitive 21st century is also gaining global attention from scholars and policymakers. This concern is driven by two key factors. First, there are signs that patterns of work are rapidly changing with new sectors emerging, and with technology, globalization, and demographic changes significantly reforming the workforce (Oliver, 2015; Pitan 2015). This change implies that it is no longer enough for graduates to have a good degree but they should also possess the skills and attributes required to compete and collaborate in a dynamic knowledge economy and world of work (Newton, 2015). Second, the current university curriculum is seen as inadequate in equipping students with the professional and lifelong learning skills needed for success in today’s evolving job market (Lees, 2002).

Hence, doing CI is more challenging than it is widely recognized in the literature (Leask, 2013). One of the challenges mentioned is engaging academics in the process of CI in their disciplines (Leask, 2013; Childress, 2010; Leask, 2008; Sanderson, 2008). The pivotal roles of academics in the process of curriculum internationalization are articulated here and there by different scholars in the area. Some of them believe that CI must begin within the disciplines. For instance, Leask (2015) argues that there has been a growing awareness that no substantial changes will take place if academics are not fully engaged in the process.

Others suggest that academics' hesitation and resistance are inhibitors of CI. Stohl (2007), for example, named his article 'We have met the enemy and he is us' to indicate the challenge of engaging the academic staff in developing and sustaining CI.

In like manner, Teekens (2000) concluded that it was not just the content of curriculum, but also the act of teaching that was the central feature of CI. She said, "It is the lecturer who is the core player in the process. It is her/his teaching that ultimately determines the results in the international classroom" (p. 30). José Sá and Serpa (2020) also noted that "teachers are key institutional actors in the process of CI and play a crucial role in ensuring its success".

One barrier to academics' engagement is the varied understanding of the meaning, purpose, relevance, and approach to CI in different disciplines (Sawir, 2011). In a similar vein, other studies (Bond et al, 2003; as cited in Green and Mertova, 2009) point to the problem of closed-mindedness among academics. For example, if academic staff's conceptualization of CI is primarily limited to student mobility and has little, or nothing, to do with their responsibility, they may show little interest in internationalizing their curriculum.

Crowther et al. (2000), points out that the role of academics in HEIs remains largely unexamined in many institutions. Similarly, Beelen and De Wit (2012) argue that the academic role in this process is insufficiently addressed in scholarly literature. Moreover, many academic staff either lack clarity on what CI entails within their specific disciplines and institutions or do not see it as relevant to them (Knight, 2006; Stohl, 2007). Even those who are interested in contributing to the development and implementation of international education may not possess the necessary skills, knowledge, or attitudes to do so effectively (Childress, 2010).

Indeed, Ethiopian universities are part of a global movement to advance and prioritize the internationalization of curricula. The Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap and Ethiopian Higher Education Policy have extensively addressed internationalization and graduate employability. For instance, in the Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap, one of the limitations states:

> During the past one and half decades, we have seen significant expansion of the Ethiopian HE system, harmonization of undergraduate curricula, introduction of modular teaching, continuous assessment, and peer learning, and the establishment and operation of quality assurance mechanisms to enhance and assure quality of higher education. However, these activities have little positive impact on the quality [of] HEIs' core processes, for example, teaching and learning. The curricula of HEI are not geared toward the development of employability and other lifelong learning skills among graduates (MoE, 2018, p.52).

Likewise, the document also goes on to say:

> Major problems currently faced by the higher education in Ethiopia include a mismatch between the demands of the labor market and the national economy and the competence level of higher education graduates; poor international practices and limited partnerships with other stakeholders, p.4

MoSHE (2020) also concludes, "the existing system of private and public universities continues to produce certified but incompetent and unemployed graduates. Thus, the system failed to achieve the intended goals and solve the social, economic, and political problems of the country" p. iii.

According to The Ethiopian Academy of Sciences (2015):

> Many higher education institutions tend to have a curriculum that is "a mile wide and an inch deep"— shallow and repetitive. That has to change towards preparing quality and employable graduates. It seems that there is an increasing demand that the curriculum addresses what is needed today, but also prepares the graduate for the future. It is common to find experiences where students are taught theoretical aspects with little exposure to practical skills – a journalist trained without exposure to a camera, an IT professional without computers, a health worker without communication with patients, and an agricultural graduate without any exposure to the maize field or the poultry farm. Therefore, in an ever-changing job market and sometimes unpredictable economies, this requires innovativeness and creativity on the part of higher education institutions and teaching faculty. Many higher education institutions will need to modify their profiles, curricula, and teaching methods (p.51).

Last but not least, in sub-article 4.5.3 of the most recent document from the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), MoE (Amharic version) (2023), two key points were also outlined regarding program introduction and university competitiveness. First,

“higher education programs will be introduced based on their relevance to both national and international development, as well as labor market demands”. Second, “to enhance the national and international competitiveness of public universities, a system will be designed to transition them to greater autonomy” (p. 11).

Hence, the above-mentioned limitations and future directions of the Ethiopian higher education system illustrate the current position and future vision of Ethiopian HEIs in producing competent graduates. From a scientific point of view, discussing the employability of graduates without considering how curricula are designed is impossible. A quality curriculum and effective teaching are at the heart of an internationalized curriculum (Farkas-Teekens, 1997; Biggs, 1999; Leask, 2011).

Furthermore, the Ethiopian Higher Education Policy (MoSHE, 2020) witnessed that academics determine the effectiveness and quality of this educational system through their impact on curriculum development and implementation, student learning and development, research undertakings, and community engagement. They also influence the nature and essence of knowledge and technology creation, transfer, and utilization.

By the same token, in this regard, Leask (2012) articulates the indispensable role of academics as follows:

> While the power and importance of policy statements, related planning, and goal-setting are substantial, it is essential that academics “own” the internationalization agenda. This means it must be interpreted and enacted at the program and course levels, as well as at the institutional policy level — and only they can do this. Academics are the crucial link between curriculum policy and students.

Caruana (2010) also argues that 'the crucial factor determining the possibilities for intercultural dialogue within the student learning experience is academics’ attitudes towards, and how they understand, internationalization.' The role of academics in understanding internationalization, both in general terms and in interpreting curriculum policy at the discipline level, requires significant attention and support. They may also need to be 'internationalized' on a more personal level (Sanderson, 2008).

However, as Kasenene (2011), Gwakwa (2016), and Wondwosen (2015) argue, in Africa generally, and in Ethiopia specifically, little has been published on the challenges HEIs face in their efforts to internationalize their programs and outlook. Hence, the authors suggest that more studies need to be conducted. Other researchers (Barnett & Coate, 2005; Shiel & Takeda, 2008) have explicitly stated that, in recent times, studies on the higher education curriculum have been scarce. Studies on the internationalization of the curriculum are even rarer and, with a few exceptions, focus on a single institution and/or a single discipline.

Regarding Ethiopia, the researcher found three published articles and one unpublished paper on the internationalization of higher education. The first study, "Internationalization of Higher Education in Ethiopia: Evidence from Public and Private Institutions" (Wondwosen, 2015), focused on the dominant aspects, rationales, benefits, frameworks, policies, and regulations, as well as the risks and barriers to internationalization in Ethiopian higher education institutions. The second study, "Internationalization of Higher Education and Research in Ethiopia: Considerations for Institutional Strategy" (Ayenachew, 2017), examined institutional strategies for enhancing the international nature of research within the broader framework of IoHE. The third study, "Internationalization of the Higher Education System in Ethiopia: A Review of Education Policies and Strategies" (Ermyas and Abiot, 2021), was a review article that analyzed the role national educational policies and strategies could play in supporting the internationalization of higher education institutions (HEIs) in Ethiopia. The fourth study, which was unpublished and sponsored by the Higher Education Strategy Center (HESC), a department under the Ministry of Education of Ethiopia, was titled "Internationalization of Ethiopian Higher Education: Towards Policy Framework*"* (Tesfaye et al., 2019). It focused on the current status of internationalization and on drafting a policy framework and strategy to guide participation in and enhancement of higher education internationalization in the country.

Based on the domestic studies mentioned above, it is apparent that the subject of this study has either neglected or has given less emphasis in the Ethiopian context. Notably, the

researcher was unable to identify any independent study specifically addressing CI. Nevertheless, as mentioned, the Ethiopian education and training policy strongly underscores the significance of internationalization and collaboration in the context of university training and education. Thus, these gaps prompted the researcher to investigate and contribute to filling the theoretical and practical gaps by examining academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI in Ethiopian Research Universities (ERUs).

Furthermore, as previously mentioned above, academics play a crucial role in shaping and implementing internationalized curricula. Their beliefs about the value and feasibility of internationalization significantly influence how these curricula are developed and delivered (Robson, 2011). In addition, CI is a critical factor in enhancing graduate employability, particularly in the context of developing countries like Ethiopia. Therefore, understanding the beliefs and practices of academics regarding this process provides valuable insights into how internationalization is being implemented and its contribution to student outcomes.

As a result, this study differs from previous domestic and/or international studies by focusing on (a) academics' beliefs at the tertiary level of education (Fives & Buehl, 2008; Tanrıverdi & Apak, 2013; Ciascai, Marchis, 2016) (b) internationalization of the curriculum (Barnett & Coate, 2005; Shiel & Takeda, 2008), (c) academics (De Wit, 2012; Leask, 2015; MoE, 2020), and (d) more than one institution or disciplinary case study (Shiel & Takeda, 2008; Leask, 2015), something many previous studies of CI have not done.

To analyze the aforementioned gaps, this study was guided by the following fundamental questions.

1.3. Basic Research Questions

The research formulated the following basic questions:

1. What are academics' beliefs about the importance of internationalizing the curriculum in their disciplines in ERUs? Is there a statistically significant difference in academics' beliefs regarding CI among disciplines and ERUs?
2. What actions have academic staff in ERUs taken to incorporate an international or intercultural dimension into their academic programs, learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment tasks in their discipline? Is there a statistically significant difference in academics' practices regarding CI among disciplines and ERUs?
3. What is the relationship between academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI as perceived by academics in ERUs?
4. What contribution do academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI have in the development of graduates' employability attributes in ERUs?
5. To what extent graduating students are equipped with international, intercultural, and/or global employability attributes?
6. What are the potential "blockers and enablers" to the internationalization of the curriculum in ERUs?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

The study will try to achieve the following general and specific objectives.

1.4.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study was to investigate the beliefs and practices of academics at ERUs regarding CI and to assess the implications of these beliefs and practices for enhancing the employability of graduates in the global job market.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were to:

1. Examine the beliefs of academics at ERUs about the importance of internationalizing the curriculum in their respective disciplines and to investigate whether there are statistically significant differences in beliefs regarding CI among disciplines and across different universities.
2. Investigate the specific actions taken by academic staff in ERUs to incorporate international or intercultural dimensions into their academic programs, including

learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment tasks, and to assess whether there are statistically significant differences in these practices across disciplines and universities.

3. Determine the relationship between academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI, as perceived by academics in ERUs.
4. Analyze the contribution of academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI to the development of graduates' employability attributes in ERUs.
5. Explore the extent to which graduate students in ERUs are equipped with international, intercultural, and global employability attributes.
6. Analyze the potential "blockers" and "enablers" of CI in ERUs.

These specific objectives align with the research questions and help to systematically address each aspect of the study.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The study titled "Academics' Beliefs and Practices Regarding CI at ERUs: Implications for Graduate Employability" holds significant relevance for several key stakeholders, including academia, higher education policymakers, students, and the broader global workforce. The findings and insights gained from this research have both theoretical and practical implications, as outlined below:

Contribution to Knowledge of CI: This study advances the understanding of CI within ERUs. Exploring academics' beliefs and practices, adds to the limited body of literature in the African context, providing valuable insights into how internationalization is perceived and implemented in higher education institutions outside the Global North. The study may serve as a reference for further research in other developing countries aiming to enhance their curriculum through internationalization.

Informing Policy and Institutional Strategies: The results of this study will be valuable to higher education policymakers and administrators in Ethiopia. By identifying the barriers, enablers, and current practices of CI in ERUs, the study can help institutions design better strategies for integrating international and intercultural dimensions into their

curricula. It can also inform the development of national policies that promote a more globally competitive education system.

Enhancing Graduate Employability: One of the primary focuses of this study is the relationship between CI and graduate employability. In a rapidly globalizing job market, graduates need to be equipped with international, intercultural, and global competencies. The findings offered insights into how effectively ERUs were preparing their graduates for employment both within and outside of Ethiopia. This information is crucial for universities to align their curriculum with the evolving demands of the global labor market.

Empowering Academic Staff: By shedding light on the beliefs and practices of academics, the study has the potential to empower faculty members by highlighting best practices and encouraging greater adoption of CI models and principles. The findings can support professional development initiatives, leading to improved teaching methods, learning outcomes, and assessment practices that integrate local and global perspectives.

Implications for Student Learning and Development: The study's focus on the contribution of CI to student employability provides a foundation for improving student learning experiences. Understanding how internationalization contributes to the development of students' employability attributes will enable universities to refine their teaching and curriculum to better prepare graduates for international and intercultural environments.

Contributing to Global Competitiveness: As Ethiopia seeks to enhance its position in the global academic community, the internationalization of its curriculum is a critical component. This study provided some valuable data on how EUs can better align themselves with global standards and contribute to the nation's aspirations of producing graduates who can thrive in international settings. Strengthening the curriculum in this way will help ERUs attract international students and faculty, fostering a more diverse and inclusive academic environment.

Addressing Challenges in Higher Education: The identification of "blockers" and "enablers" to CI will provide practical recommendations for overcoming obstacles that

prevent effective CI. By addressing these challenges, the study can contribute to building a more resilient and adaptive higher education system in Ethiopia that is capable of meeting both local and global demands.

In conclusion, this study is significant not only for its contribution to academic knowledge but also for its potential to impact policy, institutional practices, and graduate outcomes in a meaningful and practical way. The findings will be crucial for ERUs as they strive to enhance their curricula, improve graduate employability, and position themselves as competitive players in the global educational landscape.

Finally, it may also serve as a springboard for future research.

1.6. Delimitations of the Study

This study was guided by several delimitations that define its scope, focus, and boundaries. These delimitations ensure that the research remains manageable and focused on its core objectives while acknowledging the limitations of the investigation. The key delimitations of the study were as follows:

Geographic Scope: The study was limited to ERUs. It was not extended to universities outside of Ethiopia or to non-research-focused institutions within the country. This geographic focus allows for an in-depth analysis of curriculum internationalization in the Ethiopian context but limits the generalizability of the findings to other countries or regions.

Type of Institution: The study specifically targeted research universities in Ethiopia because they were first-generation universities. This delimitation was based on the assumption that research universities were more likely to be engaged in efforts to internationalize their curricula.

Study Population: The study focused on the beliefs and practices of academic staff at ERUs. It excluded other stakeholders such as administrative staff, policymakers, or domestic students. The focus on academic staff was due to the reason that they were the most directly responsible bodies for CI.

Program: The study focused only on the undergraduate program.

Thematic Focus: The study was specifically concerned with CI and its contribution for graduate employability. Other aspects of internationalization, such as international student recruitment, global partnerships, or faculty mobility, were not explored in depth unless they directly relate to CI.

Disciplinary and Program Scopes: The study includes a cross-disciplinary analysis of CI beliefs and practices among the four categories of undergraduate programs within ERUs. The selection of disciplines was based on their relevance to the study's objectives.

Data Collection Methods: The study employed specific data collection methods, such as surveys, interviews, FGDs, observations, as well as document analysis (strategic plans and curricula). Other potential data sources, such as longitudinal tracking of graduate employment outcomes, were not included due to time and resource constraints. The chosen methods allowed for a detailed exploration of beliefs and practices but may limit the study's ability to track long-term impacts on employability.

Time Frame: The study was conducted within a specific time frame, which may not fully capture long-term trends or developments in CI and graduate employability. The findings were therefore reflective of the state of CI at the time of data collection and may not account for ongoing or future changes in academic policies or practices at ERUs.

By clearly delineating the scope and boundaries of the research, these delimitations help maintain a clear focus on the study's objectives while acknowledging the areas that fall outside the scope of the investigation.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

This study was subjected to several limitations that may affect the scope, interpretation, and generalizability of the findings. These limitations were as follows:

Limited Generalizability: The study focused exclusively on ERUs, which means the findings might not be generalizable to other types of higher education institutions within

Ethiopia or to universities in other countries. Differences in academic cultures, institutional structures, and national policies may limit the applicability of the results beyond the Ethiopian context.

Sample Representation: The study might rely on a sample of academics from a subset of ERUs, which may not fully represent the diversity of academic staff across all Ethiopian research universities.

Self-Reported Data: The study depends on self-reported data from academics regarding their beliefs and practices related to CI. Self-reported data could be subjected to biases such as social desirability bias, where respondents may provide answers that they believe were expected rather than their true beliefs or practices. This could impact the accuracy of the findings.

Cross-Sectional Design: The research was cross-sectional, capturing data at a specific point in time. As a result, the study might not account for changes in academics' beliefs and practices over time. Longitudinal studies would be better suited to tracking changes in CI practices and their long-term impact on graduate employability, but this design was beyond the scope of the current study.

Limited Focus on Student Perspectives: While the study primarily examined academics' beliefs and practices, it did not extensively explore the perspectives of students or employers. This limitation might result in a partial view of the contribution of CI on graduate employability, as the experiences and perceptions of students and employers were crucial components of the overall picture.

Contextual Constraints: The study might be limited by contextual factors such as the availability of resources, institutional support for CI, and broader socio-political factors in Ethiopia. These constraints might limit the ability of academics to fully implement internationalization practices, which could affect the study's findings regarding the relationship between beliefs, practices, and graduate employability.

Time and Resource Limitations: Due to constraints on time and resources, the study might not explore all potential variables influencing CI and graduate employability. In particular, the study did not include a comprehensive analysis of factors such as international partnerships, faculty exchanges, or global collaborations that could influence CI in ERUs.

However, strategies such as triangulation (using multiple data sources or methods), refining the research questions, and suggesting areas for further research were employed to reduce the impact of these limitations and ensure the study's findings remain credible and valuable.

1.8. Definitions of Key Terms

The following key terms were operationally defined to ensure clarity and consistency throughout this research:

Academics: Refers to faculty members and teaching staff at ERU who were involved in curriculum design, teaching, and assessment. This includes lecturers, professors, and other instructional staff across various academic disciplines.

Beliefs: personal understandings, judgments, and evaluations held by academics concerning the importance of CI which can be inferred from what they *say*, *intend*, and *do*.

Blockers to CI: Refers to the barriers or obstacles that hinder the effective practices of CI in ERUs. These may include institutional constraints, lack of resources, resistance from staff or students, and other structural or systemic challenges.

Curriculum Internationalization (CI): Refers to the incorporation of international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods, and support services of a program of study.

Employability Attributes: Refers to the specific skills, knowledge, and attitudes that make graduates competitive in the global job market. These attributes include critical

thinking, cross-cultural communication, global awareness, adaptability, and problem-solving abilities that are valuable in an international context.

Enablers of CI: Refers to the factors that facilitate or promote the practice of CI in ERUs. These may include institutional support, availability of resources, professional development opportunities for staff, and a conducive policy environment.

Ethiopian Research Universities (ERUs): Refers to PUs in Ethiopia that are designated as research-intensive universities using differentiation. These institutions prioritize both teaching and research and are often recognized for their role in advancing knowledge, innovation, and academic scholarship.

Glocalization: Refers to a means by which a third culture is cultivated that values the diverse perspectives and contributions of every member of the glocal community.

Graduate Attributes: Refers to qualities stated as knowledge, attitudes, and skills that ERUs sets out as being important for students to develop by the end of their studies.

Graduate Employability: Refers to the development of attributes of university graduates that make them to be able to gain and maintain employment. These attributes were studied in this study in the form of international, intercultural, and global knowledge, attitude, and skill.

Intercultural Competence: Refers to the ability of individuals to communicate and interact effectively across different cultures and cultural contexts. It includes knowledge of cultural differences, attitudes of openness and respect, and the development of skills necessary to navigate and engage in diverse cultural environments.

Practices: refer to the specific actions and methods used by academics to incorporate international or intercultural elements into their teaching, curricula, learning outcomes, assessments, and academic programs. These practices include classroom activities, curriculum design, and engagement in intercultural and international activities. The study

examined these practices through academics' actions ("doings"), discourse ("sayings"), and relationships ("relatings") concerning CI.

1.9. Theoretical Frameworks of the Study

In higher-degree research activities, Kivunja (2018) argues that confusion regarding the concepts of theory, theoretical framework, and conceptual framework is common among the majority of students, as well as their advisors and examiners. Therefore, a clear conceptual understanding of these three terms is crucial for this study. The concepts are briefly described as follows.

The term “theoretical framework” comprises two words, “theory” and “framework”. It is therefore appropriate to start by giving definitions of what a theory is and what a framework is. Hence, a theory, according to Kerlinger (1986:9), is “a set of interrelated constructs, definitions, and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables to explain and predict phenomena”. A framework is “a set of ideas that you use when you are forming your decisions and judgments” (MacMillan English dictionary, 2002:561). According to Kerlinger (1986), a theory can be used to successfully make predictions and this predictive power of the theory can help guide researchers to ask appropriate research questions. On the other hand, a framework provides a structure within which the relationships between variables/ concepts of a phenomenon are explained. In the same manner, Imenda (2014) defined a conceptual framework as “a synthesis of concepts and perspectives drawn from many sources to explain or predict a given event, or give a broader understanding of the phenomenon of interest, or simply, of a research problem by the researcher”.

To summarize, therefore, Imenda (2014) infers both conceptual and theoretical frameworks represent an integrated understanding of issues, within a given field of study, which enables the researcher to address a specific research problem. These theoretical perspectives guide the individual researcher in terms of specific research questions, hypotheses, or objectives, leading to a better-directed review of literature, the selection/identification of appropriate research methods, and the interpretation of results. Thus, we can have many researchers working on the same research problem, where each one of them investigates the problem

from different theoretical /conceptual frameworks, and each comes up with legitimate findings and knowledge claims at the end of the day (Imenda, 2014).

Based on the above explanations, the theoretical frameworks of this study are described in the following consecutive ways.

There appears to be a lack of frameworks underpinning teaching and learning in the context of internationalization (Bell, 2008; Clarke et al., 2018). Therefore, this study employed a pragmatic philosophical lens, adopting a practical theoretical orientation. It also drew on other theoretical perspectives, predominantly change theory, human capital theory, contributing theory, and practice architecture theory as needed, to better understand the complexities of the issue. Each of these theories is briefly described below.

Change theory: is defined as a "predictive assumption about the relationship between desired changes and the actions that may produce those changes" (Connolly & Seymour, 2015, p.1). It recognizes the slow and progressive nature of change and the potential difficulty associated with anticipating and directing change (Said et al., 2015).

There are two broad categories of organizational change: **planned** and **emergent**, with the latter taking a less structured view of change management (Crosling et al., 2008). Said et al. (2015) highlight that little attention has been given to strategies for implementing change within the context of the internationalization of higher education. The authors further elaborate on the necessity of effective change management to achieve the goals of internationalization. Thus, based on the literature review, change theory relevant to planned change in an educational context served as the guiding theoretical perspective for this study. This is because CI is considered a transformational type of change, and to promote systemic change and foster a culture of support for CI, it was deemed necessary to draw on change theories (Ryan, 2020).

Eckel et al. (1998) define **transformational change** as one that alters the culture, is deep and pervasive, is intentional, and occurs over time. Comprehensive internationalization aligns with the characteristics of transformational change in several key ways. First, it **alters** the **culture** by diversifying teaching, learning, and campus activities, offering new

perspectives to all stakeholders. This leads to changes in educational outcomes and the overall character of the institution. Second, internationalization is **deep** and **pervasive**, affecting all departments, both academic and non-academic, as it is a far-reaching and all-encompassing process. Third, it is **intentional,** requiring a well-defined strategy that aligns with the institution's goals and overall mission. Finally, internationalization **occurs over time**, as it is an ongoing and evolving process (Green & Olson, 2003).

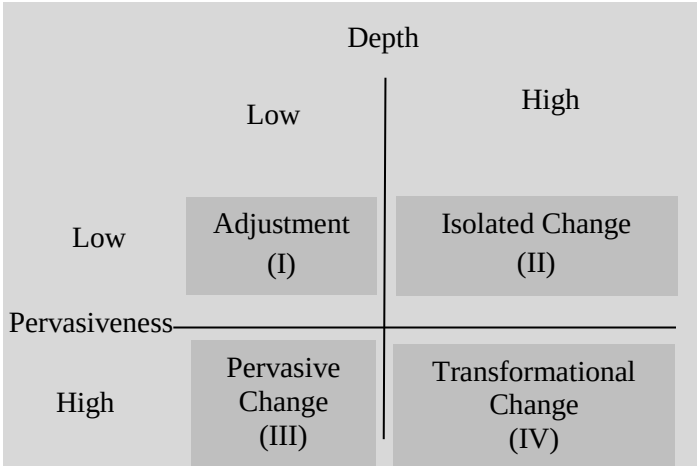
According to Ryan (2020), internationalization addresses the campus as a whole and requires different mindsets, skill sets, and delivery methods. In higher education, these changes are difficult to implement due to the challenge of achieving meaningful engagement with academics throughout the process. To successfully implement a large-scale change such as internationalization, higher education institutions (HEIs) must focus on the human factors involved and have a clear understanding of the academic cultures and subcultures at play (Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Storberg-Walker & Torraco, 2004). The American Council on Education (ACE) and the Kellogg Forum on Higher Education Transformation (KFHET) project (1998–2002) identified five core strategies for accommodating transformational change in HEIs. Kezar and Eckel (2002) further analyzed these strategies, and some HEIs have since applied them to support large-scale change.

The strategies are: (1) senior administrative support; (2) collaborative leadership; (3) flexible vision; (4) faculty and staff development; and (5) visible action steps. These strategies have been used in higher education to assess change efforts in the context of other transformational changes, such as interdisciplinary initiatives (Holley, 2009). However, like many other change management theories, they have not been widely applied by HEIs to support comprehensive internationalization (CI) efforts to date. This research aims to incorporate these strategies to both analyze past CI change efforts and support future CI initiatives in the teaching and learning environment.

Since transformational change occurs over time, it progresses through a continuum based on the depth and pervasiveness of the change. Eckel et al. (2001) argue that understanding the concepts of depth and pervasiveness, and how they interact, is essential for articulating the types of change institutions seek. These concepts are explained as follows.

> Depth refers to how profoundly a change affects behavior or alters structures; the deeper the change, the more it becomes embedded in the attitudes and daily lives of those affected. Deep change implies a shift in the values and assumptions that underlie the usual way of doing things. It requires individuals to not only act differently but also to think differently. In contrast, pervasiveness refers to the extent to which a change reaches across the institution. The more pervasive the change, the more it crosses unit boundaries and impacts different parts of the institution (Eckel et al., 2001; Lisa et al., 2009).

Moreover, these two fundamental elements of change—depth and pervasiveness—can be combined in various ways to produce the categories of change outlined in the following matrix. This matrix identifies four types of institutional change: adjustment, isolated change, pervasive change, and transformational change (Eckel et al., 2001).



Source: Eckel et al., 2001

Figure 2 : Typology of change

Using the parameters of depth and pervasiveness of change, we identified four primary types of change occurring on campuses (Eckel et al., 2001). Eckel et al. explained each type as follows.

The first quadrant is an adjustment—a change or series of changes that modify existing practices. These changes involve revisions, revitalizations, or renewals and occur when current designs or procedures are improved or extended. An adjustment might enhance a process or the quality of a service, or it could introduce a new element. However, an

adjustment does not constitute a drastic alteration and does not produce deep or far-reaching effects.

The second quadrant is isolated change, which is deep but limited to one unit or a specific area; it is not pervasive. The third quadrant is pervasive change, which is extensive but does not deeply affect the organization. It impacts all academic units, but the change itself is not profound.

The final quadrant is transformational change. Transformation occurs when a change is both deep and pervasive. Unlike adjustments or isolated changes, transformation does not address discrete problems or merely refine existing activities. Instead, it challenges the fundamental assumptions that dictate how an organization operates, behaves, and produces. In essence, transformation touches the core of the institution. It is also pervasive; it represents a collective, institution-wide shift, though it can begin with changes in one unit or even one person. When enough individuals adopt new behaviors or ways of thinking, these become the new norm, resulting in a transformed institutional culture.

The typology of change discussed complements the three most commonly used approaches to internationalizing the curriculum: the **add-on**, **infusion**, and **transformation** approaches (Bond, 2003). According to Banks (2004), the add-on approach is the earliest method and involves incorporating international or intercultural content into existing curricula and courses without altering the original structure or pedagogical methods. The infusion approach, which is the most commonly employed in higher education institutions today (Bond, 2003), involves integrating content that enhances students' cross-cultural understanding and knowledge of diverse cultures (Whalley et al.,1997).

The infusion approach focuses on the interdisciplinary nature of CI and exposes students in all fields of study to international and multicultural perspectives.

In the same vein, as posited by Marchesani and Adams, the transformational approach, is based upon the tenets of critical pedagogy. It therefore "encourages new ways of thinking, incorporates new methodologies, so that different epistemological questions are raised, old

assumptions are quested, subjective data sources are considered, and prior theories either revised or invalidated" (Marchesani and Adams, 1992).

Thus, in this study, CI was examined through the lens of the aforementioned change variables and approaches

Human capital theory: Human capital theory examines how education that aligns with the demands of the modern workforce—such as becoming more globally aware—translates into greater economic value for both individuals and society. The ability to function effectively in an interconnected world is crucial. As individuals gain knowledge and appreciation of other cultures, become more ethnorelative, and develop the skills needed to work successfully across cultures, human capital grows. Human capital refers to "activities that influence future real income through the embedding of resources in people" (Becker, 1962, p. 9).

Hence, higher education, including internationalization efforts, plays a key role in enhancing human capital, as suggested by human capital theory (Sorensen, 2000). The advanced knowledge and cultural appreciation gained through education enrich individuals' internal resources. This increase in human capital provides a greater return on investment for individuals and helps strengthen society at the local, national, and international levels (Becker, 1962; Becker, 1964; World Bank, 1995).

Contributing theory: refers to how education contributes to greater multicultural understanding, which can perhaps best be explained through Milton Bennett's work on intercultural sensitivity. Bennett (1986) demonstrated why a liberally educated person must have more than a superficial knowledge of other peoples and cultures. He observed that individuals' understanding and acceptance of other cultures vary significantly. In his seminal developmental model, Bennett proposes that individuals can be at any one of six stages in their understanding and acceptance of cultural differences, based on their experiences. This spectrum ranges from more ethnocentric stages to what Bennett calls more ethnorelative stages, including denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration.

To help individuals develop and move to higher levels of ethnorelativism, exposure to cultural differences is essential. Higher education plays a role in this social responsibility by, among other efforts, internationalizing the curriculum. This study assumes that students progress along the spectrum of intercultural sensitivity, in part, based on the extent of their exposure to other cultures and peoples during their college experience (O'Connor, 2009).

Practice theory: Concerning practice theory, Edwards-Groves and Grootenboer (2016) stated that theorizing practice has led to the emergence of different practice theories with different foci; for example, Bourdieu (1990), Latour (2007), Ingold (2011), MacIntyre (1981), and Schatzki (2002). These theorists, among others, draw attention to the different and distinctive ways people, objects, discourses, relationships, activities and circumstances are entangled or enmeshed in the doing of a practice. Their views position practice to be intrinsically social and locally enacted; and as suggested by Goodwin and Heritage (1990), it is through processes of social interaction, shared meaning, mutual understanding, relationships and the coordination of human conduct in activities are achieved.

Furthermore, social construction lies at the heart of practice theory to the extent that it is often referred to as social practice theory (Reckwitz, 2002). The concept of social construction posits that individuals do not derive meaning in isolation, but rather derive meaning as actors embedded within specific social contexts and in interaction with other human beings. A socially constructed view of the world (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) is foundational to much organizational research; however practice theory is unique in situating the social in the realm of practice. By studying a specific social practice or routinized behavior (Reckwitz, 2002), practice theorists acknowledge that the way bodily and mental activities, objects, knowledge, know-how, emotions and motivations come together, is always embedded in the collective activities of multiple actors (Schatzki, 2012). These practices are routinized to the extent that there are patterns (Reckwitz, 2002). It is this routinized social enactment which makes the practice understandable to the person(s) enacting them and the person(s) observing them (Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 2002), allowing people to understand, for example, the purpose of a chair (Jarzabkowski &

Kaplan, 2014), the structure of a hiring routine (Feldman & Pentland, 2003), and the meaning of a joke (Jane and Bednarek, 2016).

To make sense of sociality in the conduct of practices, Schatzki (2002), for example, argued that practices are comprised of distinctive characteristic actions or 'doings' and discourse or 'sayings'. His view, however, leaves implicit the ways people relate to one another in practices. To explicate the particular nature of relationships, power, agency and solidarity in the enactment of practices Kemmis et al. (2008, 2014) developed the theory of practice architectures to account not only for *sayings* and *doings* in practices, but also for *relatings*and the ways these three dimensions of practice simultaneously shape and are shaped by one another and the practice architectures that enable and constrain interaction.

The theory of practice architectures emerged by problematizing practice theory. It suggests that practices in the social world *hang together* in three ever present dimensions; specifically, in 'three dimensions of intersubjectivity' (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 23) formed in semantic space, in physical-space time and in social space. Kemmis et al., (2014), explain that in these three dimensions, cultural-discursive, material- economic and social-political arrangements do not occur separately from one another; they are always bundled together in practice and in places. Bundled together, they give social life – and our consciousness of it – its apparent solidity, its palpability, its reality and its actuality (p. 5).

According to Edwards-Groves and Grootenboer's (2016) view, the theory of practice architectures also offers a way to theorize practices and the interconnectedness between the *cultural-discursive*, *material economic* and *social-political* arrangements which embody the types of practices (or actions comprised of interconnected 'sayings', 'doings' and 'relatings') that happen in schools and classrooms.

Hence, from this view of practices, CI practices involve its own sayings, doings and relatings that are held together in its own project.

It is also important to consider **critical pedagogy** when evaluating pedagogical practices in internationalizing the curriculum. Critical educational theorists like Freire (1972) argue that critical pedagogy is a teaching approach that 'questions and challenges the social and

political construction of knowledge and curricula' (Clifford & Joseph, 2005). This approach encourages academics and students to critically examine their perspectives on issues such as domination, beliefs, and practices as they relate to the global community (Clifford & Joseph, 2005). It aligns with the inclusive nature of CI, particularly in addressing the role of culture and power in the construction of knowledge within increasingly multicultural classroom environments (Ibid.).

More specifically, the integrative and transformative approaches to comprehensive internationalization (CI), which are deeply rooted in student-centered and critical pedagogy theories, were encouraged for consideration. Additionally, best practices from CI guides and the CI conceptual framework were also taken into account when designing the methodology.

1.10. Organization of the Study

This study has been organized into five chapters. The first chapter, which is about the introduction, comprises the background of the study, a statement of the problem, basic questions, the significance of the study, delimitation, limitation, operational definition of terms, theoretical frameworks and organization of the study. Chapter two deals with related and relevant pieces of literature on the concepts of internationalization of higher education, rationales for internationalization, internationalization strategies, global trends in internationalization, truths and misconceptions about internationalization, the concept of curriculum, the concept of CI, rationales for CI, approaches to CI, challenges in CI, theoretical framework of the study, theories underpinning the CI, Leask’s framework of CI, and conceptual framework of the study

Chapter three presents a description of the study area, research paradigm, research design, sources of primary and secondary data, sample size and sampling techniques, instruments of data collection, validity, reliability, and trustworthiness of research instruments, data collection procedures, methods of data analysis and ethical considerations. The fourth chapter deals with results and discussions while chapter five presents a summary of the major findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Finally, references and appendices were also included at the end of the study.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter deals with a review of related literature. In doing this, an exhaustive review technique was employed in the process. Hence, globalization and higher education, concepts of internationalization of higher education, rationales for internationalization of higher education, approaches to the internationalization of higher education, curriculum internationalization, the concept of curriculum, the concept of curriculum internationalization, rationales for curriculum internationalization, approaches to curriculum internationalization, the roles of academics in internationalizing curriculum, academics beliefs and practices regarding curriculum internationalization, relationships between academics' beliefs and their practices, contribution of CI for the development of graduates' employability attributes, enabler' and 'blockers' for CI, and conceptual framework of the study were included.

For this, published documents such as books, journal articles, periodicals, proceedings, PhD dissertations, and master theses were reviewed and, finally, a conceptual framework has been developed from the outcome of the review.

2.1. Globalization and Higher Education

Globalization is defined as the interconnectedness of people, businesses, and institutions worldwide, leading to cultural, political, and economic integration (Fox & Hundley, 2011). In higher education, it manifests as increased networking, exchange, and reshaping of social, economic, and cultural life (Subba, 2017). Globalization has resulted in academic capitalism, characterized by massive university expansion, enhanced accountability, rapid privatization, and increased marketization (Mwesigye & Muhangi, 2015).

Globalization has significantly transformed higher education, presenting both opportunities and challenges (Hasmun, 2024). It has led to increased competition, changes in curriculum, and the need for institutions to adapt (Venkatesh, 2023). The retreat of the state and advance of markets has altered the national context, influencing higher education (Nayyar, 2008). Globalization has fostered cross-border relationships, increased mobility

of students and faculty, and created a worldwide network of research universities (Marginson & Wende, 2007). While it offers benefits such as exposure to diverse cultures and knowledge sharing (Venkatesh, 2023), there are concerns about commercialization and its impact on development (Nayyar, 2008). To address these challenges, institutions must focus on curriculum development, institutional management, and strategic planning (Hasmun, 2024). Hence, countries should formulate policies to minimize risks and capitalize on opportunities created by markets and globalization in higher education (Nayyar, 2008).

The globalization of higher education has been driven by various factors, including internationalization, corporatization, and massification (Onsman, 2010). Universities play a crucial role in advancing globalization within their sphere and beyond (Deeks, 2021; Onsman, 2010). This process has led to increased cross-border relationships, global flows of people, information, and resources, and the formation of a worldwide network of research universities (Marginson & Wende, 2007). The internationalization of research and increased mobility of students and faculty have become prominent features of this globalized landscape (Altbach, 2001; Marginson & Wende, 2007). However, challenges persist, such as maintaining educational quality and effectiveness in cross-border teaching (Onsman, 2010). As higher education institutions adapt to this new era, they must balance the demands of globalization with their responsibility to provide quality education and contribute to future society (Deeks, 2021; Onsman, 2010).

2.2. Internationalization of Higher Education

2.2.1. Concepts of internationalization of higher education

Internationalization is understood in various ways depending on perspective. For some, it refers to international activities like student and staff mobility, partnerships, collaborations, and new academic programs or research projects that cross borders. For others, it involves delivering education abroad through mechanisms like branch campuses or franchises, using both in-person and distance-learning methods. Many interpret it as the integration of international, intercultural, and global elements into curricula and teaching methods.

Additionally, some view international development initiatives and the growing focus on education as a tradeable commodity as key aspects of internationalization (Knight, 2005).

Knight (2005) emphasized that establishing a clear and comprehensive definition of internationalization is crucial for addressing the existing confusion and misunderstandings surrounding the term. While a truly universal definition may never be achieved, having a shared understanding is important. Lavrov (2014) builds on this, noting that over time, "internationalization" has been used to describe the process of incorporating international or intercultural elements into teaching, research, services, and university functions. However, Knight later proposed an updated definition that applies at national, sectoral, and institutional levels. She defines internationalization as “the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions, or delivery of postsecondary education” (Knight, 2003, p. 2). In this new definition, broader terms like purpose, function, and delivery replace the previous, more specific terms of teaching, research, and service. This shift makes the definition applicable across various levels, including sectoral and institutional, and to a diverse range of providers—whether public, private, for-profit, nonprofit, local, or international—within higher education.

In discussing the concept of internationalization, Christa et al. (2006) note that it is challenging, if not impossible, to explore the topic without encountering confusion and disagreement over terminology. Many commonly used terms in this field carry different meanings for different individuals, reflecting varied approaches and philosophies. They further explain that no single term can fully capture the range of concepts associated with "international," "global," and "intercultural." People typically choose one of these terms to represent a broader set of ideas. Consequently, it is up to the reader to navigate and select from the many possible definitions for a given term.

That means we use global learning (Christa et al, 2006) as shorthand for three related kinds of learning: global (denoting the systems and phenomena that transcend national borders), international (focusing on the nations and their relationships), and intercultural (focusing on knowledge and skills to understand and navigate cultural differences). Thus, global learning is defined as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students acquire through a

variety of experiences that enable them to understand world cultures and events; analyze global systems; appreciate cultural differences; and apply this knowledge and appreciation to their lives as citizens and workers.

2.2.2. Rationales for Internationalization of Higher Education

The internationalization of higher education can be driven by four categories of rationales: **political**, **economic**, **social-cultural**, and **academic** (De Wit, 2002, as cited in De Wit, 2010). According to De Wit, **political rationales** include factors like foreign policy, national security, technical assistance, peace and mutual understanding, as well as national and regional identity. **Economic rationales** are related to growth, competitiveness, national educational demand, labor market needs, and financial incentives. The **cultural rationale** emphasizes the role universities play in fostering intercultural understanding and competence through their research and teaching, benefiting both students and faculty. The **social rationale** highlights how exposure to an international environment helps individuals, students, and academics become less provincial. Lastly, academic rationales focus on integrating international and intercultural dimensions into research, teaching, and services.

These four rationales for internationalization are ever evolving and changing in consideration of the needs of a variety of higher education stakeholders, from students to governments. These rationales may be external to institutions or the result of internal factors. The demands for internationalization also vary from institution to institution and from one jurisdiction to another. We can expect, however, these rationales to continue to change over time as societal values change and the changes in the forces of globalization continue to emerge (Clarke & Kirby, 2022).

2.2.3. Approaches to the Internationalization of Higher Education

Lavrov (2014) identified five key strategies commonly adopted by higher education institutions (HEIs) seeking to internationalize. These strategies include: (1) internationalizing the curriculum, (2) internationalizing the student body, (3)

internationalizing the faculty, (4) offering distance learning opportunities, and (5) internationalizing the research function.

As highlighted in the Internationalization Framework (2014), cited by Soria and Tisi (2014), the curriculum is a fundamental component. This is because internationalization typically involves three interconnected elements: international relationships (between and among nations), intercultural aspects (interactions between individuals from different cultures within specific countries, communities, and institutions), and global factors (with a worldwide scope) (Absalom & Vadura, 2006, as cited in Ankomah-Asare et al., 2016).

The authors suggest that incorporating these three elements—international, intercultural, and global—into the curriculum creates opportunities for students to cultivate global awareness, international perspectives, and intercultural competence. This process of embedding these dimensions into both the formal and informal curriculum is referred to as **curriculum internationalization**.

Others (Clarke & Kirby, 2022; Ngao & Sang, 2023) stated that the internationalization of higher education is a complex strategy employed by nations to boost their global standing and equip students for a more interconnected world. Identified strategies include attracting international students, promoting study abroad opportunities, building global partnerships, and integrating international elements into curricula. Consequently, countries adopt different approaches—some prioritize enhancing their domestic systems and exporting their educational models, while others focus on collaborating with foreign education providers (Chan, 2013).

Green and Whitsed (2015) suggest that three main approaches have emerged and become prominent in the discourse on internationalization: internationalization at home (IaH), ‘comprehensive internationalization’ (Hudzik, 2011, as cited in Green and Whitsed, 2015), and curriculum internationalization (CI). According to Knight (2008), all three approaches emphasize aspects of internationalization that occur on ‘home campuses,’ such as incorporating intercultural and international elements into teaching, learning, and research,

engaging in extracurricular activities, fostering connections with local and ethnic communities, and integrating foreign students and scholars into campus life.

Ngao and Sang's (2023) study outlined five primary strategies for advancing the internationalization of higher education in China: (i) attracting a diverse range of high-caliber international students through scholarships and quality services; (ii) expanding opportunities for Chinese students to study abroad in various programs; (iii) fostering university partnerships, including joint research efforts and innovative international programs; (iv) enhancing the recruitment of exceptional international scholars and encouraging domestic academics to pursue research abroad; and (v) increasing financial support for higher education, international activities, and programs such as English language and Chinese cultural initiatives.

In general, concerning global trends in internationalization, one can observe that over the past 30 years, internationalization has exhibited the following key characteristics (De Wit, 2019).

First, it has been more focused on internationalization abroad than at home. It has often been ad hoc, fragmented, and marginal rather than strategic, comprehensive, and central in policies. Moreover, the benefits of internationalization have primarily been enjoyed by a small, elite subset of students and faculty, rather than aiming for global and intercultural outcomes for all. Furthermore, internationalization has been guided by a constantly shifting range of political, economic, social/cultural, and educational rationales, with an increasing emphasis on economic motivations. It is also increasingly driven by national, regional, and global rankings.

Another observation is that there has been little alignment between the international dimensions of higher education’s three core functions: education, research, and service to society. While internationalization is often a strategic choice for institutions of higher education, it is less of a priority for national governments. Lastly, internationalization has been more significant in developed economies than in emerging and developing economies.

In the past decade, as De Wit further remarked, a reaction to these trends has emerged. While mobility remains the most dominant factor in internationalization policies worldwide, increasing attention is being paid to the internationalization of the curriculum at home. There is also a growing call for comprehensive internationalization, which addresses all aspects of education in an integrated way. Although economic rationales and rankings continue to drive the internationalization agenda, more emphasis is now being placed on other motivations. For instance, there is greater focus on integrating international dimensions into quality assurance mechanisms in higher education, institutional policies related to student learning outcomes, and the work of national and discipline-specific accreditation agencies (De Wit, 2019).

To sum up, regarding past approaches to internationalization, scholars have identified five truths (Knight, 2012) and nine misconceptions (Beelen & De Wit, 2012). The truths are: (i) it should build on and respect the local context, (ii) it is a customized process, (iii) it carries benefits, risks, and unintended consequences, (iv) it is not an end in itself, and (v) globalization and internationalization are distinct but interconnected. The misconceptions include: (i) equating internationalization with education in English, (ii) studying or living abroad, (iii) offering an international subject, (iv) having a large number of international students, (v) assuming that fewer international students guarantees success, (vi) believing there is no need to test intercultural and international competencies, (vii) thinking that more partnerships lead to greater internationalization, (viii) assuming higher education is inherently international, and (ix) viewing internationalization as a precise goal.

As mentioned above, curriculum internationalization (CI) is one of the fundamental elements, approaches, or strategies for the internationalization of higher education institutions (HEIs). The curriculum is the heart of the internationalization process in higher education.

2.3. Curriculum Internationilization

According to De Wit (2016), the curriculum is one of the three pillars of internationalization, alongside mobility and partnerships. Moreover, Shailer (2006) asserts that the core of an institution’s internationalization is its curriculum, which will always

remain central, as the acquisition of knowledge is what a university is all about (Harari, 1989, as cited in Shailer, 2006). However, before directly engaging in the discussion of curriculum internationalization, it is beneficial to briefly address curriculum in general and higher education curriculum in particular."

2.3.1. The Concept of Curriculum

Like many terms, "curriculum" is defined differently by various scholars. Some define it narrowly, while others take a broader perspective. For example, Kpolovie (2014; 2016), as cited in Kpolovie and Lale (2017) notes that the term "curriculum" originates from a Latin word meaning "race" or "course," indicating a comprehensive journey through planned teaching and learning processes. This includes inputs, interactions, and outcomes aimed at producing an educated individual equipped to thrive in the global digital knowledge economy. In contrast, Modebelu (2015) and Holz-Clause et al. (2015) define the higher education curriculum as the entirety of learning experiences offered by higher education. Additionally, Lee, et al. (2013) suggest that the term "curriculum" is often used in a limited context, typically referring to the creation of written syllabi for courses that outline learning objectives, activities, and assessments tailored to specific needs.

Overall, as noted by Prideaux (2003), the term "curriculum" is used inconsistently, encompassing a variety of meanings. It originally referred solely to the content of a course, but contemporary usage often extends to include how that content is learned, the pedagogical methods employed by instructors, the resources and assessment techniques utilized, as well as the overall evaluation of effectiveness. Additionally, the curriculum is most effectively understood as a dynamic interplay between knowing, doing, being, and becoming (Barnett & Coate, 2005).

These issues are often overlooked in the curriculum design process, treated as if they exist outside the educational considerations of competencies and outcomes. Furthermore, without systematic, informed, research-based inquiry into curriculum design, values can be embedded in the selection and sequencing of curriculum activities with little accountability to policy and workforce needs (Lee et al., 2013). Despite criticisms of

current curriculum development practices in various professional education fields, scholars recognize that connecting educational practice to the broader context is often more challenging than it seems, especially given the lack of theoretical tools to aid this process.

As a response, a four-dimensional curriculum development framework has been proposed to assist professional educators in linking educational practice to policy, workforce, and professional standards in a coherent and reflective manner. This framework was developed by an interdisciplinary team involved in a national project on curriculum renewal for interprofessional health education in Australia, comprising educational researchers and educators from diverse health professions.

Each of the four dimensions in the framework is interconnected and relies on the others. As each element progresses from abstract concepts to more concrete and practical considerations, it reflects the principles of the other elements. Drawing on the foundational work of Bernstein (1971) and Ball (1990), as cited in Lee et al. (2013), these elements are referred to as the "message systems" of the curriculum. Each element communicates important messages about key issues, such as what knowledge will be acquired, what actions will be taken, the reasons and methods behind these actions, who will carry them out, and how the effects will be measured and evaluated. Bernstein identified three message systems: knowledge, pedagogy, and assessment, while Ball (1990) introduced a fourth, which encompasses the organizational dimensions of the curriculum.

Dimension 1: Big picture decisions – the why?

In the first dimension, the curriculum is viewed as a knowledge and learning program influenced by social, historical, political, economic, professional, and educational forces. It represents a deliberate selection of relevant cultural elements. Furthermore, the curriculum plays a direct role in shaping professional, social, economic, and personal futures by producing graduates equipped with specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes as they enter the workforce (Australian Curriculum Studies Association, 2009). Moreover, each curriculum embodies a particular vision of the future, which is valued either implicitly or explicitly by those involved in its development.

Dimension 2: Defining capabilities of graduates – the what?

This dimension focuses on defining sets of learning outcomes, which are expressed through standards and attributes, including knowledge, skills, capabilities, and dispositions such as values and attitudes, all framed within the context of professional practice (Barrie, 2006). However, contemporary theories of practice suggest that it is not merely the application of abstract knowledge acquired through traditional study methods. Instead, professional capabilities are complex and develop in the contexts where they are practiced (Green, 2009; Schatzki, 2001). For example, becoming and being a health professional is largely learned on the job through hands-on practice and systematic critical reflection on that practice. This second dimension is where the dynamic interaction between "knowing, doing, and being" (Barnett & Coate, 2005) is primarily articulated.

This dimension focuses on defining sets of learning outcomes, which are articulated through standards and attributes, including knowledge, skills, capabilities, and dispositions like values and attitudes, all within the framework of professional practice (Barrie, 2006). However, contemporary theories suggest that practice is not simply the application of abstract knowledge acquired through traditional education. Instead, professional capabilities are complex and develop in the contexts where they are practiced (Green, 2009; Schatzki, 2001). For instance, the process of becoming and being a health professional is largely learned on the job through hands-on practice and systematic critical reflection. This second dimension is where the dynamic interaction between "knowing, doing, and being" (Barnett & Coate, 2005) is most clearly expressed.

Dimension 3: Teaching, learning, and assessment – the how?

The third dimension encompasses the essential educational activities of teaching, learning, and assessment. These three components serve as a communication system that shapes daily decisions and interactions within education. Additionally, they incorporate significant aspects from the earlier two dimensions, including overarching assumptions, the envisioned future reflected in the choice and arrangement of learning activities, and insights into the most effective ways to learn through practice.

Dimension 4: Organization – the where?

The fourth dimension focuses on the organizational and administrative framework that shapes how the curriculum is designed, implemented, and experienced (Ball, 1990). This dimension encompasses the cultural norms, protocols, and procedures that are tailored to particular universities and settings. It tackles the intricate cultural challenges involved in translating curriculum concepts into practical applications experienced by teachers, students, support staff, and organizers. By treating the organization as a dynamic aspect of the curriculum rather than merely a static 'context,' it becomes more visible and subject to systematic accountability.

2.3.2. The Concept of Curriculum Internationalization

There is no doubt that curriculum internationalization means different things to different people. Like the overarching concept of "internationalization," it is complex, challenging, and interpreted in various ways (Beelen & De Wit, 2012). Curriculum internationalization was originally defined as "curricula with an international orientation in content, aimed at preparing students for professional and social engagement in an international and multicultural context, and designed for both domestic and foreign students*"* (Bremer & Van der Wende, 1995, as cited in Caruana & Hanstock, 2003, p. 4; Green & Whitsed, 2015).

According to Green and Whitsed (2015), this definition was adopted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), as well as by Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and many universities, particularly in Australia. More recently, however, the following definition offered by Leask has gained prominence (Jones, 2013, p. 169):

> Curriculum Internationalization is the incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the content of the curriculum, as well as the teaching and learning processes and support services of a program of study. An internationalized curriculum will engage students with internationally informed research and cultural and linguistic diversity. It will purposefully develop their international and intercultural perspectives as global professionals and citizens (Leask, 2009, p. 209).

Leask's updated definition is important for three key reasons: it explicitly addresses the intercultural dimension, includes learning outcomes, and underscores the necessity of active student engagement in the learning process. This approach facilitates the systematic (purposeful) development of international and intercultural learning outcomes. The definition also emphasizes the need to move beyond curriculum internationalization strategies that focus only on content or provide isolated, optional experiences for a limited number of students, which fail to demonstrate learning outcomes. Leask's focus on pedagogy is echoed by other scholars. For example, Zimitat (2008, p. 143), as cited in Jones (2013), notes that "Internationalizing curricula is not just about content; it also requires changes in pedagogy to help students develop critical skills to understand the forces influencing their discipline and to question established viewpoints".

Similarly, Aulakh et al. (1997), as referenced in Jones (2013), contend that

> Internationalization involves mutual learning between teachers and students, addressing the needs of both overseas and local students, fostering interdependence among them, considering our professional practices from various viewpoints, employing culturally inclusive teaching methods, utilizing teaching and learning resources that represent diversity, and providing high-quality courses that are relevant on an international scale (p. 15).

Once more, Leask expanded and updated her 2009 definition of curriculum internationalization in her 2015 publication, stating that "Internationalization of the curriculum is the incorporation of international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum, as well as into the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods, and support services of a program of study" (Leask, 2015, p. 9, as cited in Simm & Marvell, 2017).

Concerning the learning outcomes of an internationalized curriculum, various scholars have offered definitions. The Centre for International Curriculum Inquiry and Networking (CICIN) in Oxford, UK, identified three key intended outcomes, which Green and Mertova (2009, p. 31), as cited in Teichler (2018), summarized as follows:

i. **Global perspectives**: In addition to disciplinary knowledge, an internationalized curriculum requires understanding of other countries and cultures, as well as proficiency

in other languages. This highlights the importance of interdisciplinary education, incorporating historical, local, and global viewpoints.

ii. **Intercultural competence**: This encompasses sensitivity to others' perspectives and a willingness to empathize with them (Clifford, 2008, as cited in Teichler, 2018). Furthermore, effective communication with individuals from different cultures generally necessitates an awareness of the nature of racism.

iii. **Responsible global citizenship**: This involves recognizing the need to engage with issues of equity and social justice, sustainability, and the reduction of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination. This final outcome is seen as foundational to the first two.

Professor Leask has created a widely recognized conceptual framework for a comprehensive understanding of CI. A visual representation of the framework, along with concise explanations of its components, is provided below.

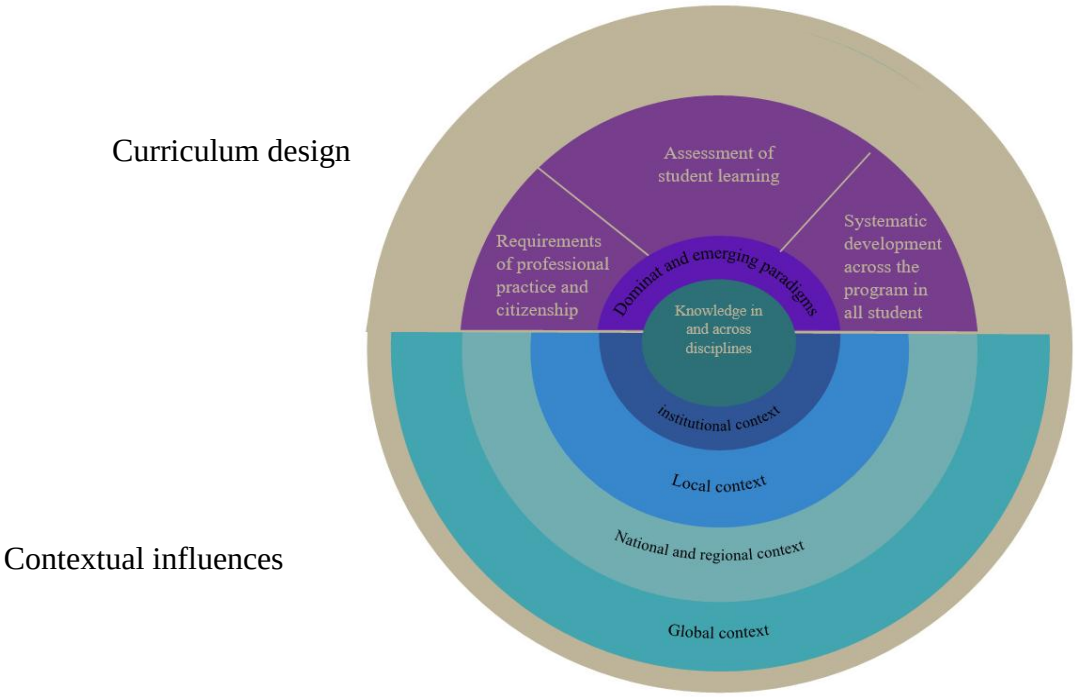


Figure 3 :Leask's CI Framework

Source: Leask (2015)

Leask (2015) briefly explains the framework as follows:

Knowledge within and across disciplines is placed at the core of the framework, as disciplines are the foundation of knowledge (Mestenhauser, 2011) and possess unique cultures (Becher & Trowler, 2001). Disciplines are the group or 'tribe' to which academics are primarily aligned. Clifford (2009) observed that academic views on CI are often shaped by their disciplinary background. Therefore, disciplines lie at the heart of the framework, serving as the starting point and key influence on how curriculum internationalization is understood and practiced. Recognizing this, scholars such as Neumann et al. (2002), along with Clifford (2009), sought to categorize academic disciplines into four broad categories along a continuum (see figure 4).

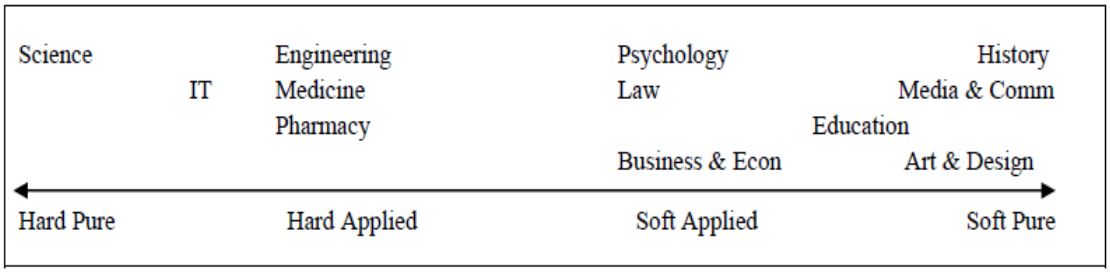


Figure 4:'Becher-style' continuum of the disciplines

Source: Clifford, 2009.

The upper section of Leask's framework (figure 3) focuses on **curriculum design** and highlights three essential components: the requirements of professional practice and citizenship, the assessment of student learning, and the systematic development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes throughout the program. Academics typically make curriculum decisions on the prevailing paradigms of their disciplines. However, as Leask emphasized, a crucial aspect of internationalizing the curriculum is to move beyond these dominant paradigms, explore emerging perspectives, and envision new possibilities for thinking and practice.

According to Leask (2015), the first element, **the requirements of professional practice**, plays a crucial role in decisions about what to exclude from a curriculum, particularly when

an external professional body accredits the program. However, university education extends beyond preparing students for the demands of professional practice in a globalized world. When designing an internationalized curriculum, it is equally important to consider the moral responsibilities associated with local, national, and global citizenship.

The second key element in curriculum design involves determining what students should be capable of by the end of the program and as graduates. This understanding helps in planning **assessment** tasks and learning experiences across different courses and levels, ensuring that students receive regular feedback on their performance and progress. In an internationalized curriculum, it is particularly important to provide feedback and assess students' achievement of clearly defined international and intercultural learning objectives.

The third aspect involves fostering international and intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes within an internationalized curriculum, which requires thoughtful planning, collaboration among colleagues, and coordination across the program. Developing competencies such as language proficiency and intercultural understanding may need to be integrated into various courses at different stages. Since students may enter the program with varying levels of ability, a variety of strategies will likely be needed to help all students meet the desired learning outcomes by the program's end. Additionally, integrating student services and the informal curriculum to complement the formal curriculum is a key component of effective curriculum design.

The other part of the framework focuses on the lower section, which addresses the contextual layers that variably influence academic decisions when designing the curriculum. The formal curriculum does not function in isolation; it is shaped by the informal curriculum, extracurricular activities, and services available to students, all of which contribute to the context in which the formal curriculum is implemented. Together, these elements form the overall student experience. Both the formal and informal curricula are influenced by the institution's context, which is in turn shaped by the university's mission and values. These are reflected in policies (e.g., availability of foreign language studies and recognition of global experience programs), funding priorities (e.g., support for international service learning), and staff development opportunities. While local

accreditation requirements might necessitate a primary focus on local laws and policies, the local context is inherently connected to national and global influences.

In conclusion, the various contextual layers of the framework interact with and influence each other both directly and indirectly. This leads to a complex environment in which academics design the curriculum, and students engage with it.

2.3.3. Rationales for Curriculum Internationalization

Rationales and drivers for the internationalization of the curriculum vary across nations and regions and have evolved over time. Different types of activities have been emphasized in various contexts at different times, reflecting a diversity of beliefs and approaches to the internationalization of the curriculum. However, some common themes, listed below, are evident. These themes are not discrete; rather, they are interconnected and related (Leask et al., 2013).

i. Preparing graduates for a globalized world

The rationale for internationalizing the curriculum has long been linked to equipping graduates to navigate and work effectively in a globalized environment. This concept is not new; as far back as 20 years ago, Harari (1992), cited in Leask et al. (2013), associated the internationalization of the curriculum with preparing graduates for "the highly interdependent and multicultural world in which they live and (will) have to function in the future" (p. 53).

Similarly, in 1995, the OECD defined the internationalization of the curriculum as essential for preparing individuals for life in "national, multicultural" contexts through an "international orientation in content″ Webb (2005) noted that in Australia, this internationalization helps students understand the global nature of scientific, economic, political, and cultural exchanges (p. 111). In South Africa, Ogude (2007) emphasized that the internationalization of the curriculum is focused on producing globally competitive graduates and generating new knowledge. The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada indicated that an internationalized curriculum serves as a way for Canadian students to cultivate global perspectives and skills within their own country (AUCC, 2009,

p. 5; as cited in Leask et al., 2013). Today, the idea of global citizenship has become an integral part of the internationalization discourse in higher education worldwide (Deardorff and Jones, 2012, p. 295; as cited in Leask et al., 2013).

ii. Developing intercultural competence

The second theme highlighted in the literature is that the cultivation of intercultural competence is a primary focus and an essential outcome of an internationalized curriculum (Leask, 2009; Deardorff and Jones, 2012, as cited in Leask et al., 2013). Various definitions of internationalization have been developed (Knight, 2004; Van Der Wende, 1997; Hamilton, 1998; Teichler, 2004; in Leask et al., 2013), and a common aspect among these definitions is the connection of university internationalization with globalization and the intercultural—specifically, the interaction between different cultures and the necessity for effective communication and behavior in these contexts (Deardorff, 2009a; Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009). The enhancement of intercultural competence is linked to graduate attributes associated with global citizenship, preparing graduates for life and work in a globalized environment (Leask, 2001; Jones and Killick, 2013). It is particularly connected to the ability to communicate effectively in social and professional settings and to collaborate in teams.

iii. Engaging academic staff

The third theme that has emerged is the significance of involving academic staff (or "faculty") in the internationalization of the curriculum. This theme is connected to the first two. Emphasizing the need to prepare all graduates for life in a globalized world places the internationalization of the curriculum within both the academic and administrative spheres of universities. While staff in international offices collaborate with academic personnel to arrange and manage study abroad and exchange programs for a small proportion of students, it is the academic coordinators and their teaching teams who oversee the formal curriculum in their respective disciplines and programs; they are responsible for its definition and management. However, the literature frequently highlights the complexities and challenges involved in engaging academic staff in this process (Childress, 2010;

Egron-Polak and Hudson, 2010; Knight, 2006a; Leask and Beelen, 2010; Stohl, 2007; as cited in Leask et al., 2013).

iv. Internationalization at home

The term "Internationalization at Home" (IaH) has increasingly been linked to the internationalization of the curriculum, although its interpretation varies across different contexts, leading to its evolution as a concept and practice (Sild-Lönroth & Nilsson, 2007; as cited in Leask et al., 2013). The authors describe IaH as a new perspective on internationalization.

Initially, the IaH concept emphasized intercultural issues and diversity, defined succinctly as "any internationally related activity except outbound student and staff mobility" (Crowther et al., 2001, p. 8). This definition raised several questions, suggesting that IaH could exist independently of outbound mobility. For instance, could an international experience at home foster outbound mobility and enhance the quality of a study-related stay abroad? Could it equip students with skills to maximize their experiences during their studies or placements abroad? Despite these inquiries, IaH has effectively shifted the focus toward the activities of teachers and learners in local classrooms and communities, rather than relying solely on sending students abroad to broaden their international perspectives (Beelen and Leask, 2011).

Overall, the four themes discussed here are prevalent in the literature examining and critiquing various approaches to the internationalization of the curriculum worldwide over the past decade. In our globalized world, it is not surprising that concepts emerging in specific national and regional contexts are adapted elsewhere. Consequently, the activities associated with the internationalization of the curriculum exhibit both similarities and differences across global regions, influenced in part by local political, economic, and socio-cultural factors (Leask and Bridge, 2013; as cited in Leask et al., 2013). Variations also occur within the same region at the same time and over different time periods.

2.3.4. Approaches to Curriculum Internationalization

The present geopolitical landscape, marked by global conflicts, health pandemics, and rising anti-globalization sentiments, complicates internationalization initiatives (Kapfudzaruwa, 2024). In response to these challenges, institutions are implementing diverse strategies to internationalize their curricula, including add-on, infusion, transformational, and social responsibility methods (Clarke & Kirby, 2022). Additionally, some countries are starting to advocate for more inclusive approaches to internationalization to address concerns about its multipolar and self-serving tendencies (Kapfudzaruwa, 2024).

The three most common approaches to internationalizing the curriculum in post-secondary institutions are the **add-on**, **infusion**, and **transformation** approaches (Bond, 2003; as cited in Ankomah-Asare et al., 2016).

A. The Add-on Approach

The add-on approach, described by Banks (2004), is the earliest method for internationalizing the curriculum. It involves incorporating international or intercultural content into existing curricula and courses without altering their original structure or teaching methods.

B. The Infusion Approach

The infusion approach is the most frequently used method in higher education today (Bond, 2003). This approach enriches the curriculum with content that enhances students' cross-cultural understanding and knowledge of diverse cultures (Whalley et al., 1997). It emphasizes the interdisciplinary nature of curriculum internationalization, exposing students across all fields of study to international and multicultural perspectives. Mestenhauser (1998) noted that the content of an existing course can be internationalized by incorporating readings, articles, or case studies with international or intercultural dimensions (Ankomah-Asare et al., 2016).

C. The Transformation Approach

The transformation approach, as proposed by Marchesani and Adams (1992), is grounded in critical pedagogy. It "encourages new ways of thinking and incorporates new methodologies, raising different epistemological questions, challenging old assumptions, considering subjective data sources, and either revising or invalidating prior theories" (Marchesani & Adams, 1992). This approach aims to challenge inequitable social structures through education while helping students appreciate the multiple realities present in today's global society (Banks, 2002, 2004; Joseph, 2008; Khalideen, 2006; Kitano, 1997; as cited in Ankomah-Asare et al., 2016). It aligns with the principles of an ideally internationalized curriculum, recognizing that teaching and learning environments are closely linked to students' cultural biases (Kennedy, 1995; Mestenhauser, 2002a, 2002b; Rizvi & Walsh, 1998; as cited in Ankomah-Asare et al., 2016.).

This approach calls for a critical examination and reevaluation of the cultural assumptions and traditional values often found in the curricula of many higher education institutions (Maidstone, 1995; Marchesani & Adams, 1992; Rizvi & Walsh, 1998; as cited in Ankomah-Asare et al.). It encourages students to explore and critically analyze reality through diverse perspectives (Banks, 2002, 2004), facilitating knowledge sharing and transfer among lecturers, students, and institutions (Kitano, 1997).

2.3.5. The Roles of Academics in Internationalizing Curriculum

Curriculum internationalization is an ongoing, multifaceted process that requires collaboration between academics, students, academic departments, institutional administration, and international offices (Williams, 2008). Bond (2003) suggests that the primary responsibility for internationalizing the curriculum falls to academics, who are "in a preferential and privileged position to influence the classroom atmosphere and create environments where students learn effectively and successfully" (Samuel & Burney, 2003, p. 84).

There is a growing consensus that curriculum internationalization is primarily the responsibility of academics, as they work in a context that demands contributions to

teaching, research, and community service (AUCC, 2009; Bond, 2003; American Council on Education, 2022). Academics can drive a successful internationalization process, but as Knight (2004) points out, it is essential to consider their needs and motivations, given their central role in this transformation. Therefore, institutions must provide opportunities for faculty to actively engage in this process. Two primary barriers to faculty participation in internationalization are identified in the literature: individual and institutional (Clarke & Kirby, 2022).

Academics' attitudes toward international learning, including their personal knowledge, skills, and cognitive competence, significantly impact their ability to participate in internationalization efforts (Childress, 2010). Some academics may not prioritize curriculum internationalization or may be unaware of its significance within their institution. Moreover, many are not provided clear guidelines on what constitutes an internationalized curriculum, and some struggle with integrating international dimensions into their courses. Additionally, there are reports of difficulties in engaging with international students (AUCC, 2009; Leask, 2023).

Research indicates that while many academics are interested in international education initiatives, institutional barriers such as restrictive policies, bureaucratic hurdles, limited funding, and a lack of financial incentives often deter them from participating (Beatty, 2013). Among these, restrictive institutional policies and insufficient financial resources are the most prominent challenges (Beatty, 2013).

Academics play a crucial role in internationalizing the curriculum as they are the bridge between students and the learning experience. Their involvement is essential; without their buy-in, the sustainability and integrity of the project would be at risk. However, support from academics may be hindered by dogmatic attitudes or the belief that "teachers know best" and do not need to adapt the curriculum (Grunzweig, 2006). Nonetheless, academics cannot undertake this task alone. Visionary leadership from senior administrators, including presidents, deans, and faculty administrators, is needed to provide guidance, professional development, and support for faculty (Ellingboe, 1998; Green & Olson, 2003; Knight, 1994; Paige, 2003; Williams, 2008).

In light of these points and Leask's conceptual framework of curriculum internationalization, it is clear that academics' engagement, with the support of their leaders, is essential for success. However, engaging academics in internationalization has been a persistent issue over the past few decades (Whitsed et al., 2021). Recent surveys by the European Association for International Education (EAIE) in 2018 and the International Association of Universities (IAU) in 2019 confirm that staff engagement remains a challenge (Hende & Riezebos, 2023). Despite these challenges, Marantz-Gal and Leask (2020) emphasize that curriculum internationalization is now a core activity for universities, and academics must play a crucial role. Riezebos (2017) adds that internationalizing teaching and learning is vital for advancing and innovating study programs. Therefore, it is crucial to explore academics' engagement with internationalization from multiple perspectives.

Several scholars (Green & Whitsed, 2015; Leask et al., 2020) have identified tensions between the expected roles of academics in curriculum internationalization and their actual engagement. Various studies (Agnew, 2013; Crosling et al., 2008; Leask, 2015) point to personal, cultural, disciplinary, and institutional barriers that lead to resistance or disengagement. As curriculum internationalization often requires interdisciplinary collaboration, academics must work across disciplinary and professional boundaries (Marantz-Gal & Leask, 2020). However, studies (Agnew, 2013; Clifford in Trowler et al., 2012) suggest that different disciplines have varying attitudes toward curriculum internationalization. For example, academics in the social sciences tend to be more engaged due to the societal and student-driven nature of their field, while those in the natural sciences may resist such efforts due to their adherence to universal principles.

2.3.6. Academics Beliefs and Practices Regarding Curriculum Internationalization

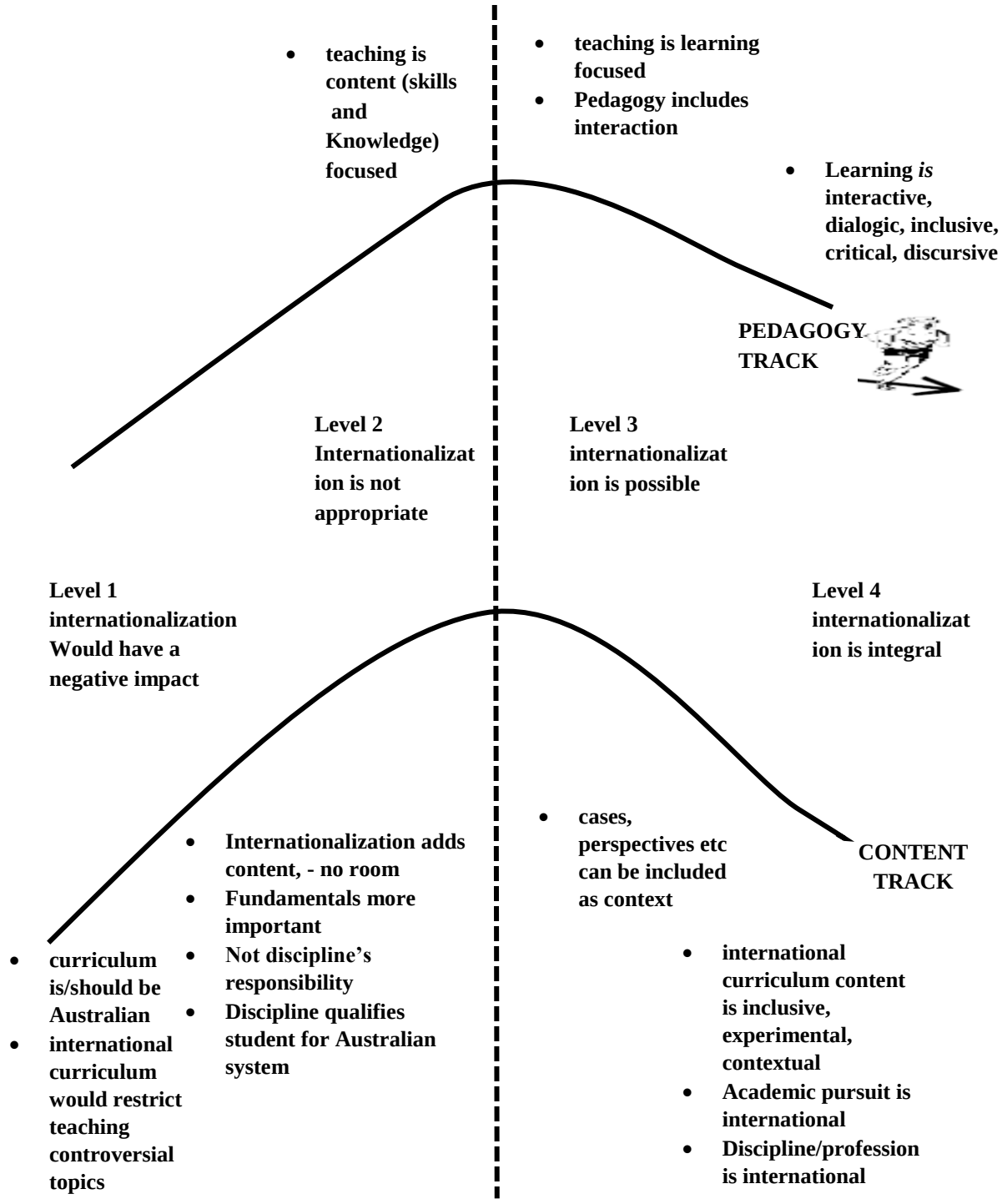
Engaging academics in the process of internationalizing the curriculum requires a critical examination of their traditional beliefs and practices. As Cohen and Ball (1990, p. 335), cited in Mohsin (2018), state, academics' beliefs are important because 'these existing beliefs act as influences on their attempts to change practice; they may also be important sites for change'.

Though beliefs have been defined in numerous ways, Rokeach (1968), as cited in Guerra and Wubbena (2017), proposed that beliefs are 'any simple proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does...' (p. 113). Furthermore, beliefs serve as 'powerful filters that shape how an individual sees the world, sees other people, and sees oneself' (Nelson & Guerra, 2014, p. 70). Similarly, Bandura (1997), as cited in Fives and Buehl (2016), argues that beliefs, whether objectively true or not, guide our goals, emotions, decisions, actions, and reactions.

Based on the above-mentioned concepts of beliefs, academics' beliefs refer to an integrated system of judgments related to teaching, curriculum, learning, and assessment processes—core behaviors in schooling that strongly influence how teachers teach and what students learn or achieve. Like all humans, academics hold beliefs about a variety of topics, relationships, and processes (Fives & Buehl, 2012, as cited in Buehl, 2016). It is evident that the implementation of an intended curriculum largely depends on the actions of teachers, individuals who possess their own deeply held belief systems (Fives & Buehl, 2012). As Leask (2008), cited in Green (2016), argues, 'decisions about curriculum innovation for internationalisation are not neutral. They are ideological in nature, shaped by beliefs about internationalisation, globalisation, and the curriculum itself.Thus, the implementation of new policies and curricula requires careful consideration of teachers' beliefs.

However, in higher education, studies focusing on teachers' beliefs have a shorter history (approximately 30 years) and are sparse compared to those at the primary and secondary levels (Kane et al., 2002, as cited in Ferguson, 2020). In their 2002 review of teacher beliefs at the tertiary level, Kane and her colleagues identified 50 research papers addressing university teachers' beliefs about teaching. Following this study, Strømsø and Bråten (2011) focused on teachers' beliefs and the role of faculty training programs. Yuan (2017) explored university-based teacher educators' teaching beliefs and practices in Hong Kong, while Fischer and Hänze (2019) examined value beliefs and views of teaching. By and large, however, the issue of teachers' beliefs at the tertiary level has not attracted much research.

Regarding curriculum internationalization (CI), Leask (2008), cited in Green and Mertova (2016), argues, 'decisions about curriculum innovation for internationalisation are not neutral. They are ideological in nature, shaped by beliefs about internationalisation, globalisation, and the curriculum itself. Bell (2004) also developed a framework, the 'Spectrum of Acceptance of Internationalizing Curriculum,' which was incorporated with Ellingboe's (1998) 'Great Divide' (figure 5) to classify academics' positions. This framework places them along a spectrum based on their agreement or disagreement with the idea that curricula within their discipline should be internationalized. This is because academics' acceptance or rejection of internationalization largely depends on their beliefs about its relevance to their teaching context (Mestenhauser, 1998).



Source: Bell (2004).

Figure 5: Spectrum of Acceptance of Internationalizing Curriculum

According to Bell (2004), the four levels on the spectrum are not mutually exclusive. Several participants occupy two levels on one side of the 'divide,' but not across it. Bell also observed that a small number of participants might have wanted to cross the divide, but this was not possible in the current higher education environment. She suggests that differences in academics' beliefs about curriculum content and pedagogy may be key to the existence of the divide. On one side of the divide, academics believed that internationalization would have a negative impact or would be inappropriate, focusing primarily on students learning curriculum content and basic disciplinary skills. On the other side, academics believed that the internationalization of content was either possible or integral to the curriculum. Their perspectives emphasized cultural inclusivity, critique, developing global perspectives, and discursive pedagogy. The framework also noted that one participant could not be placed anywhere on the divide.

Practices regarding CI vary significantly depending on the institution, academic discipline, and individual teaching philosophies. A common strategy involves incorporating global perspectives into course content, where educators modify syllabi to include international case studies, literature, and globally relevant issues. Leask (2015) emphasizes that successful internationalization equips students to navigate the complexities of a globalized world, though the degree of engagement largely depends on academics' beliefs and their willingness to embrace these changes. Academics also promote intercultural learning by encouraging interactions between students from diverse backgrounds, often through group work or collaborations with international students. However, Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2015) warn that having a diverse student body alone is insufficient for meaningful intercultural learning, which requires thoughtful course design. Another approach includes using international teaching materials, such as texts and guest lectures from global experts, though this by itself does not fully internationalize the curriculum (Zou et al., 2019).

Academics encounter considerable obstacles in fully implementing CI, including a lack of clarity on how to apply it practically and limited institutional support. Green and Mertova (2016) highlight the disconnect between theoretical models of CI and their implementation, particularly at the academics level. Similarly, De Wit and Hunter (2015) note that academic

staff often struggle to comprehend how to put CI principles into practice, which further hampers engagement. Despite these difficulties, some academics are proactive in redesigning courses to incorporate international collaborations or study abroad opportunities. However, Leask (2015) and Jones & Reiffenrath (2018) emphasize that CI should extend beyond mobility programs and be integrated into the everyday learning experiences of all students. While some academics work to incorporate global content and promote intercultural experiences, misunderstandings and insufficient support limit the broader adoption and implementation of CI.

Green and Mertova (2016) also highlight a gap between the theoretical framework and its implementation, especially among academics. De Wit and Hunter (2015) emphasize that much work remains to be done in terms of institutional implementation and engaging academics, as the practical implications of CI are not always clear to them. Despite efforts by some academics of HEIs to pursue CI, research shows that their understanding of CI is still hindered by myths and misconceptions, which hinder its proper practices (Beelen & De Louw, 2020). For instance, many academics mistakenly believe that simply having international students will automatically internationalize the curriculum for all students. Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2015) emphasized the importance of intentionally integrating all students, as a diverse student body alone does not guarantee an internationalized education or campus.

Another common misconception is that teaching in English is necessary for CI, when in fact, CI can be implemented in local languages (Jones & Reiffenrath, 2018). Other myths include the belief that offshore curricula are inherently internationalized or that more study abroad opportunities (outbound mobility) lead to a more internationalized curriculum (Leask, 2015). There is also a misconception that cross-cultural capability must be embedded in all courses to achieve CI, whereas Caruana (2011) suggests that even small changes to the existing curriculum can have a significant impact. Lastly, the assumption that a curriculum is internationalized simply because it includes international literature or guest lectures is also inaccurate (Zou et al., 2019). In general, De Wit and Hunter (2015) contend that significant progress is still needed regarding institutional implementation and

the involvement of academics, as the practical implications of CI are not always well understood.

2.3.7. Relationships between Academics' Beliefs and their Practices

The relationship between academics' beliefs and their teaching practices is deeply connected, as beliefs strongly influence how educators design and deliver curriculum. According to Pajares (1992), educators' belief systems are key in shaping their approach to teaching, as these beliefs are often more consistent than knowledge or skills in determining behavior. Academics who embrace student-centered learning, for instance, are more likely to employ interactive and participatory methods, such as discussions, group work, and problem-based learning, as opposed to those who hold more traditional views of education, where lecture-based instruction is the norm. In this way, an academic's belief about how students learn best can greatly impact the nature of classroom activities and interactions.

When it comes to curriculum internationalization (CI), academics' beliefs also play a pivotal role. Leask (2015) emphasizes that educators who value global perspectives and intercultural competencies are more likely to integrate international content into their courses. They may include global case studies, international literature, or collaborative projects with students from other countries. In contrast, those who see internationalization as irrelevant or secondary may resist making significant changes to their syllabi, limiting the global scope of their teaching. This disparity in engagement often stems from differing beliefs about the importance of global education and how it should be applied in their specific academic context.

Moreover, academics' beliefs about their students' abilities can also shape their practices. Teachers who trust that their students are capable of engaging with complex global issues are more inclined to challenge them with internationally focused materials and assignments. According to Jones and Reiffenrath (2018), academics who perceive their students as globally minded are more likely to design courses that include intercultural learning experiences, such as collaborative projects with international peers. However, if

they doubt their students' readiness for such content, they may refrain from incorporating global elements into the curriculum, leading to a more localized and narrow scope of instruction.

Finally, academics' openness to change and innovation is heavily influenced by their beliefs about the role of education in a globalized world. Those who see education as a tool to prepare students for global challenges are more likely to adopt innovative practices, including CI (Beelen & De Louw, 2020). However, academics who are more conservative in their views may hesitate to move beyond traditional teaching methods, thus limiting the internationalization of their curriculum. Additionally, as De Wit and Hunter (2015) point out, institutional support plays a significant role in enabling or constraining academics' ability to implement CI. Academics who feel that their institutions provide adequate resources and encouragement are more likely to engage in CI, whereas those who believe institutional backing is insufficient may resist fully adopting internationalization practices.

However, other studies reveals the inconsistent relationship between academics' beliefs and their practice. Other also reveal that many academics engaged in practices that did not reflect their principles: they departed from their lesson plans (Richards, et al. 1992; Flores, 2001; Foss and Kleinsasser, 1996; Deford, 1985; Nespor, 1987; Richardson et al, 1991; Ulichny, 1996; Richards, 1998; Bailey, 1996; as cited in Zheng, 2015; Green and Mertova, 2016).

Hence, as understood from the aforementioned literature, four types of relationships between academics' beliefs and practices were observed. These are: beliefs influence practice, practice influences beliefs, a reciprocal relationship, and no relationship.

2.3.8. Contribution of CI for the Development of Graduates' Employability Attributes

Curriculum Internationalization (CI) significantly contributes to the development of graduates' employability attributes by fostering the global competencies needed in today's interconnected job market. By embedding international perspectives and intercultural content into academic programs, CI helps students develop critical skills such as cross-

cultural communication, adaptability, and problem-solving. Leask (2015) highlights that an internationalized curriculum enables students to engage with diverse viewpoints, making them more effective in multicultural environments—a highly valued trait in global industries. Furthermore, CI enhances interpersonal skills by encouraging group work and international collaborations, which improve students' ability to work in teams and navigate diverse professional settings (Jones & Reiffenrath, 2018).

Additionally, CI promotes adaptability and flexibility, qualities that are crucial in an ever-changing job market. Exposure to global challenges and contexts helps students become more resilient and open to new ideas, traits that make them valuable employees in various industries (Beelen & De Louw, 2020). It also nurtures critical thinking by encouraging students to analyze problems from multiple cultural and global perspectives, a key skill in complex problem-solving environments (Zou et al., 2019). Graduates who possess a global mindset and can offer innovative solutions to international issues are particularly attractive to employers.

Moreover, CI enhances language and communication skills by exposing students to multiple languages and intercultural communication challenges. De Wit and Hunter (2015) note that graduates with strong linguistic abilities and the capacity to communicate across cultural boundaries have a competitive edge in multinational organizations. Lastly, CI expands students' professional networks through international collaborations, study abroad programs, and virtual exchanges, opening up valuable opportunities for career growth and global exposure. Overall, CI equips graduates with the essential attributes—global competencies, critical thinking, adaptability, and communication skills—that are in high demand in the global job market.

2.3.9. 'Enabler' and 'blockers' for Curriculum Internationalization

Analyzing blockers and enablers is essential for understanding the existing situation and developing strategies for curriculum internationalization. Without this examination, the interplay of factors that either support or hinder curricular change within the contextual

framework can become overwhelming (Leask, 2015). Therefore, some of the identified blockers and enablers are outlined below.

Enablers:

One of the most significant enablers of CI is institutional support. When universities prioritize internationalization in their strategic planning and allocate resources, they create a conducive environment for integrating global content into the curriculum. Leadership backing and clear institutional policies encourage faculty members to participate in internationalization efforts, which ensures that CI becomes a core part of the educational experience (Beelen & De Louw, 2020). Additionally, professional development and training play a critical role in enabling CI. Faculty members need opportunities to enhance their understanding of global education, and institutions that offer workshops, seminars, and training programs empower their academics to adopt internationalized teaching methods (Leask, 2015).

Collaboration and partnerships with international universities, organizations, and professionals are also key enablers. These partnerships create opportunities for joint research, student exchanges, and the sharing of best practices, which enrich the curriculum and expose students to a broader range of perspectives (Jones & Reiffenrath, 2018). Furthermore, technology and digital learning platforms have made CI more accessible, allowing institutions to facilitate virtual exchanges, online collaborations, and access to international resources without the need for physical mobility. These technologies help extend CI to students and faculty even in resource-constrained environments (De Wit & Hunter, 2015). Lastly, interdisciplinary approaches to CI encourage collaboration across academic departments, enabling students to engage with global issues from multiple perspectives and fostering a holistic understanding of internationalization (Zou et al., 2019).

Blockers:

Despite the potential benefits of CI, several barriers can hinder its implementation. A major blocker is the lack of institutional commitment. When universities fail to embed

internationalization into their strategic goals or provide adequate funding, it becomes challenging for faculty to prioritize CI. Without clear policies or the necessary resources, efforts to internationalize the curriculum can remain fragmented and inconsistent (De Wit & Hunter, 2015). Another significant challenge is limited faculty engagement. Academics may resist CI due to a lack of understanding or confidence in applying global perspectives in their teaching. Some faculty members may view CI as irrelevant to their discipline or an additional burden, especially if they have not received proper training (Leask, 2015).

Resource constraints also present a major obstacle to CI. Implementing internationalization efforts, such as partnerships, study abroad programs, and training initiatives, often requires significant financial investment. Institutions with limited resources may struggle to support these efforts, restricting students' opportunities to engage in international experiences (Zou et al., 2019). Additionally, language barriers can impede CI, particularly in regions where proficiency in dominant languages of global exchange, such as English, is low. This barrier limits access to international collaborations and resources, thereby reducing the scope of internationalization efforts (Jones & Reiffenrath, 2018). Lastly, cultural resistance within institutions or local communities can hinder CI. Faculty and students may be hesitant to adopt international perspectives if they perceive them as conflicting with local values or traditions. This cultural tension can create resistance to global integration, limiting the openness to CI initiatives (Green & Mertova, 2016).

Hence, the successful implementation of CI relies on key enablers such as strong institutional support, professional development, international collaborations, technology, and interdisciplinary approaches. However, several blockers, including lack of institutional commitment, faculty resistance, resource limitations, language barriers, and cultural opposition, can impede progress.

2.4. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Under this section, the reviewed literature was briefly summarized, and the conceptual framework was developed. In the reviewed literature, internationalization, particularly in the context of curriculum internationalization (CI), has different meanings for different people, with no single definition fitting all contexts. However, it typically involves

integrating three elements: international relationships, intercultural interactions, and global factors. Incorporating these into the curriculum helps students develop global awareness, international perspectives, and intercultural competence.

Two main perspectives on CI exist in the literature. The first argues that IoC is a Northern agenda, serving as a form of modern colonization of the South. The second camp believes that in today's globalized world, collaboration is essential, and internationalization is a necessary response to globalization's effects. This second viewpoint, which the author supports, advocates for a balanced response to both the positive and negative impacts of globalization through higher education internationalization.

Academics are central to internationalizing the curriculum, as they design and implement the content. However, many are not actively involved in the process, often due to internal and external pressures. Some researchers argue that academics themselves are not sufficiently internationalized, leading to varied beliefs and practices regarding curriculum internationalization across disciplines. To address this, academics must first recognize the importance of internationalizing their curriculum, followed by strong support from university leadership.

Based on the objectives and the review of related literature, a conceptual framework was developed for this study. A conceptual framework, as Kivunja (2018) explained, represents the comprehensive, logical arrangement and connections of all the elements that inform the core ideas, structures, planning, practices, and execution of the research project. It encompasses the researcher's thought process in selecting the research topic, defining the problem to be explored, framing the research questions, reviewing relevant literature, applying theoretical perspectives, choosing the methodology, and deciding on the methods, procedures, and tools for data collection. It also includes data analysis, interpretation of results, and the formulation of recommendations and conclusions (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017).

In order to create a conceptual framework, there are three sources, or stimuli (Crawford, 2020):(1) experience, (2) literature, and (3) theory. According to Crawford, although

personal experience may instigate a research idea, personal experience is not sufficient to support a conceptual framework for a research study. Hence, the conceptual framework must be rooted in the professional literature. Because the literature provides the rational for the study by exposing what is not yet known or understood about a phenomenon. The third source for a conceptual framework is theory, integrated as the theoretical framework.

Building on the above points, the conceptual framework for this study is outlined as shown in figure 6. This framework integrates several key elements: (1) Leask's (2015) conceptual framework for Curriculum Internationalization (CI), (2) the first stage of Leask's (2015) CI process (the Review & Reflect Stage), (3) Kemmis et al.'s (2014) Theory of Practice Architectures, (4) Bell's (2004) "Spectrum of Acceptance of Internationalizing Curriculum" framework, and (5) the 'Becher-style' disciplinary continuum (see figure 6).

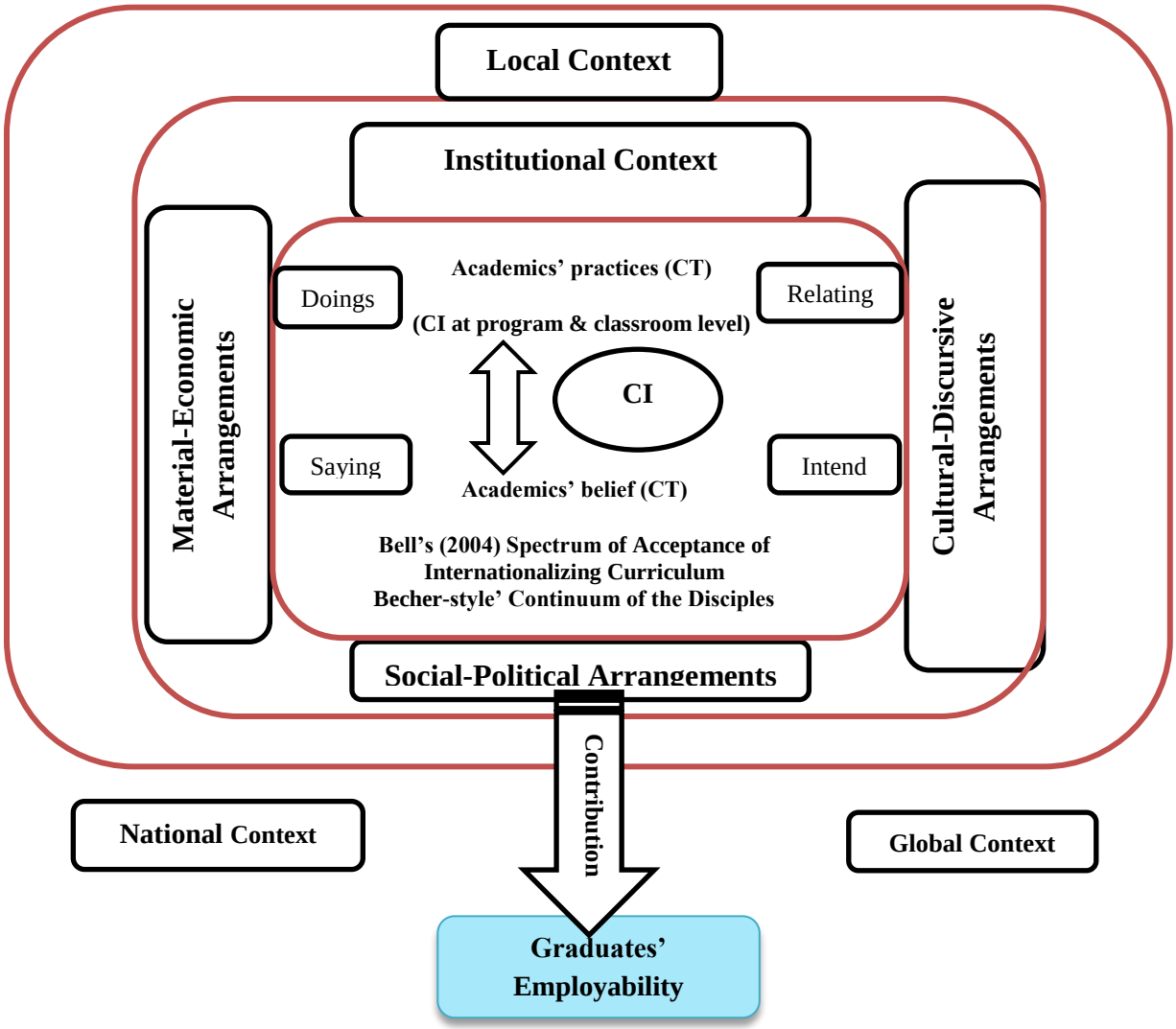


Figure 6: Conceptual framework of the study developed by the Author (2022).

As illustrated in Figure 6, the core focus of the framework is Curriculum Internationalization (CI), grounded in Leask's (2015) definition. Leask's (2015) conceptual framework also positions disciplinary teams responsible for designing the curriculum at the heart of the internationalization process, recognizing that disciplinary knowledge plays a crucial role in shaping beliefs and practices related to CI.

This research aimed to investigate the beliefs and practices of academics at Ethiopian Research Universities (ERUs) concerning Curriculum Internationalization (CI). As depicted in the study's framework (figure 6), academics' beliefs were examined through a collective understanding of "**what they say, intend**, and **do**" (Rokeach, 1972; Pajares, 1992; as cited in Savasci-Acikalin, 2009, p. 316). Beliefs and practices are interrelated and mutually influence academics' professional lives (Borg, 2018). Additionally, Bell's (2004) "Spectrum of Acceptance of Internationalizing Curriculum," combined with Ellingboe's (1998) Great Divide (figure 5), was used to classify academics' positions on internationalization. Their placement along the spectrum reflected their agreement or disagreement on the need to internationalize curricula in their discipline, as acceptance or rejection of CI largely depends on their beliefs about its relevance to their teaching context (Mestenhauser, 1998).

The other variable is practice. From the perspective of practice architecture theory, Curriculum Internationalization (CI) is seen as a practice involving a combination of **sayings**, **doings**, and **relatings**—interwoven in specific ways that make CI distinct. Like any practice, CI is not an 'abstract concept with its own ideal form' (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 33). Instead, it is shaped within the site of practice and consists of resources relevant to that site at specific points in time. Studying CI through the lens of practice architecture focuses on the network of interactions and relationships through which the curriculum is experienced. It also highlights the conditions under which internationalization practices occur (Kemmis et al.).

Leask and Bridge (2013) emphasize that Curriculum Internationalization (CI) is highly context-dependent. According to Kemmis et al. (2014), the practices of academics are

influenced and shaped by cultural-discursive, material-economic, and social-political arrangements at the institutional, sectoral, and national levels. They further explain these three contextual dimensions of practice.

Cultural-discursive arrangements involve shared specialist discourses, such as disciplinary or professional knowledge, the language educators use, ways of communicating in practice, and factors that affect opportunities for discussion. The language or discourses used reveal the often-unconscious understandings that practitioners rely on to interpret their practices. **Material-economic arrangements** refer to the physical and economic conditions that shape educational practices, including institutional budgets, classroom design, available technological resources, educators' salaries, research funding, and the socioeconomic background of students. **Social-political arrangements** consist of the relationships between educators and others (e.g., students, colleagues, and administrators) as well as policy frameworks, professional codes, and governance structures.

It was, therefore, important to take into account the 'ecological' circumstances (Biesta et al., 2015), i.e. the structural conditions and arrangements for CI at the institution and more broadly in ERUs.

The process of Curriculum Internationalization (CI) at the institutional level creates a legacy of ideas, relationships, aspirations, skills, and identities, among other things. These outcomes become ingrained in the institution and are subsequently encountered by both teachers and students in their teaching and learning experiences. In essence, CI creates a distinct space—a new site of practice—characterized by its own material-economic, cultural-discursive, and social-political arrangements, which may largely overlap with the institution's broader arrangements. These specific arrangements act as preconditions for teaching and learning practices. For instance, an institutional policy focused on large-scale student recruitment could create a new teaching context with increased student diversity. This diversity, as a form of social-political arrangement, can influence how academics view their roles and responsibilities, ultimately affecting their teaching methods (Phan, 2019).

At the classroom level, academics' Curriculum Internationalization (CI) practices are conceptualized as having three dimensions: **sayings**, **doings**, and **relatings**. As Kemmis et al. (2014) explain, "sayings" refer to "forms of understanding" (p. 3). In this context, the sayings dimension reflects how academics articulate their understanding of CI in their teaching environments. The doings dimension focuses on their internationalization-related teaching methods in response to the specific contextual conditions of CI. The relatings dimension involves academics' lived experiences and their social connections relevant to CI.

In examining the relationship between academics' beliefs and practices regarding Curriculum Internationalization (CI), four forms of this relationship were identified based on empirical research. These forms include: beliefs influencing (i.e., serving as precursors to) practice, practice influencing beliefs, beliefs being disconnected from practices, and beliefs and practices mutually influencing each other (Borg, 2018). Borg contends that while evidence exists for each of these positions in the literature, it is the last one—**the reciprocal relationship**—that most accurately reflects the complex interplay between beliefs and practices throughout academics' professional lives. Therefore, this study adopted the fourth option (the reciprocal relationship), as illustrated in the framework (figure 6).

Additionally, as thoroughly discussed in Leask's (2015) conceptual framework of Curriculum Internationalization (CI), academics' beliefs and practices are influenced by the interactions among multiple layers of context, including disciplinary, institutional, local, national, and global factors. Consequently, beliefs and practices related to CI can differ across these various contextual layers. For example, variations may occur between different disciplines within the same institution, as well as within the same discipline across different institutions. Thus, these contextual factors were taken into account in this study.

Finally, one of the implications of Curriculum Internationalization (CI) in higher education is the enhanced employability of graduates. The link between CI and graduates' employability has been affirmed by various researchers. For example, Andrews and Higson (2007) highlighted that graduates' employability lies at the intersection of a quality

curriculum (in this case, an internationalized curriculum) and the requirements and expectations of employers. Similarly, other scholars (Zapp and Lerch, 2020) argue that an internationalized curriculum fosters graduates who think globally (Elkin et al., 2008) and appreciate international diversity (Killick, 2008). Students are required to communicate effectively across borders, understand international business practices, and develop cross-cultural awareness. Such graduates are better equipped for employment in modern companies (Bremer & Van der Wende, 1995; Jones & Killick, 2007).

In summary, Green and Whitsed argue that in a challenging, disruptive, yet interconnected and interdependent world, graduates must be lifelong co-producers of knowledge who can live and work effectively, ethically, creatively, and critically across borders, cultures, and disciplines. Whether students aspire to thrive in diverse societies at home or abroad, developing these attributes is essential, and CI is widely viewed as a key approach to achieving this goal (Green and Whitsed, 2015).

For this reason, the beneficial implication of CI for the development of graduate employability attributes in ERUs was studied in this research.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with research design and methodology which incorporates the following sub-topics: description of the study area, philosophical assumptions and paradigm, research design, research methods, source of data, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of instruments, procedures of data collection, methods of data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.1. Description of the Study Area

This study was conducted in the public universities of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). There are 46 public universities accountable to MoE during the time of this study. Eight universities (first-generation universities or currently differentiated as research universities) were the target population of this study, namely: Addis Ababa University (AAU), Hawassa University (HWU), Bahir Dar University (BDU), Mekele University (MKU), Arbaminch University (AMU), Haramaya University (HRU), University of Gonder (UoG), and Jimma University (JMU), (Adula et al, 2020). Of these, four universities namely: Addis Ababa University (AAU), Haramaya University (HRU), Bahir Dar University (BDU), and Jimma University (JMU) were the sample frame of this study. According to the ten years' strategic plan and third-quarter report documents (Universities' Strategic Plan, 2020; Third-quarter Report, 2022) of these respective RUs, their brief description is provided below.

Addis Ababa University (AAU), which was established in 1950 as the University College of Addis Ababa (UCAA), is the oldest and the largest higher learning and research institution in Ethiopia. It is found in the capital city of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa. Since its inception, the university has been the leading center in teaching-learning, research, and community services. Beginning with an enrollment capacity of 33 students in 1950, AAU now has 48,673 students (33,940 undergraduate, 13,000 Master's, and 1733 PhD students) and 6043 staff (2,408 academics and 3,635 support staff). In its 14 campuses, the University runs 76 undergraduate and 293 graduate programs (72 PhD and 221 Masters), and various specializations in Health Sciences. At present, the University has 10 colleges,

4 institutes that run both teaching and research, and 6 research institutes that predominantly conduct research. Within these academic units, there are 55 departments, 12 centers, 12 schools, and 2 teaching hospitals.

Haramaya University is located in Oromia Regional State. Haramaya University is approximately 510 kilometers east of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The present Haramaya University can be traced back to the agreement made in 1952 between the governments of Ethiopia and the United States of America which resulted in the establishment of the Imperial College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts. Oklahoma State University in the USA embarked on establishing physical plants and staff to run the college's academic, research, and extension programs. The four-year B.Sc in Agriculture was started at Haramaya campus in 1954 with both limited staff and facilities available. The College became a chartered member of Addis Ababa University following the contractual termination of Oklahoma State University in 1967. Consequently, it was renamed the Alemaya College of Agriculture in 1989. In the last few years; the University has witnessed tremendous expansion in the number of faculties, departments, students, staff, and physical infrastructure. Apart from undergraduate programs, the university has widely been engaged in the expansion and diversification of graduate programs at the Master's and PhD levels. The institution was renamed Haramaya University in February 2006. Currently, the previous faculties have been reorganized into 12 colleges, one institute, and one Directorate. Under these divisions, the university offers a total of 224 programs of which 71 are undergraduate programs, 139 are second-degree (M.Sc./M.Ed./MPH) and 14 are PhD level training programs. The university is hosting a total of more than 30,355 students. The University is now functioning on two campus premises. The current composition of the staff is more than 1254 academics, and 5742 supportive and administrative.

Jimma University is also located in Oromia Regional State, which is 352 kilometers southwest of Addis Ababa. The establishment of the university dates back to 1952 when Jimma College of Agriculture was founded. The university got its current name in December 1999 following the amalgamation of Jimma College of Agriculture (founded in

1952) and Jimma Institute of Health Sciences (founded in 1983). The university has more than 4,000 (2600 academic and 1400 support) staff members. The university is operating on four campuses and it is in the phase of establishing its fifth campus. Currently, Jimma University provides education for more than 43,000 students in 69 undergraduate and 103 postgraduate programs in regular, summer, and distance education with more enrollments in the years to come.

Bahir Dar University is located in Amhara Regional State, northern part of Ethiopia. It is found at a distance of 557 km from the capital city of Ethiopia. Bahir Dar University (BDU) was established by merging two former higher education institutions; namely the Bahir Dar Polytechnic and Bahir Dar Teachers' College which had been established in 1963 and 1972 respectively. Those two HEIs were merged to form Bahir Dar University in 2000 G.C. BDU is now among the largest universities in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia with a student population of over 40 thousand in its 340 programs (104 Undergraduate and 225 Postgraduate programs- of which 170 are second degree and 55 are third degree) and 7 Specialty and 4 Certificate programs). It has 1435 academic staff on duty (of whom 278 are with PhD, 1028 are with MA/MSc, 69 are with Specialty and Subspecialty and the remaining 266 are with BA/BSc degrees). BDU has now 793 academic staff members on study leave. It has 4893 administrative and support staff. The university has now five Colleges, two Faculties, four Institutes, two Schools, two Academies, and nine fully functioning campuses. As BDU aspires to become a research-intensive university, it has already given special attention to the establishment of Research Centers in some selected areas. Hence the University has now 12 Research Centers.

3.2. Philosophical Assumptions and Paradigms

Although philosophical ideas remain largely hidden in research (Slife & Williams, 1995), they still influence the practice of research and need to be identified (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Hence, certain assumptions underpin the social science researcher's decision to conduct research (Gay et al, 2012). Cohen et al (2018) looked at the social world using Burrell and Morgan's (1979) work, which established three sets of philosophical assumptions. First, there are **ontological assumptions**, which are assumptions about the

very existence or substance of the social phenomenon being studied. This area of assumption resulted in the **nominalist–realist** debate in philosophy. The former viewpoint holds that objects of thought are simply words and that no independently accessible thing makes up a word's meaning. The realist position, on the other hand, asserts that objects have an independent existence and are not dependent on the knower.

Burrell and Morgan (1979) described a second set of epistemological assumptions. They are about the very foundations of knowledge, such as its nature and forms, how it can be acquired, and how it can be conveyed to other people. The view that knowledge is hard, objective, and observable will require researchers to take on the role of the observer while adhering to natural science methods; the view that knowledge is personal, subjective, and unique, on the other hand, will require researchers to engage with their subjects while rejecting natural scientist methods. To believe in the former is to be a positivist; to the latter, anti-positivist (Cohen et al., 2018).

The third set of assumptions concerns **human nature** and, in particular, **the relationship between human beings and their environment**. Since the human being is both its subject and object of study, the consequences for social science of assumptions of this kind are indeed far-reaching. As a result of such assumptions, two representations of human beings emerge: one portrays them as mechanically and deterministically reacting to their environment, i.e. as products of the environment, manipulated like puppets, and the other portrays them as initiators of their own actions with free will and imagination, creating their own worlds. Hence, the distinction is between **determinism** and **voluntarism** respectively (Burrell and Morgan, 1979; as cited in Cohen et al., 2018).

Therefore, the three sets of philosophical assumptions mentioned above have direct implications for the researcher's decision regarding the research paradigm, approach, design, methodology, methods, types of data sought, and their treatment (Cohen et al., 2018). These research elements are described in the proceeding sections.

Based on the aforementioned assumptions, among the four well-known paradigms or views (positivism, interpretivism/constructivism, critical paradigm/theory, and pragmatic

paradigm) that can be applied to social science research, the pragmatic paradigm was chosen for this study. This is because the pragmatic paradigm advocates a non-singular reality ontology (i.e., there is no single reality, and reality is constantly renegotiated, debated, and interpreted in light of its usefulness in new, unpredictable situations), a relational epistemology (i.e., relationships in research are best determined by what the researcher deems appropriate for the particular study), a mixed methods methodology (i.e., a combination of quantitative and qualitative research approach and design-based research), and a value-laden axiology (i.e., conducting research that benefits people) (Nguyen, 2019; Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Given the clarification of philosophical assumptions, the researcher's philosophical worldview in this study was the pragmatic paradigm, as he aimed to utilize the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research methods through a mixed methods approach.

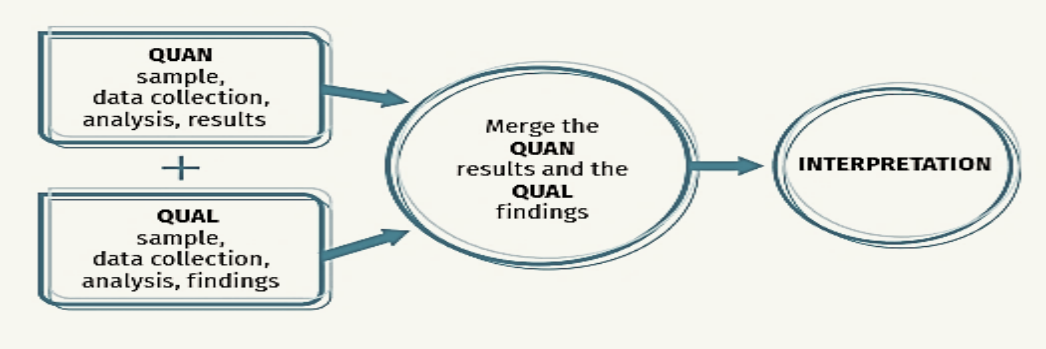
3.3. Research Design

Research design is the conceptual structure that constitutes the plan for the choices made including strategies employed and the process of collection, analysis, and interpretation of data (Marczyk et al., 2005; Creswell, 2007, 2009; Creswell, 2007; cited in Okesina, 2020). Research designs are also types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures (Creswell, 2014).

In the case of this study, since the pragmatic paradigm was employed, the research design was mixed methods design. However, mixed methods designs that are becoming increasingly popular have been identified and explained by different researchers (Creswell and Clark, 2011; Creswell, 2014; Johnson and Christensen, 2017; Creswell and Creswell, 2018). These designs according to the authors are: “the convergent parallel design, the explanatory sequential design, the exploratory sequential design, the concurrent embedded design, the transformative design, and the multiphase design*”*.

Hence, this study specifically employed a **Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods Design**. This design as described by Creswell (2014), is probably the most familiar of the basic and advanced mixed methods strategies. As Figure 7 illustrates, the process begins with an appropriate mixed study design research question and collects the qualitative and

quantitative data at the same time, but the data analysis and presentation of results were done separately. Then, the information obtained from both analyses (quantitative and qualitative) was combined and reported together side-by-side to answer each research question. The interpretation brings both pieces together to describe how the findings from the two different methodologies either support or contradict each other (Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2019).



Source: Clark and Creswell (2015)

Figure 7: Convergent parallel mixed methods design

3.4. Research Method

Regarding the research method—how data are collected and analyzed (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Makombe, 2017; cited in Okesina, 2020)—there are three conventional approaches: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Williams, 2007; Makombe, 2017). However, the choice of method depends on the nature of the problem being studied, the paradigm adopted, the methodology, the researcher's training, and the resources available (Okesina, 2020). Hence, mixed methods were employed for this study. In this approach, the researcher incorporated methods of collecting and analyzing data from both the quantitative and qualitative approaches in a single study (Shannon-Baker, 2016; Williams, 2007;). This approach helps to broaden the scope and depth of information, while also maximizing the validity and reliability of the data and findings (Cohen et al., 2007). The use of qualitative methods provides detailed insights about the subject of inquiry, enriching the study, while the quantitative methods enhance the objectivity and generalizability of the findings (Patton, 2002).

3.5. Source of Data

Both primary and secondary sources were used for this study.

3.5.1. Primary Sources of Data

The primary sources of this study were the academic staff (both local and expatriates), program coordinators, expatriate, and international students of the four selected universities, as well as experts from MoE.

3.5.2. Secondary Sources of Data

The secondary sources of data for this study included universities' strategic plans, national policy documents, and curricula from the four categories of disciplines. These were used to substantiate the data collected from the primary sources in the quantitative and qualitative approaches.

3.6. Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

3.6.1. Population of the Study

The target population of this study was the academic staff of eight Ethiopian Research Universities (ERUs), as designated by the Ministry of Education of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) (MoE, 2020). These universities were selected because, given that curriculum internationalization (CI) is a new global practice, they may be assumed to have more exposure and experience than others in their level of involvement in internationalization. This involvement was measured by factors such as joint research projects, expatriate staff, staff mobility, student exchange, and CI, which were used as criteria for selection (Wondwosen, 2015; Teklu & Ewnetu, 2017; Tesfaye et al., 2019). These universities were: Addis Ababa University (AAU), Haramaya University (HRU), Jimma University (JMU), Hawassa University (HWU), Arba Minch University (AMU), Bahir Dar University (BDU), the University of Gondar (UoG), and Mekelle University (MKU) (MoE, 2020). Their total academic population was 15,710, with a sampling frame of 6,808 (Universities' Quarter Report, 2022).

3.6.2. Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

For the quantitative method of this study, four universities were taken as a sample by using a simple random sampling technique (lottery system). These universities were: Addis Ababa University (AAU), Bahir Dar University (BDU), Hawassa University (HWU), and Jimma University (JMU). In addition, it was also impossible to handle the total population of the four selected universities. This was due to practical reasons such as time and budget. Hence, the academic disciplines of a sampling frame were determined first based on Biglan's (1973) and Becher's (1989) clusters of disciplines cited in Clifford (2009). These disciplines were classified as **hard/pure** (for example, science), **hard/applied** (for example, engineering, medicine, and pharmacy), **soft/applied** (for example, psychology, law, business & economics), and **soft/pure** (for example, history, media & communication, and art & design). This categorization of disciplines is essential for answering the first and second inferential questions of this study.

Then, the sample size was determined by using published tables and a formula for determining sample size" (Israel, 2012, p.2). Based on this, Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula and a table that was constructed using this formula were used for this study. It was used for two reasons: (a) Even though it was old, Bukhari (2020) recommended it because of its ease of reference; (b) Chuan and Penyelidikan (2006) proved that the sample size recommended by Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) calculation was large in comparison with Cohen's (1988) statistical power analysis.

The formula is:

$$S = X^2NP\ (1\text{-}P)/\ d^2\ (N\text{-}1) + X^2P\ (1\text{-}P),$$ where:

S = required sample size

X^2 = the table value of chi-square for one degree of freedom at the desired confidence level

N = population size

P = population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum sample size)

d = degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05)

According to this formula, the determined sample size was:

$S=3.84 \text{ X } 6808 \text{ X } .5\ (1-.5)/\ (.05)^2(6808-1) + 3.84 \text{ X } .5\ (1-.5) =$ **364**

However, Israel (2012) noted that these determined sample sizes reflect the number of responses and not necessarily the number of surveys mailed (this number is often increased to compensate for non-responses). For this reason, the sample size of this study was increased to 450. Furthermore, the sample size was also checked by using different online sample size calculators, like Raosoft.com and the Bukhari Sample Size Calculator (Bukhari, 2020).

Next, to ensure equal representation of samples from each of the four universities and clusters of disciplines, their sample sizes were proportionally determined. Finally, using a systematic simple random sampling technique, respondents from each university and discipline were selected. The sample sizes for each university and discipline category were calculated and are presented as follows:

$n_k=(N_k/ N_T)Xn_T,$ or $n_k= (n_T/N_T) \text{ X } N_k$

Where, n_k=sample size for the k^{th} university.

N_k=population size for the k^{th} university.

N_T=total population size.

n_T=total sample size of the study.

Based on this, table 1 shows the populations and samples drawn from each university and category of discipline.

Table 1: Populations, samples, and sampling technique

S.N.	Universities	Cluster	Population*	Sample	Sampling technique
1	Addis Ababa	Hard pure	273	18	
		Hard applied	481	32	
		Soft applied	446	29	
		Soft pure	467	31	
		Total	1667	110	
2	Jimma	Hard pure	175	12	
		Hard applied	1107	73	Proportional
		Soft applied	298	20	Systematic random
		Soft pure	194	13	sampling
		Total	1774	118	
3	Bahir Dar	Hard pure	327	22	
		Hard applied	829	55	
		Soft applied	355	23	
		Soft pure	245	16	
		Total	1756	116	
4	Hawassa	Hard pure	232	15	
		Hard applied	978	65	
		Soft applied	251	16	
		Soft pure	150	10	
		Total	1611	106	
		Total	**6808**	**450**	

Note. *=Did not include technicians, assistant graduates, study leaves, or sabbatical leaves

Source: The University's third-quarter report (2022).

For the qualitative part of this study, participants were purposefully selected. This approach was chosen because, as noted, 'purposive sampling is often used to access knowledgeable people, i.e., those who have in-depth knowledge of specific issues, possibly due to their professional roles, power, access to networks, expertise, or experience' (Ball, 1990, as cited in Cohen et al., 2007; Patton, 2002; Friday & Leah, 2024). According to the types of purposive sampling techniques described by Friday and Leah (2024), this study employed **criterion sampling**. This technique involves selecting participants who meet specific, predefined criteria essential to the research. In this study, the selected participants were experts from the Ministry of Education, academic program directors, quality associate deans, expatriate academics, and international students who possess knowledge, experience, or roles directly relevant to the study's focus.

Hence, for the interviews, a total of 30 participants—directors of academic programs and public relations and communication, quality associate deans, department heads, and experts from the Ministry of Education—were selected. For the focus group discussions (FGDs), 16 academic expatriates and 24 international students were selected from the four chosen RUs. For the observations, one classroom from each category of disciplines was purposively selected. Similarly, one curriculum from each category of disciplines was purposively chosen. These selections were made to substantiate the survey data.

3.7. Data Collection Instruments

The main instruments used in this mixed-methods research were questionnaires for the quantitative data and individual interviews, FGDs, observations, and document analysis for the qualitative data. These different methods of data collection complement each other, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the data (Cohen et al., 2007; Zohrabi, 2013).

3.7.1. Questionnaire

A questionnaire was adapted from Bell's (2004) items, which indicate academics' positions along the Spectrum of Acceptance of Internationalizing the Curriculum, into 5-point Likert scale items to assess academics' beliefs on the relevance of CI within their disciplines. Similarly, a questionnaire was adapted from two versions of the QIC, developed by the Internationalization of the Curriculum in Action Fellowship. The second version was developed by two of the participants—Green and Whitsed (2013) and Leask (2015). This questionnaire was designed to analyze the existing practice of CI at the first stage of the process—the 'Review and Reflect' stage. Leask (2015) argues that the questionnaire is a useful tool to identify what is already happening across a program of study, as well as in individual courses, subjects, or units, and what actions might be taken to further internationalize a program of study.

In addition, to identify potential blockers and enablers, a survey of 'blockers' and 'enablers' to CI was adapted from the same source to fit the context of the study area. Leask, drawing on the work of Stohl (2007), Clifford (2009), Childress (2010), and Egron-Polak and

Hudson (2010) as cited in Leask (2015), and based on her experience and interactions with a wide range of academic staff, academic developers, and university managers, developed a list of 13 enablers and 17 blockers. Accordingly, the questionnaire was adapted to suit the context of this study before being applied.

Hence, a questionnaire having five parts was used for this study. These parts were: demographic information, academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI, development of graduating students' employability attributes, and potential "Enablers" and "Blockers" to CI, respectively. The questionnaire was annexed at the end of this report (see Appendix I)

3.7.2. Validity and Reliability of the Quantitative Instrument

Validity and reliability are key criteria for judging the quality of research (Mohajan, 2017). Validity means that a measuring instrument accurately assesses the property it is intended to measure (Pallant, 2011). On the other hand, reliability refers to the confidence we can place in the measuring instrument to provide the same numeric value when the measurement is repeated on the same object. However, the reliability of an instrument does not guarantee its validity (Gaur & Gaur, 2009; Obson, 2011).

Regarding the validity of the questionnaire, the questionnaire described in the data collection instrument section was adapted from Bell's (2004) items, the Internationalization of the Curriculum in Action Fellowship, Green and Whitsed (2013), and Leask (2015). Adapting questionnaires is a common practice to better suit research needs (Sousa et al., 2017). Finally, Arsalani et al. (2011) and Moon (2017) argue that researchers must ensure the adapted questionnaire maintains reliability and validity in the new context. Ensuring the reliability and validity of the questionnaire may involve expert panels, face validity testing, and construct validity assessment (Arsalani et al., 2011)."

According to Mohajan (2017), face validity refers to the instrument appearing valid to those who use or view it, often based on intuition. Thus, the face validity of this study's questionnaire was assessed by the advisors. The second important aspect of validity was content validity. Content validity is determined by experts who ensure that the instrument includes all necessary content related to the construct (Cohen et al., 2018). Therefore, the

advisors and three experts in the fields of psychology, curriculum, and educational leadership analyzed and commented on the questions before the questionnaire was administered. The researcher then evaluated and incorporated their feedback during finalization. Based on the review from the advisors and experts, 4 questions were rejected, and 3 were amended. These experts also provided feedback on the language and readability of the questions.

The third aspect of validity was construct validity, one of the most commonly used techniques in the social sciences. Construct validity refers to the extent to which a questionnaire accurately measures the theoretical concept or construct it is designed to assess (Riva et al., 2024). It was evaluated by a panel of experts familiar with the construct (Kane, 2013). Thus, the questionnaire for this study was reviewed by the advisors and experts, and their comments were incorporated before its distribution.

Furthermore, to check the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted by distributing it to 76 academic staff members at Haramaya University, which was not included in the main study. The advantage of this pilot study was that it helped the researcher avoid some of the inevitable challenges of converting the research design into reality (Best and Khan, 1993, as cited in Thu, 2018). A reliability coefficient was calculated for each scale using Cronbach's Alpha to assess internal consistency reliability. Cohen et al. (2018) argue that Cronbach's Alpha is an alternative measure of reliability as internal consistency, often referred to simply as the alpha coefficient of reliability, or just alpha.

To check the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted by distributing it to 76 academics at Haramaya University, which was not included in the main study. A reliability analysis was then carried out for each dimension. Based on this analysis, the academics' belief scale comprised 24 items. Most items appeared to be worth retaining, as their removal would decrease the alpha. However, seven items would increase the alpha to $\alpha = 0.80$, which is acceptable. As such, the removal of these items should be considered. The internal consistency of each subscale of belief was as follows: level one = .74; level two = .80; level three = .71; and level four = .80.

In the same manner as the beliefs variable, the internal consistency of each sub-scale of practice was: .81 for learning outcomes, .80 for content, .87 for teaching and learning activities, .70 for assessment, and .87 for supportive activities. The internal consistency values for the scales of enablers and blockers of CI were .94 and .87, respectively. For the development of graduates' employability attributes in terms of knowledge, attitude, and skill, the values were .81, .86, and .90, respectively. In this regard, Cohen et al. (2018) identified the reliability levels of the alpha coefficient as: '>0.90 (very highly reliable), 0.80–0.90 (highly reliable), 0.70–0.79 (reliable), 0.60–0.69 (marginally/minimally reliable), and <0.60 (unacceptably low reliability)' (p. 774). Based on this categorization, the calculated values for the scales of the questionnaire were judged as reliable and highly reliable.

3.7.3. Interview and FGD Guide

This study employed a semi-structured interview format, also called a guided interview, which consisted of a list of questions that the researcher wanted to explore during each interview (Robson, 2011). Semi-structured interviews are a widely used qualitative research technique that allows for in-depth exploration of specific themes in a conversational style (Adams, 2015). Semi-structured interviews offer flexibility while maintaining focus, enabling researchers to adapt questions and explore unanticipated themes (Mashuri et al., 2022; Barrick, 2020). Overall, semi-structured interviews provide a powerful tool for qualitative researchers seeking robust, in-depth findings (Mashuri et al., 2022).

Hence, the main purpose of using this instrument was to get in-depth insights from the participants about academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI in their respective institutions (Denscombe, 2007) (see Appendix II). The interview guiding questions were also used for leading the FGD.

This method is especially valuable in social sciences and educational research because it allows for interaction among participants, generating a more dynamic exploration of ideas.

3.7.4. Observation

Observation was used in this study because it allowed the investigator to gather first-hand, 'live' data *in situ* from naturally occurring social situations, rather than relying on reported data (Wellington, 2015, p. 247) or second-hand accounts (Creswell, 2012, p. 213). Using observation as a principal research method has the potential to yield more valid and authentic data than mediated or inferential methods (Cohen et al., 2018). Cooper and Schindler (2014) advocate that besides collecting data visually, observation involves listening, reading, smelling, and touching.

Observations are categorized by researcher involvement, structure, and participant awareness. Structured methods follow a set system, while unstructured and semi-structured methods allow flexibility. Participant observation involves engaging with the group, whereas non-participant observation avoids influencing behavior. Observations can be naturalistic (in real settings) or controlled (in structured environments). Overt observation informs participants, potentially influencing their behavior, while covert observation keeps participants unaware, reducing bias but posing ethical challenges (Williamon et al., n.d.; Griffee, 2005; Cohen et al., 2018).

The observations conducted in this study were based on the checklist presented in table 2.

Table 2: Observation checklist

Campus environment	**Area of observation**	
	• **Different co-curricular activities/events**	Description
	-International house events	
	-Volunteer opportunities	
	-International Week	
	-International student orientation	
	-Conferences hosted by clubs and student associations	
	-Festivals	
	-Sports and other cultural activities	
	-Others	
Classroom environment	**Teaching and Learning Activities**	
	-Opportunities for students to consider issues and solve problems from a wide variety of social, economic, political, religious, ethical, and cultural perspectives?	
	-Encourage students from different backgrounds to contribute relevant examples from their home country or community.	
	- Safe, non-threatening learning environment in which students can express their own views while respecting those of other students and staff?	
	-Use team tasks that require students to work with peers from different countries or cultures either face to face or by using technology and/or blended learning.	
	-Provide students with structured learning opportunities for international experiences.	
	-Encourage a broad range of non-dominant disciplinary viewpoints and ways of thinking in the discipline presented, invited, debated, and rewarded.	
	- Intentionally designed activities to encourage, foster, and develop students' global perspectives, understandings, and skills.	
	Assessment	
	-Require students to consider issues from a variety of cultural, international, and/ or global perspectives.	
	-Require students to recognize the influence of their own sociocultural perspectives in the context of their discipline (and professional practice, if relevant).	

Hence, as indicated in the conceptual framework of this study, the actions, words, and relational dimensions of academics regarding CI were observed in both classroom and out-of-classroom situations using a semi-structured, non-participant, overt type of observation. In general, the teaching and learning activities in the classroom were observed across each discipline category for 45-50 minutes. The selection of classrooms for observation was based on the permission of academics who volunteered to be observed.

3.7.5. Document review

Documents are classified as qualitative data, consisting of both public and archival records (Creswell, 2012). Document analysis is a useful research tool to verify evidence obtained from other sources, such as in-depth interviews, FGDs, observations, and questionnaires in this case (Robson, 2011). By triangulating data and drawing upon these multiple sources of evidence, the researcher can corroborate findings across data sets and thus reduce the impact of potential biases (Patton, 2002). Moreover, documents serve as 'windows onto social and organizational realities' (Bryman, 2012, p. 554).

Therefore, documents were beneficial for this study in terms of understanding the objective realities of CI at both national and institutional levels. Specifically, the contents of national policy documents, strategic plans of the four RUs, and curricula of the four academic disciplines were reviewed with respect to CI. The method used for document review in this study begins by establishing review criteria. The criteria for the national policy and institutional strategic plan documents were derived from relevant theories (table 3). The criteria for the review of the curricula were adapted from Leask's (2015) definition of CI (table 4).

Based on the criteria, the essence of the contents of these policies and strategic plans were analyzed in terms of their intentions, motives, and rationales of CI. For the curricula, the integration of international, intercultural, and global elements in the contents, LOs, methods of teaching, assessment methods, and support services were reviewed. This normative understanding is essential for guiding future actions. The information gathered from these documents was then compared with established dimensions and elements of internationalization found in existing literature (Ermyas and Abiot, 2021).The tables containing the criteria for reviewing the documents and the curricula were presented in tables 3 and 4, respectively.

Table 3: Criteria for the review of national policy and institutional strategic plans

Theories	Focuses/intentions	Suggestions from the model. The policy/ curriculum/ should contain/include:	Criterion derived from the theory
Internationalization at Home (IaH)	Emphasizes the importance of developing students' global, international, and intercultural competencies through the formal and informal curriculum	International, intercultural, and global dimensions into the on-campus curriculum and student experience, rather than solely relying on student mobility	• Does the on-campus curriculum contain international, intercultural, and global dimensions? • Does the student experience contain international, intercultural, and global dimensions?
Comprehensive Internationalization	Views internationalization as a strategic, institution-wide process that aligns with the institution's mission and integrates international/global elements across all aspects of the university	• International, intercultural, and global dimensions in the visions and missions	• Does the national HE policy contain international, intercultural, and global dimensions in its visions and missions? • Does the institutional strategic plan contain international, intercultural, and global dimensions in its visions and missions?
Curriculum Internationalization (CI)	• Aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to function effectively in global and multicultural contexts	• Intentionally integrated international, intercultural, and global dimensions into the content, learning outcomes, teaching methods, assessment methods, and supportive services of an academic program or course.	• LOs of the program Does the contents of the program contain international, intercultural, and global dimensions? Are the LOs of the program articulated in relation to: -global competencies? -cross-cultural understanding? -international awareness? Do the teaching methods of the program foster cross-cultural communication/collaboration/perspective-taking/experiential learning opportunities? Does the assessment require students to consider issues from a variety of cultural, international, and/ or global perspectives? Does the institution encourage student participation in globally and locally focused co-curricular activities?
Transformative Learning Theory	• Supports pedagogical approaches that foster intercultural dialogue, perspective-taking, and transformative learning experiences	• Posts that deep, meaningful learning occurs when students critically examine their own cultural assumptions and worldviews, and are challenged to develop new perspectives	• Do the pedagogical approaches encourage students to: critically examine their own cultural assumptions/the different world views/ challenge students to develop new perspectives?
Decolonizing the Curriculum	• Challenges the Eurocentrism and Western dominance embedded in traditional curricula	• Advocates for centering marginalized voices, knowledge systems, and pedagogies from the Global South	• Does the curriculum contain Indigenous content/ knowledge systems/ pedagogies from the Global South?

Source: Adapted from Tesfamariam and Jeilu (2021).

Similarly, the criteria used for the analysis of curricula about CI were displayed in table 4.

Table 4 : Criteria for the analysis of curricula about CI

Components of curriculum	Criteria
A. Learning outcomes	• Clear articulation of learning outcomes from international, intercultural, and/or global perspectives.
B. Contents	• Inclusion of subject matter relating to international, intercultural, and/or global perspectives (e.g. international case studies, examples, practices).
C. Teaching and Learning Activities	• Provide opportunities for students to consider issues and solve problems from a wide variety of social, economic, political, religious, ethical, and cultural perspectives.
D. Methods of assessment	•Require students to consider issues from a variety of cultural, international, and/ or global perspectives.

Source: Adapted from Leask (2015).

3.7.6. Trustworthiness in the Qualitative Part

In qualitative research, some studies are considered better than others based on their validity or trustworthiness, which refers to the plausibility, credibility, and defensibility of the findings (Ahmed, 2024; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Kakar et al., 2023). To ensure the validity of qualitative methods, such as interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), observation, and document analysis, several strategies are employed. These include triangulation, which involves cross-checking information from multiple sources and methods; complementation; the use of multiple data collection methods (questionnaire, interview, observation, and document analysis); and an external audit by experts to assess the study's quality. Additionally, low-inference descriptors, such as verbatim quotes from participants, are used to accurately represent their language, dialect, and personal meanings, allowing readers to better understand participants' thoughts and feelings (Ahmed, 2024).

In addition to these, the data analysis followed rigorous procedures of qualitative data analysis. The thick description provided in this research may enable anyone who wishes to compare and contrast the results with other contexts for transferability. The written raw

data and images can also be checked or used for further research in the future. Moreover, qualitative researchers, as human beings, hold certain opinions and beliefs about the topic, and it is challenging for them to remain neutral or objective (Mehra, 2002, as cited in Abebaw, 2014). Although it is not possible to be completely unbiased and conduct research with an 'open mind', the researcher attempted to minimize the influence of his bias on the study. This was achieved by suspending his own taken-for-granted beliefs and opinions about the topic at every step of the research process.

On the other hand, the researcher's experiences in this study may have also contributed to its trustworthiness. The researcher is an experienced professional in the area of curriculum, having served as a student, instructor, and expert at different levels. Prior to this research, the researcher completed a course titled Advanced Qualitative Research Methods in Education as part of this PhD program. He also took a course titled Educational Policy Analysis and Program Development, from which the topic of this research originated. As a result of these rigorous procedures in qualitative research, the researcher argues that the study is reasonably credible, confirmable, transferable, and dependable.

3.8. Data Collection Procedures

Data collection is an important part of the research. Hence, some basic procedures that were followed for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data were described as follows.

3.8.1. Quantitative Data Collection Procedure

For the questionnaire, the researcher first submitted an official permission letter to the selected universities. Based on the universities' consent, respondents for the questionnaire were selected, and the actual data collection time was arranged in collaboration with the quality associate deans and managing directors of the respective colleges. Subsequently, the researcher contacted the selected respondents in person and provided a brief orientation regarding the purpose of the study, confidentiality assurances, their consent, and necessary instructions. Finally, the questionnaire was distributed to 450 respondents, following the sample size determined for each specific discipline of the sampled universities. Of the 450 distributed questionnaires, 21 were not returned, and 14 were incomplete. Thus, the

response rate was 415, representing 92.2%. This indicates that the research achieved a high response rate compared to the literature in this area. For example, Gay et al. (2012) argue that a response rate above 50% increases confidence in the findings.

Table 5: Response rate by universities and respondents

			Respondents' sample size (n) and response rate (rr)		
S.N.	University	Cluster	n	rr	%
1	Addis Ababa	Hard pure	18	16	88.9
		Hard applied	32	30	93.7
		Soft applied	29	26	89.7
		Soft pure	31	27	87.1
		Total	110	99	90
2	Jimma	Hard pure	12	11	91.7
		Hard applied	73	69	94.5
		Soft applied	20	18	90
		Soft pure	13	12	92.3
		Total	118	110	93.2
3	Bahir Dar	Hard pure	22	20	90.9
		Hard applied	55	51	92.7
		Soft applied	23	20	86.9
		Soft pure	16	15	93.7
		Total	116	106	91.4
4	Hawassa	Hard pure	15	14	93.3
		Hard applied	65	62	95.4
		Soft applied	16	14	87.5
		Soft pure	10	10	100
		Total	106	100	94.3
			450	415	92.2

Source: Researcher's Data, 2022

The high response rate was achieved due to various efforts made by the researcher. For instance, while administering the questionnaire and through follow-up phone calls, the researcher provided clear explanations about the nature and structure of the questionnaire both before and during its completion. The researcher personally visited respondents, moving from office to office and person to person, to distribute and collect the questionnaires. In cases where questionnaires were lost, replacements were provided. Additionally, the researcher enlisted the help of data enumerators and personal acquaintances to contact respondents and remind them to complete the questionnaire.

3.8.2. Qualitative Data Collection Procedure

For the interview and FGDs, at the onset, the participants were purposely selected. Next, the researcher made personal contact with each of the participants and confirmed their permission by telling them the topic and the objective of the research. The time at which the interview and FGDs were conducted was fixed for each of the participants. During the interview and FGDs, some ethical issues were cleared out for the participants. Furthermore, the researcher made clear that participation was voluntary and that it was possible to withdraw at any time and withhold the data before they were public at any time. As much as possible, noises and any other distracters were minimized during the interviews and FGDs to increase the quality of the data. In doing this, an average time of fifty minutes for one interviewee and one hour for one FGD was used. All the interviews and FGDs were recorded using a "smartphone recorder".

In addition, notes were also taken to complement the recorded data. During the interviews and FGDs, English was used.

3.9. Methods of Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data sets were analyzed separately and merged later on in the discussions.

3.9.1. Methods of quantitative data analysis

The appropriate statistical analysis for quantitative data depends on the particular type of research design. However, there are two main types of statistical techniques: descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics are used for the exploratory research design (e.g., identifying the form and nature of what exists). However, if a research study is explanatory (e.g., examining the reasons for, or causes of what exists), inferential statistical methods are used in the analysis (Howitt & Cramer, 2014).

Hence, based on the aforementioned facts and research questions, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data in this study. This means the descriptive main research questions of number one, two, five, and six seek to explore the form and nature of what exists regarding academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI,

development of graduates' employability attributes, and blockers and enablers for CI in ERUs. Therefore, descriptive statistical methods which are the most common way of making a large amount of data comprehensible (the means and the standard deviations) were used (Beins, 2012).

The infrential questions of sub-questions of question number one and two, and main question of question number three and four examined the variations among different groups and relationships between variables, respectively. So, inferential statistical methods were used in these analyses. In other words, inferential statistics were used to examine whether or not differences among groups are statistically significant or to analyze the relations between the variables. Therefore, the chi-square and Cramer's tests were used to test the significance variations and their effect sizes on respondents' demographic variables, respectively. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (r) was used to see the relationship between academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI. Two-way ANOVAs were used to see statistically significant differences in academics' beliefs and practices among disciplines and universities (Gay, et al, 2012; Larson-Hall, 2010). Standard regression was also used to see the relationships between academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI and the development of graduates' employability attributes. Different researchers (Bordens and Abbott, 2011; Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Creswell and Creswell, 2018; Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2019) support the selection of this statistical tool to answer the mentioned research question. They argue that the goal of regressions is to learn about the relationship between several predictor or independent variables (beliefs & practices in this case) and an outcome variable or dependent variable (development of graduates' employability attributes). In other words, Larson-Hall (2010), explained that regression tries to determine how much of the dependent variable (attributes' development in this case) can be explained by variation in the scores on the independent variables (beliefs & practices in this case).

In doing this process of quantitative analysis, four interrelated steps were involved (Creswell, 2012). In the initial phase, data preparation for analysis included determining the method for assigning numeric scores, selecting the types of scores, choosing statistical

software, entering the data into the program, and then cleaning the database for further analysis. For this study, the Likert system with a five-point scale was employed for assigning the scores of the data. Computer-assisted data software; called SPSS (The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 26 was used for the analysis. When the period of data collection was completed, all raw data from the Excel file was imported into the Data Analysis and Statistical Software program (SPSS). After entering all questionnaire data collected from respondents into SPSS, the process of cleaning the data was carried out, which was described by Creswell (2012) as the process of inspecting the data that were outside the accepted range.

In the second step, a descriptive analysis of the data, which was recommended by Creswell and Creswell (2018), was applied, including reporting measures of central tendency and variation. To describe trends in the data for every single variable or question on the instrument, descriptive statistics were applied. Then, the inferential statistics were analyzed to see mean differences or relationships among groups. The next step was to report the results that were found using tables and a discussion of the key findings. For this study, all quantitative results were summarized and displayed in tables. The final stage consists of summarizing the results and comparing them with past literature and theories.

3.9.2. Methods of qualitative data analysis

For the qualitative data of this study, a thematic analysis was chosen to interpret the meanings of collected data (Huberman & Miles, 1998; Creswell, 2012; Saldaña, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The procedure was as follows: first, the data was organized; then, the interviews were transcribed; third, the transcripts were analyzed manually; fourth, the general sense was explored (Matthews & Ross, 2010, p. 373); fifth, coded (Saldaña, 2016, pp. 9-14); sixth, themes were developed (Saldaña, 2016, pp. 9-14); then themes were categorized; and finally, compared them with existing theoretical frameworks (Creswell, 2012, p. 237). The findings were then linked to the results of the quantitative data analysis.

In safeguarding anonymity, abbreviations, letters, and numbers were assigned to individual participants, institutions, and their respective documents. These letters and numbers were

purely nominal and provided no additional information, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity. Accordingly, the letters 'P' for participant, 'I' for interview, 'i' for international, 'S' for student, and 'E' for expatriate; the abbreviations 'FGD' for focus group discussion, 'RU' for research university, 'HP' for hard/pure, 'HA' for hard/applied, 'SA' for soft/applied, 'SP' for soft/pure, and 'CR' for classroom, and the numbers 1 to 415 for participants, open-ended item respondents, and institutions were used in this study.

The whole process of its analysis was carried out manually. Further, during the data analysis process, due attention was given to transcription. Transcribing interviews and FGDs accurately involves a structured process to ensure that all verbal content is captured precisely. To do this, the researcher transcribed exactly what was said, including pauses, stutters, and filler words without paraphrasing or omitting contents unless specified (Bailey, 2008). Hence, such data was transcribed effectively with appropriate citation of sources using the method of verbatim transcription.

3.10. Integration of the Results from the Two Data Sets

Finally, integrating quantitative and qualitative data in mixed methods research is crucial for achieving a comprehensive understanding, but it is often challenging to execute and report (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hands, 2022). As Huntley et al. (2017) argue, successful integration can lead to a more holistic understanding of complex phenomena and inform the development of effective interventions. Creswell and Creswell (2018) identified three ways to merge the two databases: side-by-side comparison, data transformation, and joint display of data. Based on this, a side-by-side comparison approach was employed in this study to integrate the two databases. In doing this, the researcher first reported the quantitative statistical results and then discuss the qualitative findings (themes) that either confirm or disconfirm the statistical results.

The comparisons were presented in the discussion section of this study. The interpretation of the merged databases was also included in this section, comparing the results from both databases and noting whether there was convergence or divergence between the two sources of information.

3.11. Ethical Considerations

Ethics has been defined as a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others (Cavan, 1977, p. 810, cited in Cohen et al, 2018). Privitera and Ahlgrim-Delzell (2019) also elaborate that research ethics identifies the actions that researchers must take to conduct responsible and moral research. Hence, researchers must be aware of how a study affects others in any positive or negative way. For the matter of this, research ethics provide guidelines for responsible and moral research throughout the research process.

For the most part, issues of ethics focus on establishing safeguards that will protect the rights of the participants. The traditional and often dominant issues that emerge when considering research ethics involve obtaining informed consent from participants, protecting them from harm, and ensuring confidentiality. Informed consent means that participants have been given information about procedures and risks involved in the study and have been informed that their participation is voluntary and they have the right to withdraw from the study without repercussions (Matthews & Ross, 2010). Morrison (1996b), as cited in Cohen et al (2018) wrote about educational researchers by emphasizing that they must take into account the effects of the research on participants; they have a responsibility to participants to act in such a way as preserve their dignity as human beings. And, their research must demonstrate rigor and quality in the design, conduct, analysis, and reporting of the research.

In this study, the investigator adhered to relevant ethical considerations, such as explaining the objectives and significance of the study to obtain consent from selected respondents, encouraging voluntary participation, and ensuring confidentiality by using the information provided solely for the purposes of the study. Additionally, questionnaire papers were registered by number rather than by name. The sample universities granted permission for the researcher to conduct the study on their premises. All data were kept confidential and anonymous to protect the identity of respondents and participants. The publication(s) resulting from this study followed the highest ethical standards of academic and scholarly principles. In summary, this research strictly adhered to the highest ethical considerations throughout the design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and publication stages.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The previous chapters provided the background, reviewed relevant literature, and described the study's methodology. In this chapter, the researcher presents the data collected according to the methodology outlined in Chapter 3. The study aimed to explore the beliefs and practices of academics regarding CI and its contribution to the development of graduates' employability attributes in ERUs. Specifically, it examined the beliefs and practices of academics, significant differences among universities and academic disciplines, and the relationships between their beliefs and practices regarding CI. To achieve this, a convergent mixed-method design was employed. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the results and discussion of both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were obtained from the survey questionnaire, while qualitative data were collected from open-ended questions, interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), observations, and document reviews. Hence, these data were presented, analyzed, interpreted, and discussed in this section.

The analysis of the two data sets were systematically structured by using the following analysis framework (table 6).

Table 6: Analysis framework(research ends, research tools, methods of analysis)

No.	Research questions	Research tools	Analyses techniques
1	What are the representations of academics in the selected universities in terms of some demographics (sex, discipline, nationality, experience, academic position, and rank)? Is there a statistically significant difference among these universities in terms of these demographic variables?	Self-reported survey questionnaire.	Frequencies, percentages, Chi-Square Tests, and Cramer's V.
2	What are academics' beliefs about the importance of internationalizing the curriculum in their disciplines in ERUs? Is there a statistically significant difference in academics' beliefs regarding CI among disciplines and ERUs?	Self-reported Survey Questionnaire, Semi-structured Interview, and FGDs.	Means, Standard Deviations, Two-way-ANOVA, and Thematic Analysis.
3	What actions have academic staff in ERUs taken to incorporate an international or intercultural dimension into their academic	Self-reported Survey Questionnaire, Semi-structured	Means, Standard Deviations, One-way-and Two-way-

	programs, learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment tasks in their discipline? Is there a statistically significant difference in academics' practices regarding CI among disciplines and ERUs?	Interview, FGDs, Observations, and Document Review.	ANOVAs, and Thematic Analysis.
4	What is the relationship between academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI as perceived by academics in ERUs?	Self-reported Survey Questionnaire.	Scatter Plots and Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation
5	What contribution do academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI have in the development of graduates' employability attributes in ERUs?	Self-reported Survey Questionnaire, Semi-structured Interviews, and FGDs,	Means, Standard Deviations, Scatter Plots, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation, Standard Regression, and Thematic Analysis.
6	To what extent graduating students are equipped with international, intercultural, and/or global employability attributes?	Self-reported Survey Questionnaire, Semi-structured Interview, FGDs, and Document Review.	Means, Standard Deviations, and Thematic Analysis.
7	What are the potential "blockers and enablers" to the internationalization of the curriculum in ERUs?	Self-reported Survey Questionnaire, Semi-structured Interview, and FGDs.	Means, Standard Deviations, and Thematic Analysis.

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.1. Results from the Quantitative Data

The findings obtained from the analysis of the quantitative data collected through the questionnaire were presented in this part. The findings regarding the demographic information of the respondents, academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI, the development of graduating students' employability attributes, and potential "enablers and blockers" for CI were the sequences of this presentation.

4.1.1. Respondents' Demographic Representations Among Universities

The relative representations of respondents in terms of some demographic characteristics were examined and presented in table 7. These demographic characteristics were: sex,

discipline, nationality, experience, academic position, and rank. This was for answering the first and second research questions.

Table 7: Respondents' representation in terms of demographic characteristics

Variable	Category	University									
		HWU		BDU		AAU		JMU		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Sex	Male	79	19.0	90	21.7	86	20.7	93	22.4	348	83.9
	Female	21	5.1	16	3.9	13	3.1	17	4.1	67	16.1
	Total	100	24.1	106	25.5	99	23.9	110	26.5	415	100.0
Discipline	Hard/Pure	15	3.6	19	4.6	18	4.3	12	2.9	64	15.4
	Hard/Applied	62	14.9	51	12.3	28	6.7	71	17.1	212	51.1
	Soft/Applied	13	3.1	20	4.8	26	6.3	17	4.1	76	18.3
	Soft/Pure	10	2.4	16	3.9	27	6.5	10	2.4	63	15.2
	Total	100	24.1	106	25.5	99	23.9	110	26.5	415	100.0
Nationality	Ethiopian	86	20.7	97	23.4	83	20.0	100	24.1	366	88.2
	Non-Ethiopian	14	3.4	9	2.2	16	3.9	10	2.4	49	11.8
	Total	100	24.1	106	25.5	99	23.9	110	26.5	415	100.0
Experience	International	15	3.6	18	4.3	7	1.7	20	4.8	60	14.5
	Intercultural	63	15.2	73	17.6	64	15.4	72	17.3	272	65.5
	Both	22	5.3	15	3.6	28	6.7	18	4.3	83	20.0
	Total	100	24.1	106	25.5	99	23.9	110	26.5	415	100.0
Academic position	Yes	7	1.7	18	4.3	11	2.7	17	4.1	53	12.8
	No	93	22.4	88	21.2	88	21.2	93	22.4	362	87.2
	Total	100	24.1	106	25.5	99	23.9	110	26.5	415	100.0
Academic Rank	Lecturer	60	14.5	70	16.9	23	5.5	58	14.0	211	50.8
	Assistant professor	28	6.7	24	5.8	35	8.4	28	6.7	115	27.7
	Associate professor	8	1.9	7	1.7	30	7.2	15	3.6	60	14.5
	Full professor	4	1.0	5	1.2	11	2.7	9	2.2	**29**	**7.0**
	Total	100	24.1	106	25.5	99	23.9	110	26.5	**415**	100.0

F = Frequency % = Percent

As illustrated in table 7, respondents from the four public universities participated with minor proportional differences. That means the participants' difference between the highest (Jimma University) and the lowest (Addis Ababa University) is about 11 (2.6%). The differences between the other universities' respondents and the highest respondents' universities were also 4 (1%) for Bahir Dar University and 10 (2.4%) for Hawassa University.

With respect to the sex variable, the proportion of males was almost five times that of female respondents. This observation of differences was revealed across the four universities. In comparing the four universities, the proportion of females was relatively high in Hawassa University and the least in Addis Ababa University by having 21 (5.1%) and 13 (3.1%), respectively. Respondents' representation in respect of their discipline category was also another variable of this study. In line with this, the result of their distribution across the four universities is revealed in table 7.

In terms of the respondents' categories of disciplines, respondents were drawn from the four categories of academic disciplines in the four universities. However, as can be seen from table 4, they were distributed in different proportions. Out of the total respondents of the four universities, 212 (51.1%), which is more than half of the total respondents, were from the hard/applied category of a discipline. Whereas, the least and with almost similar proportion was from the two extremes of the category. These were the hard/pure and soft/pure disciplines, having a proportion of 64 (15.4%) and 63 (15.2%), respectively. Concerning the representation of respondents from the hard/applied category, Jimma University had the highest (17.9%) number of respondents. The higher distributions of respondents in soft/applied and soft/pure disciplines were from Addis Ababa University (34.2% and 42.9%, respectively). In these categories, respondents from Hawassa University and Addis Ababa University were the fewest.

The other demographic variable was the nationality of the respective academic respondents. It can be seen from the data in table 7 that the majority (88.2%) of the academic respondents were of Ethiopian nationality. The non-Ethiopian nationality respondents were only 49 (11.8%). Regarding the distribution of these non-Ethiopian respondents in the four universities, a relative majority of 16 (3.9%) were from Addis Ababa University, followed by Hawassa University, which had a total of 14 (3.4%) respondents. Whereas, the least was Bahir Dar University with 9 (2.2%) non-Ethiopian respondents, followed by Jimma University with 10 (2.4%) respondents.

Concerning respondents' distribution in their experiences, the results were also reported in terms of international, intercultural, and both experiences. Table 7 shows that the majority

(65.5%) of the respondents did not have international experience. The distribution of these respondents among the four universities oscillated from 63 (15.2%) at Hawassa University to 73 (17.6%) at Bahir Dar University. Addis Ababa University was found to have the fewest (1.7%) respondents with international experience. However, it was found to be the highest university in having respondents with both international and intercultural experiences (6.7%), followed by Hawassa University (5.3%).

Regarding the respondents' academic position in their respective universities, the result was presented in table 7. Table 7 depicts that the majority (more than 80%) of the total respondents had no academic positions. They were also distributed evenly throughout the four universities with a rate of 21.2% to 22.4%. In line with the respondents who had academic positions, the majority (4.3%) were from Bahir Dar University followed by Jimma University (4.1%). The last, but not least, demographic variable of this study was the academic rank of the respondents.

It can be observed from table 7 that half (50.8%) of the total respondents had an academic rank of lecturer. Besides this, as moving from the lecturer to the full professor, the respondents' distribution was a decreasing rate except that of Addis Ababa University. Addis Ababa University was exceptional in that the assistant professor rank respondents (8.4%) had a greater distribution than that of the lecturer rank (5.5%). In addition to this, Addis Ababa University had higher frequency counts for the highest two academic ranks (associate professor and full professor) than the other three research universities, followed by Jimma University.

4.1.2. Academics' Beliefs Regarding CI in ERUs

Academics' beliefs regarding IoC are the second basic question of this study. In line with this, the quantitative data were collected using Likert scale items, which were categorized into four levels as mentioned in Chapter 3. In doing this, the evaluation criteria of a 5-point Likert scale (table 8) was also used.

Table 8: Table 8: The evaluation criteria of Likert scale (5-point) questions

Score Interval (Mean)	Evaluation Criteria
1.00 - 1.79	Almost never/Strongly disagree/ Very low level
1.80 - 2.59	Not often/Disagree/Low level
2.60 - 3.39	Sometimes/Undecided/Medium level
3.40 - 4.19	Often/Agree/High level
4.20 - 5.00	Almost always/Strongly agree/Very high level

Source: (Tekin, 2000, as cited in Çelik and Oral, 2016; GENÇ et al., 2017, as cited in Genc, 2021)

Based on this, the results of the analysis of the respondents' beliefs at each of the four levels of belief were presented in table 9 through 12. Level one of academics' beliefs contains a major belief scale, which is stated as *internationalization would have a negative impact*. This also includes subscales of beliefs (see table 9).

Table 9: Table 9: Means and Standard Deviations of respondents (n= 415)

Level1:Internationalization would have a negative impact	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Belief Level 1 Subscale1	415	1	5	3.47	1.25
Belief Level 1 Subscale2	415	1	5	3.62	1.31
Belief Level 1 Subscale3	415	1	5	2.72	1.25
Belief Level 1 Subscale4	415	1	5	3.32	1.24
Belief Level 1 Subscale5	415	1	5	2.66	1.07
Belief Level 1 Subscale6	415	1	5	2.52	1.34
Belief Level 1 Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	3.05	.73
Valid N (listwise)	415				

As can be seen from table 9, the majority of the mean scores of the sub-scale items and the major scale were less than the upper limit of the undecided level of the interval scale (3.39). Hence, the majority of the respondents were not sure whether or not *internationalization would have a negative impact.*

In the same manner, the result obtained regarding academics' beliefs in level two is presented in table 10.

Table 10: Mean and Standard Deviations of respondents (n= 415)

Level 2: Internationalization is not appropriate	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Belief Level 2 Subscale 1	415	1	5	3.56	1.30
Belief Level 2 Subscale2	415	1	5	3.31	1.34
Belief Level 2 Subscale3	415	1	5	2.49	1.16
Belief Level 2 Subscale4	415	1	5	2.83	1.26
Belief Level 2 Subscale5	415	1	5	2.45	1.19
Belief Level 2 Subscale6	415	1	5	2.98	1.24
Belief Level 2 Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	2.94	.65
Valid N (listwise)	415				

As shown in table 10, almost all sub-scales except one sub-scale and the major scale mean scores were less than the lower limit of "somewhat agree" (*M*=3.40, *SD*= .65). That means the majority of the respondents have not decided *whether or not internationalization is not appropriate*.

The result acquired regarding academics' beliefs in level three is also shown in table 11.

Table 11: Mean and Standard Deviations of respondents (n= 415)

Level 3: Internationalization is possible	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Belief Level 3 Subscale1	415	1	5	3.79	.96
Belief Level 3 Subscale2	415	1	5	3.91	.93
Belief Level 3 Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	3.85	.77
Valid N (listwise)	415				

It was seen from table 11 that the mean scores of the respondents for all sub-scales and the major scale were evaluated in the range of 3.40 and 4.19. In other words, the majority of the respondents somewhat agreed with the level of belief that *internationalization is possible* from the perspective of their respective discipline.

Similarly, the result of academics' beliefs in level four is shown in table 12.

Table 12: Mean and Standard Deviations of respondents (n= 415)

Level 4: Internationalization is integral	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Belief Level 4 Subscale1	415	1	5	3.69	1.05
Belief Level 4 Subscale 2	415	1	5	3.84	1.02
Belief Level 4 Subscale3	415	1	5	3.92	.98
Belief Level 4 Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	3.82	.74
Valid N (listwise)	415				

Table 12 disclosed that the mean scores of all the sub-scales and the major scale of academics' belief of level four were found to be within the scale range of 3.40 and 4.19, which is categorized under the level of 'somewhat agree'. That means they believe that to some extent internationalization is an integral part of their teaching and learning activities.

4.1.3. Mean Differences of Academics' Beliefs

In this study, the second research question was included to identify whether or not significant differences exist among different groups concerning academics' beliefs regarding CI. In this regard, the mean differences among the four disciplines and four universities were checked using a two-way Analysis of Variance (two-way ANOVA). However, before running the ANOVA, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested using Levine's test. The test result is presented in table 13.

Table 13: Levene's homogeneity test of variances among disciplines and universities (n = 415)

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a,b]					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Belief mean score	Based on Mean	1.97	15	399	.02
	Based on Median	1.59	15	399	.07
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	1.59	15	243.91	.08
	Based on trimmed mean	1.83	15	399	.03

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.
a. Dependent variable: Belief mean score

b. Design: Intercept + university + discipline + university * discipline

As it can be seen from table 13, the homogeneity of variances for the groups of the independent variables (disciplines & universities) based on the dependent variable (practice) were not equal, F (15, 399) = 1.97, p =.02. In this case, the assumption of homogeneity of variances for running an ANOVA seemed to be violated. However, the variance ratio (VR) of the groups was 0.60, which is less than "the established rule of thumb for considering a potential threat to *F*-test robustness" (Musselwhite & Wesolowski, 2018, p. 5; Blanca et al., 2018, p. 937). In addition, "the largest sample standard deviation (.692) of the groups is no more than twice the smallest sample standard deviation (.49)" (Kiernan, 2014, p. 133). Hence, a two-way ANOVA was calculated, and the result was presented in table 14.

In computing ANOVA, both descriptive and inferential statistics were yielded. Hence, table 14 provides some very useful descriptive statistics, including the mean, standard deviation, and 95% confidence intervals for the dependent variable (belief) for each separate group, as well as when all groups are combined (total). These groups were the four categories of disciplines and the four universities.

Table 14: Descriptive statistics of academics' beliefs regarding IoC

Descriptive Statistics				
Dependent Variable:	Belief mean score			
University	Discipline	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
HwU	Har/Pure	3.20	.51	15
	Hard/Applied	3.34	.40	62
	Soft/Applied	3.10	.46	13
	Soft/Pure	3.14	.85	10
	Total	3.26	.49	100
BdU	Har/Pure	3.21	.49	19
	Hard/Applied	3.24	.29	51
	Soft/Applied	3.21	.46	20
	Soft/Pure	3.28	.54	16
	Total	3.23	.40	106
AaU	Har/Pure	3.19	.40	18
	Hard/Applied	3.19	.32	28
	Soft/Applied	3.35	.43	26
	Soft/Pure	3.29	.21	27
	Total	3.26	.35	99
JmU	Har/Pure	3.32	.61	12
	Hard/Applied	3.22	.44	71
	Soft/Applied	3.10	.54	17
	Soft/Pure	3.14	.55	10
	Total	3.21	.48	110
Total	Har/Pure	3.22	.49	64
	Hard/Applied	3.25	.38	212
	Soft/Applied	3.22	.47	76
	Soft/Pure	3.24	.49	63
	Total	3.24	.43	415

As was seen in table 14, the mean values of each of these groups revealed that there was a similarity in responses among the four categories of disciplines and the four groups of universities. In line with this, the result of the inferential statistics, which is a two-way ANOVA, is also presented in table 15.

Table 15: Two-way ANOVA for groups of disciplines and universities (n = 415)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: Beliefs mean score					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	2.07[a]	15	.14	.73	.76
Intercept	3058.04	1	3058.04	16130.45	.00
University	.22	3	.07	.38	.77
Discipline	.16	3	.05	.29	.84
University * Discipline	1.70	9	.19	.99	.44
Error	75.64	399	.19		
Total	4434.14	415			
Corrected Total	77.71	414			

a. R Squared = .027 (Adjusted R Squared = -.010)

Table 15 shows that the computed two-way ANOVA result revealed no significant main effect for university and discipline on academics' beliefs regarding IoC, F (3, 399) =.29, ρ =.*836;* and F (3, 399) =.38, ρ =.768, respectively. A similar result was also observed with regard to the combined effect of university and discipline, F (9, 399) =.99, ρ =.442.

4.1.4. Academics' Practices Regarding CI in ERUs

To assess academic staff's practices regarding CI, their attempts to incorporate international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the learning outcomes, methods of teaching, assessment tasks, and supportive services of their discipline were asked. The subsequent results are presented herewith. Based on this, the responses of the survey respondents regarding the articulations of international and/or intercultural elements in the learning outcomes in their respective courses were analyzed and presented in table 16.

Table 16: The means and standard deviations of respondents for internationalizing learning outcomes (n = 415)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Outcome sub-scale 1	415	1	5	2.87	1.17
Outcome sub-scale 2	415	1	5	2.98	1.18
Outcome sub-scale 3	415	1	5	3.29	.93
Outcome sub-scale 4	415	1	5	3.16	1.00
Outcome Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	3.07	.80
Valid N (listwise)	415				

As shown in table 16, all the mean scores of the sub-scales and the major scale score (*M* = 3.07, *SD* =.80) revealed that the majority of the respondents were not sure about the articulation of the international, intercultural, and/or global elements to be achieved as learning outcomes in their respective courses.

In the same manner, respondents were asked whether or not the international and/or intercultural dimensions were included in the contents of their respective courses. The subsequent result was summarized in table 17.

Table 17: The means and standard deviations of respondents for internationalizing contents (n = 415)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Content Sub-scale 1	415	1	5	3.71	.99
Content Sub-scale 2	415	1	5	3.56	1.06
Content Sub-scale 3	415	1	5	3.31	1.05
Content Sub-scale 4	415	1	5	3.66	1.05
Content Sub-scale 5	415	1	5	3.46	1.16
Content Sub-scale 6	415	1	5	3.77	2.61
Content Sub-scale 7	415	1	5	3.13	1.12
Content Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	3.51	.73
Valid N (listwise)	415				

Table 17 shows that the majority of the responses to the mean scores for the sub-scales and major scale (*M* = 3.51, *SD* =.73) revealed that the majority of the respondents responded that the international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions were moderately integrated

into the contents of their respective courses. Regarding teaching and learning activities, respondents' responses were summarized in table 18.

Table 18: The means and standard deviations of respondents for internationalizing teaching and learning activities (n = 415)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teaching and learning sub-scale 1	415	1	5	2.94	1.11
Teaching and learning sub-scale 2	415	1	5	2.87	1.15
Teaching and learning sub-scale 3	415	1	5	2.57	1.15
Teaching and learning sub-scale 4	415	1	5	2.95	1.15
Teaching and learning sub-scale 5	415	1	5	2.81	1.16
Teaching-learning sub-scale 6	415	1	5	2.72	1.19
Teaching-learning sub-scale 7	415	1	5	2.74	1.14
Teaching-learning sub-scale 8	415	1	5	2.93	2.29
Teaching & learning Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	2.82	.82
Valid N (listwise)	415				

The sub-scales mean scores and major scale mean score shown in table 18 indicated that the majority of the respondents (M = 2.82, SD = .82) could not decide whether or not they had integrated the international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into their teaching strategies. Likewise, the responses in line with the assessment were also summarized in table 19.

Table 19: The means and standard deviations of respondents for internationalizing assessment strategies (n = 415)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Assessment sub-scale 1	415	1	5	2.86	1.19
Assessment sub-scale 2	415	1	5	2.69	1.12
Assessment sub-scale 3	415	1	5	2.80	1.15
Assessment sub-scale 4	415	1	5	2.71	1.10
Assessment Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	2.76	.87
Valid N (listwise)	415				

From table 19, all the subscale mean scores and major scale mean scores of the items revealed that, like the learning outcomes and teaching and learning activities, the majority

(*M* = 2.76, *SD* =.87) of the respondents could not decide the extent to which the international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions were integrated into their assessment strategies in their respective courses. To the supportive services rendered in the selected universities, the responses were summarized in table 20.

Table 20: The means and standard deviations of respondents for internationalizing supportive services (n = 415)

	N	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Supportive services sub-scale 1	415	1	5	2.75	1.10
Supportive services sub-scale 2	415	1	5	2.83	1.19
Supportive services sub-scale 3	415	1	5	2.79	1.14
Supportive services sub-scale 4	415	1	5	2.37	1.25
Supportive services sub-scale 5	415	1	5	2.51	1.06
Supportive services sub-scale 6	415	1	5	2.16	1.12
Supportive services sub-scale 7	415	1	5	2.43	1.07
Supportive Services Major Scale	415	1	5	2.55	.79
Valid N (listwise)	415				

As can be seen from table 20, the mean scores for the sub-scales and major scale of the supportive service dimension disclosed that the majority of respondents (*M* = 2.55, *SD* =.79) responded that the international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions were rarely integrated into different aspects of the campus life of students.

In summing up the aforementioned results for each dimension of curriculum, the practices of internationalizing curricula were revealed in table 21.

Table 21: The means and standard deviations of respondents regarding the five major scales for IoC (n = 415)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Outcome Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	3.07	.80
Content Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	3.51	.73
Teaching & learning Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	2.82	.82
Assessment Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	2.76	.87
Supportive Services Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	2.55	.79
Mean Score of Major Scales	415	1	5	2.94	.61
Valid N (listwise)	415				

From table 21, it can be seen that the practices of integrating international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the learning outcomes, contents, teaching and learning activities, assessment activities, and supportive activities were found at the middle level of the measurements. That means according to the mean scores of the major scales of each dimension of the formal curriculum, except for the content dimension of the curriculum (*M* = 3.51, *SD* = .73), the rest four dimensions were evaluated at the level of medium/moderate. Furthermore, the mean score of the major scales (*M* = 2.94, *SD* = .61) of the five dimensions of the curriculum also confirms this result.

4.1.5. Mean Differences of Practices Regarding CI Among Disciplines and Institutions

The other question that required a statistical test was whether or not there was a significant statistical difference regarding the practices of IoC among disciplines and institutions. For this purpose, one-way ANOVAs were computed successively for the groups of disciplines and universities. As anticipated, before running ANOVA, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested using Levine's test. The test result was obtainable in table 22**.**

Table 22: Levene's homogeneity test of variances for the two independent categorical variables (n = 415)

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a,b]					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Practice mean score	Based on Mean	5.89	15	399	.00
	Based on Median	3.84	15	399	.00
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	3.84	15	313.635	.00
	Based on trimmed mean	5.64	15	399	.00

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.
a. Dependent variable: Practice mean score
b. Design: Intercept + University + Discipline + University * Discipline

As it can be seen from table 22, the homogeneity of variances for the groups of the independent variables (disciplines & universities) based on the dependent variable

(practice) were not equal, F (15, 399) = 0.00, $p < .05$. In this case, the assumption of homogeneity of variances for running an ANOVA seemed to be violated. However, the variance ratio (VR) of the groups was 0.56, which is less than "the established rule of thumb for considering a potential threat to *F*-test robustness" (Musselwhite & Wesolowski, 2018, p. 5; Blanca et al., 2018, p. 937). In addition, "the largest sample standard deviation (.692) of the groups is no more than twice the smallest sample standard deviation (.69)" (Kiernan, 2014, p. 133). Hence, a two-way ANOVA was calculated, and the result was presented in table 23.

Table 23: Descriptive statistics of academics' practices regarding CI (n=415)

Descriptive Statistics				
Dependent Variable:	Practice mean score			
University	Discipline	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
HwU	Har/Pure	3.12	.68	15
	Hard/Applied	2.81	.48	62
	Soft/Applied	2.95	.54	13
	Soft/Pure	3.18	1.09	10
	Total	2.91	.61	100
BdU	Hard/Pure	3.37	.75	19
	Hard/Applied	2.69	.33	51
	Soft/Applied	3.02	.81	20
	Soft/Pure	3.25	.80	16
	Total	2.96	.66	106
AaU	Har/Pure	3.14	.61	18
	Hard/Applied	2.95	.57	28
	Soft/Applied	2.85	.46	26
	Soft/Pure	2.68	.23	27
	Total	2.89	.49	99
JmU	Har/Pure	2.90	.35	12
	Hard/Applied	2.95	.61	71
	Soft/Applied	3.23	.79	17
	Soft/Pure	3.23	.63	10
	Total	3.01	.63	110
Total	Har/Pure	3.16	.64	64
	Hard/Applied	2.85	.52	212
	Soft/Applied	2.99	.66	76
	Soft/Pure	2.99	.69	63
	Total	2.94	.60	415

As described in table 23, the mean values and the standard deviations of some discipline categories in some universities indicate that there were relative variations among the

groups. Based on this result, the mean value of the responses from the hard/pure discipline of BDU was the highest (M = 3.37) of the others. Whereas, the mean value of responses from the soft/pure discipline of AAU was the least (M = 2.68) in the groups. Concerning the standard deviations of the groups, the soft/pure discipline category of HWU has the highest value (SD =1.09) of all groups. But the soft/pure (SD =.23), hard/applied (SD =.33), and hard/pure (SD =.35) groups of disciplines from AAU, BDU, and JMU, respectively, had the lowest values of a standard deviation.

However, these mean differences among the groups need to be further tested by using a two-way ANOVA to decide whether or not these differences were statistically significant. Hence, the result of the analysis is described in table 24.

Table 24:Two-way ANOVA for groups of disciplines and universities (n = 415)

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects						
Dependent Variable: Practice mean score						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	15.53[a]	15	1.04	3.06	.00	.10
Intercept	2691.55	1	2691.55	7964.34	.00	.95
University	1.71	3	.57	1.68	.17	.01
Discipline	5.20	3	1.73	5.12	.00	.04
University* Discipline	8.08	9	.90	2.66	.01	.06
Error	134.84	399	.34			
Total	3746.49	415				
Corrected Total	150.37	414				
a. R Squared = .103 (Adjusted R Squared = .070)						

The ANOVA result as shown in table 24 depicts no significant main effect for the university on academics practices regarding IoC, F (3, 399) = 1.68, ρ =.170, partial η^2 =.01(small); a significant main effect for discipline, F (3, 399) = 5.12, ρ = .002, partial η^2 =.04 (small); and a significant interaction between university and discipline, F (9, 399) = 2.66, ρ = .005, partial η^2 = .06 (medium). To describe the combined effect of university and discipline One- way ANOVA for each group of one factor was used. This makes sense to look at the differences between the universities by discipline as indicated in table 25.

Table 25:One-way ANOVA for the four groups of disciplines

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects						
Dependent Variable: Practice mean score						
Discipline	Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Har/Pure	Corrected Model	1.69[a]	3	.56	1.40	.25
	Intercept	608.70	1	608.70	1514.90	.00
	university	1.69	3	.56	1.40	.25
	Error	24.11	60	.40		
	Total	665.05	64			
	Corrected Total	25.80	63			
Hard/Applied	Corrected Model	2.39[b]	3	.80	3.04	.03
	Intercept	1518.51	1	1518.51	5802.94	.00
	university	2.39	3	.80	3.04	.03
	Error	54.43	208	.26		
	Total	1772.90	212			
	Corrected Total	56.81	211			
Soft/Applied	Corrected Model	1.54[c]	3	.51	1.19	.32
	Intercept	647.69	1	647.69	1497.25	.00
	university	1.54	3	.51	1.19	.32
	Error	31.15	72	.43		
	Total	715.08	76			
	Corrected Total	32.68	75			
Soft/Pure	Corrected Model	4.50[d]	3	1.50	3.52	.02
	Intercept	508.08	1	508.08	1191.52	.00
	university	4.50	3	1.50	3.52	.02
	Error	25.16	59	.43		
	Total	593.46	63			
	Corrected Total	29.66	62			
a. R Squared = .066 (Adjusted R Squared = .019)						
b. R Squared = .042 (Adjusted R Squared = .028)						
c. R Squared = .047 (Adjusted R Squared = .007)						
d. R Squared = .152 (Adjusted R Squared = .109)						

As shown in table 25, there was a difference between the mean of academics' practices regarding CI in the four universities for hard/applied discipline, F (3, 208) = 3.04, $\rho < .05$; and soft/pure discipline, F (3, 59) = 3.52, $\rho < .05$. But not for hard/pure, F (3, 60) = 1.40, $\rho = .25$; and soft/applied discipline, F (3, 72) = 1.19, $\rho = .32$. Hence, a post hoc test for hard/applied and soft/pure disciplines was done as depicted in table 26.

Table 26:Post hoc test for hard/applied and soft/pure disciplines

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Practice mean score

Tukey HSD

Discipline	(I) university	(J) university	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Hard/Applied	HwU	BdU	.12	.10	.59	-.13	.37
		AaU	-.14	.12	.61	-.44	.16
		JmU	-.14	.09	.42	-.37	.09
	BdU	HwU	-.12	.10	.59	-.37	.13
		AaU	-.26	.12	.13	-.58	.05
		JmU	-.26*	.09	.03	-.50	-.02
	AaU	HwU	.14	.12	.61	-.16	.44
		BdU	.26	.12	.13	-.05	.58
		JmU	.00	.11	1.00	-.29	.30
	JmU	HwU	.14	.09	.42	-.09	.37
		BdU	.26*	.09	.03	.02	.50
		AaU	-.00	.11	1.00	-.30	.29
Soft/Pure	HwU	BdU	-.07	.26	.99	-.76	.63
		AaU	.50	.24	.18	-.14	1.14
		JmU	-.05	.29	1.00	-.82	.73
	BdU	HwU	.07	.26	.99	-.63	.76
		AaU	.56*	.21	.04	.02	1.11
		JmU	.02	.26	1.00	-.68	.72
	AaU	HwU	-.50	.24	.18	-1.14	.14
		BdU	-.56*	.21	.04	-1.11	-.02
		JmU	-.54	.24	.12	-1.20	.10
	JmU	HwU	.05	.29	1.00	-.73	.82
		BdU	-.02	.26	1.00	-.72	.68
		AaU	.54	.24	.12	-.10	1.18

Based on observed means.
The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .426.

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 26 revealed that the interaction effect of hard/applied disciplines of JMU and BDU was significant ($\rho < .05$) on academics' practices regarding CI, in which the interaction mean value of JMU was greater than that of BDU by .26. Besides, the interaction effect of

soft/pure disciplines of AAU and BDU was also significant ($\rho < .05$), where the interaction mean value of BDU was greater than that of AAU by .56.

4.1.6. Relationship Between Academics' Beliefs and Practices Regarding CI

The fifth research question of this study was about the relationship between academics' beliefs and their practices regarding CI as perceived by the respondents in ERUs. To examine this, a Pearson's product-moment correlation was conducted. However, before computing a Pearson correlation, a visual inspection using scatterplots was conducted, as displayed in figure 8.

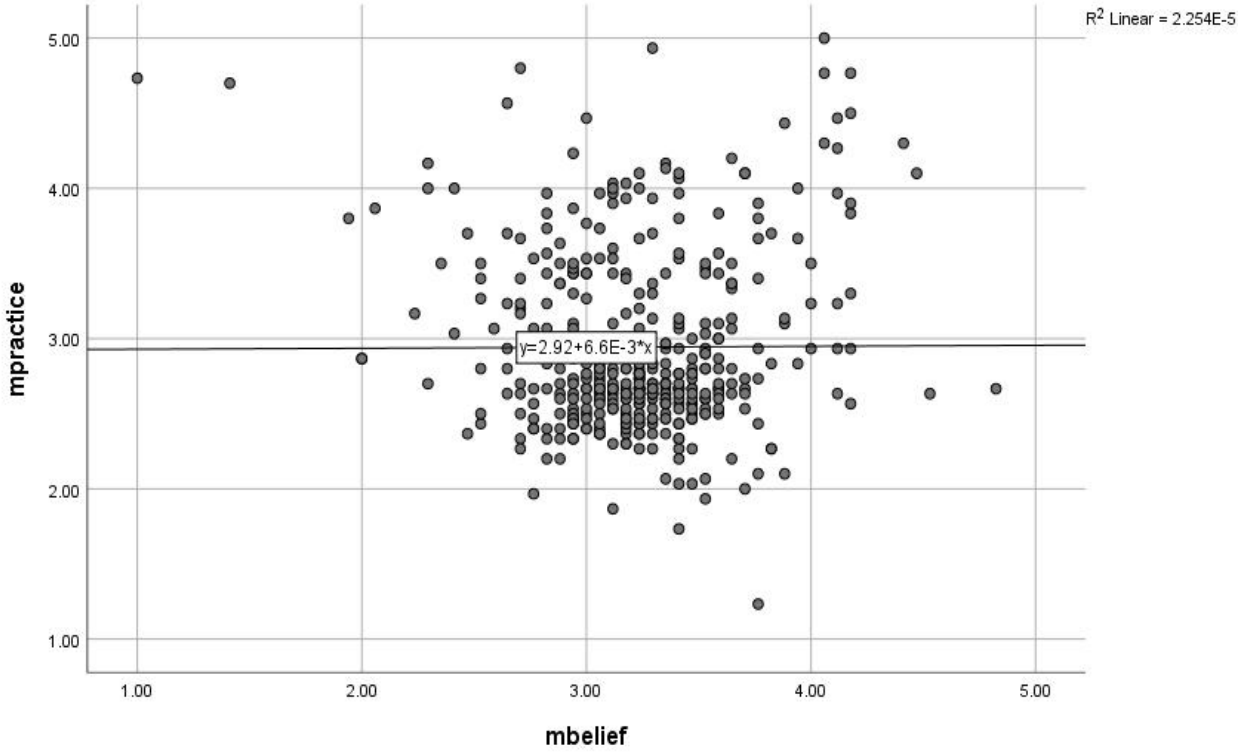


Figure 8: A scatterplot for the correlation between academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI.

As shown in figure 8, the scatterplot for the correlation between academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI seemed to indicate that the two variables were not linked at all. Since the visual inspection alone was not sufficient to determine whether or not there is an association between these two variables, a Pearson correlation was conducted. The result is shown in table 27.

Table 27:Result of correlation between academics beliefs and practices regarding CI (n □ 415)

		Belief mean score	Practice mean score
Belief mean score	Pearson Correlation	1	.01
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.92
	N	415	415
Practice mean score	Pearson Correlation	.01	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.92	
	N	415	415

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 27 reports the Pearson product-moment correlation (r) results of the relationship between the academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI. According to Schober et al.'s (2018, p. 1765) suggestion, for the absolute value of *r* (0.00-0.10 = negligible, 0.10-0.39 = weak, 0.40-0.69 = moderate, 0.70-0.89 = strong, 0.90-1.00 = very strong correlations). In this case, the relationship between academics' beliefs and their practices was negligible, *r* (415) =.01, *r* > 0.05. This finding indicated that academics' beliefs did not explain the variability of their practices in a linear manner regarding CI in ERUs. A statistically insignificant value of a correlation at α =.05 was indicative of a lack of actual relationship rather than due to chance. The effect size of the correlation (R^2 =.0001) also indicated that about .01% of the variability of academics' practices was attributed linearly to the variability of their beliefs.

4.1.7. The Contribution of Academics' Beliefs and Practices Regarding CI on the Development of Graduates' Employability Attributes in ERUs

To identify the effect or contribution of academics' beliefs and their practices regarding CI on the development of graduates' employability attributes, multiple standard regression was used. This type of regression was used because it answers: (a) What is the nature and size of the relationship between the response variable and the set of explanatory variables? (b) How much of the relationship is uniquely contributed by each explanatory variable? (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). With this, the different regression outputs—the descriptive

statistics, correlation matrix, model summary, coefficient table, residual statistics, and regression assumptions—were exhibited below consecutively. However, before executing regression analysis, its assumptions were checked in the following manner.

Examining Regression Assumptions

Concerning the assumptions of regression, Larson-Hall (2010, p. 183) stated that "assumptions cannot be tested until the model has been decided on because in many cases the variables that we are testing results from the model". Based on this, the last column of the coefficients table (table 44) provides information about multicollinearity. The VIF column shows the variance inflation factor (tolerance, the column before it, is just 1/VIF). According to Heiberger and Holland (2004, p. 243), "VIF values of over 5 are evidence of collinearity, which would be evidence that the variables are too highly intercorrelated and may harm the model." However, the VIF for this data set was 1, which was under 5. Hence, there was no problem with the model.

In addition, in a standard regression, there were columns in the coefficients output, notably the columns under the "Correlations" section (table 47). These columns contain the partial and part correlations. The column labeled "part" gives the squared semipartial correlations (sr^2) for each term, and these should be reported as a way of comparing the importance of each term in the model. Therefore, as can be seen from table 39, academics' practices would be the most important factor by far (with an sr^2 of .56).

In examining the assumption of normality, the distribution of the residuals and the presence of outliers need to be checked. The distribution of the residuals was checked using a P-P plot of the standardized residuals. This plot is shown in figure 9.

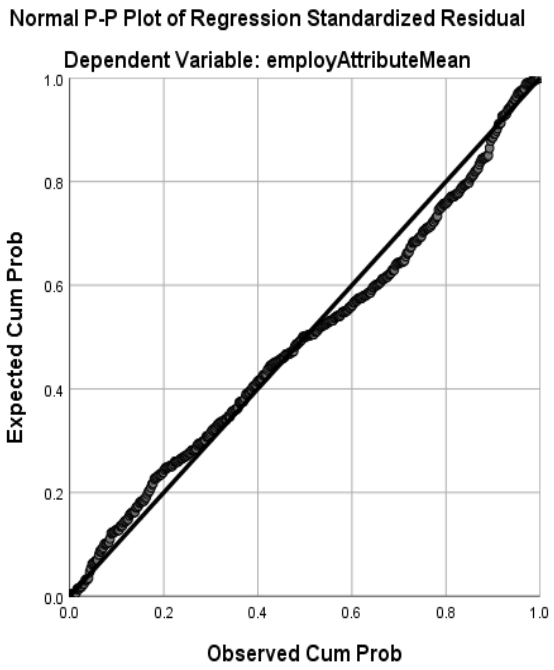


Figure 9: P-P plot for diagnosing normal distribution of data

Figure 9, showed that even though the points should follow a linear distribution, the plot detected some distinct curvature of points in its distribution. However, it did not appear too extreme to be evidence for the non-normality of the data.

Concerning the outliers, one way of checking this was to look at the row in the residuals statistics output (table 43) that was labeled standard residual. In line with this, Larson-Hall (2010, p. 196) argued that “no points should be above 3.0 or below -3.0." Based on this, table 40 showed that there was nothing below -2.87 and nothing above 3.97. Consequently, in this test, signs of outliers were found but not significant. The other way of checking outliers was by looking at the residual statistics output (table 28) at the row for the cook’s distance. A value over 1.0 would be cause for concern (Ibid.), but the largest value in this data set is .17.

Table 28:Regression Output: Residual statistics

Residuals Statistics[a]					
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	2.15	4.45	3.17	.37	415
Std. Predicted Value	-3.00	3.47	.00	1.00	415
Standard Error of Predicted Value	.03	.16	.04	.02	415
Adjusted Predicted Value	2.09	4.42	3.17	.37	415
Residual	-1.58	2.19	.00	.55	415
Std. Residual	-2.87	3.97	.00	1.00	415
Stud. Residual	-2.92	4.02	.00	1.00	415
Deleted Residual	-1.64	2.24	.00	.56	415
Stud. Deleted Residual	-2.95	4.10	.00	1.01	415
Mahal. Distance	.02	35.70	1.99	3.23	415
Cook's Distance	.00	.17	.00	.01	415
Centered Leverage Value	.00	.09	.01	.01	415

a. Dependent Variable: Graduates' employability attributes mean score

The other assumption was about the homogeneity of variances. This was checked by examining the scatterplot between the studentized residuals (what SPSS calls *SRESID) and the predicted value of the standardized residuals (*ZPRED). The result is presented in figure 10.

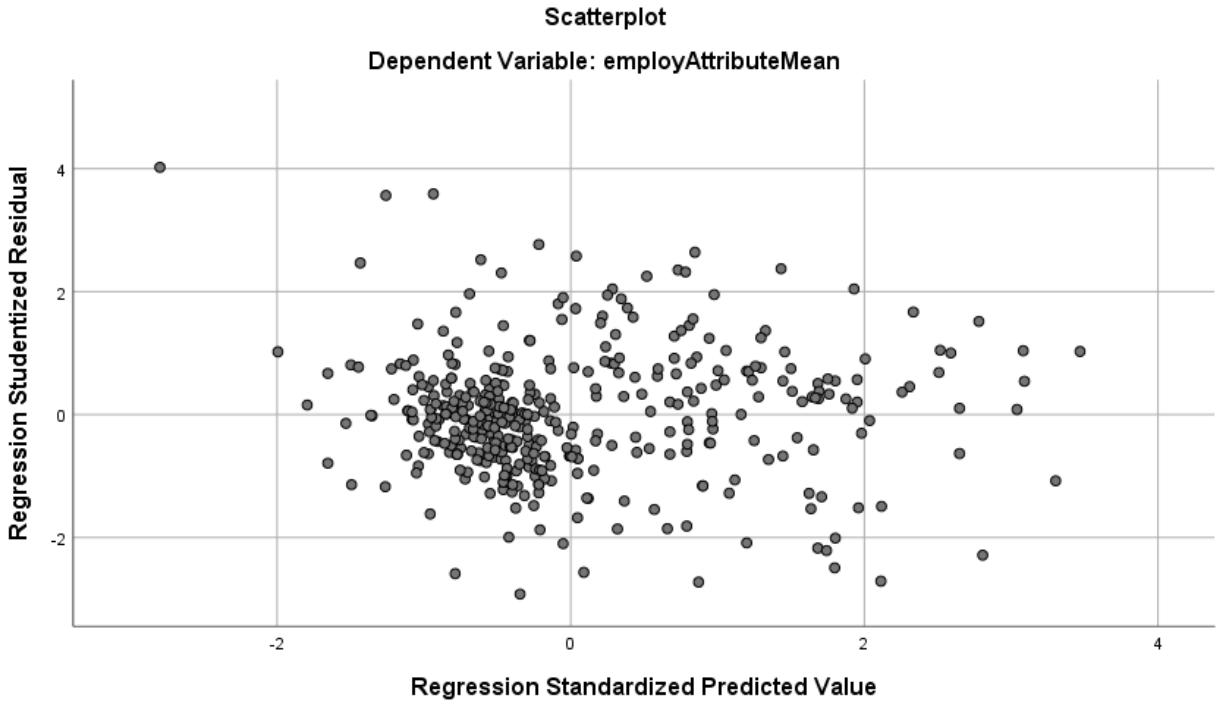


Figure 10: A plot of studentized residuals crossed with fitted values.

As was seen in figure 10, the cloud of data was a little bit concentrated on the right lower center side of the graph instead of being scattered randomly. This indicated that there was a minor violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variances.

The first box in the regression output is the descriptive statistics, which are presented in table 29.

Table 29:Regression Output: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Belief mean score	3.24	.43	415
Practice mean score	2.94	.60	415
Employability attributes mean score	3.17	.66	415

From the descriptive statistics table, it was seen that the mean scores are quite different for the different predictors. That means the mean score of the first predictor variable (academics' beliefs) was greater (M = 3.24) than that of the second predictor variable (academics' practices) (M = 2.94).

The second box of the output is a correlation matrix. It is important to note whether there are any high correlations between the explanatory variables and the response variable or among the explanatory variables themselves. The result is displayed in table 30.

Table 30:Regression Output: Correlations between variables

		Belief mean score	Practice mean score	Graduates' employability attributes mean score
Belief mean score	Pearson Correlation	1	.01	.02
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.92	.69
	N	415	415	415
Practice mean score	Pearson Correlation	.01	1	.56**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.92		.00
	N	415	415	415
Graduates' employability attributes mean score	Pearson Correlation	.02	.56**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.69	.00	
	N	415	415	415

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

Table 30 revealed that there was a negligible but positive correlation between academics' belief mean score and their practice's mean score, *r* (415) =.01=, r > 0.01; academics' belief mean score and graduates' employability attributes mean score, *r* (415) =.02=, r > 0.01; but a moderate and positive correlation between academics' practice's mean score and graduates' employability attributes mean score, *r* (415) =.56=, r < 0.01.

The next part of the output, the model summary table, provides a summary of how much of the variance in the response variable is accounted for by the predictors (table 31).

Table 31:Regression Output: Model Summary of Standard Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.56[a]	.31	.31	.55

As seen in the R square column in the model summary (tabl 46), the result revealed that the model with academics' beliefs and practices accounts for R^2 = 31% of the variance in the development of graduates' employability attributes. However, to identify whether each explanatory variable contributes uniquely to the model, the result was presented in the next part of the output, which is the coefficients table (table 32).

Table 32:Regression Output: Coefficients (Standard Regression)

Coefficients[a]												
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta (*β*)			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.30	.24		5.34	.00	.82	1.774					
	Belief	.03	.06	.02	.42	.67	-.70	.15	.02	.02	.02	1.0	1.0
	Practice	.61	.05	.56	13.54	.00	.52	.70	.56	.56	.56	1.0	1.0

a. Dependent Variable: Development of graduates' employability attributes

After correlation results showed positive relationships between academics' practices and the development of graduates' employability attributes, a standard regression was calculated to predict the development of graduates' employability attributes based on the respondents' response mean score of their practices regarding CI. As was seen in table 47, the results of the regression indicated the two predictors explained 31% of the variance (R^2 =.31, F (2, 412) = 91.83, r < 0.01). It was found that academics' practices regarding IoC significantly predicted the development of graduates' employability attributes (β =.56, r <.001), but academics' beliefs were not (β =.02, r >.01).

4.1.8. Development of Graduates' Employability Attributes in ERUs

Graduates' employability attributes were studied in terms of knowledge, attitudes, and skills as perceived by the academics. The results obtained regarding each category of attributes are presented below. The respondents' responses regarding the knowledge domain were analyzed and presented in tables 33 through 35.

Table 33:The means and standard deviations of respondents regarding the development of knowledge attribute's (n = 415)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Knowledge sub-scale 1	415	1	5	3.75	1.00
Knowledge sub-scale 2	415	1	5	3.76	.95
Knowledge sub-scale 3	415	1	5	3.73	1.05
Knowledge sub-scale 4	415	1	5	3.66	1.01
Knowledge sub-scale 5	415	1	5	2.84	1.13
Knowledge sub-scale 6	415	1	5	2.95	1.13
Knowledge Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	1	3.45	.64
Valid N (listwise)	415				

As shown in table 33, the mean scores of a sub-scale and major scale illustrate that the majority of respondents (M = 3.45, SD = .64) perceived that their graduating students are moderately equipped with the knowledge of international, intercultural, and/or global attributes. As regards the attitude domain of the attributes, the data obtained from the respondents was summarized in table 34.

Table 34:The means and standard deviations of respondents regarding the development of attitude attribute's (n = 415)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude sub-scale 1	415	1	5	3.00un	1.22
Attitude sub-scale 2	415	1	5	2.90un	1.16
Attitude sub-scale 3	415	1	5	2.92un	1.19
Attitude sub-scale 4	415	1	5	2.89	1.18
Attitude sub-scale 5	415	1	5	3.60	1.26
Attitude Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	3.06	.89
Valid N (listwise)	415				

The mean scores of all the sub-scales except one and the major scale of the attitude attributes shown in table 34, indicated that the majority (M = 3.06, SD =.89) of the respondents could not decide about the development of graduates' employability attributes. Concerning the development of skill attributes, the result is presented in table 35.

Table 35:The means and standard deviations of respondents regarding the development of skill attribute's (n = 415)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Skill sub-scale 1	415	1	5	2.90	1.16
Skill sub-scale 2	415	1	5	2.93	1.24
Skill sub-scale 3	415	1	5	2.88	1.20
Skill sub-scale 4	415	1	5	2.88	1.19
Skill Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	2.90	.97
Valid N (listwise)	415				

The mean scores of all the sub-scales and the major scale of the skill attributes shown in table 35, indicated that the majority of the respondents (M =2.90, SD = .97) could not decide whether or not the skill attributes were integrated into their respective courses.

To sum up, regarding the development of graduates' employability attributes, academics perceived that their graduating students were moderately equipped with international, intercultural, and/or global elements but did not decide on attitude and skill.

4.1.9. Potential "Blockers" and "Enablers" for CI in ERUs

Relating to the potential "blockers" and "enablers" to the internationalization of the curriculum in ERUs, responses from the respondents were summarized in tables 36 and 37, respectively.

Table 36:The means and standard deviations of respondents regarding "enablers" for IoC (n = 415)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Enabler sub-scale 1	415	1	5	4.09	1.06
Enabler sub-scale 2	415	1	5	4.16	.97
Enabler sub-scale 3	415	1	5	4.20	.92
Enabler sub-scale 4	415	1	5	4.31	.95
Enabler sub-scale 5	415	1	5	4.22	.95
Enabler sub-scale 6	415	1	5	4.22	.94
Enabler sub-scale 7	415	1	5	4.26	1.00
Enabler sub-scale 8	415	1	5	4.25	1.03
Enabler sub-scale 9	415	1	5	4.17	1.00
Enabler sub-scale 10	415	1	5	4.25	.99
Enabler sub-scale 11	415	1	5	4.24	.93

Enabler sub-scale 12	415	1	5	4.26	.95
Enablers Major Scale Mean Score	415	1	5	4.22	.59
Valid N (listwise)	415				

As can be seen from table 36, the means of the majority of the sub-scales and the major scale score showed that the majority of the respondents (*M* = 4.22, *SD* =.59) considered the listed items as very important enablers for internationalizing their respective curricula. These listed enabler items were: institutional policy, recognition and reward, workload allocation, professional development, assistance, experts, collaborations, support and resources, a culturally diverse course or program team, committed and informed leaders, international experience and personal commitment, and international strategy. Regarding the blockers, academics' respondents' responses were presented in table 37.

Table 37:The means and standard deviations of respondents regarding "blockers" for IoC (n = 415)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Blockers sub-scale 1	415	1	5	4.18	1.02
Blockers sub-scale 2	415	1	5	4.18	.98
Blockers sub-scale 3	415	1	5	4.06	1.06
Blockers sub-scale 4	415	1	5	3.97	1.08
Blockers sub-scale 5	415	1	5	3.96	1.07
Blockers sub-scale 6	415	1	5	4.27	.92
Blockers sub-scale 7	415	1	5	4.13	1.04
Blockers sub-scale 8	415	1	5	4.06	1.08
Blockers sub-scale 9	415	1	5	4.06	1.06
Blockers sub-scale 10	415	1	5	4.05	1.10
Blockers Major Scale mean Score	415	1	1	4.09	.62
Valid N (listwise)	415				

From table 37, it can be understood that except for sub-scale 5, the mean scores of each sub-scale and the major scale showed that the majority of the respondents (*M* = 4.09, *SD* = .62) thought all the items as moderately potential blockers for internationalizing their respective courses. These items of potential blockers were: lack of (or poor communication of) institutional vision and policy**,** lack of a strategy to ensure that policies are enacted, low priority of internationalization of the curriculum, the internationalizing curriculum is not considered important in the discipline, not considering internationalization of curriculum

as a workload, insufficient funding, and support, leaders who are not committed or informed, a discourse of marketization and commercialization of education, a strategy that in practice is focused primarily on income generation, and disciplinary “mindsets” or “culture.

4.2. Results from the Qualitative Data

Since this study adopted a mixed method approach, the qualitative data were collected in parallel to the quantitative data through semi-structured interviews, open-ended items, FGDs, document reviews, and observations. Hence, the results of the analysis of each qualitative instrument were presented successively as follows.

4.2.1. Results from the Interview Data

The results obtained from the participants of a semi-structured interview were revealed hereunder. In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with experts in the Ministry of Education, academic program directors, public relations and communication directors, quality associate deans, department heads, and senior academics. In a nutshell, one academic program director, two quality associate deans, two department heads, and two senior academics from each sample university were purposefully chosen because they play significant roles in developing, leading, and managing strategic plans and activities of CI at various levels. Thus, a total of 30 participants were interviewed. Table 53, summarizes the results of the demographic data.

Table 38:Characteristics of the participants in the interview

Characteristics	Category	No. of participants	Type of Participants
Institution	Addis Ababa University	7	Academic Program Directors, Public Relation and Communication Directors, Quality Associate Deans, Department Heads, Senior Academics, and Experts from ministry of education
	Bahir Dar University	7	
	Hawassa University	7	
	Jimma University	7	
	Ministry of Education	2	
	Total	30	
Discipline	Hard/Pure	7	
	Hard/Applied	10	
	Soft/Applied	7	
	Soft/Pure	6	
	Total	30	
Sex	Male	27	
	Female	3	
	Total	30	
Nationality	Ethiopian	26	
	Non-Ethiopia	4	
	Total	30	
Experience	International	6	
	Intercultural	19	
	Both	5	
	Total	30	
Academic position	With position	20	
	Without position	10	
	Total	30	
Academic rank	Lecturer	3	
	Assistant professor	7	
	Associate professor	15	
	Professor	5	
	Total	30	

As seen from table 38, seven participants from each of the four sampled universities and two participants were involved in the interview. In terms of discipline, the majority of the participants (10) were from the hard/applied category of discipline, followed by the Hard/Pure (7), Soft/Applied (7), and Soft/Pure (6). Sex-wise, more participants (27) were men. In terms of nationality, the majority (26) of the participants were Ethiopians. Even if more participants (19) have intercultural experiences, the others have international experiences or both international and intercultural experiences. In terms of position, 50% (20) of the participants had academic positions (directors, department heads, and quality associate deans). Finally, regarding the academic rank of the participants, 27 were those under the

rank of professorship (assistants, associates, and full professors). This was purposefully done for the reasons of their senior experiences.

The results obtained from the participants were presented based on the following themes and sub-themes. These were:

i. Academics' beliefs regarding CI,
ii. Academics' practices regarding CI (sub-themes: CI as a priority, the integration of international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the curriculum learning outcomes, contents, teaching and assessment activities, and supportive services),
iii. Contribution of academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI for the development of graduates' employability attributes,
iv. Development of graduates' employability attributes, and
v. Potential "blockers" and "enablers" to CI in ERUs.

Hence, the results of the analysis following these six thematic areas were consequently presented hereunder.

4.2.1.1. Academics' beliefs as a major theme

Concerning their beliefs regarding the importance of curriculum internationalization, participants provided their opinions without any reservations. Based on this, the majority of the participants believed that internationalizing their curriculum was mandatory. Their justification is that they are living in a global, borderless world. As a result, they doubted their ability to be an island. But what they repeatedly raised was how to maintain global and local balance. The participants emphasized what they called "thinking globally and acting locally" in doing the business of IoC. In line with this, one of the participants informed the following African mythology:

> I prefer to describe my belief regarding the importance of internationalizing our curriculum by using African words: "Sankofa" and "Ubuntu." That means "Sankofa" implies that I believe that when we think about internationalization in general, we have to rediscover and

> reclaim some of our historical wisdom to address contemporary problems and challenges. The term "Ubuntu" implies that internationalization should be based on principles of care and community, harmony and hospitality, respect and responsiveness, and other values that express the fundamental interconnectedness of human existence (IP6, RU1, 2022/5/23).

Similarly, the other participant expressed his belief in the importance of internationalizing curriculum by citing what former President Julius Nyerere, a famous Africanist and founding father of the Republic of Tanzania, said nearly six decades ago, at the dawn of African independence in the 1960s:

> I do not have a problem with the importance of internationalizing our curriculum. But my problem is with its practicality in avoiding the tension and danger of the lack of a balanced view between what is local and what is international. Hence, I agree with Nyerere's idea that there are two possible dangers facing a university in a developing nation: the danger of blindly adoring mythical "international standards," which may cast a shadow on national development objectives, and the danger of forcing our university to look inwards and isolate itself from the world (IP3, RU4, 2022/6/9).

Furthermore, one informant strongly criticized the fact that "scholars from the Global South spend their time complaining and hesitating about the innovations developed by scholars from the Global North rather than attempting to contribute their share" (IP4, RU2, 2022/5/11). The same informant believes that "we have to develop self-confidence to be competent members of this global community. To do this, we have to think outside the box and challenge Western paradigms".

On the other hand, the other participant strongly expressed his disbelief regarding the importance of internationalizing the curriculum in an Ethiopian context. This is evident from the following verbatim:

> I was disappointed with the so-called internationalization of the curriculum. The reason for this is that what can Africans in general, and Ethiopians in particular, contribute? Even Africa produces a fraction of the world's global knowledge. In so doing, the continent relies heavily on the knowledge produced by others. The rest of the Global South also falls into this unenviable category. For instance, most books, journals, databases, and other information and data are produced in the Global North. Even the format and style of

> intellectual writing and academic communication refer to institutions in the north—the American Psychological Association (APA), Harvard Style, and Modern Language Association (of America)—demanding that every college student from virtually anywhere in the world follow these international norms (IP1, RU3, 2022/5/30).

According to the above-mentioned information, the participant's focus in conceptualizing IoC is skewed toward the international dimensions, undermining the intercultural dimension. Also, one participant from the hard/pure discipline demonstrates the following belief: "I believe that my discipline is inherently international and there is no need to further internationalize this curriculum" (IP6, RU2, 2022/5/11).

4.2.1.2. Academics' practices regarding CI

Academics' practices regarding IoC were the second major theme of the qualitative data analysis, with sub-themes under it. Hence, the results obtained from the interview participants are presented based on these sub-themes.

Sub-theme 1: CI as a Priority in the University

This sub-theme was studied with national and institutional policies and the rationales of the IoC. In line with this, the results obtained from the interview participants are presented below. Relating to the presence of national and institutional policies regarding the internationalization of the curriculum, participants were informed that there were no distinct policies. For instance, a participant indicated that "although Ethiopian universities are expected to produce citizens with both local and global orientations, their internationalization activities have been limited and conducted in the absence of clear policies and strategies, both at national and institutional levels (IP3, RU3, 2022/5/30).

However, most of the interview participants also described that, even though there was no separate policy, the issue of internationalization is currently a priority at their respective universities. What they commented, however, is that the 'talk is greater than the walk'. For instance, one of the participants said "I have a chance to evaluate the implementation of my university's third strategic plan. In this plan, internationalization is one of the five pillars. However, the actual implementation is not as per the plan" **(**IP4, RU2, 2022/5/11).

From the interviews, it was observed that the idea of internationalization is more related to partnerships and cooperation with other universities in the world. This means that internationalization abroad is more pronounced than internationalization at home, of which CI is a key element.

An expert from the Ethiopian Ministry of Education also described that IoC is currently a priority in our context, by reasoning out the following:

> ...even though we don't have an internationalization policy separately, we do have a higher education policy where we have indicated that internationalization is very important. In this document, it was indicated that internationalization is a priority, and the elements that need to be considered were also indicated. (IP1, MoE, 2022/7/29).

The expert from the ministry also noted that "when curricula are developed or accredited, the issue of internationalization is considered" (IP1, MoE, 2022/7/29). He stated that it is for this reason that "very recently, we have included emerging technology, global trends, and critical thinking as new courses" (IP1, MoE, 2022/7/29). The other expert in the Ministry has also expressed his appreciation, saying that "Ethiopia has considered the issue of internationalization as one of the strategic issues in its higher education policy, which can be regarded as an example for other countries in the developing world" (IP2, MoE, 2022/7/29). This expert gave credit to the government for the efforts currently made. He points out:

> …until very recently, the internationalization of higher education has been undertaken with little planning and coordination at national and institutional levels. However, the efforts that have been made over the past few years are a clear indication of the move from fragmented practices to a cohesive path. Hence, there is increasing recognition on the part of the government and Ethiopian HEIs about the values of internationalization as an important undertaking for promoting teaching and research collaborations, mobilization of international resources, enhancement of academic quality and standards, and, lately, drawing additional income (IP2, MoE, 2022/7/29).

Regarding the rationales, the participants of the interview stated that internationalization is an important activity for teaching and resource collaborations, international resource projects, academic quality, and standards. One participant indicated that "the manifested

rationales for the activities of internationalization in our university are teaching and research collaborations, international research projects, academic quality and standards, and mobility and exchange programs*" (*IP1, RU2, 2022/5/11).

Sub-theme 2: Integration of International, Intercultural, and/or Global Dimensions into the Curriculum (Learning Outcomes, Contents, Teaching and Assessment Activities, and Supportive Services)

Concerning CI, the practice emphasizes mobility and joint programs. Internationalizing their curricula was also practiced in one way or another. However, more attention was given to the postgraduate curricula than to the undergraduate. The justification given for this was that the undergraduate programs were already harmonized programs that were developed at the ministry level with very minor adjustments (nearly 20%) at the university level. The following verbatim indicates this;

> Different attempts were made regarding IoC in our daily activities at our university. But not in an organized manner. For instance, there were joint programs, and mobility of academic staff, and students, especially in the postgraduate programs. The undergraduate programs were harmonized programs in which the curricula were developed at the national level with very minor opportunities for flexibility (up to 20%) at the university level. This flexibility includes modifying the course title, course code, and credit hours (IP3, RU4, 2022/6/09).

With specific reference to the CI, a participant stated during the interview that "to improve mobility inside and outside the country, all academic programs except medicine were undergoing harmonization at the national level in all public universities in Ethiopi*a*" (IP1, RU4, 2022/6/09). The other participant also said, "When a program is developed, it considers regional, national, and international interests" (IP5, RU3, 2022/5/30). The other participant also dictated the following:

> To internationalize our curricula, the Bologna process, with some of its features: outcome-based curriculum; modularization; converting credit hours to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS); harmonization; modularization; flexible learning paths; recognition; mobility; and the like, has been practiced in the university. However, I did not know whether or not the intended changes were achieved. These issues were introduced by our national ministry of education. Furthermore, a few common courses were also recently included in the undergraduate

> programs by the Ministry of Education. These courses have both national and global aspects (IP4, RU1, 2022/5/24)

With the specific practices of integrating international, intercultural, and/or global elements in learning outcomes, contents, methods of teaching, and assessment activities, the participants argue that they have not done remarkable and organized activities. Their justification for this is that the curriculum was already developed at the ministry level with the participation of some academics from universities for the sake of validation. In line with this, one of the participants said:

> I remember that the Ministry of Education in our country made a curriculum reform by aligning the existing curriculum or designing new academic programs with the ideals of formulating learning outcomes in the form of competency-based education. This has brought about a shift in curriculum thinking to design a curriculum based on local and global knowledge demands. Hence, the Ethiopian higher education sector is attempting to incorporate competency-based education as a means of aligning academic programs in line with the capability of students to function effectively in the world of the market (IP4, RU2, 2022/5/11).

However, as understood by the interview participants, the real practices of the teaching and learning process were dominated by the traditional way of doing things. One participant highlighted this by saying, “Today, academics are lecturing their lessons throughout the entire instructional time using PowerPoint presentations. Even the instructional practice seemed to be such that, in the absence of electric power, there could not be classroom instruction” (IP6, RU4, 2022/6/09). In support of this idea, the other participant also elaborated more on the overall practices regarding teaching and learning in the following manner:

> In my observation, what we are practicing concerning teaching and learning is something that lacks some kind of logical alignment. That means what is said in principle is quite different from what is done. For instance, as a principle, my university advocates learner-centered instruction and continuous assessment. However, practically, what we are doing is a PowerPoint presentation. And then we test our students continuously using paper pens. We were doing this because of various factors, like the large class size, the nature of the block course, overloaded content, and so forth (IP5, RU2, 2022/5/11).

Concerning the supportive services of the universities, the interview participants from each selected sample university said that it was discouraging. One of the participants provides her reflection, saying that:

> Currently, what is observed on our campus in connection with different staff and student services is shocking. For instance, the campus community has no unity, so everybody has his or her group members. There is no trust among each other because of the political turbulence. Students from the same ethnicity were booked in the dormitory together; they did their assignments together and the like. They did not respect and value each other's culture and language. Even the majority of the academic staff and almost all of the supportive staff members were from the same region or area. Due to this situation at the university, there were no adequate opportunities for creating intercultural and international interactions among the different university communities (IP5, RU1, 2022/5/24).

One participant described the diverse services offered at his university, comparing the recent past to the present. According to his account,

> The university used to have cultural centers that presented various events during holidays, such as fashion shows of cultural dressings, music, and literature of various ethnic groups in the university. Additionally, the university offers a distinctive program called 'Bahir Dar Bete-Bahir Dar is My Home,' which brings together students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds during weekends to visit their respective local families (IP1, RU3, 2022/5/30).

4.2.1.3. The contribution of academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI on the development of graduates' employability attributes

The interview participants were asked about the contribution of academic staff's beliefs and practices regarding CI for the development of graduates' employability attributes. The results based on their perspectives are described below. During the interview, two groups of participants were observed. One group, which involves the majority of the participants, perceived that academic staff's beliefs and practices regarding CI have their contributions to the development of graduates' employability attributes. The second group involved a small proportion of the participants who could not decide on the issue mentioned above.

These categories of group ideas can be evidenced by the following participants' verbatim of each group. A participant from the first group verbalized the following:

> What academic staff believe and practice matters to the development of graduates in different aspects. In my view, curriculum internationalization is a process, and the competence of the graduates is the output. Hence, the main purpose of curriculum internationalization is to produce desired and competent graduates, both nationally and internationally. From this point of view, the beliefs and practices of academic staff regarding CI have their own positive or negative contributions to the development of graduates' employability attributes (IP7, RU2, 2022/5/11).

In the same vein, the other participant in this group briefly described that "*since* academic staff practiced what they believed, their beliefs and practices regarding curriculum internationalization has its direct contribution to the development of graduates' employability attributes" (IP7, RU4, 2022/6/09). A participant from the second group also conveyed his view, saying that *"*from the perspective of our context, I could not identify the contribution or effect of academics' beliefs and practices regarding curriculum internationalization on the development of graduates' employability attributes. Because IoC by itself is a new phenomenon to us*"* (IP2, RU3, 2022/5/30).

4.2.1.4. Development of graduates' employability attributes in ERUs

The interview participants informed their perceptions about the development of their graduates' employability attributes from the perspective of CI as follows.

Regarding the development of employability attributes, "a gap between the knowledge being imparted through the academic programs and the knowledge required for graduates to function effectively in the job market was observed" (IP3, RU2, 2022/5/11). Specifically, the participants of the interview indicated that the instructional process and teaching-learning practices are often below standard, being predominantly teacher-centered and limited to PowerPoint presentations.

When it comes to the attitude, similar to the knowledge aspect, "there was a disconnect between the desired attitudinal outcomes (e.g., adaptability, critical thinking,

entrepreneurial mindset) and the actual attitudes being cultivated through the current teaching and learning practices" (IP4, RU3, 2022/5/30). Concerning the skill development,

> There was also a lack of emphasis on the active application and demonstration of skills (e.g., problem-solving, communication, teamwork) that employers value in graduates. Hence, the continuous assessment practices are perceived and implemented more as continuous testing rather than a holistic evaluation of skills development (IP4, RU4, 2022/6/09).

4.2.1.5. The potential "blockers" and "enablers" to CI in ERUs

This theme is the last basic question of this study. With this, participants in the interview were asked to describe the potential "blockers" and "enablers" to CI at their respective research universities. The results obtained in this regard are described below. The participants tried to describe some of the issues that could influence CI as blockers and enablers. In line with this, one of the participants stated:

> there could be different factors that could block or enable the practice of CI in our context in general and at my university in particular. For me, from the very beginning, the awareness and beliefs of the university community regarding CI could be a major blocker to practicing curriculum internationalization. Whereas, the positive impact of globalization could be an enabler for CI (IP3, RU2, 2022/5/11).

The other participant also noted that "lack of awareness, resistance to change, limited resources, language barriers, and lack of government support were some of the blockers, whereas the positive consequences of these blockers were the enablers" (IP3, RU3, 2022/5/30). Similarly, another participant in the interview pointed out the following blockers and enablers by indicating their variations across the unique context of each ERU. These were: "Government support, international partnership, faculty development, student mobility, technology, and infrastructure were the major enablers or blockers of CI" (IP1, RU4, 2022/6/09). Another participant again considered "limited financial resources, capacity gaps, institutional inertia, language barriers, and rigid accreditation standards as blockers, whereas national policies, collaborative partnerships, funding opportunities, engaging the expatriates, and interdisciplinary curricula as enablers" (IP3, RU1, 2022/5/24).

4.2.2. Results from the FGD Data

The FGD was conducted with the expatriates and international students. Their demographic characteristics and results were presented consecutively.

Table 39:Characteristics of the participants in the FGD (Expatriates)

Characteristics	Category	No. of participants	Type of Participants
University	Addis Ababa	4	Senior expatriates
	Bahir Dar	5	
	Hawassa	3	
	Jimma	4	
	Total	16	
Discipline	Hard/Pure	4	
	Hard/Applied	6	
	Soft/Applied	3	
	Soft/Pure	3	
	Total	16	
Sex	Male	13	
	Female	3	
	Total	16	
Nationality	Ethiopian	0	
	Non-Ethiopia	16	
	Total	16	
Experience	International	12	
	Intercultural	0	
	Both	4	
	Total	16	
Academic position	With position	3	
	Without position	13	
	Total	16	
Academic rank	Lecturer	0	
	Assistant professor	5	
	Associate professor	7	
	Professor	4	
	Total	16	

Table 39, showed that more participants of the FGD (five) were from Bahir Dar University, and followed by Addis Ababa and Jimma Universities. Regarding their discipline, the majority of them were from the hard/applied (six), followed by hard/pure (four). In terms of their sex, the majority of them (13) were male. Nationality-wise, all (16) of them were non-Ethiopians. In terms of their experiences, the majority of the participants (12) had

international experiences; whereas four of them had both international and intercultural experiences. Concerning their academic position, the majority of them (13) had no position. In terms of their academic rank, the majority of the participants (seven) were associate professors, followed by assistant professors (five).

In the same manner, the profile of international students is presented in table 40.

Table 40:Characteristics of the participants in the FGD (International students)

Characteristics	Category	No. of participants	Type of Participants
University	Addis Ababa	8	International students
	Bahir Dar	5	
	Hawassa	6	
	Jimma	5	
	Total	24	
Home country	Somalia	4	
	Ghana	4	
	South Sudan	6	
	Uganda	4	
	Namibia	2	
	Leseto	1	
	Djibouti	4	
	Eritrea	3	
	Total	24	
Discipline	Hard/Pure	0	
	Hard/Applied	15	
	Soft/Applied	6	
	Soft/Pure	3	
	Total	24	
Sex	Male	19	
	Female	5	
	Total	24	
Year of Study	4th	11	
	3rd	10	
	2nd	3	
	Total	24	

As was seen from table 40, relatively more participants (eight) were from Addis Ababa University, followed by Hawassa University (six). Relating to their home country, all (24) of the participants were from African countries. Of these, the majority of the participants

(six) were from South Sudan. Regarding their academic discipline, the majority of them (15) were from the hard/applied category of disciplines. However, none of them were from the hard/pure category of a discipline. In terms of their sex, the majority of them (19) were male. As to their year of study, the majority of the participants were third- and fourth-year students (10 and 11, respectively).

The results obtained from the participants of the FGD were also presented following the themes and sub-themes used above for the interview.

4.2.2.1. Academics' beliefs regarding CI

The FGD regarding academic staff's beliefs was conducted only with the expatriate academic staff members. The results obtained from this FGD emphasize the importance of internationalizing curricula in higher education by offering several arguments. One of the expatriates argues:

> We are living in an era of globalization that requires us to develop global thinking and competency. Hence, our engagement in internationalizing our curriculum will contribute to and improve our staff and students' competency to properly respond to this (FGDE2, RU2, 2022/5/12).

In the same vein, one of the participants in the FGD described her beliefs regarding CI concerning the preparation of graduates by stating:

> I believe that the issue of CI is highly related to the preparation of graduates in that they must be prepared for not only the national labor market but also the regional and global labor market because the national labor market cannot absorb all graduates. Hence, Ethiopia should also supply other countries with a competent labor force. Due to this fact, internationalizing the curriculum is mandatory, not a luxury (FGDE1, RU1, 2022/5/24).

The other participant expressed his belief by saying, "I believe that internationalizing Ethiopian higher education curricula is very important because it makes Ethiopia part of the world" (FGDE4, RU4, 2022/6/10). Furthermore, a Nigerian professor who participated in FGD articulated his beliefs regarding the importance of internationalizing curricula as follows:

> I believe that the issue of internationalization in general and the IoC in particular is a natural phenomenon, not an artificial one. The reason is that we are naturally connected, not alienated. It is for this fact that most of the time we say 'think globally' and 'act locally'. Hence, integrating global and local elements into Ethiopian higher education curricula is vital (FGDE4, RU3, 2022/5/31).

A professor from India who participated in the FGD described his beliefs regarding IoC from the perspective of its practicality by saying, "IoC is not practical because of two reasons: one is due to the unbalanced power between the global north and south, and the second is due to the tension between the ideas of indigenization and internationalization" (FGDE5, RU1, 2022/5/24). In supporting this, the other participant from the same university disclosed his belief:

> Theoretically, I have a firm belief in IoC. However, in reality, it is a challenging situation in African universities. Due to "invisible hands," most of the time, universities on this continent were considered peripheries, whereas universities in Western countries were regarded as benchmarks for the production and distribution of knowledge. Hence, African universities are expected to model and follow in the footsteps of their Western counterparts (FGDE7, RU1, 2022/5/24).

The other participant from the other university stated his disbelief regarding IoC in African universities by providing "both external and internal challenges such as, from the outside, the asymmetric partnership with the center and uncontextualized policy influence, and from the inside, poor political resolve, incapable capacity, and lack of a working system*"* (FGDE2, RU3, 2022/5/31).

It was important to fuse cultures without abandoning anyone's. This is what one of the students has to say "Without much ado, I believe, curricula design should adopt an "African taste" which embraces diversity. This will enable us to be globally competitive without losing our own *Africanness* in curriculum design.

One of the participants explained her belief regarding CI by mentioning its current criticisms as follows:

> I do not agree with the current practice of internationalization in general and the IoC in particular. The reason is that it focuses on global standardization. This ultimately leads to homogenization. The homogenization maintained

> through efforts to internationalize tends to overshadow the recognition of "fundamental local values and beliefs" (FGDE3, RU2, 2022/5/12).

The other participant in the FGD described her belief concerning the importance of IoC in line with university graduates in the following verbatim:

> Whether or not they plan or decide to work away from home or overseas, today's graduates and those of tomorrow are faced with increasing international contexts and intercultural challenges as migration and a mobile workforce result in a divergent, multi-cultural workplace. Hence, I believe that CI is a response to the need to prepare learners for work in the new reality of a globally interconnected world (FGDE6, RU4, 2022/6/10).

The other participant expressed his belief regarding CI besides its risks as:

> In my belief, even though CI is a global phenomenon that one cannot escape, it causes serious loss of intellectual and professional resources in the form of brain drain, increases the hegemony of Western knowledge and cultural values, more commodification of higher education, and sustains inequality between North-South universities (FGDE3, RU3, 2022/5/31).

Contrary to the aforementioned idea, a participant from the same university stated his belief concerning the importance of IoC as "in recent years, there has been growing recognition of "brain circulation," which implies that migration can benefit both the origin and host countries (FGDE5, RU3, 2022/5/31). The other participant believed that "IoC provides non-mobile African students with the opportunity to develop global perspectives and skills via the introduction of international dimensions in their university education" (FGDE1, RU2, 2022/5/12).

4.2.2.2. Academics' practices regarding CI

Regarding the practices, an expatriate who participated in the FGD started with the view that "the practices of CI in Ethiopian research universities was a growing area of focus but still relatively nascent" (FGDE3, RU1, 2022/5/24). This participant continued to say "Ethiopian universities have recognized the importance of preparing students for a globalized world and have taken steps to internationalize their curricula". It could be for this reason that the other participant also said the following:

> The policies and strategic documents in Ethiopian universities advocate inclusiveness. For instance, Ethiopian higher education policy clearly states that the medium of instruction is English. However, most of the academic staff were using their mother tongue for elaborating their instruction for their students, which is against this policy" (FGDE2, RU3, 2022/5/31).

In line with the above practices, one expatriate from Nigeria elaborated further in connection with what he came across himself:

> He encountered a problem when he brought his child to Ethiopia and joined a secondary school to learn. However, because of the instructional language that teachers used, he returned to his homeland to complete his secondary education. After the completion of his secondary education, he brought the child to Ethiopia and joined his university education. Again, the same problem happened. That means the majority of the university teachers were using local language during much of their instructional time. However, the policy clearly states that the instructional medium is English (FGDE3, RU2, 2022/5/12).

The other participant also appreciated the practice of the Ethiopian universities for the "inclusion of international content and diverse viewpoints in their curriculum, which can enrich students' understanding of global issues and foster a more comprehensive worldview (FGDE6, RU4, 2022/6/10). Others also stated some common practices and initiatives observed in Ethiopian research universities as follows. One participant pointed out that "to expose students to diverse perspectives and global issues, Ethiopian universities are working on integrating international content like readings, case studies, and research from scholars and experts around the world into their curricula" (FGDE5, RU2, 2022/5/31). The other participant discusses the following:

> Ethiopian universities have been establishing partnerships and collaborations with international institutions to enhance CI. These collaborations often involve joint research projects, faculty exchanges, and the development of shared courses or programs. Hence, these partnerships provide opportunities for faculty members and students to engage with international scholars and researchers (FGDE8, RU1, 2022/5/24).

In the same manner, one of the participants articulates that "some Ethiopian universities have started offering study-abroad programs, enabling students to spend a semester or academic year at partner institutions abroad. These programs allow students to experience

different educational systems, cultures, and perspectives while earning credits toward their degrees" (FGDE4, RU4, 2022/6/10). The other tried to express the practices relating to faculty development and training. He conveys:

> Some Ethiopian universities also recognize the importance of equipping faculty members with the necessary skills and knowledge to internationalize the curriculum. For this reason, faculty development programs and workshops are conducted to enhance their capacity in designing and delivering internationalized courses. These initiatives aim to promote innovative teaching methods, intercultural communication, and awareness of global issues among faculty (FGDE5, RU2, 2022/5/31).

In the same fashion, one participant describes the practices regarding CI in aligning with research collaboration saying:

> Ethiopian research universities are actively engaging in research collaboration with international institutions. Joint research projects provide opportunities for faculty and students to work on interdisciplinary and globally relevant research topics. Research collaboration contributes to knowledge exchange, publication in international journals, and the overall research quality of Ethiopian universities (FGDE8, RU1, 2022/5/24).

In addition to the aforementioned practices, one of the participants quotes the practices of CI in Ethiopian research universities from the perspective of international guest lecturers and visiting scholars "Ethiopian universities occasionally invite international guest lecturers or visiting scholars to deliver lectures, workshops, or seminars on specific topics. These interactions expose students to diverse perspectives and expertise and foster academic dialogue and collaboration" (FGDE4, RU3, 2022/05/31).

With the supportive services provided for students, a participant uncovers that "Ethiopian research universities have different offices, organizing committees, and clubs that play a crucial role in curriculum internationalization. However, especially in very recent times, they are not practically active" (FGDE1, RU4, 2022/6/10).

International students have also described the practice of CI in Ethiopian research universities. Some participants like the expatriates appreciated the inclusion of international case studies, examples, and perspectives in the curriculum, which broadened their understanding of different

societies, economies, and academic approaches. One participant disclosed this saying “Diverse perspectives, theories, and methodologies from different disciplines were incorporated into the curriculum, which became more comprehensive and reflected the interconnected nature of today's world. This can enhance our critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills (FGDiS7, RU1, 2022/5/25).

While the participants may appreciate the practice of CI in Ethiopian research universities, they may also report the challenges faced related to language barriers, cultural adjustment, and different educational systems. Hence, one of them proposed that “…it is important for Ethiopian research universities to provide adequate support services, language assistance, and cultural integration programs to help international students overcome these challenges and fully benefit from the internationalized curriculum” (FGDiS4, RU2, 2022/5/12).

4.2.2.3. The contribution of academics’ beliefs and practices to the development of graduates’ employability attributes

Unlike the interview participants, all of the FGD participants of the expatriates had similar perspectives on the contribution of academics’ beliefs and practices of CI for the development of graduates’ employability attributes. One of the participants stated:

> …most of the time, what we are and what we are doing is what we believe. Hence, it is for this matter that it was said that internationalizing academic staff themselves is a precondition for CI. In other words, academic staff who believe in and practice CI can have a positive contribution to the development of graduates' employability attributes by incorporating global and intercultural perspectives into their teaching (FGDE3, RU2, 2022/05/12).

Similarly, the other expatriate who participated in the FGD also argues:

> …the beliefs and practices of academic staff regarding CI can contribute to the development of graduates' employability attributes by promoting a global perspective and fostering intercultural competence. These efforts can equip graduates with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and global job market (FGDE1, RU4, 2022/06/10).

A participant also discusses that “beliefs and practices of academics can significantly influence the development of graduates' employability attributes*”*(FGDE5, RU3,

2022/5/31). The participant mentioned some ways in which academics contribute to the development of graduates' employability attributes:

> *Curriculum design***;** by which academics incorporate relevant and up-to-date knowledge, skills, and competencies required by employers, *teaching methods;* academics can employ teaching methods that foster the development of employability attributes; *guidance and mentorship;* academics can provide guidance and mentorship to students, helping them navigate their career paths and develop their employability attributes; *research and industry engagement;* academics who are actively involved in research and industry collaborations can bring real-world insights and expertise into the classroom; and *assessment methods*; by employing diverse assessment strategies academics can encourage students to develop and showcase their employability skills (FGDE6, RU1, 2022/5/25).

International students' FGD concludes that "it is obvious that the beliefs and practices of our instructors have their contribution to our learning in general and the development of our attributes in particular*" (*FGDIS2, RU2, 2022/5/12). For the supportive services provided at the university, one of the international students said:

> At the university level, we do not have a responsible body or office that is expected to organize and assist us except our students' representative. We heard of an office called the Internationalization Office, but we do not know what it was doing. We do not have events of experience sharing organized by the university, except the welcoming event to make some briefings (FGDiS7, RU1, 2022/5/25).

4.2.2.4. Development of graduates' employability attributes in ERUs

The focus group discussions yielded several key insights about the development of employability attributes among graduates of ERUs. Of course, all participants begin their ideas by acknowledging and appreciating the efforts made in ERUs to improve the employability of their graduates. With this regard, one of the participants said:

> To improve graduates' employability, different reforms and activities were done at my university and at the national level. For instance, the establishment of a deliverology office, career guidance, and counseling office, office of quality assurance, higher education quality and relevance agencies, students' apparent ships and internship programs, and tracer study were some of the reforms still practiced in my university to improve graduates employability (FGDE4, RU2, 2022/05/12).

However, the participants highlighted the following limitations about the development of graduates' employability attributes. One participant expressed "In my opinion, apart from the above-mentioned efforts done by the university, our graduates had a skills gap, including critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and practical/applied knowledge" (FGDE2, RU1, 2022/5/25). The other participant substantiated that "there is a mismatch between the knowledge and skills produced by universities and the needs of the job market" (FGDE3, RU3, 2022/5/31). Another participant recognized "Students often lack practical experience, such as sufficient opportunities for internships, project-based learning, and other forms of hands-on, experiential education" FGDE3, RU4, 2022/6/10). One of the participants noted, "Students could not explore career options and prepare for the job search process" (FGDE2, RU4, 2022/6/10).

4.2.2.5. Potential "blockers" and "enablers" to CI

The FGDs of the expatriates and international students revealed similar results, except that students highly emphasized the language barrier. One of them explained the language barrier in general and the instructional media in particular in the following manner:

> The dominance of local languages, such as Amharic, during classroom interaction and outside of the classroom, and language proficiency among faculty and students, particularly in English, could be a serious potential blocker to incorporating international content into the curriculum. This is because English is commonly used in international academic settings (FGDiS3, RU2, 2022/5/12).

An FGD conducted with international students also revealed that there was a problem encountered while they came to Ethiopian universities. The language, including the instructional language and the culture, were the major problems for them. For instance one of the participants indicated the problem saying that "almost all academic staff use Amharic most of their instructional time in the classroom. All students also prefer to speak Amharic both in the classroom and outside the classroom. Hence, it becomes very difficult for us to communicate well" (FGDiS3, RU3, 2022/6/1). The other participant also stated the problem as "during instructional time, most of the time, academic staff were used their

mother tongue to explain the contents for their students. They considered it as if all students were able to listen and speak their mother tongue" (FGDiS3, RU2, 2022/5/12).

Furthermore, almost all expatriate academics complained that due to the language barrier, their interaction with the academic staff and their local colleagues was very limited. One of the participants of the expatriates stated the different factors associated with CI in categorizing as "enablers" and "blockers" in the following ways.

> Limited resources, language barriers, cultural resistance and institutional mindset, bureaucracy, and policy constraints are the blockers, whereas, leadership, faculty development and engagement, international partnerships and collaborations, student mobility programs, and support services for international students are the potential enablers for CI (FGDE6, RU3, 2022/5/31).

4.2.3. Results from the Open-ended-Items

Since the questionnaire contained open-ended items, 51 respondents filled out these items. Regarding their profile, it was already described with the profile of the respondents to the questionnaire in the quantitative data and analyzed there. So, it was not necessary to repeat here for the sake of avoiding redundancy. Hence, out of the 415 respondents who completed the questionnaire, 51 of them wrote their thoughts on some of the open-ended questions. These were: eighteen from Jimma University, ten from Addis Ababa University, sixteen from Hawassa University, and seven from Bahir Dar University. Finally, these data were analyzed and the results were presented below.

From the open-ended responses, respondents described their opinions under each theme. For academics' beliefs regarding CI, the majority of them argue that they believe in the importance of CI with attention given to the local context. In line with this, they wrote, "Currently, globalization is an important issue, and hence CI is very important, but indigenous knowledge and context should be considered" (RU1,121; RU2,174; RU4,49). Few of the respondents described their beliefs differently. They said "We believe that the source of our curriculum is the knowledge of Western countries. Hence, we do not have roles other than borrowing or copying from these countries*"* (RU2,176 & 163; RU3,102).

Finally, the findings obtained from the responses to the open-ended items indicated that the majority of the respondents believed in the importance of internationalizing their curriculum. But they recommended that this should be done with *intention*, not *coercion*.

Regarding the priority given to CI, "internationalization is one of the pillars in the ten years strategic plan of our university" (RU2,186 &173). However, the respondents claimed that "there are practical limitations when we come to some fields, like law, which are inherently domestic by their natures" (Ibid.). One of the respondents noted:

> Our university has included CI as one of its core functions. However, the academic staff was not aware of the concept fully. Thus, he suggested awareness creation, experience sharing (national and international), and preparing a guideline that enables teachers to practice it in the teaching-learning process were mandatory. Otherwise, it will be lip service as usual (RU2,173).

One of the open-ended respondents commented on the teaching and learning process, saying, "*We* continued to use the traditional method of teaching and learning, which cannot prepare students with 21st-century skills. This makes our students hardly fit the global demands*"* (RU2,173). With this respect, the other respondent argues that "the current curricula are designed in such a way that the students think locally rather than globally or nationally" (RU4,49). In line with the development of graduates' employability attributes, respondents stated that the competency of graduates was under question. In justifying this problem, respondents from two different universities stated that "since there is little incorporation of soft skills in the curricula, a lack of skills like interpersonal communication skills is highly observed" (RU2,186 & RU4,26). Some respondents tried to see graduates' attributes from the perspective of the three domains of educational objectives. With this respect, one of the respondents wrote that "even though I am not clear on the main reason, currently the competency of graduates in the three domains of learning (knowledge, skill, and attitude) is decreasing from time to time" (RU2,174). The other respondent also commented on the curriculum, saying that "our curriculum is not considered our indigenous national integrity" (RU4,26).

The other respondent describes the current situation of supportive services on the campus saying:

> Currently, supportive services on our campus are deteriorating from time to time due to a low level of leadership involvement and less attention given from stakeholders starting from the university to the ministry (Ministry of Education level). And also they are not aware of the effects of curriculum defects on the coming generation and public safety. E.g. you can consider existing undergraduate nursing curricula have different controversial issues not been solved in the last three years (RU2,174).

4.2.4. Results from Document Reviews

As mentioned in Chapter Three of this study, national policy documents, ten years of institutional strategic plans, and four selected curricula from each category of discipline were reviewed. The essence of the contents of these policies and strategic plans was analyzed in terms of their intentions, motives, and rationales concerning CI. For the curricula, the integration of international, intercultural, and global elements in the content, learning outcomes (LOs), teaching methods, assessment methods, and support services were reviewed. Although the detailed findings of the documents are attached at the end of this report (Appendices III, IV, & V), a concise summary is presented below.

The review of Ethiopian policy documents reveals a gradual shift towards acknowledging and integrating internationalization in higher education. The earlier documents, including the former Education and Training Policy (ETP, 1994) and the first four Education Sector Development Programs (ESDP I-IV), lacked coherent strategies for internationalizing the higher education system. However, subsequent policies, such as the Higher Education Proclamation No. 650/2009, began to tacitly acknowledge the importance of international engagement, particularly in joint research and global competitiveness. The Education Sector Development Program V (ESDP-V, 2015-2019) marked a significant turning point by explicitly incorporating internationalization as a key policy initiative. It emphasized the need for collaboration with international institutions to enhance academic and research quality and proposed structural changes to support these efforts, such as establishing a national unit for internationalization.

The Education Development Road Map (2018-2030) and subsequent Higher Education Proclamation (2019) further reinforced the importance of internationalization, highlighting

strategies to attract international students and staff, and recommending curricular changes to foster global competencies. The Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHE) policies from 2020 onward emphasized aligning Ethiopian higher education standards with international benchmarks, promoting joint programs, and ensuring that higher education contributes to both national and global labor market demands. The Ethiopian Ten-Year Plans (2013-2022/2021-2030) and the most recent Education and Training Policy (2023) continue this trend, focusing on enhancing the international competitiveness of Ethiopian higher education institutions through accreditation, curriculum reform, and fostering a diverse, inclusive educational environment. Despite these advancements, challenges remain, including gaps in implementation and the need for more robust strategies to fully realize the potential of internationalization in Ethiopia's higher education system.

The review of strategic documents from four ERUs highlights their aspirations and challenges in internationalization. **RU1** emphasizes becoming a world-class research university by 2030, with a focus on internationalizing its programs, though it faces challenges like poor graduate employability and weak student support services. **RU2** aims to balance indigenous and Western knowledge, with internationalization as a core value. Despite efforts to foster global partnerships, the university struggles with integrating internationalization effectively due to structural and strategic shortcomings. **RU3** has established numerous partnerships and is committed to producing globally competent graduates through internationalized curricula and research. Internationalization is integral to its strategic goals, though it recognizes the need for a conducive institutional environment to support this. **RU4** aspires to be Africa's leading university by 2025, with internationalization embedded in its mission and strategic goals. However, it faces challenges in fully integrating internationalization beyond partnerships, as its relevant office focuses more on facilitation rather than strategic initiatives. Across all institutions, internationalization is a strategic priority, but the effective implementation of these goals varies, often hindered by gaps in resources, strategic planning, and operational execution.

The review of curricula across four academic disciplines—**HP**, **HA**, **SA**, and **SP**—reveals significant gaps in aligning learning outcomes (LOs) with internationalization objectives.

In the **HA** program, the LOs are not well-articulated, lacking emphasis on international, intercultural, and global perspectives. The curriculum primarily focuses on basic cognitive development, with little consideration for skills, attitudes, or 21st-century competencies. There is also a disconnect between LOs, teaching methods, and assessment strategies. The **HA** curriculum similarly fails to clearly state LOs related to knowledge, skills, and attitudes, with limited inclusion of intercultural content. Teaching and assessment methods are inadequately detailed. In the **SA** curriculum, although LOs are categorized into knowledge, skills, and attitudes, they often neglect attitudinal aspects. The teaching and assessment methods are uniform across courses and lack intercultural dimensions. The **SP** program presents LOs focused on cognitive skills, with some attention to intercultural issues in the content. However, teaching and learning activities are vaguely described, and assessment methods are largely repetitive. Additionally, common courses across disciplines also show a heavy reliance on basic cognitive tasks, with a predominant use of paper-based assessments and little integration of intercultural elements. Overall, these findings highlight the need for greater alignment between LOs, course content, teaching activities, and assessment methods to better incorporate international and intercultural perspectives in the curricula.

4.2.5. Results from Observations

The observations were based on the checklist presented in table 2. Based on this checklist, the findings were reported below by categorizing the campus environment and teaching-learning activities in the classroom.

i. Campus environment

While the researcher observed the campuses, many of the co-curricular activities/ events were not actively functioning. The reason that the interview and FGD respondents of the respective universities described was the ethnic tension echoed in the country. Hence, during the time of observation, the following results were observed.

- Dedicated "International Houses" that host regular events and programs to promote cross-cultural exchange and international collaboration were not established in the observed RUs.
- Some universities (RU2, RU3, & RU4) encourage students to engage in voluntary community service activities, such as teaching in local schools, organizing health camps, and supporting environmental conservation efforts. This activity was led by student-led volunteer clubs.
- There was no active international week program in all observed universities.
- An orientation program for both local and international newly enrolled students was observed in all observed RUs (RU1, RU2, RU3, & RU4).
- Research-focused conferences, workshops, and symposia hosted by clubs and student associations were conducted in some RUs (RU1 & RU2).
- Festivals and cultural activities were observed in some RUs (RU1 and RU3).
- Different sports and recreational activities were observed in all observed RUs.

ii. Teaching and learning activities

During the classroom observation regarding the teaching-learning activities, the following results were observed.

- Opportunities were not adequately given for students to consider issues and solve problems from a wide variety of social, economic, political, religious, ethical, and cultural perspectives during the teaching-learning process in most observed classrooms (RU1CR2; RU2CR3; RU3CR4).
- The teaching-learning activities in the classroom hardly encouraged students from different backgrounds to contribute relevant examples from their home country or community in most observed classrooms (RU2CR1; RU3CR3; RU4CR1).
- Students rarely felt safe, in a non-threatening learning environment in which they could express their own views freely while respecting those of other students and staff. (RU2CR1; RU3CR3; RU4CR1).

- Using team tasks that require students to work with peers from different countries or cultures either face to face or by using technology and/or blended learning was not observed in the classroom (RU3CR2; RU2CR3; RU4CR3).
- Students were not provided with structured learning opportunities for international experiences (RU1CR2; RU4CR2; RU4CR1).
- Encouraging a broad range of non-dominant disciplinary viewpoints and ways of thinking in the discipline presented, invited, debated, and rewarded were not observed (RU1CR2; RU2CR2; RU3CR1; RU4CR1).
- Intentionally designed activities to encourage, foster, and develop students' global perspectives, understandings, and skills were rarely observed in the classroom (RU3CR3; RU2CR1; RU1CR1).
- The assessment did not adequately require students to consider issues from a variety of cultural, international, and/ or global perspectives (RU1CR2; RU2CR2; RU3CR1; RU4CR1).
- Students' assessments also rarely require them to recognize the influence of their own sociocultural perspectives in the context of their discipline (and professional practice, if relevant) (RU4CR1; RU2CR2; RU3CR1; RU1CR1).

In general, during the time of the observation, those opportunities that encourage students to acquire international, intercultural, and/ or global experiences were minimal both in the campus and classroom environment. The teaching-learning activities were predominantly dominated by lectures with limited use of interactive, student-centered approaches. Surprisingly, even though the newly incorporated freshman courses had international and intercultural content, their delivery approaches were dominated by traditional approaches. Regarding the instructional media, English is the official language of instruction, but proficiency levels among both students and faculty vary significantly. Hence, code-switching between English and local languages is common, which can hinder effective communication and understanding of course materials. Figure 11, depicts the traditional classroom arrangement for the lecture method of teaching.

Figure 11: Classroom observation at RU2CR1

4.3. Discussion of the Results from the Two Data Sets

The results obtained from the two sets of data (quantitative and qualitative) were presented in the former sections. Hence, in this section, the results obtained were integrated and then discussed in view of the previous studies of the area. The discussion was organized based on the basic questions of this study as follows.

4.3.1. Academics' Demographic Representations among Universities

Academic staff's demographic distribution is vital for internationalization in general, CI in particular. Based on this, the distributions of survey respondents in the four selected RUs in terms of their respective sexes, disciplines, nationalities, experiences, academic positions, and ranks were discussed.

In this study, as the quantitative result revealed, academic staff from the four RUs have participated with minor differences in proportions. That means the participants' difference between the highest (Jimma University) and the lowest (Addis Ababa University) is about 11 (2.6%) individuals. In addition, the differences between the other universities' participants and the highest respondents' university (Jimma University) were also 4 (1%) for Bahir Dar University and 10 (2.4%) for Hawassa University. This is because

respondents were taken proportionately from each university, as described in the methodology section. Concerning the category of disciplines, participants were drawn from the four categories of academic disciplines. It can be seen from the analysis that a similar proportion of respondents (15.4% and 15.2%) from the two extremes on the opposite sides of the continuum of discipline categories (hard/pure and soft/pure, respectively) participated in this study. However, about half of the total respondents were from the hard/applied category of the disciplines. This could be attributed to the country's emphasis on engineering and technology education (Kahsay, 2012; Olkaba, 2015; Wondwosen, 2019).

In terms of the sex variable of the respondents, the majority (83.9%) of the respondents were men. This distribution indicates that male academic staff were more than five times with their female counterparts. On the contrary, for gender equality in higher education, in the last few years, there has been a very good intention, at least, to help women or girls through affirmative action in Ethiopian universities. However, as Mahlet et al. (2021) point out, ensuring gender equality has still been a significant challenge. In the same vein, Wondwosen (2018) wrote that some progress has been made concerning the number of women faculty, but the higher education sector remains one of the areas where significant gender disparity exists. Furthermore, the researcher noticed that there were more female academics than ever during the time of data collection in Ethiopian public universities. However, the majority of them were still quite young. It may be because of the reason that assistant graduates and technicians were not included as respondents in this study and that the portion of women is so small.

Hence, a lot needs to be done to put the policies in place and to have a targeted action plan for the short-term, medium-term, and long-term. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), Planning and Development Commission (n.d.), raised hopes for this by claiming that "Ethiopia will become the center of African female leaders" (p. 64) in its 2021–2030 strategic plans. To put this in effect, Ethiopian universities are expected to be role models in improving the participation of women in academic arenas. However, women are still grossly underrepresented in higher education leadership positions in Ethiopia. For

instance, according to Bothwell et al. (2022), only 10.6 percent of executive management positions were held by women in 2019–20 across Ethiopia's 45 public universities. In view of CI, diversity, of which gender is one aspect, is a general resource that must be taken into account in the pursuit of internationalizing higher education curricula (Weissova, 2021). Furthermore, the author argues that CI also promotes equity and inclusion in the higher education environment. As a result, the gender variable was examined for the reasons stated above.

About nationality, the majority (88.2%) of them were Ethiopians. This has its impact in terms of providing opportunities for international experiences. As it was noticed during data collection, of the non-Ethiopians, the majority of them were Indians. In support of this idea, Wilkins and Neri (2018), as cited in Jagadeesha et al. (2020), argue that expatriate faculties from developed countries are well-versed and experienced with emerging trends and technological transformations. In its fifth Education Sector Development Plan, as cited in Wondwosen (2019), the Ethiopian government aimed to increase the number of foreign faculty members in recognition of its significance. However, Wondwosen further noted that issues of salary, taxes, and staff quality (among many others) appear to be factors that affect the process of attracting, recruiting, and retaining international faculty in Ethiopian HEIs. Furthermore, unlike international capacity development projects and research collaborations, academics from the global south make up the vast majority of staff mobility (Yallew, 2020).

In relation to the experiences of the respondents, the majority of respondents did not have international experiences but had intercultural experiences (74.0% and 77.6%, respectively). Even a small proportion of academics with international experiences tend to migrate to other sectors, countries, and continents in large numbers, searching for better opportunities and working conditions. With reference to this, Teferra & Altbach (2004), as cited in Yallew (2020), showed that "though the number varies from institution to institution, the estimate of the brain drain from Ethiopian universities might be as much as 50%" (p. 12). Surprisingly, within the country, there was internal mobility and a brain drain of experienced academics from new universities to well-established and less remote ones,

and from public universities to private ones (Teferra & Altbach, 2004; Van Deuren, 2015; Yallew, 2020). In addition, Ethiopians who travel abroad for further education and training tend not to return to the country (Wondimu, 2003). International experience is one dimension of internationalizing the curriculum. Therefore, internationalizing the academics themselves is a necessary step in implementing CI in Ethiopian RUs. Pertaining to the intercultural experience of academics, is the other side of the international dimension of CI. This is because diversity is the root of internationalization in education. For this reason, academics must adopt an inclusive approach to curriculum and pedagogy since ERUs' campuses and classrooms reflect this variety. Thus, it is important to value both of the aforementioned experiences.

Concerning the academic position of the respondents, the majority of them (87.2%) did not have additional responsibilities other than their teaching load. The implication is that these respondents were those who were actively involved in teaching and learning activities. In other words, they were the right people to react to the question of curriculum in relation to their respective fields. Even those who held positions were the department heads and coordinators at the department level. In relation to the academic rank of the respondents, the proportion decreases by half from the bottom (lecturer, 50.8%) to the top (full professor, 7%) of the four successive ranks. This also requires attention from the institutions as well. Because these universities are first-generation universities in which more professors and senior academics were expected. Furthermore, professors are senior scientists with extensive international and/or intercultural experience who guide institutions toward curriculum internationalization.

Statistical test results regarding the distributions of the above-mentioned demographic variables among the four RUs were also discussed as follows.

As the chi-square test result revealed, there was no significant difference in the frequency distribution of academic respondents in terms of their sex among these universities; $\chi 2$ (3, N = 415) = 2.53, p >.05. This means that the proportion of female academics was lower than that of males throughout the four universities in this study. In other words, less distribution of female academics relative to males was common among the four RUs. In

terms of discipline categories, the distribution of academic respondents among the four research universities seems different. Even the chi-square test result confirmed that the variation was significant: $\chi 2$ (9, N = 415) = 38.33, p < 05. However, the effect size of Cramer's v (*V*) of .17 and a degree of freedom of 3 suggest that the finding was practically small. This may be because similar policies governed the universities under the country's government. This was confirmed by the distribution of academics having a relatively large proportion of the hard/applied disciplines due to the government's emphasis on engineering and technology.

From the nationality aspect of the respondents, the chi-square test result indicates that the variation in the distribution of non-Ethiopian academics among the four universities was not significant; $\chi 2$ (3, N = 415) = 4.16, p >.05. This means the frequency count and percentage distribution of the non-Ethiopian academic respondents relative to their Ethiopian counterparts were evenly distributed with small proportion across the four universities. In line with the international experience of respondents, the chi-square test also confirms that the variation of the distribution in this regard was not significant; $\chi 2$ (3, N = 415) = 2.39, p >.05. In contrast, the distribution of academics with their intercultural experience among the four universities was statistically significant; 2 (3, N = 415) = 13.49, p =.05. However, the effect size of Cramer's *V.14* and the degree of freedom of 1 indicate that the significance was small. This showed that the distribution of academics having intercultural experiences was larger than those having international and both experiences among the four universities.

Regarding the respondents' academic position in the university, the distribution was statistically not significant among the four universities; $\chi 2$ (3, N = 415) = 5.63, p >.05. Concerning the last demographic variable, which is academic rank, the distribution variation was statistically significant; $\chi 2$ (9, N = 415) = 54.00, p < .05. Furthermore, the practical effect size of Cramer's-V of .21 and the degree of freedom of 3 was also medium.

The distribution of the demographic variables of the participants in an interview and FGDs was also similar to that of the survey respondents.

In a nutshell, the above-mentioned demographic representation of academics at Ethiopian research universities reflects a complex mixture of factors, including persistent gender imbalances, disciplinary variations, limited international diversity and experience, and an academic hierarchy dominated by less experienced scholars. Addressing these disparities and fostering a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive academic environment remains an ongoing challenge and priority for the ERUs.

4.3.2. Academics' Beliefs Regarding the Importance of CI in ERUs

As the aforementioned survey result of the four levels of academics' beliefs regarding the importance of internationalizing curriculum revealed, academics were unable to agree or disagree on the first two levels of beliefs. They, on the other hand, agreed with the last two levels of beliefs. Based on these results, it is possible to indicate the position of the respondents along Ellingboe's Great Divide and Bell's Spectrum of Acceptance of Internationalizing Curriculum. This is because the first two levels and the last two levels of academics' belief are found on the left side and right side of the great divide, respectively. It is supposed that to accept the internationalization of curricula, academics need to cross this difficult divide. Hence, in this study, the majority of the respondents agreed with the belief that internationalization is possible and integral; this indicates the position on the right side of the Great Divide. The reason is that they conceptualize curriculum in terms of teaching methodology and learning activities rather than just curriculum content.

The abovementioned findings support the findings of other studies (Kelly, 1998; Curro and McTaggart, 2003, as cited in Bell, 2004; Bell, 2004). For instance, just over half of the academics' responses in Bell's study were classified at levels three and four of the divide. For them, an internationalized curriculum is believed to go beyond content (for example, the inclusion of international examples) in that the curriculum is conceived as an inclusive, dialogic teaching and learning environment for the development of students' understanding of content. Hence, for these academics, pedagogy was an integral aspect of the curriculum. Kelly also argued for this, stating that "content expertise is not enough because academics

need to engage students in critical thinking and develop a learning environment within which critical thinking can take place" (Kelly, 1998, as cited in Bell, 2004, p. 11).

In general, the broad range of beliefs that exist amongst academic staff as to the relevance of "internationalizing the curriculum" within their discipline was revealed in this study. However, the majority of academics had crossed Ellingboe's 'Great Divide'. Hence, it is possible to conclude that academics at ERUs believe in the importance of internationalizing their respective disciplines, with a strong emphasis on keeping the balance between international and local tensions. In this regard, significant differences were not observed among disciplines or institutions. This may create a favorable environment for these universities to practice CI based on their context. This is because (a) the academics' role is central, (b) one of the major challenges of CI is the academics' resistance, and (c) the academics' beliefs regarding the CI influence their actual practices.

The qualitative result (open-ended, interview, and FGD) also supported the above survey result as discussed below. The results obtained from the open-ended responses showed that the majority of the respondents believe in the importance of CI with attention given to the local context. The rationale behind their belief was globalization. However, respondents were recommended that this should be done with *intention*, not *coercion*. This was due to the panic that "HEIs in Africa are either impacted to accept the policies and roles of the centers or forced to change their policies in favor of the conditions of the centers" (Sintayehu, n.d., p. 4). With this regard, Teferra (2019) also argues that internationalization in middle- and low-income countries is *more coerced* than *intentional*. For this reason, De Wit (2019b) stated that African universities dealing with the issues of internationalization should be strongly guided by their context.

The interview results also revealed that most participants believed internationalizing their curriculum was mandatory. Their justification is that they are living in a global, borderless world. As a result, they doubted their ability to be an island. But what they repeatedly raised was how to maintain global and local balance. This concern was supported by Neale-Shutte and Fourie (2006) which states that "the challenge facing African higher education institutions is to balance the influences on the curriculum of increased outside

(international) knowledge, and indigenous learning". Hence, the participants emphasized what they called "thinking globally and acting locally" in doing the business of CI. This belief was similar to the recommendation of Gwakwa (2016, p. 85), which states that "the design of the curriculum should not abandon local content at the expense of western or eastern content but create "space for each" knowledge system". Furthermore, Patel and Lynch (2013), cited in Mary (2020, p. 23), also suggested that "shifting towards glocalizing higher education, rather than traditional internationalization, could foster more reciprocal knowledge exchange among all stakeholders".

In line with the mentioned doubt of the respondent, Teferra (2020, p. 73), in a book chapter titled "From 'Dumb' Decolonization to 'Smart' Internationalization," argued that "all internationalization, that is, smart internationalization, ought to be locally grounded and internationally flavored." In the same vein, De Wit (2019b) stated that African universities dealing with the issues of decolonization and Africanization in their internationalization strategies should be strongly guided by their context. Furthermore, some informants believe that "we have to develop self-confidence to be competent members of this global community. To do this, we have to think outside the box and challenge Western paradigms" This is akin to Du Preez's (2018) concept of CI as "curriculum decolonization through challenging the dominance of Western knowledge, pedagogy, and research, as well as questioning the colonial roots of university practices and curricula".

On the other hand, a few participants strongly expressed their disbelief regarding the importance of internationalizing the curriculum in an Ethiopian context. They reason out that Africans in general, and Ethiopians in particular did not produce a fraction of the world's global knowledge. Hence, the continent relies heavily on the knowledge produced by others. However, the problem of their justification emanated from the misconception of CI which was skewed towards the international dimensions, undermining the intercultural dimension. Few of the participants from the hard/pure discipline also believed that their discipline is inherently international and there is no need to further internationalize this discipline. However, in line with this argument, Schoorman (1999), as cited in Williams (2008), recognized that "although the problems of science are international and the same

for all, the approach to those problems depends on the culture" (p. 29). Hence, faculty members who deny the need to internationalize their curricula are neglecting to consider the diverse learning styles and experiences of international students within their classes.

Put succinctly, the findings obtained via interview participants more or less supported the quantitative result. This means that the majority of the participants believe in the importance of internationalizing the curriculum in our context. The doubt, however, was about maintaining the balance between the two tensions—international and local. From the perspective of Bell's "Spectrum of Acceptance of Internationalizing Curriculum", the position of the majority of the participants about their belief about the importance of internationalizing curriculum was to the right of the 'divide' Ellingboe's Great Divide. This is the position where internationalization was seen as *possible* or *integral* (and was already being implemented to various degrees). This is because there is a tendency for participants to think of curriculum in terms of teaching methodology and learning activities rather than just curriculum content. Hence, the finding of this study was similar to Bell's (2004, p. 7) finding, which stated that "a little over half of participants' responses were placed on the right of the divide".

Furthermore, the FGD results also supported the survey, open-ended, and interview results, except in a few of them, where criticisms and doubts were reflected. The majority of the results emphasize the importance of internationalizing curricula in higher education by offering several arguments. One of the arguments was globalization. The participants argued that since they are living in an era of globalization that requires them to develop global thinking and competency, their engagement in internationalizing their curriculum will contribute to and improve their staff and students' competency to properly respond to the phenomenon. This argument was similar to that of Bell's (2004) finding. The other argument was the preparation of graduates. Pertaining to this, participants believed that graduates must be prepared for not only the national labor market but also the regional and global labor market because the national labor market cannot absorb all graduates. Due to this fact, internationalizing the curriculum is mandatory, not a luxury. The research

findings conducted by Gwakwa (2016), Tesfaye et al (2019), and Tesfamariam and Jeilu (2021) also supported this argument.

Few participants disclosed their doubts from the perspective of the practicality of CI. They justified the unbalanced power between the global north and south, and the tension between the ideas of indigenization and internationalization for their doubt. With this regard, Altbach (2004b) and Zgaga (2013) describe that "the powerful universities have always dominated the production and distribution of knowledge while weaker institutions and systems with fewer resources and lower academic standards have tended to follow in their wake". Angervall & Kitaw (2021) also stated a similar idea saying that **"**institutions benefit from global relationships, but with caution regarding their unintended consequences due to an inherent imbalance of resources between the Southern and Northern institutions". In the same vein, Tamrat and Teferra (2018), as cited in Wondwosen (2021), reported that "Northern partners were seeking to achieve their own objectives without much regard to the needs and aspirations of their local partners, p. 484". Others express their disbelief regarding CI by mentioning its impact on homogenization. In fact, this criticism refers to globalization in that globalization is the idea of *oneness* it tries to convey rather than a focus on difference and diversity (Robertson, 2013). However, internationalization is assumed to be the reaction mechanism for such a negative impact of globalization.

Similarly, others believe that CI is a global phenomenon that one cannot escape. Nevertheless, they listed its risks as causing serious loss of intellectual and professional resources in the form of brain drain, increasing the hegemony of Western knowledge and cultural values, more commodification of higher education, and sustaining inequality between North-South universities. These lists of risks were similar to what Sintayehu (n.d) had described in his thesis titled "Rewards and Challenges of Internationalization of Higher Education in Africa". Contrary to the former idea, other participants stated their belief about the importance of CI using the justification which is the antithesis of 'brain drain' that is 'brain circulation'. According to 'brain circulation', they believed that migration can benefit both the origin and host countries. Daugeliene and Marcinkeviciene (2015) as cited in The World Bank (2017) supported this idea. These authors elaborated on the idea of

‘brain circulation’ by citing the cases of India and China as typically positive examples. They further stated that CI provides non-mobile Global South students with the opportunity to develop global perspectives and skills via the introduction of international dimensions in their university education. In line with this, Adamu (2012) indicated that “the introduction of international/intercultural elements into the curriculum provides non-mobile African students an international dimension in their university education, and this is essential to develop global perspectives and skills, p. 206”.

Finally, the findings obtained from the FGD revealed that the majority of the participants believed that CI is an important phenomenon for EHEIs for responding to or reacting to the positive and negative impacts of globalization, respectively. Akin to this, Wondwosen and Damtew (2018) found that “Ethiopian universities are aware of the importance of internationalization in terms of perceived benefits in improving teaching and learning, student and teacher development, and standards and quality, p.2”. A few of the participants also expressed their doubts and criticisms regarding internationalization in general and CI in particular. These findings were related to other findings of similar studies in one way or another. Consistent with these findings, a study conducted by Gwakwa (2016) showed that “all the ten Universities concurred that internationalization of curriculum was necessary and inevitable. However, 60% of the Universities expressed fear of losing their identity, as they felt that universalizing their program contents, would jeopardize their creative systems*”*. However, two of the universities in South Africa and the other one in Zimbabwe believe that “internationalization of the curriculum did not mean losing one’s identity, it is a collaborative effort, in which the indigenous knowledge system is fused or partnered with those global requirements”.

To sum up, the findings obtained from both the quantitative and qualitative data sets revealed that the majority of the academics of ERUs believed in the importance of internationalizing their respective curricula. These findings were similar to the study conducted on similar HEIs by Wondwosen (2015, p. 17) which stated that “both public and private HEIs ascribe a high level of importance to internationalization*”*. In other words, academics in ERUs believe that “internationalization is possible and integral*”* within their

respective discipline and universities. This acceptance of academics about the importance of CI is one of the encouraging conditions for implementing this innovation in ERUs. The reason as Leask (2015) confirmed, is that the denial of the relevance of internationalization to a particular discipline and/ or institution is one of the blockers of CI.

4.3.3. Mean Differences Among Groups on Beliefs about CI

Identifying whether or not significant differences exist among different groups concerning academics' beliefs regarding CI was one of the objectives of this study. In this regard, the mean differences among the four disciplines and four universities were checked using a two-way Analysis of Variance (Two-way ANOVA).

As was seen in the presentation of the results section of this study, the mean values of each of these groups revealed that there was a similarity in responses among the four categories of disciplines and the four groups of universities. In addition, the result of the inferential statistics, which was a two-way ANOVA, shows that the computed two-way ANOVA result revealed no significant main effect for university and discipline on academics' beliefs regarding CI, F (3, 399) =.29, ρ =*.836;* and F (3, 399) =.38, ρ =.768, respectively. A similar result was also observed concerning the combined effect of university and discipline, F (9, 399) =.99, ρ =.442. Hence, there is no significant evidence from which to conclude that there were differences in academics' beliefs among the four categories of disciplines and four RUs. This means that the majority of academics in each of the groups agreed with the belief that *internationalization is possible and integral* within their respective discipline and university. This finding seems divergent from Jones's (2014, p. 6) argument that states "disciplines have distinct cultures and values and will often have different rationales for internationalizing the curriculum". It seems also unlike Leask's (2015, p. 14) finding, which believed that "many, but not all, of the academics in the hard/pure disciplines, are often less open to accepting CI than their colleagues in the soft/applied disciplines".

However, as Leask's finding indicated, other academics in the same discipline argue against those who make such claims by justifying that they are working within a culturally

defined frame of reference. In addition, in line with Leask's finding, Jones (2011, p. 18) also claims that "there is some evidence questioning the relative strength of the influence of disciplines on academics' beliefs".

Regarding the universities, it could be due to the reason that the sampled institutions in this study were research universities with relatively similar experiences regarding the issue under study. However, to relate this finding with other studies, Leask and Bridge (2013), as cited in Robson (2015, p.50), demonstrated that many of the existing studies of CI were focused on one institution or a disciplinary case study.

4.3.4. Academics' Practices Regarding CI in ERUs

Academics' practices regarding CI were studied based on the priority given to the phenomenon, attempts to incorporate international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the learning outcomes, methods of teaching, assessment tasks, and supportive services of their discipline. The discussion of the subsequent quantitative and qualitative results was presented herewith.

The interview results showed, that internationalization in general, and CI in particular, were priority areas in Ethiopian universities. However, until very recently, ERUs did not have clear policies and strategies, either at the national or institutional level. This finding was also evidenced by Wondwosen (2015; 2018; 2019; Tesfaye, et al., 2019). Wondwosen stated that "EHEIs have been conducting their internationalization activities in the absence of clear policies and strategies, both at national and institutional levels", p. 1. The analysis results of the ten years strategic plans (2021-2030) of the four selected universities (RU1, RU2, RU3, & RU4) of this study also substantiated the interview result in that the four universities stated in their visions and goals about their vision and commitments to becoming world-class, leading research universities in Africa and globally in their visions and goals. Besides, they indicated that internationalization is seen as a key strategic priority and enabler to achieving their vision.

Furthermore, it was also observed from the interview results that the activities of internationalization were more related to partnerships and cooperation with other

universities in the world. This means that internationalization abroad is more pronounced than internationalization at home, of which IoC is a key element. This was similar to the finding stated that "internationalization was understood by sample universities in terms of collaboration and partnership with universities and organizations abroad" (Tesfaye et al., 2019, p.131). Nevertheless, this time, Ethiopia has developed a national policy of internationalization that can be regarded as a remarkable development to encourage informed and planned moves in all spheres of the internationalization arena (Wondwosen, 2020).

However, as confirmed from the experts' interview in the MoE and policy document, the internationalization of HEIs was clearly stated as one of the priority areas of EHEIs in general and RUs in particular. In this regard, interview participants appreciated the efforts currently made by the government side. This attempt reaches from the fragmented practices to national policy formulation. This was supported by Wondwosen (2021). Wondwosen points out an increasing recognition on the part of the government and Ethiopian HEIs of the values of internationalization as an important undertaking. Ethiopia's latest Education Development Road Map (MoE, 2018, p. 55) further acknowledges "the need for promoting IHE as a key means of ensuring quality higher education".

From the analysis results of different national policy documents described under the result section, it was conceivable that the policy landscape shows a gradual but increasing recognition of the need to internationalize the Ethiopian higher education system, with more recent documents providing clearer and more comprehensive policy direction in this regard. This was evidenced as described below.

Early policy documents like the former ETP (1994) and the first four ESDPs (I-IV) did not provide coherent policy direction on internationalizing the Ethiopian higher education system. The Higher Education Proclamation No. 650/2009 and the National Employment Policy and Strategy of Ethiopia (2009) tended to acknowledge the need for producing graduates who are competitive at the international level. ESDP-V (2015-2019) was the first policy document that clearly articulated the need for internationalizing the higher education system. It emphasized aspects like international collaboration, importing/exporting of

knowledge and experiences, and establishing dedicated structures for managing internationalization.

The Education Development Road Map (2018-2030) further reinforced the importance of internationalization, identifying key focus areas like building capacity to attract international students/staff, internationalizing teaching and research, and promoting student/staff mobility. The Higher Education Proclamation (2019) and MoSHE (2020), Higher Education Policy and Strategy document made internationalization a key policy priority, with strategies around meeting international standards, promoting international partnerships, and ensuring graduate employability.

The GTP plans (GTP-I, 2010-2014 and GTP-II, 2015-2019) also recognized the need for a national-level framework to guide internationalization efforts in higher education. The MoSHE (2020) "Quality, Relevance, Equity, and Access Program" document emphasized aspects like joint study programs, diversity and inclusion, international accreditation, and aligning programs with global development needs. The Education and Training Policy (2023) further reinforced the importance of autonomy, international accreditation, and producing graduates competitive at the international level. The existence of these general policy frameworks, as Ermyas and Abiot (2021) outlined, could create a conducive operative legal, institutional, financial, and structural environment

The analysis results of the ten years' strategic plans of the four selected universities (RU1, RU2, RU3, & RU4) of this study were also substantiated by the results of the national policy documents and interviews mentioned above. In their respective ten-year strategic plans (2021-2030), these four RUs declared their strong visions and commitments to becoming world-class, leading research universities in Africa and globally in their visions and goals. They also showed that internationalization is seen as a key strategic priority and enabler to achieving this vision. Moreover, the strategic plans demonstrate a strong ambition and commitment to internationalization as a core strategy for public universities to elevate their status and competitiveness on the global stage. However, sustained efforts are needed to truly transform these universities into globally renowned research and education hubs.

In relation to the above findings, Marinoni (2019) as cited in De Wit & Jones (2022, p. 144) identified that more than 90% of institutions mention internationalization in their mission or strategic plan. But remarked that some of them really place it at the forefront whereas for others it is still rather marginal and ad hoc…, even for those relatively few universities that do place a high importance on internationalization, it is not always clearly defined and, in practice, is largely represented by mobility and competition rather than broader approaches incorporating internationalization for all.

The commonly manifested rationales for the practice of internationalization in EHEIs were also identified during the time of the interview as teaching and research collaborations, international research projects, academic quality, and standards, and mobility and exchange programs. This was in congruence with the findings of Adamu (2012) and Wondwosen (2015; 2021). For instance, according to Adamu (2012, p. 202), "studies and reports indicated that academics is the major regional rationale for promoting the internationalization of higher education". The academic rationale includes strengthening research capacity and knowledge production, internationalizing curricula, enhancing academic quality, developing human resource capacity, and increasing competitiveness. In relation to the rationales, Jones and De Wit (2012, p. 50) as cited in Jones (2013, p. 2) argued that "there is still too great focus on political and economic rationales for internationalization from an international and institutional perspective, in which the perspectives of those for whom it is all intended are underrepresented".

Pertaining to the practices of internationalizing the formal curriculum, the survey result revealed that the majority of the respondents could not decide whether or not the international, intercultural, and/or global elements were integrated into the learning outcomes, teaching, and learning activities, as well as the assessment activities in their respective courses. However, the majority of the respondents responded that the international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions were moderately integrated into the contents of their respective courses. These dimensions were also rarely integrated into the different aspects of the campus life of students.

In the same manner, the interview result disclosed that even though there was no organized way of doing CI, some activities have been done especially on the postgraduate curricula. The reason mentioned for this was that the undergraduate curricula were already harmonized and developed at the ministry level with very minor adjustments (nearly 20%) at the university level. However, the result also indicated that this harmonization has contributed a lot to students' mobility both within the country and abroad. The result also found the practices of the Bologna process in EPUs with some of its features. These were the outcome-based curriculum; modularization; converting credit hours to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS); harmonization; flexible learning paths; recognition; mobility; and the like. It was also attested by Gebremeskel (2014, p. 94). Even the the centrality of curriculum development was argued by experts from the MoE saying that the role of the MoE was facilitating the process. That means the ministry invites the academic staff from each discipline of each university to come together at the center and develop their curriculum.

Furthermore, a few common courses were also recently included in the undergraduate programs by the Ministry of Education. These courses have both national and global aspects. This was evidenced in the document analysis that there were about 14 (Wondwosen, 2019, p. 4) new courses integrated into each undergraduate program. Despite various rationales being provided for incorporating these courses, the underlying aim is to address deficiencies in the student's knowledge, skills, communication abilities, understanding of global and local affairs, ethical and moral standards, sense of individual and social responsibility, and preparedness for employment (MoE, 2018; as cited in Wondwosen, 2019, p. 1). As Wondwosen indicated, fostering positive relationships among students of different ethnic backgrounds was also the other intention of the newly included courses.

In line with the above-mentioned practices regarding CI, Gebremeskel (2015) as cited in Teklu & Ewnetu (2017) substantiated that the Ethiopian higher education sector is attempting to incorporate competency-based education as a means of aligning academic programs in line with the capability of students to function effectively in the world of the

market. However, as understood from the interview results, the real practice was highly dominated by the traditional way of doing business. This was also confirmed by Girma et al's (2018) and Wondifraw's (2019) study which found that "the instructional process was below the standard, the teaching-learning process was found to be predominately teacher-centered and limited to PowerPoint presentations, and the continuous assessment has continued to be perceived and practiced as continuous testing, *p. 1*". Wondifraw's study also investigated the reasons behind as perceived by the academics which were attributed to "the nature of the classroom, shortage of time for covering courses, and large class size, p. 7". The finding also aligns with the findings of the MoE (2018) which revealed that "the competences are not well identified, organization of modules is found weak, teaching methods that were employed were highly dominated by the traditional lecture method".

From the interview results, nowadays, it was understandable that the campus environment was not promising for the interaction of the different diversities of students and academics. The majority of the campus community has his or her group members. The composition of the group was commonly based on similarity in ethnicity, religion, political ideology, region, and the like. Hence, because of the lack of trust among each other, the interaction among them was not as expected. This finding was corroborated with Abebawu's (2014) findings. The Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap also found a similar finding which was stated as "none of the Ethiopian universities have activities to promote unity" (MoE, 2018). According to Abebawu, new student reception by religious groups, language and ethnic-based friendships, prejudice, stereotypes and ethnocentrism, and political party membership were some of the major factors impeding intergroup relations.

The observation results were also not different. The results from the classroom observations showed that there was a lack of internationalization and global engagement in the teaching and learning activities across the observed classrooms. This was evidenced by Wondwosen (2018, p. 2) that "ineffective student learning explained through students' lack of practical and soft skills, contents of the curricula, assessment schemes, and students' poor language and communication skills that are critical for employability were identified as areas for improvement".

The observation results of the campus environment signified that there was a restricted scope of cross-cultural exchange and international collaboration programs which were impacted by the ethnic tensions in the country. However, there were still some efforts by the universities and students to engage in community service, academic events, and cultural activities, as well as provide orientation support for new students.

In general, the abovementioned practices were also clearly identified by the Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap in that different curriculum reforms such as harmonization of undergraduate curricula, introduction of modular teaching, continuous assessment, and peer learning have been introduced. However, according to MoE (2018, p. 52), these activities have little positive impact on the quality of HEIs' core processes, for example, teaching and learning. It seems that it was stated in the policy document that " revamping curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and student support for enhanced student experiences was one of the key policy changes" (MoSHE, 2020, p. 2).

The results found from the FGD also showed similar practices. Here are some of the results discussed. As perceived by the participants, CI practices had a nascent but growing focus. That means CI practices in ERUs are still relatively new and developing, but there is increasing recognition of the importance of preparing students for a globalized world. Research universities are working to integrate international readings, case studies, and research from global scholars into their curricula to expose students to diverse perspectives. The universities are establishing partnerships with international institutions for joint research, faculty exchanges, and shared courses/programs to enhance CI.

Even, some universities have started offering study abroad programs, allowing students to experience different educational systems and cultures. The universities are conducting training programs to equip faculty with skills for internationalizing their teaching, such as intercultural communication and awareness of global issues. They are also engaging in joint research projects with international partners, contributing to knowledge exchange and publication in global journals. Furthermore, some RUs occasionally invite international guest lecturers and visiting scholars to share their expertise and foster academic dialogue.

However, as the participants noted, a policy versus practice gap was observed. For instance, while the national higher education policy states that the medium of instruction is English, many academics still use local languages extensively in teaching, going against the policy. This "code-switching" approach can be confusing for students and detract from the coherence of the lesson. The reason behind this "code-switching", as participants argue was a lack of proficiency in English from the sides of both the academics and students. This will harm the universities in the process of global competition in which the dominant language is English. This challenge was also observed in the study findings conducted nationally and internationally by Tesfaye et al (2019) and Wu et al (2015, p.7), respectively. These researchers demonstrated that “international students face language and cultural challenges both inside and outside the classroom”.

Concerning student support services, while some universities have offices and organizations to support CI, participants noted these are not very active, especially recently. Hence, international students face challenges like language barriers, cultural adjustment, and adapting to different educational systems, suggesting a need for more comprehensive support services. This was mentioned by Wu et al (2015) that service centers were valuable resources for stress relief, support, and problem-solving strategies for international students.

Overall, the discussion highlights both the progress and remaining challenges in implementing comprehensive CI at ERUs.

The review results of the four selected curricula were also agreed with that of the above-mentioned results of the survey, interview, and FGDs. For instance, out of many lists of the results described under the result section of this study, the major ones were briefly described as follows.

At the very beginning, the LOs were not clearly articulated from the perspective of international, intercultural, or global perspectives. Even, most of the courses’ LOs were focused on the lower levels of cognitive development (e.g., describing facts) rather than higher-order skills. LOs were also primarily from a technical/professional perspective, with

few addressing 21st-century "soft" skills. Furthermore, there was a lack of alignment between LOs, teaching/learning activities, and assessment methods. Concerning the course contents, aside from community-based education courses, the content did not include significant international, intercultural, or global elements.

Across different courses, the teaching and learning activities were largely uniform, with little variation. The assessment was dominated by traditional pen-and-paper exams, with little diversity in assessment techniques across courses. And, the assessment weightings and methods were often similar or identical across different courses.

Overall, the analysis suggests that the curriculum lacks a cohesive, intentional approach to incorporating international, intercultural, and global dimensions, both in terms of learning outcomes, content, teaching methods, and assessment. The community-based education courses appear to be one of the only elements integrating these perspectives.

4.3.5. Mean Differences Among Groups on CI Practices

To test whether or not there were statistically significant mean differences among groups of disciplines and/ or universities regarding the practices of CI, a two-way ANOVA was calculated. Based on this, the descriptive statistics result showed that the mean values and the standard deviations of some discipline categories in some universities indicate that there were relative variations among the groups. As was presented in the result section, the mean value of the responses from the hard/pure discipline of BDU was the highest (M = 3.37) of the others. Whereas, the mean value of responses from the soft/pure discipline of AAU was the least (M = 2.68) in the groups. With regard to the standard deviations of the groups, the soft/pure discipline category of HWU has the highest value (SD =1.09) of all groups. But the soft/pure (SD =.23), hard/applied (SD =.33), and hard/pure (SD =.35) groups of disciplines from AAU, BDU, and JMU, respectively, had the lowest values of a standard deviation.

The result of two-way ANOVA depicts no significant main effect for university on academics practices regarding CI, F (3, 399) = 1.68, ρ =.170, partial η^2 =.01(small); a significant main effect for discipline, F (3, 399) = 5.12, ρ = .002, partial η^2 =.04 (small);

and a significant interaction between university and discipline, F (9, 399) = 2.66, ρ = .005, partial η^2 = .06 (medium). The implication was that the university (i.e., the institution) does not have a significant main effect on academic practices regarding CI. Whereas, the discipline (i.e., the field of study) does have a significant main effect on academic practices regarding CI. Besides, there is a significant interaction effect between university and discipline on academic practices regarding CI, indicating that the relationship between university and CI practices varies depending on the discipline.

To describe the combined effect of university and discipline one- way ANOVA for each group of one factor was used. This makes sense to look at the differences between the universities by discipline. The result shows that there was a difference between the mean of academics' practices regarding CI on the four universities for hard/applied discipline, F (3, 208) = 3.04, $\rho < .05$; and soft/pure discipline, F (3, 59) = 3.52, $\rho < .05$. But not for hard/pure, F (3, 60) = 1.40, ρ = .25; and soft/applied discipline, F (3, 72) = 1.19, ρ = .32.

Hence, a post hoc test result for hard/applied and soft/pure disciplines indicated that the interaction effect of hard/applied disciplines of JMU and BDU was significant ($\rho < .05$) on academics' practices regarding CI, in which the interaction mean value of JMU was greater than that of BDU by .26. Besides, the interaction effect of soft/pure disciplines of AAU and BDU was also significant ($\rho < .05$), where the interaction mean value of BDU was greater than that of AAU by .56.

In summary, the results suggest that there are significant differences in academic staff's practices regarding CI across the four universities for the hard/applied and soft/pure disciplines, but not for the hard/pure and soft/applied disciplines. This indicates that the relationship between university and CI practices varies depending on the specific combination of hard/soft and pure/applied dimensions of the academic discipline.

Different research findings support (Neumann, Parry, and Becher, 2002; Becher and Trowler; 2001; Tight; 2015) and contradict (Knight, 2004; Altbach and Knight, 2007; Jones and de Wit, 2012) the above findings.

Supporting research findings by Neumann et al. (2002), along with Becher and Trowler (2001), highlight how teaching and research practices vary significantly across academic disciplines, particularly along the hard/soft and pure/applied dimensions. These disciplinary differences shape how academic staff engage with internationalization initiatives like CI, with hard/applied disciplines focusing on practical global outcomes and soft/pure disciplines emphasizing theoretical knowledge. Tight's (2015) review further supports this, suggesting that the variations in CI practices across universities can be attributed to the discipline-specific nature of knowledge production.

Contradicting research findings by Knight (2004) argue that while disciplinary differences exist, internationalization strategies, including CI, tend to be applied broadly across institutions, potentially leading to more consistent CI practices regardless of disciplinary distinctions. Altbach and Knight (2007) further support this view, suggesting that globalization pressures are driving greater uniformity in CI practices across universities, thereby diminishing the impact of the hard/soft and pure/applied distinctions. Similarly, Jones and De Wit (2012) emphasize that institutional factors, such as support for internationalization, play a more significant role in shaping CI practices than disciplinary differences, suggesting that variations in CI practices may stem more from institutional culture than from specific academic disciplines.

4.3.6. Relationship Between Academics' Beliefs and Practices Regarding CI

The other objective of this study was about the relationship between academics' beliefs and their practices regarding CI. Regarding this, the Pearson product-moment correlation (r) result showed that the relationship between academics' beliefs and their practices was negligible, r (415) =.01, $r > 0.05$. This was based on Schober's (2018, p. 1765) suggestion for the absolute value of r (0.00-0.10 = negligible, 0.10-0.39 = weak, 0.40-0.69 = moderate, 0.70-0.89 = strong, 0.90-1.00 = very strong correlations), which was mentioned in the method part. This finding indicated that academics' beliefs did not explain the variability of their practices in a linear manner regarding CI in ERUs. A statistically not significant value of a correlation at α =.05 was indicative of a lack of actual relationship rather than due to chance. The effect size of the correlation (R^2 =.0001) also indicated that about .01%

of the variability of academics' practices was attributed linearly due to the variability of their beliefs.

The findings of this study, concerning the relationship between academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI, align with Borg's (2018) third category of relationships, which describes a disconnect between beliefs and practices. This outcome contrasts with Leask's (2015) conclusion that "academics' beliefs are often strong predictors of their engagement" However, as various researchers in the field have noted, the gap between what academics believe about internationalization and what they actually practice can be attributed to several factors. These include institutional constraints (Green and Mertova, 2016), institutional support (Deardorff et al., 2012), intercultural competence and personal experience (Clifford and Montgomery, 2017), and disciplinary differences (Jones & De Wit, 2012).

4.3.7. The Contribution of Academics' Beliefs and Practices Regarding CI on the Development of Graduates' Employability Attributes in ERUs

To study the contribution of academic beliefs and their practices regarding CI on the development of graduates' employability attributes, multiple standard regression was used. Hence, from the first regression output, which is the *descriptive statistics* table, it was seen that the mean scores are quite different for the different predictors. That means the mean score of the first predictor variable (academics' beliefs) was greater (M = 3.24) than that of the second predictor variable (academics' practices) (M = 2.94).

The second regression output, which is a *correlation result* revealed that there was a negligible but positive correlation between academics' belief mean score and their practice's mean score, r (415) =.01=, r > 0.01; academics' belief mean score and graduates' employability attributes mean score, r (415) =.02=, r > 0.01; but a moderate and positive correlation between academics' practice's mean score and graduates' employability attributes mean score, r (415) =.56=, r < 0.01. This finding indicated that academics' beliefs explain much less of the variability in the development of graduates' employability attributes. The effect size for academics' beliefs (r^2 =.0001) indicated that academics'

beliefs regarding CI accounted for a negligible portion (.01%) of the variability in the development of graduates' employability attributes. However, the effect size for academics' practices (r^2 =.31) indicated that academics' practices regarding CI accounted for a moderate portion (31%) of the variability in the development of graduates' employability attributes.

After correlation results showed positive relationships between academics' practices and the development of graduates' employability attributes, a standard regression was calculated to predict the development of graduates' employability attributes based on the respondents' response mean score of their practices regarding CI. As was seen in the analysis, the results of the regression indicated the two predictors explained 31% of the variance (R^2 =.31, F (2, 412) = 91.83, r < 0.01). It was found that academics' practices regarding CI significantly predicted the development of graduates' employability attributes (β =.56, r <.001), but academics' beliefs were not (β =.02, r >.01).

The results from the interview were discussed hereunder. As perceived by the participants, the results exhibited were two types. The first type of the results which involves the majority of the interview participants, perceived that academic staff's beliefs and practices regarding CI have contributed to the development of graduates' employability attributes. The second type of the result which contains a small proportion of the participants was undecided on the issue and could not identify the contribution or effect of academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI on the development of graduates' employability attributes.

According to the perspective of the first group (majority) of the participants, academics' beliefs and practices matter for the development of graduates in different aspects. They viewed CI as a process and the competence of the graduates as the output. Therefore, the beliefs and practices of academics' regarding CI can have positive or negative contributions to the development of graduates' employability attributes. As per the perspective of the second group (minority) conveyed, they could not identify the contribution of academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI on the development of

graduates' employability attributes. This was because CI was a new phenomenon in their context.

In summary, the majority of interview participants recognized the contribution of academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI to the development of graduates' employability attributes. They saw a direct connection, as the beliefs and practices of academics influence the curriculum and teaching processes, which in turn impact the development of graduates' competencies and employability. This aligns with the argument made by Jones (2013, p.1), who stated that "student support, inclusive pedagogy, and questions of curriculum, whether at home or overseas, are affected by academics, but are rarely the main focus of attention". However, a small proportion of the participants were unable to identify this contribution, as the concept of CI was still new in their context.

Unlike the interview participants, all of the expatriate FGD participants had similar perspectives on the contribution of academics' beliefs and practices of CI to the development of graduates' employability attributes. As argued by the participants, academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI can contribute to developing graduates' employability attributes by promoting a global perspective and fostering intercultural competence, equipping graduates with the necessary knowledge, attitudes, and skills for the global job market.

The participants also suggested the following ways through which academics could contribute to the development of graduates' employability attributes. These were:

Curriculum design: Academics can incorporate relevant and up-to-date knowledge, skills, and competencies required by employers.

Teaching methods: Academics can employ teaching methods that foster the development of employability attributes.

Guidance and mentorship: Academics can provide guidance and mentorship to students, helping them navigate their career paths and develop their employability attributes.

Research and industry engagement: Academics who are actively involved in research and industry collaborations can bring real-world insights and expertise into the classroom.

Assessment methods: Academics can employ diverse assessment strategies to encourage students to develop and showcase their employability skills.

These mentioned findings were incongruence with the British Council (2015, 1; as cited in Bitzer and Withering, 2020, p. 24) report which confirms the importance of program curricula in graduate attribute development: "... the quality of teaching, and teaching methods significantly influences intellectual and personal development and the formation of critical knowledge and skills for working in a diverse society".

The FGD results from the perspectives of international students were akin to that of the expatriates. The international students' FGD concluded that the beliefs and practices of their instructors have contributed to their learning and the development of their employability attributes. However, they mentioned that they do not have a responsible body or office at the university level to organize and assist them, except for the students' representative. They are not aware of the role of the internationalization office, and the university does not seem to organize many events or experience-sharing opportunities for them.

In a nutshell, the expatriate FGD participants had a shared perspective on the significance of academics' beliefs and practices of CI in contributing to the development of graduates' employability attributes. They highlighted various ways in which academics can positively influence this development, such as through curriculum design, teaching methods, guidance and mentorship, research and industry engagement, and assessment methods. This was substantiated by a key finding of the study conducted by Bitzer and Withering (2020, p. 24) which was "the value placed on teaching staff to promote the learning of graduate attributes".

In contrast, the international students expressed a lack of support and awareness of the university's efforts to facilitate their learning and the development of their employability attributes.

4.3.8. Development of Graduates' Employability Attributes in ERUs

The development of graduates' employability attributes from the perspectives of CI was studied in terms of knowledge, attitudes, and skills as perceived by the academics. This was due to the reason that one approach to CI has been to focus on the systematic development of related graduate attributes which emphasize the building of a broad range of *skills*, *knowledge*, and *attitudes* needed by global professionals and citizens (Leask, 2011; as cited in Phan et al, 2019, p. 175).

Based on this, the survey results, as perceived by the academics, indicated that graduating students were moderately equipped with the knowledge of international, intercultural, and/or global elements, but their level of preparedness in terms of attitude and skill was undecided. In this matter, the Higher Education Proclamation (No.1152/2019) emphasized the main objective of the country's higher education system, which is stated as "to prepare graduates with adequate knowledge, skills, and appropriate attitudinal maturity via developing various programs*".* However, according to Tesfamariam and Jeilu (2021, p. 16), the extent of the implementation of policies, strategies, and actions to enhance graduate employability was poor. This was apparent in MoSHE (2020, p. 7) that "the graduate employment rate was planned to be 80% within one year after graduation, but 59% has been achieved".

The interview results indicated the gaps in the development of graduates' employability attributes in ERUs.

The interview results suggested that the academics perceive a gap between the knowledge being imparted through the academic programs and the knowledge required for graduates to function effectively in the job market. Specifically, the result indicated that the instructional process and teaching-learning practices are often below standard, being predominantly teacher-centered and limited to PowerPoint presentations. This traditional, lecture-based approach may not be sufficiently developing the breadth and depth of knowledge needed for graduates to thrive in their future careers. Consistent with this, the World Bank's Enterprise Surveys data for Ethiopia (2015) identifies poorly educated workers as one of the most common business environment obstacles, as identified by

business owners and top managers in 848 firms (Wondwosen, 2018). Comparable to this, it was stated in the policy document that “there are clear complaints about the competency and capabilities of higher education graduates from employers, communities, and industry owners, and there are a lot of failures (poor result) reports on entrance exams for scholarships and job competitions*”* (MoSHE,2020, p. 8). Furthermore, the study conducted by Tesfamariam and Jeilu (2021, p. 1) with this regard also concluded that “the policies, strategies, and actions in place were not satisfactory to enhance the employability of the graduates”. Others illustrated that “integrating GAs into university curricula by itself continues to be problematic and many graduates enter work without having developed the skills that employers value” (Mahon, 2022, p. 5).

The interview results also revealed that the "real practice" in the higher education sector is still highly dominated by a traditional way of doing business, rather than the intended competency-based education approach. This suggests a potential disconnect between the desired attitudinal outcomes (e.g., adaptability, critical thinking, entrepreneurial mindset) and the actual attitudes being cultivated through the current teaching and learning practices.

The results indicated that the continuous assessment practices are perceived and implemented more as "continuous testing" rather than a holistic evaluation of skills development. This points to a potential lack of emphasis on the active application and demonstration of skills (e.g., problem-solving, communication, teamwork) that employers value in graduates.

Overall, the interview results suggested that while the ERUs are attempting to incorporate competency-based education and align with CI practices, the actual implementation appears to be hindered by persistent traditional teaching and assessment methods.

Similarly, the FGD result analysis also identified the status of graduates’ employability attributes. Based on this, the following results were discussed subsequently. The first gap was the skills gap, which includes critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and practical/applied knowledge. The participants perceived that the curricula and teaching methods in universities are overly theoretical and do not adequately develop

these in-demand employability skills. This was evidenced by MoE (2018, p. 53) that "the curricula of HEI are not geared toward the development of employability and other lifelong learning skills among graduates". On the contrary, the global nature of higher education and the drastic expansion of universities in Ethiopia have elevated the issue of graduate employability as a major focus of the country's educational policies. So that the Ethiopian Ministry of Education has now positioned graduate employment rates as a central metric for evaluating the performance and success of universities. Hence, it has set a target that 80% of university graduates must find jobs within one year of graduating (Oumer et al., 2023, p. 41).

The second was the mismatch between the knowledge and skills produced by universities and the needs of the job market. Participants noted that employers reported difficulties finding graduates with the right combination of technical, interpersonal, and professional competencies.

The third was a lack of ability to apply classroom concepts in real-world settings and develop workplace-relevant skills. This was due to the reason that students often lack sufficient opportunities for internships, project-based learning, and other forms of hands-on, experiential education. Weak collaboration between universities and industry partners was also seen as another contributing factor. The fourth was the lack of ability of the graduates to explore career options and prepare for the job search process. In this respect, participants noted insufficient career counseling and professional development support for students that could hamper their ability to explore career options and prepare for the job search process. The above-mentioned limitations were also recognized and stated as a way forward by the Education and Development Roadmap saying that "there is a need to produce university graduates with balanced skills of cognitive and non-cognitive skills and having higher-order thinking skills such as critical, creative and problem-solving thinking, and a high degree of computer literacy" (MoE, 2018, p. 53).

In summary, the focus group findings point to a multifaceted challenge in developing the employability attributes of graduates in Ethiopian research universities. In line with this, Cross and Ndofirepi (2017, p. 3) as cited in Ambrose (2020, p. 183) argue, that there are

still no good African universities that serve the needs and equip graduates with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for transforming their societies. It might be for this reason that Tesfamariam and Jeilu (2021, p. 2) articulated that “skills, knowledge, and personal attributes the graduates possess have always been questioned by parents, employers, and customers”. They offered their justification for focusing on higher education saying that “currently higher education graduate unemployment and low success in the labor market is increasing and becoming a serious problem in Ethiopia”.

Hence, addressing these issues will likely require a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach involving curriculum reform, stronger university-industry collaboration, and enhanced career support services for students.

4.3.9. Potential “Blockers” and “Enablers" for CI in ERUs

Identifying the potential "blockers" and "enablers" of CI in ERUs was the final, but not the least important, objective of this study. Hence, based on the survey results, the following were considered very important enablers for CI in ERUs: institutional policy, recognition and reward, workload allocation, professional development, assistance, experts, collaborations, support and resources, a culturally diverse course or program team, committed and informed leaders, international experience and personal commitment, and an international strategy.

Regarding the potential “blockers”, the following were considered moderately significant:

- Lack of (or poor communication of) institutional vision and policy
- Lack of a strategy to ensure that policies are enacted
- Low priority of internationalizing the curriculum
- Internationalizing the curriculum not being considered important in the discipline
- Not considering internationalization of the curriculum as part of the workload
- Insufficient funding and support
- Leaders who are not committed or informed
- A discourse of marketization and commercialization of education
- A strategy that in practice is focused primarily on income generation

- Disciplinary "mindsets" or "culture" that is resistant to change"

These lists of findings were congruent with the findings of Knight (2003) as cited in Kasenene (2011). However, according to Kasenene (2011, p. 78) and Ambrose (2020, p. 182), no challenge has bedeviled the internationalization of higher education by African institutions of higher learning to the extent to which their funding has done so. In other studies, as Gwakwa (2016) reported, bureaucracy was perceived as the leading of the blockers.

The interview results also revealed similar factors as potential blockers and enablers of CI. Hence, some of them are discussed below.

i. Enablers:

- **Institutional commitment**: participants witnessed that some ERUs have demonstrated a strong institutional commitment to internationalizing their curricula, with strategic plans and dedicated resources to support these efforts.
- **Collaborative partnerships**: According to the participants, many ERUs have established academic and research collaborations with international institutions, enabling the exchange of knowledge, faculty, and curriculum design.
- **Language proficiency**: As participants perceived, increased proficiency in English, the primary language of international academic discourse, among faculty and students in Ethiopia has facilitated curriculum internationalization.
- **Student demand**: There is a growing demand from Ethiopian students for more globally relevant and internationally recognized academic programs and qualifications.
- **Funding opportunities**: The availability of funding from international donors and development agencies has supported CI initiatives in some ERUs.

ii. Blockers:

- **Lack of comprehensive policies**: Many ERUs lack comprehensive policies and guidelines to systematically integrate international perspectives and content into their curricula.

- **Resistance to change**: Entrenched academic traditions and organizational cultures in some ERUs may be resistant to the adoption of new, internationally-oriented teaching and learning approaches.
- **Language barriers**: Limited English proficiency among faculty and students in some institutions can hinder the effective delivery and engagement with internationally focused curriculum content.
- **Resource constraints**: Financial and human resource limitations in certain ERUs can constrain their ability to develop, implement, and sustain internationalized curricula.
- **Quality assurance challenges**: Robust quality assurance mechanisms to ensure the relevance and academic rigor of internationalized curricula may be lacking in some ERUs.
- **Contextual relevance**: Striking a balance between integrating international perspectives and maintaining contextual relevance to Ethiopian educational and societal needs can be a significant challenge.

These findings corroborate the findings of Kaplan (2002), Mazzarol & Soutar (2002), Teichler (2004), Agnew & Smith (2013), and Jansen & Meer (2017).

The FGD results of the expatriate academics and international students were also discussed as follows. Both groups of the FGD participants disclosed similar results. However, the international students emphasized the language barrier as the major blocker to CI. Whereas, the expatriates provided a more comprehensive list of "blockers". The results indicated that Amharic, a local language, was dominantly used during classroom interactions and outside the classroom. This dominance of the local language was seen as a serious potential obstacle to incorporating international content into the curriculum.

Since, the reason is that English is the common language used in international academic settings, so the prevalence of the local language creates a mismatch. The participants noted that the language proficiency, particularly in English, among both faculty and students was a concern. This lack of English proficiency was identified as a potential blocker to effectively incorporating international content. English is the lingua franca in international

academia, so the limited English skills of both instructors and students posed a significant challenge.

Overall, the international students reported that the language barrier, including both the instructional language and the overall culture, were major problems they encountered. They specifically highlighted that "almost all academic staff use Amharic most of their instructional time in the classroom." This heavy reliance on the local language by the faculty made it very difficult for the international students to communicate well. Another international student pointed out that the faculty often used their mother tongue (Amharic) to explain the content, assuming all students could understand it. Due to the language barrier, the international students complained that their interactions with the academic staff and local peers were very limited. The lack of a common language of instruction and communication severely hindered their ability to engage with the university community.

The expatriates, while acknowledging the language barrier as a "blocker" to incorporating international content, saw it as one of several interconnected factors. They also identified potential "enablers" such as leadership, faculty development, international partnerships, and support services for international students. This suggests the expatriates had a more holistic view of the challenges and opportunities in addressing the language barrier and incorporating international content.

In summary, the language barrier emerged as a central and acute challenge, particularly from the international student's perspective, as it permeated various aspects of their academic experience and engagement. Addressing this language divide appears to be a critical step in facilitating the incorporation of international content into the curriculum.

4.4. Towards Model Development for CI in Universities

Based on the data analysis and discussion, the researcher developed a model called the “Glocalization Model” for CI in ERUs. The "Glocalization Model” for CI in universities offers a comprehensive framework for integrating global and local educational perspectives within university curricula. This model emphasizes a balanced approach

where global standards and competencies are harmonized with local relevance and cultural context. The model reflects the interaction between globalization and localization, making it particularly relevant in the Ethiopian context. Wondwosen (2019, p. 1) highlighted Ethiopia as a case where the tension between internationalization and 'Ethiopianisation' is evident. He also emphasized that addressing the challenges posed by these competing policy frameworks is essential as we move forward, balancing the inevitable forces of internationalization with the ongoing push for Ethiopianisation. In supporting this, Patel and Lynch (2013), as cited in Diki (2020), also pointed out that a shift in focus to *glocalizing* higher education, an alternative to the traditional notion of internationalization, would better enable the symbiotic exchange of knowledge among all partners.

By positioning CI at its core, the model promotes the adoption of global best practices while ensuring that educational content addresses the unique needs of the local environment. It advocates for cross-cultural pedagogy, dynamic collaborations, and robust university ecosystems that support policy alignment, institutional resources, and community engagement. This approach not only equips students with the skills necessary for global citizenship but also fosters a deep connection with their immediate surroundings, creating graduates who are both internationally adept and locally grounded. The model is shown in figure 12.

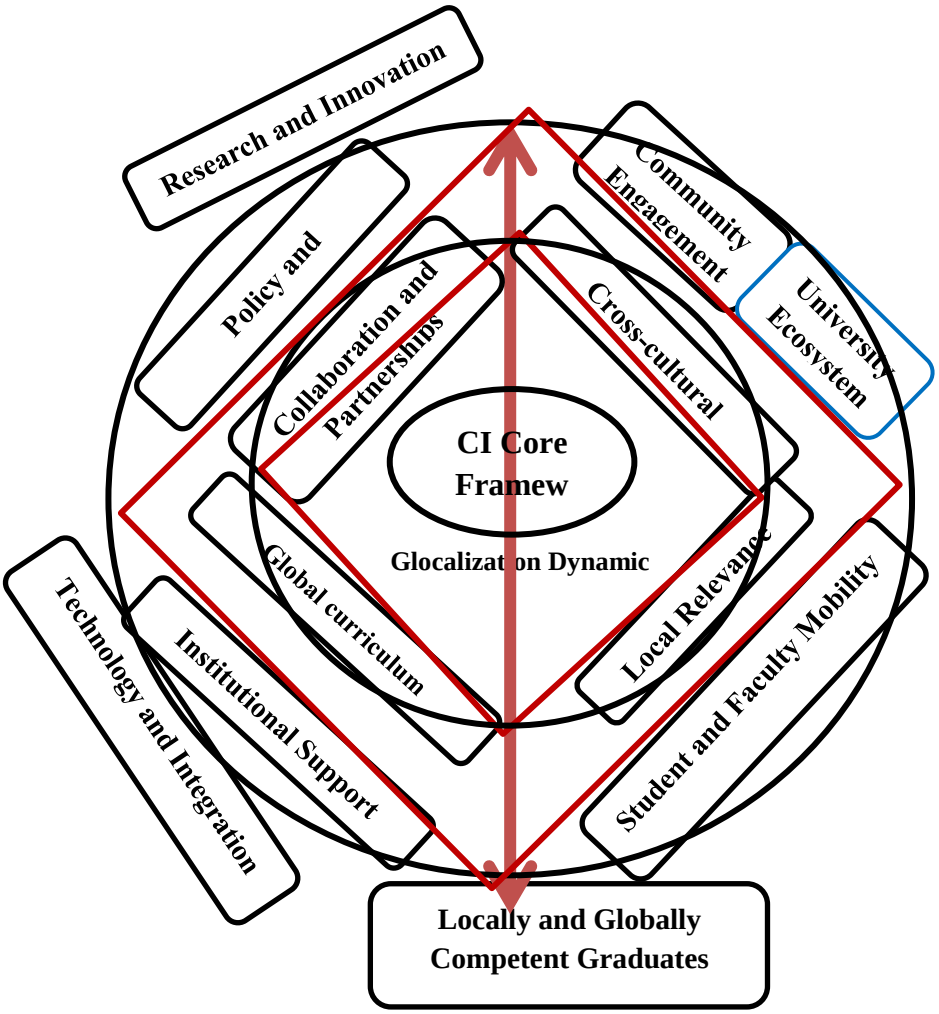


Figure 12: Glocalization Model for CI in RUs developed by the Author (2024)

The above diagram is described as follows:

1. Central Circle - CI Core Framework

The central circle represents the core idea of CI. It symbolizes the foundation of the model, which integrates both local and global educational needs and values.

2. Middle Ring - Glocalization Dynamics

The ring consists of four segments around the core:

Global Curriculum Standards: Represents the integration of global education standards, international competencies, and skills that prepare students for global citizenship.

Local Relevance: Emphasizes the adaptation of the curriculum to address local cultural, economic, and societal needs, ensuring that it is relevant to the student's immediate environment.

Cross-cultural Pedagogy: Incorporates diverse teaching methods that draw from both global best practices and local educational traditions, promoting a balanced approach to education.

Collaboration and Partnerships: This segment highlights international collaborations with universities and organizations, while also fostering partnerships with local institutions and communities to strengthen both global and local ties.

3. Outer Ring - University Ecosystem

This outer ring includes various factors that support the implementation of glocalized CI within universities:

Policy and Governance: Represent university policies that support CI and align with both global education standards and local governance regulations.

Institutional Support: Reflects the availability of resources (funding, training, and administrative support) for CI initiatives.

Student and Faculty Mobility: This aspect covers student exchange programs, faculty internationalization, and the recruitment of diverse international students and staff.

Community Engagement: Focuses on the university's outreach to local communities and industries, emphasizing the practical application of CI practices to address local challenges while aligning with global trends.

4. Directional Arrows

Inward Arrows: Indicate how global and local influences are incorporated into the curriculum through glocalization principles.

Outward Arrows: Show the dissemination of internationalized curricula to students, who then contribute to both local and global communities, embodying the outcomes of a glocalized education.

5. Supporting Components

Research & Innovation: Positioned at the top, indicating how research supports continuous improvement of CI practices and helps balance global trends with local innovations.

Technology Integration: Positioned at the bottom, symbolizing the role of digital technologies in facilitating global learning experiences while also supporting local educational delivery.

In a nutshell, this model provides a balanced approach to curriculum internationalization by integrating both global standards and local relevance. At its core, it emphasizes a curriculum that is internationally competitive yet locally applicable, equipping students with the skills they need to thrive in both global and local contexts. The model also underscores the importance of collaboration across global and local spheres, supported by policies, mobility, and engagement with the broader community. The dynamic interaction between these elements allows RUs to deliver education that is both globally informed and locally grounded, fostering a globally competent yet community-connected graduate profile.

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapters have set the context, reviewed the relevant literature, and detailed the research methodology. In Chapter 4, the researcher presented the data collected using the methods outlined in Chapter 3. This chapter summarizes the findings, draws conclusions based on the study, and offers recommendations for Ethiopian Research Universities (ERUs), the government, and future research in this area.

5.1. Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the status of academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI and its contribution to the development of graduates' employability attributes. Therefore, the researcher used this study to explore the representations of certain demographic variables of academics from the perspective of CI among selected ERUs, as well as the beliefs and practices of academic staff regarding CI, and to examine any significant correlations between academics' beliefs and practices and the development of graduates' employability attributes. Moreover, the study aimed to identify whether or not there were mean differences among the four selected ERUs and four academic disciplines regarding academics' beliefs and practices concerning CI. In addition, the study examined the potential "blockers" and "enablers" of CI in ERUs.

To achieve this purpose, the study employed a convergent parallel mixed-method design, in which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected concurrently using instruments such as questionnaires, open-ended items, interviews, FGDs, observations, and document analysis. The quantitative data were obtained from a randomly selected sample of 415 respondents (64 from hard/pure disciplines, 212 from hard/applied, 76 from soft/applied, and 63 from soft/pure disciplines) across four sample ERUs (i.e., RU1, RU2, RU3, and RU4). The qualitative data were gathered from 30 purposively selected participants for interviews and 40 participants (24 international students and 16 expatriate academics) for FGDs. Additionally, 51 respondents to the questionnaire responded to the open-ended items included at the end of each questionnaire.

The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, and standard deviations, as well as inferential statistics like Chi-square tests, Cramer's V tests, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (r), one-way and two-way ANOVAs, and standard regression. The qualitative data from the five instruments were analyzed using thematic analysis, from which five major themes emerged. Chapter Four presented and analyzed the two data sets (i.e., quantitative and qualitative) separately and discussed the merged results. Based on the outcomes of these analyses and the discussions in the respective sections, summaries of the major findings are presented below.

The merged results of the study revealed the following major findings.

1. Demographic representations of academics among universities

The study on academic staff's demographic distribution at four ERUs revealed a nuanced picture of representation and diversity. Quantitatively, minor differences were found in participant proportions across the universities, with Jimma University having the highest number of respondents. Most respondents (83.9%) were male, highlighting significant gender imbalances despite recent efforts to improve gender equity through affirmative action. Women, though increasing in number, remain underrepresented in academic and leadership positions.

Discipline-wise, most respondents were from hard/applied fields like engineering and technology, reflecting the country's educational priorities. A similar proportion of respondents came from hard/pure and soft/pure disciplines. Nationality-wise, 88.2% of the respondents were Ethiopian, with non-Ethiopians, mostly Indians, representing a small minority. This limited international representation may hinder global exposure and curriculum internationalization, a point noted in previous studies on the challenges of attracting foreign faculty to Ethiopia.

Most respondents had intercultural experience (77.6%) but lacked international experience (74%), a trend influenced by brain drain both within Ethiopia and internationally. Academics tend to migrate to better-established universities or leave the country altogether. The majority of respondents (87.2%) were engaged in teaching without additional

responsibilities, while the academic rank distribution showed a sharp decline from the lower ranks (lecturer at 50.8%) to the higher ranks (full professor at 7%).

Statistically, the chi-square tests revealed significant differences in the distribution of disciplines and academic ranks, but the effect sizes were small to medium. No significant differences were found in terms of sex, nationality, or academic positions among the universities, suggesting common challenges across the board.

Qualitative findings echoed the quantitative results, pointing to persistent issues with gender disparity, limited international diversity, and a predominance of junior academic staff. These challenges highlight the need for targeted action to foster greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in Ethiopian higher education.

2. Academics' beliefs regarding the importance of CI

The major findings reveal that academics at Ethiopian Research Universities (ERUs) largely support the internationalization of curricula (CI). Quantitative data shows that most respondents agree with the belief that internationalization is integral, positioning them on the right side of Ellingboe's Great Divide. These academics view curriculum as encompassing teaching methodology and learning activities, not just content. This reflects a shift towards seeing internationalization as a fundamental aspect of curriculum development.

Qualitative data, including open-ended responses, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGD), reinforces these findings. Most participants believe in the importance of CI, emphasizing the need to balance global and local perspectives. They acknowledge the influence of globalization and argue that internationalization is essential for preparing students for both national and global labor markets. However, participants also expressed concerns about the power imbalances between the Global North and South and the tension between indigenization and internationalization.

Despite some skepticism, particularly regarding the risks of homogenization and brain drain, the majority believe that CI is a necessary response to globalization. Some participants advocate for "brain circulation" as a counter to brain drain, suggesting that

migration can benefit both home and host countries. Overall, the findings highlight a broad consensus among ERU academics on the importance of internationalizing curricula, with a focus on maintaining a balance between global influences and local context.

3. **Mean differences among groups on beliefs about CI**

The study aimed to assess whether significant differences existed among academic staff from various disciplines and universities regarding their beliefs about curriculum internationalization (CI). Quantitatively, the two-way ANOVA revealed no significant main effects for either university or discipline on academics' beliefs about CI. The analysis showed that the differences in mean values among the four disciplines and four universities were minimal and not statistically significant, with $F (3, 399) = .29$, $p = .836$ for universities, and $F (3, 399) = .38$, $p = .768$ for disciplines. Additionally, the combined effect of university and discipline on beliefs about CI was also non-significant, $F (9, 399) = .99$, $p = .442$.

These findings suggest that academics across different disciplines and institutions generally share similar beliefs regarding the importance and feasibility of internationalizing the curriculum. The results diverge from previous studies, such as Jones (2014) and Leask (2015), which suggested that disciplines have distinct cultures and values, often leading to varying rationales for CI. For instance, Leask (2015) posited that academics in hard/pure disciplines tend to be less open to CI compared to those in soft/applied disciplines. However, the current study did not support this distinction, indicating that academics in both hard/pure and soft/applied disciplines in Ethiopian research universities largely agree on the value of CI.

Qualitatively, this consensus might be attributed to the fact that the sampled institutions were all research universities, which likely have similar experiences and views regarding CI. This contrasts with findings from other studies, such as Leask and Bridge (2013), which focused on single institutions or specific disciplinary case studies, highlighting more pronounced differences.

Overall, the study suggests a shared belief in the importance of internationalization across disciplines and universities, despite theoretical expectations of variability based on disciplinary cultures.

4. **Academics' practices regarding CI in ERUs**

Survey results indicated that the majority of academics were unsure whether international, intercultural, or global elements were integrated into their courses' learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessments. Although there was some integration of these dimensions into course content, they were rarely present in campus life activities.

From the interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs), it was clear that internationalization, particularly CI, is increasingly seen as a priority in Ethiopian universities. However, the focus has been more on international partnerships and collaborations (internationalization abroad) rather than incorporating international elements into the curriculum (internationalization at home). This aligns with previous studies indicating that internationalization in Ethiopia has historically lacked clear policies and strategies, though recent national policies are beginning to prioritize it.

Ethiopian universities have developed strategic plans that emphasize their vision of becoming world-class institutions. These plans indicate that internationalization is a key strategy, though actual practices often lag behind policy commitments. For instance, some CI activities, such as integrating international readings and case studies into curricula, offering study abroad programs, and faculty exchanges, have begun. However, the practices are still in their infancy and are not well organized.

Despite policy statements promoting CI, the actual practice remains inconsistent. Many academics use local languages instead of English in the classroom, despite the policy that English should be the medium of instruction. This "code-switching" is partly due to limited English proficiency among both academics and students, which hinders ERUs' ability to compete globally.

A review of curricula revealed a lack of intentionality in incorporating international, intercultural, or global perspectives into learning outcomes (LOs), content, teaching, and

assessments. Most courses focus on lower-order cognitive skills (e.g., recalling facts) rather than higher-order skills (e.g., critical thinking). Additionally, the curriculum is primarily technical or professional, with little attention to 21st-century soft skills or global competencies. Assessment methods are predominantly traditional exams, with little variation across courses.

Student support services for international students, such as language assistance and cultural adjustment programs, were found to be insufficient. While some universities have offices dedicated to CI, these services are not active enough to meet the needs of international students. This echoes findings from other studies that international students often face challenges adapting to different educational systems.

The campus environment also showed limited cross-cultural interaction, with students and staff primarily grouping based on ethnicity, religion, or region. This has created a sense of division that further impedes the development of a more internationally and culturally integrated academic environment.

In general, while there is growing awareness and some progress toward CI at ERUs, the overall implementation is fragmented and inconsistent. National policies have recently begun to emphasize internationalization, but the actual practices in universities, particularly regarding curriculum development, remain traditional and lack comprehensive integration of international perspectives. Efforts to improve CI, such as strategic partnerships and curriculum reforms, show promise, but sustained efforts and clearer alignment between policy and practice are necessary to fully realize the vision of internationally competitive ERUs.

5. **Mean differences among groups on CI practices**

The major findings of the study on curriculum internationalization (CI) practices among Ethiopian universities (ERUs) reveal that disciplinary differences significantly influence academics' engagement with CI, while institutional differences play a smaller role. The two-way ANOVA results showed no significant main effect for universities ($F(3, 399) = 1.68$, $p = .170$, partial $\eta 2 = .01$), meaning that the institution itself does not strongly

influence CI practices. However, there was a significant main effect for discipline ($F(3, 399) = 5.12$, $p = .002$, partial $\eta 2 = .04$), indicating that the field of study has a meaningful impact on how CI is implemented.

Furthermore, the interaction between universities and disciplines was also significant ($F(9, 399) = 2.66$, $p = .005$, partial $\eta 2 = .06$), suggesting that the relationship between universities and CI practices varies depending on the discipline. Post hoc tests highlighted significant differences in CI practices between universities in the hard/applied and soft/pure disciplines but not in the hard/pure and soft/applied ones. For example, RU2 had a greater mean score in the hard/applied disciplines than RU4, and RU4 had a higher mean score than RU1 in the soft/pure disciplines.

These findings align with earlier research by Neumann et al. (2002), which emphasized how CI practices differ across academic disciplines, particularly in their hard/soft and pure/applied dimensions. Disciplines like hard/applied focus on global practical outcomes, while soft/pure emphasizes theoretical knowledge. However, opposing views from Knight (2004) and Altbach and Knight (2007) suggest that internationalization strategies tend to be applied broadly, leading to more uniform CI practices across institutions regardless of discipline.

In summary, while CI practices vary based on discipline, they are less influenced by the institution itself, with specific differences emerging primarily between hard/applied and soft/pure disciplines. These findings indicate that academic disciplines, more than universities, shape how CI is practiced in Ethiopian universities.

6. **Relationship between academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI:**

The findings regarding the relationship between academics' beliefs and their practices concerning curriculum internationalization (CI) reveal a negligible correlation. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis showed a very weak relationship between academics' beliefs and their actual CI practices ($r(415) = .01$, $r > 0.05$), indicating that beliefs do not predict practices in a linear way within Ethiopian research universities (ERUs). The effect

size (R^2 = .0001) suggests that only .01% of the variability in CI practices can be attributed to beliefs, further underscoring the minimal connection.

These results align with Borg's (2018) third category, which describes a disconnect between beliefs and practices. This contradicts Leask's (2015) argument that beliefs are strong predictors of engagement in internationalization. Qualitative insights from previous studies suggest that this gap may be due to various external factors, such as institutional constraints (Green & Mertova, 2016), lack of institutional support (Deardorff et al., 2012), and personal factors like intercultural competence and experience (Clifford & Montgomery, 2017). Disciplinary differences (Jones & De Wit, 2012) also play a role, indicating that even when academics believe in the value of CI, their ability to implement it in practice may be limited by external and contextual influences.

In summary, the study finds that while academics may hold certain beliefs about CI, these beliefs do not significantly translate into their actual CI practices, likely due to institutional and personal factors that hinder the application of their beliefs.

7. **The contribution of academics' beliefs and practices regarding CI on the development of graduates' employability attributes in ERUs**

The study explored how academics' beliefs and practices regarding curriculum internationalization (CI) contributed to the development of graduates' employability attributes in Ethiopian research universities (ERUs).

Quantitative results revealed that academics' practices regarding CI significantly impacted graduates' employability, while their beliefs had little effect. From the multiple regression analysis, it was found that academics' practices regarding CI accounted for 31% of the variability in graduates' employability attributes (R^2 = .31), indicating a moderate effect. However, academics' beliefs accounted for a negligible portion (0.01%) of this variability. While the mean scores showed that academics' beliefs (M = 3.24) were higher than their practices (M = 2.94), the practices had a stronger correlation with graduates' employability attributes (r = .56) compared to beliefs (r = .02).

Qualitative findings from interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) complemented the quantitative results. The majority of interview participants recognized that academics' CI beliefs and practices positively influenced graduates' employability. They viewed CI as integral to fostering global perspectives and intercultural competencies in graduates. The expatriate FGDs supported this view, emphasizing the role of academics in shaping employability attributes through curriculum design, teaching methods, guidance, and mentorship. However, a minority of interviewees were undecided, primarily because CI was new to their context. Additionally, international students expressed dissatisfaction, noting a lack of institutional support and events to aid in their employability development, despite recognizing the contributions of their instructors.

Overall, the study concluded that academics' practices regarding CI play a significant role in developing graduates' employability attributes, while their beliefs have a minimal impact. This reflects the importance of practical engagement with CI over mere belief in its value.

8. **Development of graduates' employability attributes in ERUs**

The study on the development of graduates' employability attributes in Ethiopian Research Universities (ERUs) revealed a complex landscape where moderate progress has been made in equipping students with international and intercultural knowledge, but significant gaps remain in developing the attitudes and skills necessary for the job market.

Quantitative survey results showed that while academics perceived graduates as moderately prepared for global knowledge, they were uncertain about the development of students' attitudes and skills. The regression of employability rates demonstrated that only 59% of graduates found employment within a year, far below the government's 80% target. These gaps were further corroborated by interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs), which revealed a mismatch between academic programs and the skills demanded by the job market.

Qualitative data from interviews highlighted that teaching practices were predominantly traditional and lecture-based, often failing to develop the practical skills and critical

attitudes required for employability. Academics expressed concern that graduates lacked critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and teamwork skills, aligning with employer complaints about poorly prepared graduates. Furthermore, continuous assessment was often limited to testing, rather than evaluating practical skills, further hindering the development of workplace competencies.

FGDs echoed these findings, emphasizing that the curricula are overly theoretical and insufficiently aligned with industry needs. Participants noted a lack of opportunities for experiential learning, such as internships and project-based education, which are crucial for translating academic knowledge into real-world skills. They also identified weak collaboration between universities and industries as a barrier to enhancing graduates' employability. Additionally, students faced inadequate career counseling and professional development support, which hindered their ability to explore career options and prepare for job searches.

In summary, the study revealed that while ERUs have taken steps to develop graduates' employability attributes, particularly in global knowledge, they struggle with implementing competency-based education that effectively prepares students for the job market. The findings suggest the need for curriculum reforms, improved teaching methods, stronger university-industry partnerships, and enhanced career support services to bridge the gap between academic training and labor market demands.

9. **Potential ‘blockers’ and ‘enablers’ for CI in ERUs**

The study on potential "blockers" and "enablers" for curriculum internationalization (CI) in Ethiopian Research Universities (ERUs) revealed both opportunities and challenges in advancing CI.

Enablers:

Institutional policy & commitment: Institutional policies, recognition, reward systems, and committed leadership were highlighted as critical enablers for CI. Many ERUs have demonstrated commitment to CI by developing strategic plans, allocating resources, and fostering international collaborations.

Collaborative partnerships: Established academic and research partnerships with international institutions to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, curriculum design, and faculty development, promoting CI efforts.

Language proficiency & student demand: Growing proficiency in English among faculty and students and increasing student demand for globally relevant programs were seen as enablers that support CI efforts.

Funding opportunities: International funding sources, such as development agencies and donors, were crucial in supporting CI initiatives.

Personal commitment & international experience: Personal commitment from faculty and leadership with international exposure further bolstered CI integration.

Blockers:

Lack of comprehensive policies & strategy: The absence of comprehensive CI policies and poor communication of institutional vision hindered systematic efforts to integrate international perspectives into the curriculum.

Resistance to change & organizational culture: Entrenched academic traditions and a lack of priority placed on internationalizing the curriculum resulted in resistance to new teaching methods and content.

Language barriers: A dominant language barrier, especially limited English proficiency among both students and faculty, emerged as a major blocker. The use of Amharic, the local language, in instruction created a disconnect from global academic standards and posed a significant challenge for international students.

Resource constraints & funding issues: Financial and human resource limitations hindered the development and sustainability of CI, with inadequate funding and support cited as barriers.

Quality assurance & contextual relevance: Challenges in ensuring the quality and relevance of internationalized curricula while balancing local educational needs were identified as blockers.

The marketization of education: A focus on commercialization and income generation over educational quality was seen as a further impediment to CI.

Qualitative Insights:

Interviews: Academics highlighted both enablers like leadership commitment and collaborative partnerships, as well as blockers like resistance to change, resource constraints, and the dominance of traditional teaching methods.

Focus group discussions (FGDs): International students expressed that language barriers were the most significant blocker, particularly the extensive use of Amharic in the classroom, which hindered their academic integration. Expatriates pointed to a more holistic set of blockers, including insufficient English proficiency, inadequate institutional policies, and limited support systems for international students.

In summary, while ERUs have several enablers to promote CI, including institutional commitment, international partnerships, and growing demand for global content, substantial barriers remain. The most prominent challenges are language barriers, resistance to change, and resource constraints, particularly funding. Addressing these issues, especially the language divide is critical to enhancing CI in ERUs.

5.2. Conclusions

In this section, the conclusions derived from the major findings of the study were presented in line with the basic research questions. Hence, the study on CI in ERUs highlighted the following key conclusions:

1. **Demographic representation**: There is a notable gender imbalance in the academic staff, with a predominance of males and an underrepresentation of women in senior roles. Most academics are Ethiopian, with limited international diversity, impacting global exposure and CI. Although many academics have

intercultural experience, international experience is less common due to brain drain. The distribution of academic ranks shows a concentration of junior staff, pointing to potential challenges in leadership and curriculum development.

2. **Beliefs about CI**: Academics generally recognize the importance of CI, viewing it as essential for preparing students for global and national job markets. They emphasize the need to balance global and local perspectives, though concerns about homogenization and brain drain persist. There is broad agreement on the value of CI, despite some skepticism about its implementation and impact.
3. **Mean differences in CI beliefs**: Academics across different disciplines and universities in ERUs share similar beliefs about CI. No significant differences were found in beliefs based on university or discipline, suggesting a consensus on the importance of CI despite varying disciplinary cultures.
4. **CI practices**: While there is growing awareness and some progress toward CI, the implementation remains inconsistent. The focus has largely been on international partnerships rather than integrating international elements into the curriculum. Issues such as limited English proficiency, traditional teaching methods, and inadequate student support services hinder effective CI.
5. **Disciplinary differences in CI practices**: CI practices vary significantly across disciplines, with hard/applied disciplines showing more engagement with CI compared to soft/pure disciplines. This variation suggests that academic disciplines influence the extent and nature of CI practices, with less impact from institutional differences.
6. **Beliefs vs. practices:** There is a weak correlation between academics' beliefs and their CI practices. This disconnect suggests that institutional constraints, lack of support, and personal factors may prevent beliefs from translating into practice.
7. **Contribution of academics' beliefs and practices for graduates' employability**: Academics' CI practices significantly contribute to graduates' employability, whereas their beliefs have minimal contribution. Effective CI practices contribute to developing global competencies and employability attributes in graduates, highlighting the importance of practical engagement with CI.

8. **Development of employability attributes**: Despite some progress, there are gaps in preparing students for the job market. Traditional teaching and assessment methods and limited practical skills development hinder graduates' employability. There is a need for curriculum reforms, better industry partnerships, and improved career support services.
9. **Blockers and enablers for CI**: Key enablers include institutional commitment, international partnerships, and growing language proficiency. Major blockers are language barriers, resistance to change, and resource constraints. Addressing these blockers, especially language issues, is crucial for advancing CI in ERUs.

In summary, while ERUs demonstrate some commitment and progress toward CI, significant barriers remain. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort to align policies with practices, enhance language proficiency, and improve support systems to fully realize the benefits of curriculum internationalization.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the major conclusions reached in section 5.2., recommendations were forwarded for EPUs, for the government, and for future research.

5.3.1. Recommendations for ERUs and the Government

1. **Addressing gender imbalances:**

Universities: Should implement mentorship and leadership programs specifically for female academics to support their career advancement. Encourage the development of policies that actively promote gender equity in hiring and promotions.

Government: Should introduce national policies that provide incentives for universities to increase female representation in senior academic and administrative positions. Support initiatives aimed at reducing gender disparity in higher education through targeted funding and training programs.

2. Enhancing local and international diversity:

Universities: Should develop strategic plans to provide opportunities for intercultural and international interactions among academics and students. Should also develop strategic plans to attract and retain international faculty and students. Establish partnerships with foreign institutions to facilitate faculty exchanges and collaborative research projects.

Government: Should provide funding and support for international recruitment campaigns and faculty exchange programs. Streamline visa and work permit processes to make it easier for international academics to work in Ethiopia.

3. Aligning beliefs with practices in CI:

Universities: Should develop and implement comprehensive CI policies that bridge the gap between beliefs and practices. Integrate intercultural and international perspectives into curricula and ensure that teaching and assessment methods reflect these perspectives.

Government: Should support universities in creating and adopting CI frameworks through grants and policy incentives. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of CI policies to ensure alignment with educational goals.

4. Improving CI practices across disciplines:

Universities: Should foster interdisciplinary collaboration to promote CI across all academic disciplines. Share best practices and successful CI models between departments and institutions.

Government: Should encourage and fund interdisciplinary research projects and CI initiatives that span multiple disciplines. Promote best practice sharing and collaboration among universities through national conferences and workshops.

5. Enhancing curriculum and teaching methods:

Universities: Should revise curricula to include international and intercultural perspectives. Adopt innovative teaching methods that emphasize global competencies and practical skills. Increase opportunities for experiential learning, such as internships and project-based education.

Government: Should support curriculum reforms that align with global standards and labor market needs. Provide funding for faculty training in modern pedagogical methods and curriculum development.

6. Bridging the gap between academia and industry:

Universities: Should strengthen partnerships with industries to ensure that curricula align with job market demands. Develop career services that offer career counseling, internships, and job placement support.

Government: Should facilitate industry-university partnerships by providing incentives for collaborative projects. Implement policies that encourage industries to contribute to curriculum development and student training.

7. Addressing language barriers:

Universities: Should promote English language proficiency among students and faculty. Offer language support services and training programs to improve academic English skills.

Government: Should support language proficiency programs and provide resources for universities to enhance their English language capabilities. Address language barriers in higher education policy to facilitate better integration of international students.

8. **Improving support services:**

Universities: Should develop comprehensive support services for both domestic and international students, including orientation programs, co-curricular and club activities, language assistance, and cultural adjustment resources.

Government: This should ensure that policies and funding are in place to support the integration of intercultural and international dimensions in the campus environment. Monitor and address challenges faced by both domestic and international students through regular feedback and assessment.

9. Developing a clear CI strategy:

Universities: Should establish clear CI strategies and action plans with measurable objectives and outcomes. Regularly review and update these plans to ensure they meet evolving needs and standards.

Government: Should provide guidelines and support for universities to develop and implement CI strategies. Evaluate and incentivize the progress of CI integration across institutions.

10. Enhancing quality assurance for CI:

Universities: Should develop robust quality assurance mechanisms to evaluate and ensure the effectiveness of CI practices. Incorporate feedback from stakeholders to continuously improve CI efforts.

Government: Should create a framework for evaluating and accrediting CI practices in universities. Support institutions in establishing quality assurance systems that align with international standards.

These recommendations aim to address the identified challenges and leverage the opportunities to advance CI and overall academic excellence in ERUs.

5.3.2. Recommendations for Future Research

While the researcher acknowledges the strengths of this study, he does not claim it is without flaws. Consequently, there are limitations that future research can address. Below are some of the study's strengths, limitations, and implications for future research:

Regarding its strengths, the study benefited from a comprehensive approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a well-rounded analysis of CI beliefs and practices. By including data from multiple ERUs, it offered a diverse perspective on CI across various institutions. This broad scope is particularly relevant as it addresses current issues such as gender imbalances, international diversity, and curriculum alignment, which are crucial for improving higher education. The thorough examination of demographic distributions, academics' beliefs, and practices about CI further enriched the findings, offering valuable insights into how CI contributes to graduates' employability. The dual use of quantitative and qualitative data ensures a nuanced understanding of CI beliefs and practices and their impact on job market readiness.

Despite its strengths, the study had several limitations. The generalizability of the findings may be constrained, as they might not apply to all universities in Ethiopia or other contexts outside the study's scope. Potential biases in self-reported data from surveys and interviews

could affect the accuracy of the results. Additionally, the study provides only a snapshot in time without tracking changes over a longer period, limiting insights into evolving trends. The research is also restricted to a specific sample of ERUs, which may not fully represent the broader higher education landscape. Besides, the other wing of the universities, the supportive staff did not participate as the source of data because the study primarily focused on the academic staff.

Hence, the following are the implications for future research:

Future research should aim to expand the sample diversity by including a wider range of institutions, such as non-research universities, to enhance generalizability. Longitudinal studies are needed to track CI practices and their effects over time, providing a better understanding of long-term trends and changes. Detailed case studies on specific universities could offer deeper insights into successful practices and challenges. Investigating how external factors, such as policy changes and global trends, influence CI practices and their effectiveness would also be valuable. Additionally, research should focus on practical strategies to overcome identified limitations and improve CI implementation. A broader contextual analysis and evaluation of current policies and practices related to CI would help propose recommendations for enhancing implementation at both institutional and national levels.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire for Academics

Haramaya University

Postgraduate Program Directorate

HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

A Questionnaire to be filled in by Academic Staff Members

Dear Respondents,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather data for the research entitled "**Academics' Beliefs and Practices Regarding Curriculum Internationalization in Ethiopian Public**

Universities: Implications for Graduates Employability" which is conducted for PhD Dissertation in the field of Curriculum Studies at Haramaya University. The successful accomplishment of this study greatly depends upon your honest and genuine responses to each item. Hence, the researcher kindly requests you to give your genuine responses. The data you provide will be used only for this research purpose and will be kept confidential. It may take you **thirty minutes** to complete all **the five parts** of this questionnaire. Participation is voluntary. Please, do not write your name. After completing the filling or for any questions, please give me a page on 0913206624 and I will call you back on the spot.

Thank you in advance for your willingness and kind cooperation!!

HabtamuTeshome, PhD Candidate, 0913206624,
Email:habtamuteshome64@gmail.com

General Directions

Part I: Demographic Data

The first part of the questionnaire contains demographic information (University, college, academic discipline, sex, nationality, prior international/intercultural experiences, teaching experience, and academic rank); thus, the researcher kindly requests you to give the necessary responses for each item by putting "√" mark or by writing the correct response in the space provided. The responses you provide to these demographic characteristics will be used only to compare and contrast the results of this research.

1. University:_____
2. College:_____
3. Academic discipline (e.g. *Biology*, *Chemistry*, *Accounting*…): _____
4. Sex: _____
5. Nationality:_____
6. Prior international/intercultural experiences

6a. Do you have any international experience? A/ Yes ☐ B/ No ☐

6b. Do you have any other university's/region's/local area's experiences in your country?

A/ Yes ☐ B/ No ☐

7. Your academic position in the University _____

8. Your academic rank: A/ Lecturer ☐ B/ Assistant Professor ☐ C/ Associate Professor ☐

D/ Professor ☐

Part II: Academics' Beliefs Regarding Internationalization of Curriculum

Using the scale, select the response that most accurately reflects your belief regarding the internationalization of curriculum by *encircling* one of the numbers from 1 to 5.

From my discipline/field of study point of view, I believe that internationalization of the curriculum:	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
2.1.1.com promises the integrity of the discipline as it limits what can be taught.	1	2	3	4	5
2.1.2. leads to brain drain due to international academic mobility.	1	2	3	4	5
2.1.3.does not respect the local context due to the attention it gives to the international dimension of higher education.	1	2	3	4	5
2.1.4. threats to the quality and relevance of higher education due to increased commodification and commercialization of cross-border licensing and twinning programs.	1	2	3	4	5
Continues…					
2.1.5.will limit teaching controversial topics.	1	2	3	4	5
2.1.6. brings a modern form of colonization of the South/developing countries by the North/developed countries through focusing on Western values.	1	2	3	4	5
2.2.1.adds content. However, there is no room to do this.	1	2	3	4	5
2.2.2.throws the fundamentals out to satisfy some extraneous requests.	1	2	3	4	5
2.2.3. is not the discipline's responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5
2.2.4. is expected to qualify students for the Western system.	1	2	3	4	5
2.2.5. is based on pure theory, removed from practice.	1	2	3	4	5
2.2.6. promotes content-focused teaching (skills and knowledge)	1	2	3	4	5

2.3.1. can include different cases, perspectives, etc. as content.	1	2	3	4	5
2.3.2. encourages learning-focused teaching, which includes interactions.	1	2	3	4	5
2.4.1. has inclusive, experiential, and contextual content.	1	2	3	4	5
2.4.2. assumes that academic activity is international.	1	2	3	4	5
2.4.3. considers learning as interactive, inclusive, critical, and conversational.	1	2	3	4	5

If you have any additional comments, please state them here.

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Part III: Academics' Practices Regarding Internationalization of Curriculum

Using the scale, select the response that most accurately reflects your opinion regarding the incorporation of international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions in the curriculum by *encircling* one of the numbers from 1 to 5.

3.1. Learning outcomes ***In the course, you teach how to clearly articulate any:***	**Very Poorly**	**Poorly**	**Not sure**	**Well**	**Very Well**
3.1.1.intercultural perspectives, aims, goals and outcomes?	1	2	3	4	5
3.1.2. global perspectives and understandings of aims, goals, and outcomes?	1	2	3	4	5
In the course you teach, how well do:					
3.1.3. the stated intercultural, international, and/ or global learning outcomes of the course relate to those in the other courses across the major/degree program?	1	2	3	4	5
3.1.4. the course materials explicitly define and articulate how the intercultural and global learning outcomes of the unit relate to those of the major/degree program?	1	2	3	4	5
3.2. Contents					
Continues…					
To what extent does the course you are teaching:	Not at all	Slightly	Undecided	Moderately	Significantly
3.2.1. include subject matter relating to international and intercultural perspectives? (e.g. international case studies, examples, practices)	1	2	3	4	5
3.2.2. compare and contrast international and cross-cultural research findings.	1	2	3	4	5
3.2.3. include contents that are informed by research and practice from international, non-Western contexts?	1	2	3	4	5

3.2.4. include specific references to contemporary international and local content	1	2	3	4	5
3.2.5. address issues such as social justice, equity, human rights, and related social and economic issues.	1	2	3	4	5
3.2.6. address critical global environmental issues.	1	2	3	4	5
3.2.7. include topics on ethical issues in globalization.	1	2	3	4	5
3.3. Teaching and Learning Activities **In the course you teach, to what extent the *teaching and learning activities*:**	Never	Rarely	Undecided	Often	Always
3.3.1. provide opportunities for students to consider issues and solve problems from a wide variety of social, economic, political, religious, ethical, and cultural perspectives?	1	2	3	4	5
3.3.2. encourage students from different backgrounds to contribute relevant examples from their home country or community?	1	2	3	4	5
3.3.3. use fieldwork with local organizations working on international projects?	1	2	3	4	5
3.3.4. create a safe, non-threatening learning environment in which students can express their own views while respecting those of other students and staff.	1	2	3	4	5
3.3.5. use team tasks which require students to work with peers from different countries or cultures either face to-face or by using technology and/or blended learning?	1	2	3	4	5
3.3.6. provide students with structured learning opportunities for international experiences?	1	2	3	4	5
3.3.7. encourage a broad range of non-dominant disciplinary viewpoints and ways of thinking in the discipline presented, invited, debated, and rewarded?	1	2	3	4	5
3.3.8. are intentionally designed to encourage, foster, and develop students' global perspectives, understandings, and skills?	1	2	3	4	5
3.4. Assessment **In the course you teach, to what extent do the *assessment tasks*:**					
Continues…					
3.4.1. require students to consider issues from a variety of cultural, international, and/ or global perspectives?	1	2	3	4	5
3.4.2. require students to recognize the influence of their own socio-cultural perspectives in the context of their discipline (and professional practice, if relevant)?	1	2	3	4	5
3.4.3. undergo systematic analysis of answers and grades for signs of any difficulties across particular student cohorts?	1	2	3	4	5
3.4.4.draw on the student cohort as a culturally mixed group and use it as a resource in assessment design?	1	2	3	4	5

3.5. Supportive services **In your institution, to what extent the following supportive services/opportunities are available?**					
3.5.1. Socializing students from other cultures/countries.	1	2	3	4	5
3.5.2**.**The campus environment enables students to gain and understand the different cultural and international perspectives of the world.	1	2	3	4	5
3.5.3. An opportunity for promoting the internationalization of the curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
3.5.4. An opportunity to participate in conferences regarding the internationalization of curriculum	1	2	3	4	5
3.5.5. Different means of administrators' involvement in promoting internationalization of the curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
3.5.6. Appropriate allocation of funds for internationalization of curriculum activities within and outside the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
3.5.7. Different co-curricular activities/events (e.g. International house events and volunteer opportunities, international week, international student orientation, conferences hosted by clubs and student associations, festivals, sports and other cultural activities).	1	2	3	4	5

If you have any additional comments, please state them here.

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Part IV: Potential "Enablers and Blockers" to the Internationalization of the Curriculum

4.1. Enablers ***To what extent do you think that the following can be important enablers for internationalizing the curriculum of the course that you teach?***	Not at all important	Low importance	Undecided	Moderately important	Very important
4.1.1. Institutional policy regarding internationalization.	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.2. Recognition and reward for efforts made.	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.3. Appropriate workload allocation**.**	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.4. Professional development**.**	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.5. Just-in-time assistance with practical issues**.**	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.6."Local," school-based experts who can assist in practical ways.	1	2	3	4	5

4.1.7. Collaboration with international employers and professional associations.	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.8. Support and resourcing for academic staff.	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.9. A strong and culturally diverse course/program team.	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.10. Committed and informed leaders.	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.11. Own international experience and personal commitment.	1	2	3	4	5
4.1.12.International strategy in both policy and practice.	1	2	3	4	5
4.2. Blockers ***To what extent do you think that the following factors can be inhibitors/blockers for internationalizing the curriculum of the courses that you are teaching?***	Not at all a blocker	Somewhat a blocker	Undecided	Moderately a blocker	Very blocker
4.2.1. Lack of (or poor communication of) institutional vision and policy**.**	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.2. Lack of a strategy to ensure that policies are enacted.	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.3. Low priority of internationalization of the curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.4. Internationalizing curriculum is not considered important in the discipline.	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.5. Not considering internationalization of curriculum as a workload.	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.6.Insufficient funding and support**.**	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.7.Leaders who are not committed or informed.	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.8. A discourse of marketization and commercialization of education.	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.9 Strategy that in practice is focused primarily on income generation.	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.10.Disciplinary “mindsets” or “culture”.	1	2	3	4	5
Continues…					

If you have any additional comments, please state them here.

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Part V: Development of Graduating Students’ Employability Attributes

To what extent graduating students in your discipline are equipped with the following international, intercultural, and/or global *attributes*? **5.1. Knowledge**	Not at all	To some extent	Undecided	Moderately	Adequately
5.1.1. Knowledge of world geography, conditions, issues, and events.	1	2	3	4	5

5.1.2. Awareness of the complexity and interdependency of world events and issues.	1	2	3	4	5
5.1.3. Understanding of historical forces that have shaped the current world system.	1	2	3	4	5
5.1.4. Knowledge of one's own culture and history.	1	2	3	4	5
5.1.5. Knowledge of effective communication.	1	2	3	4	5
5.1.6. Understanding of the diversity of the world in various aspects.	1	2	3	4	5
5.2. Attitudes					
5.2.1 Openness to new opportunities, ideas, and ways of thinking.	1	2	3	4	5
5.2.2 Tolerance for ambiguity and unfamiliarity	1	2	3	4	5
5.2.3 Sensitivity and respect for personal and cultural differences	1	2	3	4	5
5.2.4 Empathy or the ability to take multiple perspectives	1	2	3	4	5
5.2.5 Self-awareness and self-esteem about one's own identity and culture.	1	2	3	4	5
5.3. Skills					
5.3.1 Technical Skills.	1	2	3	4	5
5.3.2 Critical- and comparative-thinking skills.	1	2	3	4	5
5.3.3 Communication skills.	1	2	3	4	5
5.3.4 Coping and resiliency skills in unfamiliar and challenging situations	1	2	3	4	5

If you have any additional comments, please state them here.

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End

Appendix II: Interview and FGD Guide Questions for Experts, Directors, Expatriates, Coordinators, and International Students

HARAMAYA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

1. What is your belief regarding the importance of internationalizing the curriculum of ERUs?
2. What activities are there to integrate the international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the curriculum at your respective university (sub-themes: CI as a priority, the integration of international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the curriculum learning outcomes, contents, teaching and assessment activities, and supportive services)?
3. Do you think that internationalizing the curriculum contributes to the development of graduates' employability attributes?
4. What do you think are the potential "blockers" and "enablers" to the internationalization of the curriculum in ERUs?

Appendix III: Findings for the Analysis of Policy Documents

Document Type	Findings in relation to CI
The former ETP (1994) and the first four ESDPs (I-IV)	• Did not provide any coherent and well-thought policy direction toward internationalizing the higher education system.
The Higher Education Proclamation No. 650/2009	• The proclamation tacitly indicated the issue of internationalization and CI in particular. For instance, articles 25 and 53 (g), indicated the necessity of engagement in international affairs for joint research projects and receiving funds. Article 4 (1) also mentions the preparation of knowledgeable, skilled, and attitudinally mature graduates so that the country shall become internationally competitive.
National Employment Policy and Strategy of Ethiopia; MoLSA (2009)	"*the produce competent graduates who have appropriate dge, skills, and attitudes in diverse fields of study*, p, 23.
ESDP-V (2015-2019)	• The first vividly put and well-articulated policy initiative on the internationalization of the higher education system of Ethiopia is incorporated. For instance: • It briefly states the need for connection and collaboration between Ethiopia and international institutions to advance the breadth and quality of academic programs and research institutions (p. 113). • It was further described that in addition to advancing the breadth and quality of academic programs, research, and teaching and learning, IHE is considered to be essential for importing and exporting international and local experiences, knowledge, technologies, and social and cultural experiences (p. 113). • The need for structural changes including the establishment of a national unit or body for marketing, monitoring, and evaluating the internationalization of Ethiopian higher education, the establishment of an international liaison office, and the development of an international collaboration strategy both at national and institutional levels, has been firmly established (p. 113).
The Education Development Road Map (2018-2030)	• Acknowledges the need for promoting IHE as a key means of ensuring quality higher education by identifying three areas as the major components of what it calls "*new strategies for internationalization*": (1) building the capacity of HEI to attract students and staff from overseas, and

	research grants; (2) internationalization of teaching and research activities without compromising the country's development need; and (3) encouraging staff and student mobility programs (p. 55). • It recommended the "*introduction of new courses to give students exposure to the diverse culture/peoples of Ethiopia. Hence, introducing multicultural courses including Geography and Anthropology courses that focus on Ethiopia may help students to focus on unity within diversity*", p. 51. • It recommended the "*use of community associations to expand the system of connecting students with families in the vicinity of the university. It also recommended to allow voluntary families to invite a few university students to spend in their homes at weekends*" p. 51. • It reported that "*the curricula of HEI are not geared toward the development of employability and other lifelong learning skills among graduates*" p. 53. • It described that "*the current programs at the Ethiopian universities do not provide entrepreneurial skills*" p. 57.
Higher Education Proclamation (2019)	• The proclamation (Article 4(1) stated one of the objectives of HEIs is "*to prepare sufficient knowledgeable, skilled, and attitudinally mature graduates in relevant disciplines with competence to support peace, democracy, and national development that can make the country internationally competitive*" p. 11448.
MoSHE (2020), Higher Education Policy and Strategy	• One of the strategies of the policy direction for the quality of higher education stated in the document is "*developing a standardized assessment system to compare and determine the competence level of Ethiopian higher education institutions' graduates with international standards*", p.14 • In the policy document "*Internationalization and partnership*" are stated as one of the core policy issues, p.15. • "*Indigenous knowledge*" is also described as another core policy issue, p.18. • One of the strategies for the quality and relevance of HE is "*designing extra-curricular and co-curricular activities to engage learners in various physical, social, psychological, vocational, technological, economic, and intellectual aspects of personal development*".p7. • Regarding the medium of instruction, "*unless programs are offered in other languages, English shall be used as the medium of instruction in higher education*" p. 16. • Concerning employability, one of the major problems identified in the document was "*the mismatch between the demands of the labor market and the national economy and the competence level of higher education graduates*" p.10. • The vision statement of the policy is stated as "*To create a vibrant, sustainably transformed higher education sector*

	that advances the nation in socio-economic, political, scientific and technological developments through the production of competent graduates" (p.14). •
GTP-I (2010-2014) & II (2015-2019)	• GTP I has no explicit provision about the internationalization of higher education while GTP-II has set a general direction on the importance of formulating a framework for guiding international partnership and collaboration. It has also indicated "*the need for reviewing international standards to establish research universities that could focus on knowledge development and technological innovation*", p, 189. This means the plan recognized the need for national-level policy and strategy to guide the internationalization efforts of higher education in Ethiopia
MoSHE (2020).Quality, Relevance, Equity, and Access Program in Ethiopian Higher Education	• It recommends the strengthening of joint study programs for quality education, p, 12. • It also promotes diversity and inclusion in higher education, p,18. • It says, "*Higher education programs shall be of high quality and relevant and aligned with country and global developmental needs and labor market demands*", p, 9. • It was stated in the document that "*Institutional and program accreditation and re-accreditation will be used as the only way that allows human resource mobility across the country and internationally*", p. 35. • In doing the accreditation, "*there will be selected programs to be accredited internationally and will pass through international accreditation systems*", p, 35.
Ethiopian Ten years (2013-2022) Plan (Amharic Version)	• Some of the focus areas of education and training development for the next ten years have been identified as follows: • "*Creating opportunities for all students to achieve high-level educational outcomes comparable to high-performing international systems, adapting the curriculum, teaching methods, teaching and learning materials, and assessment systems to the needs of the market systems*", p, 150; • "*Implementation of an education system that ensures national unity and diversity: this will be an important issue for educational institutions to play an important role in shaping students from different religions, identities, and social backgrounds to get to know each other, to communicate, interact and to strengthen national unity by respecting their differences and having a common experience and tradition*", p, 150.
Ethiopian Ten Years (2021-2030) Plan (English Version)	• In general, the issue of education is not exhausted in the document. For instance, "*education is not considered in the ten key strategic pillars and key priority areas of the ten-year development plan*", p, 21.

FDRE, Education and Training Policy. (MoE, 2023)	• Highlights "*The PHEIs will establish a system for higher education institutions to become autonomous to enhance their national and international competitiveness*", p, 11. • The policy declares that "*Higher education programs will be made to be passed through the international accreditation system*", p, 14. • Also suggests that "*By ensuring the education and training system at all levels, the education and training curriculum that makes all students and trainees competitive at the international level will be improved*", p, 15.
MoSHE (2021) Education and Training Research Thematic Areas	• The three thematic areas out of eight identified in the document were "*the curriculum, teaching, learning, and assessment, employability, and entrepreneurship*", p, 4. • In the document, it was stated that "*teaching, learning, and assessment in Ethiopia show huge gaps thus poorly qualified students/trainees and graduates are produced*", p, 5.

Appendix IV: Findings for the Analysis of Strategic Plans of the Institutions

Document Type	Findings in relation to CI
RU1(10 YP)	• Two of the messages from the former president: • "*Our vision for the period (2020-2030) is to become a world-class university and the leading research university in East Africa*", p. 4. •"*The plan sets directions to elevate AAU to a well-known world-class research University and the most preferred university in Africa*", p. 4. • "*The university will give priority to the quality of education and employability of its graduates*", p. 13. • "*The university will work aggressively towards the internationalization of its programs",* p, 14. • Weaknesses identified under the SWOT analysis of the plan were: • "*Poor quality and low employability of graduates*", p. 20. • "*Lack of student support services such as information centers, language centers, financial support/loan services, extra-curricular activities, and career development services*", p. 21. • "*More emphasis on theory than on practice in teaching*", p. 21. • "*Poor English language proficiency, poor students' learning achievement, and inability to engage students in national and international issues*", p. 31. • "*Internationalization is the fifth of the 12 strategic issues to be addressed in the strategic plan*", p. 29. • "*Improving the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process and increasing graduate employability*" is one of the 12 corporate goals in the strategic plan, p. 35. • "*Academic programs internationalization and accreditation is one of the 24 core initiatives that have been identified in line with its strategic goals*", p. 111.
RU2 (10 YP)	• Two of the messages from the former president at the very beginning of the strategic plan: • *"Capitalizing on balancing Indigenous and Western-dominated contemporary knowledge, and taking internationalization as an overarching value to implement this strategy*", p. 6. • ***"Bahir Dar My Home*** project, which BDU pioneered, will involve international staff and students", p. 6.

- "*Producing graduates with relevant professions and necessary competencies (knowledge, skills, and attitude) to respond to the national and global labor market requirements is one of the four missions*", p.47.
- "*Internationalization*" is one of the seven mutually inclusive core values for the pursuance of the University's missions, p. 47.
- "*As regards internationalization, BDU has intensified its efforts to strike partnerships with many institutions and to become a member of international associations and consortia*", p. 19.
- Weaknesses identified under its SWOT analysis during the preparation of the plan were:
  - "*Despite the efforts, females have remained under-represented in the academic staff composition of the university*", p. 24.
  - "*Students could not develop a problem-solving skill that would make them ready for the real-life context*", p. 24.
  - "*Course contents are not designed and delivered by considering the available employing agencies, industries, technologies, and facilities*", p. 25.
  - "*Students are overburdened with continuous assignments without receiving proper evaluation and timely feedback*", p.25.
  - "*Graduates seem to lack the required level of competence and basic life skills which stem from the theory-dominated approach of teaching*", p. 25.
  - "*There is a loose link between the main internationalization and partnership office at the university level and the end users of the partnerships made (academic units/departments*)", p. 33.
  - *"There is also a gap between the expectations associated with the main internationalization and partnership office and the actual shape of the office (e.g. in terms of resources- human and material*)", p. 33.
  - "*Due to a lack of proper strategy, structure, and staffing, the existing staff of the Office of International Affairs or External Relations is consumed by routine tasks rather than by strategic ones that would otherwise elevate the university to a higher possible position in terms of internationalization and consequently to better visibility and recognition*", p. 33.

RU3 (10 YP)

- "*The University signed more than 100 MoUs with partner universities from Europe, the USA, and Asia*", p. 13.
- "*The university has a clear policy to work with partners through a mutually beneficial framework agreement and areas to help all actors achieve their institutional goals*", p.13.
- "*The university reached the critical milestone of preparing its strategic plan to internationalize academic, research, and service endeavors*", p. 14.
- "*Fostering an environment in which diversity is appreciated, respected, and celebrated is one of the sixth values of the strategic plan*", p. 17.
- "*The university is committing itself to exclusively produce nationally and globally competent graduates through a range of research-based teaching-learning with an internationally accredited curriculum*", p. 20.
- "*Program accreditations in which all university programs to be accredited nationally and internationally*" is one of the core strategic issues, p. 43.
- "*Internationalization and Global Engagement*" is one of the five strategic goals of the strategic plan, p. 44.

- "*Internationalization and the vision of the university are two sides of the same coin, so that, the university must induce an institutional environment conducive to internationalization and enlarging its global academic, research, and alumni networks*", p. 72.

RU4 (10 YP)

- "*The university has established a long-standing collaboration with different national and international partners working closely on teaching, research, and community services towards its goals*", p. 9.
- "*Considered internationalization as a foundation in which every activity of the university is performed as per the international standard*", p. 35.
- "*The university aspires to be the best in the nation, competent in Africa, and internationally renowned by 2025*", p. 35.
- "*The university wants to be visible enough in the international community or world*", p. 39.
- In its mission statement, "*the University strives to produce efficient and internationally competent graduates*", p. 35.

- "*Internationalization is one of the eight values stated in the strategic plan of the university",* p. 11.
- In the document, "*the university has the plan to internationalize its education and has the aim of internationalization in mind*", p. 38.
- In its strategic plan, "*it is strictly speculated that foreign relations are vital for the university and it is related to its vision to become the best university in Africa and excel in education. It puts internationalization as a means to enhance the quality of education*", p. 39.
- It was identified in the weaknesses of the SWOT analysis of the plan that "*internationalization is not only about partnering, it is also about competition*", p.17.
- The office of the corporate Communication and Marketing Directorate at the university is "*a unit working more on the facilitation aspects*". It only focuses on "*briefing guests and international visitors about the university, and arranging campus visits and tours; that is only the communication part, and thus is not fully in charge of internationalization*", p. 41.

Appendix V: Findings for the Analysis of Curricula of the Four Academic Disciplines

Discipline category	Curriculum	Findings in relation to CI
A. Hard/Pure	Harmonized Curriculum for BSc Degree Program in Biology (MoE, 2022)	**Learning outcomes (LOs):** • The learning outcomes stated for the program and the courses for the program were not aligned. For instance, the learning outcome for the program was stated as "*Upon completing the undergraduate study program in Biology, a graduate should develop scientific concepts, critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving ability, effective communication skills and ethical responsibility with the appreciation of diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, religion, etc of the others*", p. 6. However, the breakdown of these LOs was not found in the statement of the LOs of the courses. • LOs were not clearly articulated in terms of international, intercultural, and/or global perspectives. • Except for the community-based education courses (specific to JMU), the majority of the courses' LOs were focused on the simplest levels of cognitive development. For instance, "*more than 80% of the behavioral terms were explaining and describing concepts, facts, and principles"* (Phycology, Biol 2031, p. 115; Plant Anatomy and Physiology, Biol 3032, p. 133; Invertebrate Zoology, Biol 2042, p. 139). There were no LOs' statements for the development of attitude, and skill. • Almost all LOs of the courses were stated from the perspective of the technical and professional point of view. The 21st-century skills (soft skills) were rarely stated as LOs. • There were no alignments among LOs, teaching and learning activities, and methods of assessments. For instance, for a course having nine to ten laboratory sessions, there was no statement of LOs for skill development. On the contrary, for there was no teaching and learning activity for skill development, the LO

	statement for skill development was stated. In addition, for the course having seven sessions of laboratory reports, the assessment was marked only out of ten points. That means each laboratory report had less than two points. In addition, there was a fieldwork report and presentation but no value was considered in the assessment technique (Bryophytes and Pteridophytes, Biol 2032; Phycology, Biol 2031; Soil Science, Biol 2082; Plant Anatomy and Physiology, Biol 3032). **Contents**: • The inclusion of content related to international, intercultural, and/or global perspectives was not observed in the courses' contents except for "*the community-based education (three courses; CBTP 1202; CBTP 2202; & CBTP 3202, p. 322*)" specific to JMU. For these courses, undergraduate regular students were expected to be assigned to urban, semi-urban, and rural communities. **Teaching and Learning Activities:** • Except for the community-based education courses, different courses with different topics and learning objectives have the same methods of teaching-learning activities. For instance, "*Bryophytes and Pteridophytes courses***,** *Biol 2032, p. 120; Phycology, Biol 2031, p115*; *Seed plants, Biol 3031, p. 125; Soil Science, Biol 2082, p. 130; Plant Anatomy and Physiology, Biol 3032, p.133; Invertebrate Zoology, Biol 2042, p. 139*". **Methods of assessment:** •Except for the community-based education courses, the paper-pen examination was dominant throughout the courses. For instance, "*for a cell biology course, out of the recommended mode of assessments 80% was pen paper examination*", p.114. In addition, the assessment techniques described in different courses were almost similar to each other (i.e., copy past) *"Bryophytes and Pteridophytes, Biol 2032, Phycology, Biol 2031); Seed plants, Biol 3031, p. 127; Soil Science, Biol 2082, p. 132; Plant Anatomy and Physiology, Biol 3032, p. 137; Invertebrate Zoology, Biol 2042, p. 142".* • In the program, the method of assessment was stated as "*Continuous and/or summative assessments which could include practical and field reports, assignments, the group works, essays, oral and poster presentations, tests, data interpretations, problem-solving, attachment reports and projects, mid-exam, final examination* …etc", p. 9.
B. Hard/Applied	**Learning outcomes:**

	Harmonized Curriculum for BSC Degree Program in Hydraulic and Water Resources Engineering (MoE, 2020).	• LOs were not clearly stated in the program document in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. • LOs of each course were not clearly stated in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitude. They were highly emphasized on the mastery of the subject matter. **Contents**: • Contents related to the intercultural elements were not observed throughout the courses. However, 10 non-field-specific courses that had international and intercultural issues were integrated into the program. **Teaching and Learning Activities:** • Teaching and learning activities were not clearly described in the program document. • The teaching and learning activities used for delivering the courses were not described in each of the courses. **Methods of assessment:** • Methods of assessment were not described in the program document. • The method of assessments was stated as a "Continuous assessment method of which quizzes, tests, mid-term exam, assignments, projects, laboratory activities are counted.
C. Soft/Applied	Harmonized Curriculum for BSc Degree Program in Economics (MOE, 2021).	**Learning outcomes:** • The LO of the program was articulated as "*The program will equip students with a solid knowledge of economic theory as applied to development issues, natural resources, and other socio-economic issues concerning the developing countries in particular and the globe in general*", p. 5. • LOs were clearly stated in the program and categorized as "*knowledge, skill, attitude, communication, management*", p. 6. • The majority of the specific courses lack LOs related to attitude. **Contents**: • Contents related to the intercultural elements were not observed throughout the courses. **Teaching and Learning Activities:** described as "*The method of teaching shall be student-centered*", p. 22. However, throughout all the specific courses, there were similar methods of teaching specified as "*Lecture Method, In-class problem solving, Group Work, and Assignment*". **Methods of assessment:** • As stated in the program document "*Students will be assessed continuously through two quizzes and one assignment which will be counted out of 50% and the remaining 50% will be for the summative exam*", p. 22. Finally, the grading system was based on EtCTS.

		• Similar to the teaching and learning, the assessment methods used throughout all the courses were similar. It was described as "*Individual or group assignment (20%), quizzes or tests (30%), final exam (50%*)". • However, intercultural, international, and/ or global elements were not clearly described for assessment activities.
D. Soft/Pure	Harmonized Curriculum for BSc Degree Program in History and Heritage Management (MoE, 2021).	**Learning outcomes:** • LOs of the program were all about the cognitive domain, p.2. The same is true for each course **Contents**: • Different intercultural, international, and/or global issues were described in each course. **Teaching and Learning Activities:** • Teaching and learning activities were not described in the program document. • More or less similar activities (Lecture, presentations and discussion, independent reading, and term paper writing) were stated for different courses and contents to be employed. **Methods of assessment:** • The assessment was stated in the program document as "*Student learning is assessed on a continuous assessment basis (in the form of tests, assignments, presentations, which accounted 50%) and final exam (50%)"*, p. 3. • "*Individual presentation, group presentation, class participation, and final Exam*" were stated as an assessment and evaluation technique to be used for each course.
	Common courses	**Learning outcomes:** • Two behavioral terms (54.54%) were written together as "*Understand and explain the concept of elasticity and relate it to the law of demand and the law of supply*" (Econ1011, p. 214). • "*All (100%) of the LOs were stated in the form of the simplest level of cognitive domain*" (Econ1011, p. 214). • Even the LOs stated that the physical fitness course in terms of the three domains of learning were "*60% cognitive, 10% affective, and 20% psychomotor domains with their respective least levels*" (SpSc 1011, p. 251). **Contents**: • Intercultural elements like cultural values (Chapter Three) and population (Chapter Five) were integrated into the course. (FLEn1011, p. 203).

Teaching and Learning Activities:

- Similar students' activities were stated for different topics and objectives throughout the five units. The activities were "*attending the lesson, listening and taking notes, answering questions, reading, doing class works and homework, and reflection*" (FLEn1011, p. 202).
- Similar copy past activities of students as "*attending the lesson and taking short notes, asking and answering questions, and participating in group discussion*" were described through chapters one to eight (GeES 1011, p. 207; Econ1011, p. 214).
- *"The methods and strategies and students' task are similar (copy-paste) throughout all the five chapters*" (GlTr 1012, p. 225).

Methods of assessment:

- Almost 91% of the assessment techniques stated were paper pen (exam). It was listed as "*Test (8%), quiz (8%), assignment (9%), mid-exam (25%), and final exam (50%)*" (FLEn1011, p. 205; GeES 1011, p. 211; GlTr 1012, p. 226).
- "*Map reading as a classwork*" was used throughout all eight chapters of the course (GeES 1011).
- In the teaching-learning strategies and learning outcomes, practical activities were not planned. However, the assessment says "*Practical exams (flexibility, cardiorespiratory, muscular strength endurance, & good conduct) accounts 50% of the total assessment*" (SpSc 1011, p. 254).