

International Journal of Human Sciences Research

PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL STUDENT MOBILITY: SITUATION OF THE HIGHER LEVEL IN THE SOUTHEAST OF MEXICO

Fidel Ramón Alcocer Martínez

Professor of Finance at the Autonomous
University of Campeche, Mexico

Román Alberto Quijano García

Professor of Investment Projects
at the Autonomous University
of Campeche, Mexico

Giselle Guillermo Chuc

Professor of Finance at the Autonomous
University of Campeche

Roger Manuel Patron Cortés

Professor in the Administration
area of the Autonomous University
of Campeche, Mexico

César Augusto Ortiz Neira

Professor at the Minuto de Dios University
Corporation, in Bogotá, Colombia

All content in this magazine is
licensed under a Creative Com-
mons Attribution License. Attri-
bution-Non-Commercial-Non-
Derivatives 4.0 International (CC
BY-NC-ND 4.0).



Abstract: Student mobility in higher education is relevant for the comprehensive training of students, the economic factor constitutes the main factor from the point of view of the student and the institution for its consolidation, so virtual mobility is an alternative for the democratization of the training experience for the benefit of student learning. The general objective of this research is to explore the current situation of the mobility programs of higher education institutions and reveal student participation as a basis for the generation of new strategies. The research is applied, exploratory in depth, quantitative, with a non-experimental, longitudinal design. The results show that this strategy impacts a greater number of participants, democratizing it in favor of their comprehensive training.

Keywords: mobility, exchange, COIL, higher education.

INTRODUCTION

In higher education, the search for improvement in quality and relevance is considered a *sine qua non* objective (Stockwell, Bengoetxea, & Tauch, 2011), and the promotion of student mobility between European universities finds its cradle in the treaties of Bologna in 1998, (Yordany, 2015). HEIs in Mexico still have insufficient experience in student mobility (Fresán, 2009), even though this strategy is considered useful to improve the competitiveness of graduates, by acquiring knowledge through processes and methodologies additional to those of their home institution (Van Mol, Caarls, & Souto-Otero, 2021). Mobility is considered by some as a strategy that must not be mandatory for students, and that to participate, compliance with requirements such as a high grade average, having a great capacity for adaptation and socialization must be required (Fresán, 2009); For others, mobility must be

a guaranteed educational opportunity for all students (Sussex Center for Migration Research, 2004). Student mobility allows us to strengthen knowledge from another academic setting, with different learning strategies and different teaching practices (Belvis, Pineda, & Moreno, 2007)

In-person academic mobility faces economic challenges such as: transfer to the destination state, city or country, immigration procedures, tuition, food, lodging and study materials, among others. (Fresán, 2009). The IEs of origin have the responsibility of monitoring and guaranteeing academic equivalence and the adequacy of mobility options to the professional profile of their students. (Santiago, García, & Santiago, 2019). The administrative challenge presented by the mobility of students from the institution of origin includes, in principle, the institutional inexperience of the academic processes and school control, as well as the strategy of monitoring and accompaniment during the time that the mobility lasts. (Fresán, 2009)

Since the academic experience refers to the elements that the student values in relation to the teaching-learning process (Much, Galicia, Jiménez, Patiño, & Pedronni, 2013), the evaluation of mobility must include all those aspects that integral contribute to the success of the strategy, so within the dimensions to be evaluated are: skills of the students in mobility, Quality of the support received by the origin EI for the success of the mobility, Perception of the learning unit taken, Perception of the importance of the mobility experience in their training (Fresán, 2009). Since academic mobility has the primary objective of consolidating the comprehensive training of students, the evaluation of the results of mobility must also focus on the participants, contemplating aspects of performance, both absolute and resulting from the differences and similarities between the origin university

and the receiving university (Santiago, García, & Santiago, 2019). Some of the aspects to consider are: academic performance prior to the experience, academic performance in the experience, perception of the participating student about their personal situation in relation to students from the receiving IE in terms of: academic performance, capacity to adapt, capacity to socialization, ability to speak in public, ability to write texts, mathematical understanding, ability to argue. (Fresán, 2009)

Mexico is a country with little reception of international students, receiving 7 for every 10 Mexican students who emigrate in mobility (PATLANI, 2014). Some studies in the country have found that students upon returning from the mobility experience had failed subjects and required recovery strategies (Fresán, 2009). On the other hand, it was found that students raised their academic level in disciplinary areas (Romero, López, Almaraz, & Dzul, 2013). In other studies, mobility was identified as a strategy for the development of knowledge application activities based on cooperation processes. (Murillo & Gallardo, 2014). Research on mobility exposes results obtained in particular academic programs, showing some influence between the socioeconomic level of the students involved and their interest in participating in mobility programs (Belvis, Pineda, & Moreno, 2007), while students located in a upper-middle socioeconomic level migrated academically to increase learning or out of interest in the language, those of a low-middle level were motivated mainly by taking subjects that are not offered at their university or by the prestige of the destination institution. (Santiago, García, & Santiago, 2019). Other studies focused on the perspective of democratization of access to mobility, identified that a minority participates in them, with an elitist character, influenced by the higher educational level of their parents, also identifying that the

economic and cultural level of the parents influences the predisposition to do mobility on the part of the students. (Ariño, Soler, & Llopis, 2014). Educational institutions most likely establish internationalization strategies through physical mobility; however, with the arrival of the Internet and the consolidation of information and communication technologies, hybrid mobility gave way, where they partially carries out part of the experience in person and another part through virtualization. It is perhaps due to the unexpected boost that virtual media received during the COVID-19 pandemic, that the benefits of virtual student mobility are distinguished (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2022).

The advances of globalization processes have recently intensified student mobility, regardless of the fact that these academic programs and projects have existed for several years (García, 2013). Student mobility at the higher level is considered essential when universities are viewed as the space for training subjects who are members of a society where borders are reduced and knowledge is global, regardless of where they are (Carvalho, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

PROCEDURE

The design of this study is applied research, exploratory in depth, quantitative, non-experimental, and longitudinal. The study is carried out at the Autonomous University of Campeche (UACAM). In the years 2021 and 2022, and with the data from the COIL project carried out at the Faculty of Accounting and Administration (FCA) of the same University. Statistical data were collected through published institutional reports, and the final report of the COIL project for the semesters 2020-2021 phase II, 2021-2022 phase 1, 2021-2022 phase 2 and 2022-2023 phase 1.

For the analysis of the variables, descriptive statistical analysis was applied with the results shown in frequency tables and graphs. With the information obtained, the results were compared between the phases and the management reports to identify differences, reaching conclusions.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

Student mobility, both physical and virtual, is recognized internationally, since the World Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications defines it as movement for the purposes of study, research or teaching, both physically and virtually. Virtual mobility can be identified as Virtual Student Mobility (VME) or as Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2022).

RESULTS

The Autonomous University of Campeche recognizes that mobility and academic exchange are decisive in strengthening students' skills. In the rector's annual report corresponding to the 2020-2021 period, 14 mobility students were registered, of which 9 were destined for foreign institutions, and 5 were mobile to national institutions, receiving 3 visiting students. In the report corresponding to 2021-2022, it reveals that 23 of its students participated in the mobility program, 2 destined for foreign institutions, and 21 to universities within the country; receiving 7 visiting students in the same period (see Table 1).

Destination Institution	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	Total
International	9	2	11
National	5	21	26
Total	14	23	37

Table 1. Student Mobility according to the Rector's Office report.

The COIL project developed at the FCA during the mobility restrictions derived from the COVID-19 pandemic involved subjects such as Fundamentals of Finance, Labor Law and Entrepreneurs' Workshop, while on behalf of the International institution with which the MVE was carried out, the subjects involved were: Public Management, Human Talent Management and Organizational Behavior. A total of 223 UACAM students participated in this type of mobility during the period covered by the study (see Table 2).

Student origin	2020 - 2021	2021 - 2022	Total
UACAM students	71	152	223
Visiting students	91	170	261
Total	162	322	484

Table 2. Student Virtual Mobility through COIL

At the Autonomous University of Campeche, in the period of 2020-2021, 14 students were in the institutional mobility program, while 71 participated in the virtual modality, which represents more than 500% while during the period 2021-2022 the The number of students in the institutional program rose to 23 compared to 152 in the COIL project, a figure greater than 660%.

The same statistical behavior is observed in the number of visiting students.

ANALYSIS

Studies on mobility recognize that the economic aspect is considered the most important by students, followed by academic and family aspects (Ramirez & Montañez, 2014). Regardless of the differences in the economic resources required for each of the mobility modalities, during the period of time included in the study, the limitations that the COVID-19 pandemic imposed on the educational activities starting April 2020 (National Association of Universities and

Schools of Higher Education, 2020).

Participation in mobility programs presents different types of challenges within the institutions, including the processes of equivalence, academic control and monitoring, which often become inhibitory factors for student participation that counteract the motivation of students. live new experiences (Santiago, García, & Santiago, 2019)

The ease provided by the MVE seems to encourage participation, as long as the management processes also share their operation on technological bases.

CONCLUSIONS

Student mobility is undoubtedly an element of great importance in the comprehensive training of students, taking into account the level of globalization in communication, industrialization, commerce, consumption, and the needs of the economic and productive sector. For this reason, it is up to higher education institutions to develop and implement strategies that facilitate and democratize the mobility opportunity for their students, recognizing economic and infrastructure limitations.

Virtual Student Mobility, through projects such as COIL, represent an option for students to experience a training different from that of their home institution, with teachers and fellow students with different cultures, customs and skills, without travel costs. that in-person or physical mobility requires.

LIMITATIONS

The study carried out used the information reported in the statistics presented in the rector's reports of the Autonomous University of Campeche (UACAM) in the defined periods and in the results of the COIL activity carried out during the same periods of time with the Minuto de University Corporation. Dios (UNIMINUTO) of Bogotá, Colombia, There was no access to the amounts of resources applied in both cases, nor to the academic achievement achieved in the in-person mobility of the UACAM.

The results obtained in the research generate new questions that will serve as a basis for future research. The comparison of the economic resources necessary and involved in each of the mobility modalities, the economic efficiency of said resources in terms of the number of students benefited, the resources indirectly required in the virtual modalities, but that may be limiting due to their amount, such as technological platforms, training and telecommunications infrastructure to be able to meet a sustained demand for students in MVE, In the aspect of academic performance, real impact on the comprehensive training of students, and effect of the massification of mobility in a element that for now is a differentiator between the students who do participate and those who do not, also become bases for hypotheses to be formulated to try to provide answers to an educational system whose objective is to comprehensively train its students in an increasingly society. more globalized.

REFERENCES

- Ariño, A., Soler, I., y Llopis, R. (2014). "La Movilidad estudiantil universitaria en España". *Revista de la Asociación de Sociología de la Educación*, 7(1), pp. 143.
- Asociación Nacional de Universidades y Escuelas de Educación Superior. (2020). "Acuerdo Nacional por la Unidad en la Educación Superior frente a la emergencia sanitaria provocada por el COVID-19". Obtenido de https://web.anui.es/files/Acuerdo_Nacional_Frente_al_COVID.pdf
- Belvis, E., Pineda, P., y Moreno, M. (2007). "La participación de los estudiantes universitarios en programas de movilidad: factores y motivos que la determinan". *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación*, pp. 42-52.
- Carvalho, J. (2010). "La universidad en la sociedad del conocimiento. Los procesos de cooperación regional y la propuesta de ENLACES". *Universidades*, vol. LX, num. 47, pp. 47-55.
- Fresán, M. (2009). "Impacto del programa de movilidad académica en la formación integral de los alumnos". *Revista de la Educación Superior*, Vol. XXVIII (3), No.151, Julio-Septiembre, pp. 141-160.
- García, J. (2013). "Movilidad estudiantil internacional y cooperación educativa en el nivel superior de educación". *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación*, Num. 61, pp. 59-76.
- Much, L., Galicia, E., Jiménez, S., Patiño, F., y Pedronni, F. (2013). "Administración de Instituciones Educativas". México: Trillas.
- Murillo, R., y Gallardo, K. (2014). "La movilidad estudiantil en las IES particulares: ¿Servicio adicional o necesidad educativa?". *Estudios en Ciencias Sociales y Administrativas* de la Universidad de Celaya, 4(68).
- Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura. (2022). "Mentes en movimiento: Oportunidades y desafíos para la movilidad virtual de estudiantes en un mundo pospandémico". París: UNESCO.
- PATLANI. (2014). "Encuesta Nacional de Movilidad Estudiantil Internacional de México". Obtenido de: *Sistema Integral de Revalidaciones y Equivalencias*: http://www.sincree.sep.gob.mx/work/models/sincree/Resource/archivo_pdf/movilidad.pdf
- Ramírez, M., y Montañez, L. (2014). "Aspectos que interfieren en la movilidad estudiantil". *Revista Ciencia y Cuidado*, 11(2): 59-73.
- Romero, V., López, M., Almaraz, L., y Dzul, M. (2013). Movilidad estudiantil: una maleta llena de recuerdos. Obtenido de <http://www.uaeh.edu.mx/sciege/boletin/icshu/n5/e2.html>
- Santiago, A., García, J., y Santiago, P. (2019). "Movilidad Estudiantil. nuevas experiencias académicas, otros significados". *Atenas*, Vol. 1, Num. 45, January-March.
- Stockwell, N., Bengoetxea, E., y Tauch, C. (2011). "El espacio europeo de educación superior y la promoción de la cooperación académica y de la movilidad con México". México: *Instituto de investigaciones sobre la Universidad y la Educación*: UNAM.
- Sussex Centre for Migration Research. (2004). "International Student Mobility", *Report by Sussex Centre for Migration, Research, University of Sussex and the Centre for Applied Population Research*, University of Dundee. Obtenido de Sussex Centre for Migration: <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/migration/>
- Van Mol, C., Caarls, K., y Souto-Otero, M. (2021). "International student mobility and labour market outcomes: an investigation of the role of level of study, type of mobility, and international prestige hierarchies". *Higher Education*, 82:1145-1171.
- Yordany, J. (2015). "Discursos de la Movilidad Estudiantil en la Educación Superior. Semejanzas, Diferencias e Interpretaciones". *Escenarios*, 13(1), pp.53-65.