

Kong Baptist University). These types of partnership have been particularly popular with leading, high-ranked institutions.

A transnational institution that is owned by two institutions that each have substantial responsibilities for strategic decision-making and that share profits or losses may be referred to as an *international joint venture institution*, defined as follows:

“An international joint venture institution is a higher education institution that is jointly owned by two or more institutions based in different countries. Each partner institution has some degree of responsibility for the overall strategy and quality assurance of the jointly owned entity, and the two parent institutions share profits and losses resulting from the joint venture.”

International collaboration and cooperation have always existed in higher education. Nowadays, there are many examples of independent universities that are associated with a foreign country’s higher education system and that rely on foreign institutions for advice, curriculum, resources, and quality assurance. Examples of such institutions include the American University in the Emirates, the Vietnamese-German University, and the British University in Dubai. The British University in Dubai has a partnership alliance with four leading British universities (Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Manchester), which each advise or collaborate on matters related to program design, program delivery, research activities, and quality assurance.

An independent institution that follows a foreign higher education system and that is affiliated to at least one foreign institution may be referred to as a *foreign-backed institution*, defined as follows:

“A foreign-backed institution is an independent higher education institution that follows a foreign higher education system and that is affiliated to at least one foreign institution with which it collaborates or cooperates, and from which it receives advice, services, and/or resources.”

Independent institutions that follow a foreign higher education system but are not affiliated to a foreign institution (e.g. the American University of Beirut and the American University in Cairo) are *not* foreign-backed institutions since there is no transfer of curricula, staff, or resources across national borders.

CONCLUSION

Transnational higher education operates in a myriad of forms and modes. This article identifies the most common types of transnational providers and offers a possible definition for each type. The classification of transnational institutions provided will be useful for researchers and those publishing data on transnational education, but it is acknowledged that in practice, the institutions involved with transnational education are themselves using a variety of

terms to refer to their operations. For example, it is currently fashionable for institutions to refer to their international branch campuses simply as global campuses, while also emphasizing that the foreign outpost is *not* a branch. Such actions may be responses to previous accusations of academic colonialism, but they are often done with the approval and encouragement of host country governments and regulators. ■

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Importing Branch Campuses to Advance Egypt’s Development

JASON E. LANE

Jason E. Lane is chair and associate professor, Educational Policy @ Leadership, and codirector, Cross-Border Education Research Team, State University of New York, Albany, US. E-mail: jlane@albany.edu.

As Egypt builds a “new Cairo”—a government and business hub in the desert on Cairo’s outskirts—the government wants international branch campuses (IBCs) to be a part. Governments increasingly view internationalization as a means for advancing national policy priorities, driven by a combination of enhancing economic competitiveness and global reputation. Such government attention toward internationalization can be a welcome advance, as well as fraught with potentially troubling policy and practical implications.

Egypt is not the first country to declare IBC recruitment a component of a national strategy. Examples stretch from China to Qatar. Approaches vary. Some nations provide significant subsidies; others take a more free-market approach. A unifying aspect is leveraging “internationalization” to import foreign academic investment to build out local educational capacity. While yielding some benefits, the efforts also raise questions about sustainability and potential tradeoffs for IBCs.

Internationalization of Egyptian higher education, mainly through student mobility, has ballooned. In 2017, approximately 47,000 foreign college students enrolled in Egypt, a significant increase from fewer than 2,000 in 2010. The country emerged as a leading hub of student mobility in the Middle East due to public institutions being open to noncitizens, which is not the case in most Arab Gulf states; and affordable tuition rates relative to many

other regional institutions. IBCs are now viewed as an opportunity to extend the benefits of internationalization for the country. The effort to import IBCs symbolizes seemingly contradictory positions of the Egyptian government to embrace foreign investment and build international relationships as a means for strengthening the nation's role on the global stage, while also seeming to curb local freedoms of central importance to the IBCs it seeks to import.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN EGYPT

Egypt has 24 public universities and 23 private universities, including the American University in Cairo (1919) and an outpost of the Technical University of Berlin, opened in 2012. Enrollment in higher education has grown from approximately 2 million students in 2010 to nearly 2.8 million in 2017.

The intention is to raise Egypt's international education profile and attract global students; and IBCs are required to admit a certain proportion of Egyptian students.

Recent government policies have set a new agenda for higher education. These include increasing the number of college students by nearly 50 percent by 2030; improving the quality of provision through a new accreditation process; requiring new private higher education institutions to partner with highly ranked foreign partners; enhancing international competitiveness by increasing the number of universities ranked in the top 500 globally; increasing the number of international students by 50 percent; and better aligning educational offerings with the labor market demands.

BALANCING STATE AUTHORITY AND INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY

The growing student demand and new policy context may be alluring to potential international partners. It is important to look at the details, though. A new law on IBCs seeks to balance state oversight and engagement with the need for academic independence.

Which IBCs will be allowed to operate remains under strict government control; those approved will be allowed high degrees of flexibility in advancing their mission. The intention is to raise Egypt's international education profile and attract global students; and IBCs are required to admit

a certain proportion of Egyptian students. IBCs are granted administrative autonomy; and must employ a number of Egyptian staff and faculty. The Egyptian government will provide the facilities and some of the ongoing administrative support; and they will tax tuition income at not more than 1 percent to recover those investments. The law provides for freedom from academic interference from the government; yet the fuzzy edges of a university can make it difficult to operate freely when the surrounding environment does not have the same freedoms. Further details are uncertain; but there is a clear sense of active government engagement.

Moreover, Egypt's policy context is like the shifting sands of the desert. What may seem reasonable tradeoffs now may further evolve as IBCs become a reality. What that evolution will look like is hard to predict.

EGYPT'S INTEREST IN IBCs: SIGNALING, DIPLOMACY, AND LEAPFROGGING

The reasons to invest in education are well established. Why a nation pursues a foreign university—as opposed to, or in tandem with investing in its domestic sector—is not as clear. A recent statement from the Egyptian minister of higher education provides some insight: “The opportunity for UK universities to establish [IBCs] in Egypt will support Egypt's internationalization ambitions and labor market demands ... IBCs will contribute to the fabric of Egypt's higher education landscape and be catalysts for broader international partnerships between the United Kingdom and Egypt in research, innovation, and mobility.”

Recruiting a well-known foreign university to set up shop signals something interesting, if not important, happening in the importing nation that warrants attention from outside actors. Similar investment by (or in) the domestic system would likely not send the same signal, or at least not as loudly. The effort to build a new capital is an attention-seeking effort; and having well-known IBCs, particularly from global powers, further supports the attention worthiness. IBCs can be an important means for strengthening geopolitical relationships and a foundation on which to recruit other forms of investment. Possibly considered a new form of public diplomacy, an IBC creates a physical and cultural link between two nations. The hope of the Egyptian government is that the IBC can be a catalyst for further partnership.

Recruiting outposts of well-established universities can be a mechanism for importing the academic capital created in the foreign country to help develop the local education system. In many ways, this academic investment (comparable to foreign direct investment in business) can be a means to leapfrog educational development that would like-

ly be slower by only investing in domestic institutions. As such, it could advance Egypt's effort to be home to several top-ranked universities.

IMPLICATIONS FOR IBCs TO CONSIDER

Proponents argue that New Cairo is an important symbol of Egypt's future and a beacon for new investment. Critics worry that relocating the wealthier members of society to the new city and focusing IBCs in New Cairo will accentuate social class inequity.

Egypt is also a fluid and dynamic policy and political environment. Policies created today can be undone tomorrow. Recruiting an IBC can expand capacity, be structured to align with economic initiatives, and serve as a means to raise global rankings and recruit international students. However, what happens when the academic ethos of critical inquiry and free expression that contributed to the success of the home campus run into conflict with efforts by the host country to curtail such freedoms in the broader environment?

Universities setting up IBCs elsewhere have accepted such compromises when choosing to operate in similar environments, often arguing that it is easier to help change a society from within than from without. Indeed, IBCs can be embassies of knowledge and demonstration sites where academic freedom can be allowed to be experimented with and fostered separate from the constraints in the broader environment. However, such activities must be taken on carefully and often at some risk to the individual and the institution. This risk becomes heightened when in a dynamic policy environment that allows for unchecked bans on parts of the internet and where foreign establishments can as quickly go from being welcomed to being banned. Whether elite institutions will risk Egypt's shifting sands is hard to say; it may all depend on whether they see rewards outweighing risks. ■

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Xiamen University Malaysia: A Chinese Branch Campus

GUO JIE

Guo Jie is director of the International Office and lecturer, Xiamen University Tan Kah Kee College, P.R.China. Dr. Guo has participated in the founding process of Xiamen University Malaysia since 2012. E-mail: 410125299@qq.com

With typical Chinese speed, the fourth and newest campus of Xiamen University (XMU), about 45 km outside of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, has completed its first phase of development. This project was initially drafted in 2012, began in 2014, and started its second phase in November 2017. Among the ten international branch campus universities in Malaysia, Xiamen University Malaysia (XMUM) occupies the largest campus with a total gross floor area of 470,000 square meters, represents the largest overall investment (about RMB 1.5 billion, mostly by Xiamen University—which corresponds to over US\$37million), and is 100 percent owned by XMU. The branch campus celebrated its opening ceremony on February 22, 2016, and currently operates 15 programs, enrolling about 1,720 Malaysian, 950 Chinese, and 30 other international students. It is expected that in five years' time the total number of students will be 5,000.

The increase of international student flows into Malaysia over the years has proven the plan's effectiveness in the context of the growing competition of the global education market.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION, COMMERCIALIZATION, AND COMPETITION IN MALAYSIA

Before XMUM was founded, the Malaysian government invited three Australian and six British universities to establish branch campuses in various Malaysian states. These initiatives were based on a strategic plan called "the International Education Base of Asia," which started around 1990. The 1990s were an era during which the Malaysian economy began looking for new pathways rather than selling traditional natural resources. The increase of international student flows into Malaysia over the years has proven the plan's effectiveness in the context of the growing competition of the global education market. In particular, XMUM enrolls top quality international students; the Chinese students enrolled are *Gao Kao Yi Ben Sheng* (top level students of the national entrance examination of China). According to local education experts, it is the first time in history that Malaysia has attracted this number of *Yi Ben Sheng* from China, whose overseas study plans used to include only the United States, Britain, Australia, and other western countries.