

An examination of interconnectedness between U.S. international branch campuses and their host countries

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This qualitative study examines U. S. international branch campus (IBC) administrative leadership structures and the interconnections they have to their respective host countries. While several factors concerning the sustainability of IBCs have been cited, this study introduces "leadership networks" to the discourse on IBC sustainability. Open access website documents were reviewed to identify IBC leadership and their interconnections. Using Atlas ti., concept maps were constructed for 48 U.S. IBCs to conduct a social network graphical analysis. The maps were coded and assessed for the emergence of patterns of interconnectedness between onsite administrative leadership or board members and their respective host country. An *American International Branch Campus Leadership Structure Typology* was created from the emergence of patterns found in the leadership structures identified, the themes of interconnectedness found, and the density of these interconnections at each U.S. IBC. The typology included six categories of U.S. IBC leadership structures based on five criteria. In addition, the study compares leadership structures and host country interconnections by looking at differences between U.S. IBCs established by public universities to those of private nonprofit universities. It also examines the differences in funding with respect to leadership structure, interconnections, and public versus private nonprofits. The key findings indicate that U.S. IBC administrative leadership has multiple connections with their host countries. Six themes of interconnectedness were identified during the study and differences in funding were found among leadership structures and in comparing U.S. IBCs established by public versus private nonprofit universities. In this globally competitive innovation driven environment it is envisioned that IBC leadership and their interconnections to the host country will play a critical role in fostering opportunities in research and development between the IBC and the private sector. Implications of this involve IBC leadership using their relationships within the host country and region to help sustain IBCs by reducing their reliance on government financial contributions and tuition as a sole source of revenue.