

# An Empirical Approach towards the Internationalization of the Honduran Higher Education Programs

Jesús Argueta Moreno, Cesar Ortega Jiménez, Mario Acevedo Amaya  
Faculty of Economics and Social Science  
National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH), Honduras  
[jargueta@ies-unah.org](mailto:jargueta@ies-unah.org) , [cortega@ies-unah.org](mailto:cortega@ies-unah.org) , [macevedo@ies-unah.org](mailto:macevedo@ies-unah.org)

## Abstract:

This Qualitative research, aims to determine the main deviations among the Higher Public Honduran Education Protocols (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras) and the International Models of Internationalization proposed by the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico (UNAM), through the analysis of the UNAM's Supply Chain scholastic services, provided to Foreign and local undergraduate students, over multilingual scenarios.

This investigation's scope, holistically describes the Honduran formation processes and its alignments towards contemporary methods of internationalization, parallel to regional efforts towards more competitive professionals.

With the use of the "Osmosis" model, who clearly translates the processes described in the Honduran higher Education, in a sequential pattern known as the Supply Chain Management of the Needs and Demands of the current, potential and future professionals that undergo the Honduran Educational processes. By focusing on the Higher Education Link, known as the "Supplier".

**Keywords:** Educational Internationalization, Multilingual Scholastics, Student Mobilizations

## The Research main objective:

Determine the main deviation factors among the Honduran Supply Chain Educational processes that threaten the internationalization efforts.

## Specific Goals of the Investigation:

- Diagnose the UNAH Academic context, in terms of their approach to the Internationalization of the Higher Education.
- Evaluate the UNAM, Internationalization, critical features.
- Compare the UNAM Internationalization scenario, versus the UNAH current conditions, in order to determine the points of inflection over which, the UNAH authorities must interact.
- Explore the Internationalization Best Practices Procedures, on the OECD countries.

<b>Acronyms used along the paper</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>HEI's</b>	<b>Higher Education Institutions</b>
<b>UNAM</b>	<b>National Autonomous University of Mexico</b>
<b>UNAH</b>	<b>National Autonomous University of Honduras</b>
<b>OECD</b>	<b>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development</b>
<b>ACC</b>	<b>Academic Cooperative Cluster</b>

### **Holistic approach towards the Internationalization of Higher Education**

The Internationalization of education is a contemporary term that now a days has a global scale; this concept resumes the new Higher Educations means to capture new talents, stimulate entrepreneurs, develop cooperative links among researchers, enhance the business Best Practices through an academic acknowledgement and extend the multicultural experiences among international students (Hawawini, 2011).

By considering, that the Higher Education academic aims have mutate into the rapid global expansion features, we could infer, that a primary target to keep on with these frequencies rhythm is based over the quick response towards the:

- Student Mobilization programs
- Multilingual Education Programs
- Research Cooperative Efforts

Thereby, the Internalization of the Higher Education Institutions requirements, need to acquire an intensified upgrading, on the pursuit of the organizations academic maintenance.

This research's scope, embraces the range of opportunities and benefits that derive from the internationalization processes, parting from the study of the Universidad NacionalAutonoma de Mexico (UNAM), who will be used as the benchmark or reference point, to comprehend and determine the existent deviations over this scenario and the Universidad NacionalAutonoma de Honduras (UNAH) framework.

### **What is Internationalization?**

The Internationalization of Higher Education Institutions represent a general subject that has recently moved to the top of the agenda of the authorities from the high educations institutions, who want to internationalize their organizations and bond their academic programs through the networking of international research protocols (Nasulg, 2004) .

Various scholars, have attempt to recognize a formal definition of the concept, but have undergo some difficulties, due to its complexness and multifaceted processes, so there is really no formal definition to attend this particular issue. But, in our effort to provide an integral view of this processes we have adopted the perspective of PhD. Dr. Mary lee Davis, who states that the

internationalization of the higher education nucleus is based over the “Academic Colonization of the multicultural opportunities expansion” (Knight, 2008).

Other investigations, contemplate the internationalization process as “the concatenation of homogenous processes that integrate an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of an academic institution” (Hans, 1997). Although there are a huge number of other interpretations, the focus of internationalization is based on the foreign students skills upgrading through multicultural experiences (either on their home country or foreign countries).

### **The Importance of Internationalization**

Higher education has become increasingly international, in the past decade as more and more students choose to study abroad and enroll in foreign educational programs. This growth is the result of different but not exclusive driving forces:

- A desire to promote mutual understanding.
- The Migration of skilled workers in a globalized economy.
- The desire of Academic Institutions to generate additional revenues.
- The need to build a more educated force in the student’s home countries (generally developing countries).

The cross border education has developed different approaches, among various countries and regions. Large student mobility rates, has been the general policy driven in Europe and demand driven in the Asian Pacific Regions, while in North America (the foreign students main demandant) has mostly been a magnet for foreign students (Healy, 2010). On the other hand, the delivering of foreign educational programs and institutions, on the students home countries, has expanded, in order to supply the local students, with foreign education protocols, without leaving their home country. But the growth of cross border education raises a significant number of questions from the government and Academic Institutions, who need to know if:

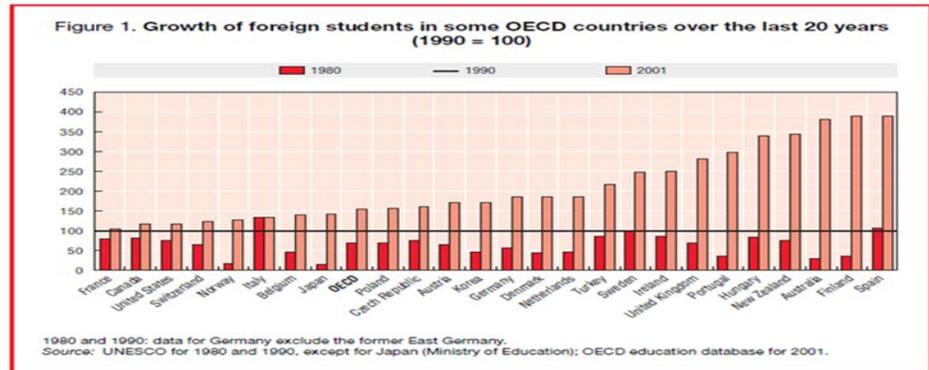
- The Capacity is being increased , to meet growing demands
- Are Academic opportunities being widened
- Are the costs being lowered for the students and government, who basically cover:
- Quality and Recognition issues
- Access and Equity, towards the different countries social sectors.
- Financing and Cost.
- Policy Coherence.

But ¿where are International Students going?

Students going abroad to study, is the mayor form of cross border education, in fact the number of foreign students in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, has doubled over the last 20 years, to significant 1.6 million student population, although, the students concentration approaches different destinies, but along the most chosen HEI’s or importers universities, we could take in count, the following:

**Table No 1 and 2 OECD Country members, who import the most significant amounts of foreign students**

OECD Countries	%
United States	30%
United Kingdom	14%
Germany	13%
France	9%
Australia	7%
Japan	4%
Total:	77%



**Source:** Policy Brief, Internationalization of Higher Education, 2004

In fact, going abroad to study is only a form of cross border education, an increasing number of students are being offered and taking advantage of a new option, by taking a degree or other secondary course, offered by a formal university cost, offered by a foreign University, without leaving their home country, proportionally, program and Institution mobility has grown through the past decade and is likely to build a growing demand in the future (OECD, 2004).

Program mobility is the second most common form of cross border education, higher education, after student mobility. Involving cross border distance education, including E-learning, generally supplemented by face to face teaching, in local partners institutions, but mainly takes the form of a traditional face to face via partner's institution abroad.

### **The Osmosis Effect generated by the Internationalization of Higher Education**

Current projections show a continued increase in the population among the student cross border professionalization programs, whose projected population expectancy is forecast to reach between 7.5 --10.5 million by 2050, Some analysts have questioned the sustainability of further world population growth, citing the growing pressures on the environment, global food supplies, and energy resources (Healey, 2010).

Globalization and its side effects have expanded the search for new talents, as well as the quest for new professional skills among the different labor markets, thereby forcing the Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) to invest and pursuit complementary academic accelerators in order to synchronize with the global contemporary pace.

On the other hand, the constant upgrading of each programs curriculum, based upon the regions competitive professional needs, drive the universities and different HEI's, into the student Osmosis Analysis, in order to detect and fully comprehend the student migration phenomena.

Under an academic framework, the osmosis principle, supports the HEI's in its:

- Detection of the new research cooperative opportunities
- The determination of the most qualified talents inventory, that may future internationalization budgeting.

- The Detection of the areas, sectors and countries that are undergoing continuous upgrading, on their technological acknowledgement and market threats, investigations, as well as the use of new best practices in the corporate scenarios.
- The detection of potential employment opportunities, for the professionals who are about to graduate from the HEI's.
- The approximation towards the students: cultural, technological, spiritual and academic exchange, aware of each market needs and gaps.

Parting from the above, we may infer that the student migration is an issue who is strongly dependent on the new global requirements, parting from the from the student home countries conditions and the professional fields they have chosen.

Several studies, developed by OCED, country members on this topic, have revealed that the student's migration to talent "importer countries" (Lehman, 2004), is based upon the labor market conditions on their home countries vs. the working conditions faced on the study abroad main destinies, like:

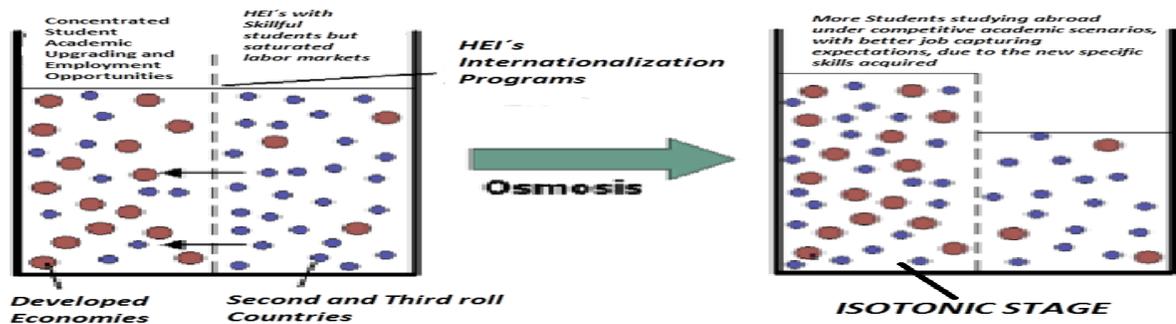
- The saturation of professionals over a specific field
- The labor markets salary payrolls ranges and elasticity.
- The contemporary technological and academic challenges each industry faces among their business context.

Despite the previously mentioned facts, along the OCDE statistics, we are able to perceive certain anomalies, such as the Japanese foreign student case, were the Japanese government efforts are focused on the upgrading of the student skills, in order to diversify the competitiveness of the countries job trends. But generally the behavior of the student migration variables, over the OCDE countries, obeys the last 3 factors recently depicted (OECD, 2004).

Before our compenetration into further studies, we must be able to clearly define the Osmosis process and its translation to an academic perspective, leading us to the following interrogation ¿What is Osmosis? Among the exploration of diverse literature, we could infer that osmosis is the process in which a fluid passes through a semipermeable membrane, moving from an area in which a solute such as salt is present in *low concentrations*, to an area in which the solute is present in *high concentrations*. The end result of osmosis will be equal amounts of fluid on either side of the barrier, creating a state which is known as "isotonic" (Dutrochet, 1826).

That isotonic stage, is the main quest from the Latin American HEI's who want to avoid the significant loss of skillful personnel into other job markets, but still transfer their students from areas of low academic development to regions with a high academic standard concentration, in order to guarantee their supply of future competitive professionals on their enterprises. The Osmosis process would be referred to as student search for multicultural exchange (please revise Figure No 1 Internationalization HEI's Osmosis Effect).

**Figure No 1 Internationalization HEI's Osmosis Effect**



**Source:** Self Interpretation

Parting from the OCDE compilations, we are able to empirically demonstrate that the countries with the highest migration percentages (besides de US and United Kingdom), were the ones who offered the foreign students, a wider variety of multilingual options, over their undergraduate and graduate programs, such as Finland, Australia and Hungary among others (OECD, 2004).

### **Internationalization Statistics:**

Clearly, the fact that English has become the world's common second language, making English a prerequisite for a successful career. International business recruiters, have benefited the MESDCs students with a particular value in the international labor market. Thereby, the MESDC universities count with a competitive advantage over, the HEI's that contemplate no multilingual programs or poor foreign student complementary support. Thus some of the highly ranked universities, are still not align with the MESDC patterns, they obey the internationalization policies towards multilingual conversion, through their efforts as the students suppliers and financial "mediators"/sponsors, in order to diversify the countries future labor market, with competitive skill workers and managers, are still not enough, to challenge the MESDC strong performance. In order to evaluate this phenomenon, we are going to divide this mobilization processes over the 2 supply chain principles:

1. The Supplier Universities
2. The Demanding Universities

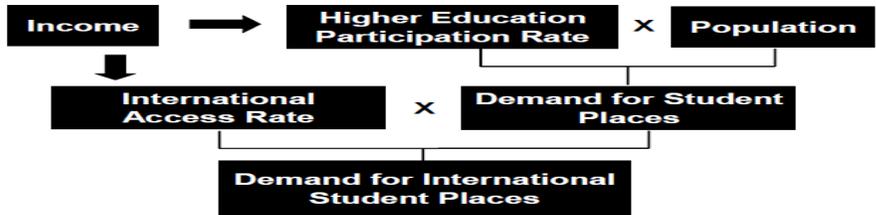
Where the Supplier University, provide the demanding HEI's with talented students, who possess outstanding academic achievements, in exchange for international research cooperation, academic networking and entrepreneurship financing. On the other hand, the Demanding Universities, must meticulously search for the most remarkable talents, their great corporations could procure, as well as for the construction of the best scenarios, for the students multicultural exchange (Scott, 1998).

The real driver of the demand for international education is simply based, in the fact that developing countries that are experiencing rapid economic development, present a wide (income-elastic) demand for higher education students (whether at home or abroad) typically growing faster than the capacity of the domestic higher education sector. Where, the considerable fixed costs and lead times in expanding domestic higher education in developing countries are almost impossible to meet and thereby the need to obtain external aid turns grows louder (Healey, 2010).

But in order to forecast the foreign students incoming, the demanding universities must mediate and control de pace at which they are going to be receiving the human capital, there for, some HEI's have develop methods of forecasting, the potentials of the foreign student allocation (revise Figure No 2 in the annexes), like the Australian HEI's who generated a particular pattern of a sustainable student procurement, who enables them to widen the cooperation among the Universities bonded to them, while preparing for the new upcoming challenges (Healey, 2010).

Figure No 2 Australia Forecasting Models, for the Internationalization of the HEI's Budgeting

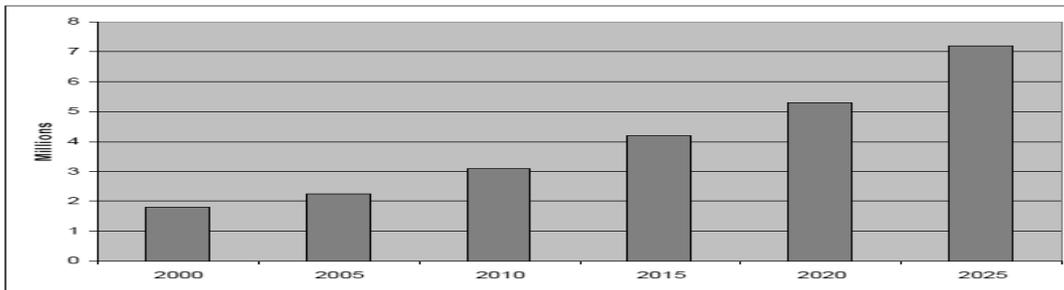
**Forecasting Model**



Source: Kemp (2004)

1  
 benefits, since the huge bulk of foreign alumni forecasted to the next 20 years (revise Figure No 3 on the annexes), is practically 43% more that the current amounts and the only way in which the student mobilization can keep the pace, is done by the conversion of the non MESDC HEI's to a Main English-Speaking Destination Countries (MESDC), on the rest of countries, particularly the Latin American, particularly the Mexican, Brazilian, Colombian and Argentinian (Healy, 2010).

Figure No 3: Forecast Global Demand for International Higher Education Main English-Speaking Destination Countries (MESDC)



Source: IDP 2003

Figure No 4 Global Demand for International HE in Main English-Speaking Destination Countries (MESDC) by Source Region (thousands)

	2003	2005	2010	2015	2020	Annual Growth*
Africa	63	67	87	113	146	5.2%
Middle East	37	39	49	60	73	4.2%
Asia	528	612	943	1,347	1,862	7.8%
America	127	134	156	181	209	3.0%
Europe	226	235	262	289	313	2.0%
Total	988	1,096	1,507	2,000	2,614	6.0%

Source:

British Council 2004

**Figure No 5 The Times Higher Education Supplement Top Non-MESDC Universities, 2005**

2005 Rank	2004 Rank	University	Country
10	27	Ecole Polytechnique	France
15	17	Beijing University	China
16	12	Tokyo University	Japan
21	10	ETH Zurich	Switzerland
22	18	National University of Singapore	Singapore
24+	30	Ecole Normale Supérieure	France
31	29	Kyoto University	Japan
34	32	École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne	Switzerland
41	39	Hong Kong University	Hong Kong
43	42	Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Hong Kong
45	47	Heidelberg University	Germany
48	50	Nanyang Technological University	Singapore
50	41	Indian Institutes of Technology	India

Source:

Times

HE Supplement

### **The UNAH Landscape towards Internationalization of Higher Education Programs**

The National Autonomous University of Honduras, is the most prestigious University on the Honduran Academic Environment, currently occupies the world's a significant place, among the SCIMAGO Indicators, validating that it is still one of the World's most prestigious Higher Education Institution, thus its main campus is located on the Honduran Capital of Tegucigalpa, this entity extends all over the Honduran Country, with different campuses in strategic areas, in order to capture the largest amounts of undergraduate students in its perimeter .

The National Autonomous University of Honduras receives a financial budgeting of 177,079,053.20 USD from the Honduran Tributary Recalls. The University counts with around 72,000 students, sustaining the 498th place, in the SCIMAGO HEI's rankings, where it evidences that it is one of Central Americas most influential Academic Institutions in the region and thereby need to rapidly acquire an Internationalization position in order to keep with the HEI's regional competitive pace (UNAH, main networking instance [www.unah.edu.hn](http://www.unah.edu.hn)).

### **The UNAM, Landscape, towards Internationalization processes**

The National Autonomous University of Mexico was founded in the year 1910, by Justo Sierra. According to the 2011 Academic Ranking of World Universities, developed by the Institute of Higher Education of Shanghai Jiao Tong University, the UNAM is ranked between the 151–200 top universities of the world and currently holds the second place among Ibero-American universities in a tie between the University of Buenos Aires and Brazilian University, below the University of São Paulo (Shanghai Jiao Tong University Index 2012, Academic Rank of World Universities).

In the present, this prestigious institution, serves around 293,000 alumni, among graduate, bachelors and undergraduate students:

<b>Bachelors Degrees</b>	108,230.00
<b>Undergraduate Students</b>	163,368.00
<b>Graduate Students</b>	21,230.00
<b>Total Students</b>	292,828.00

The Universities financial incomes, are the result of the government's fiscal activities, from the tributary recalls, receiving an annually average amount of 2,510,299,969.85 USD, were 652,680,419.21 USD are destined to research and International cooperation (without the

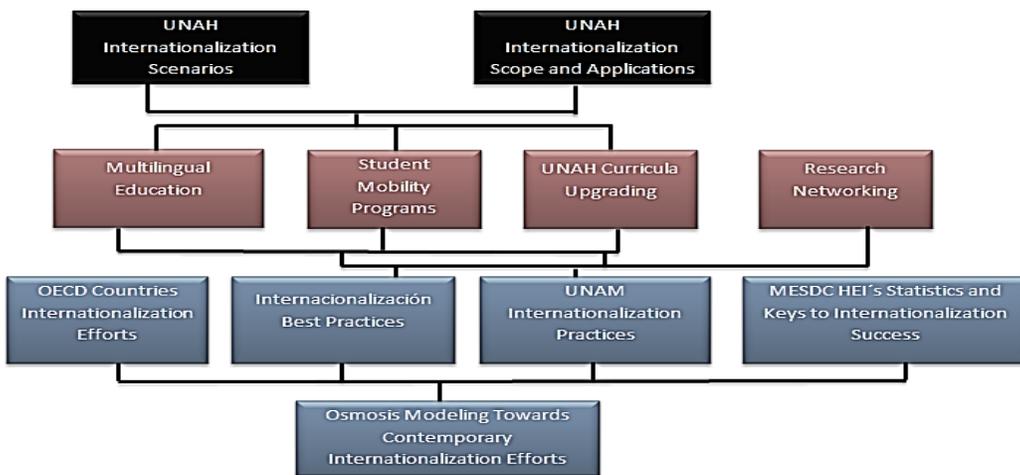
scholarship funds consideration). The National Autonomous University of Mexico offers a total of 126 careers on their academic profile.

### Why Chose the UNAM, as a reference point?

The current, UNAM efforts towards internationalization, despite the increasing patterns, of its student population, this HEI, shows great improvement in respect to its global image and prestige, reflected, on their Internationalization efforts. The UNAM’s multilingual reach and presence, among the world’s top 200 universities, demonstrates that even a non MESDC HEI’s, are able to generate positive impacts on its cooperative international affairs, particularly, where the internationalization strategy, was oriented, over the student mobilization paths, instead of the Multilanguage strengthening, but their perseverance on the multilingual affairs advices a futuristic positive impact on the internationalization efforts (Barrientos, 2011).

The UNAM, was originally chosen as a reference point, due to its proximity with the UNAH academic environments, since, it uses the Spanish language, as its mother tongue communication media and potentially possesses, mobilization opportunities for the Honduran students who want to exchange cultural traits and gain a different academic approach (please revise figure No 7).

Figure No 7 The Investigations Conceptual Map



Source: Self Interpretation

### The Mexican HEI’s Internationalization Framework

Right after the Rio summit held in 1999, several motions were taken in consideration, by the UNAM authorities, who already had an internationalization structure, but needed to revise its performance. At that time, in the Mexican context, there were parallel initiatives that wanted to incorporate their efforts, in order to build up an Academic Cooperative Cluster (ACC). This movement as well as the Bologna Process had great influence on the creation of the Common Spaces, for Higher Education Cooperation in México (Barrientos, 2011).

Several meetings were develop, in order to determine the new standards for the Mexican Internationalization environment, nonetheless, the Commission for International Education of the American Council on Education (ACE), after multiple discussions among its members and other

peers, drew up a series of suggestions to the UNAM Academic Authorities, which were approved by the Council of Public Universities and Institutions, related to the National Association of Universities and Institutes of Higher Education (ANUIES). Who concluded on a ten base internationalization protocol plan, which drew a standard or benchmark to follow, for the next 2 decades, which stated:

- 1) All graduates must demonstrate competence in at least one foreign language.
- 2) Promote the knowledge of at least a different culture.
- 3) Increase the knowledge of the global systems among the students population.
- 4) Standardize the curricula in order to valid the studies in any university.
- 5) Double the expansion pace of the study opportunities and residencies abroad for all students.
- 6) Improve the economic and human development of faculty members.
- 7) Examine the organizational conditions of international education.
- 8) Establish consortiums in order to increase exchange opportunities.
- 9) Cooperate with education institutions in other countries.
- 10) Work with local schools and communities.

In September 2004, the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) proposed to the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN) and the Metropolitan Autonomous University (UAM), the creation of the Common Space for Higher Education defined as “ECOES”, who carries on the following internationalization tasks:

1. Promoting and Supporting the students Mobility
2. Upgrade and Standardize the Curricula for the undergraduate and Graduate Programs
3. Strengthen the Strategic areas of Research
4. Sponsor the Postgraduate Students among various Research Activities
5. Program Development for Home Studies
6. Joint Research Internationalization
7. Networking of Digital Libraries

### **The UNAH's deviations over the Internationalization of the HEI's**

Despite the great differences among both HEI'S, on their financial capabilities, on which the UNAH's yearly budget, represents only 7% of the UNAM's annual proceedings, the UNAH strategic positioning towards the student, investigators and entrepreneurs recruitment, one may consider that the UNAH, can adopt a suppliers posture, towards the student mobilization processes, trigger the Isotonic stage, previously described on our internationalization Osmosis model.

On the other hand, by considering their financial limitations, the UNAH's approach towards the Internationalization protocols, must obey 3 the UNAM's internationalization main features, that consume the fewest resources and thereby aid the institution prestige among the international scope and this activities are:

1. Networking of Digital Libraries
2. Program Development for Home Studies
3. Upgrade and Standardize the Curricula for the undergraduate and Graduate Programs

Thus these 3 elements, do require a strong technological support, once the systems key performance indicators, adopt a specific efficiency pattern, the various automated procedures may overcome the initial invests and revenue rates (by conforming a positive slope, when

averaged), demonstrating the projects quality standards accomplishment (please revise figure No 6, on the annexes).

### **Concluding Remarks**

Parting from the literature exploration and the contextualization of the UNAH current situation, the Internationalization processes, must be applied in an efficient manner, in order to depict the huge bulk of unattended demands from the international labor markets (main recruiters) and thereby ensure, that no talented or skillful individual, misses an opportunity, to engage an academic, intellectual, spiritual or cultural exchange.

The Osmosis Model, clearly portrays the developing countries student migration phenomena, in which the skills and technological trends of the students abroad, must be recruited, at the industries pace, although the Honduran students, still undergo various difficulties, due... to the lack of permeable mechanisms that allow them to participate on fair application processes, for scholarship granting and foreign studies, thereby, the transparency and proper socializations o this effort should be a key the students involvement.

Finally, despite the strong existing deviations, over the UNAM-UNAH scenarios, we must state, that the UNAM, internationalization strategyl, should be applied and “tropicalized” into the Honduran Academic environments, on a different scale

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