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*Article*

# Integrating Global Business Ecosystems into Higher Education: A Case Study of an Innovative MBA Program

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**Abstract:** This paper examines how an innovative MBA program integrates global business ecosystems into higher education, analysing its impact across five dimensions: curriculum development, industry partnerships, internationalization networks, graduate competency development, and regulatory recognition. Using a single-case qualitative methodology, the study demonstrates that embedding experiential learning, problem-based approaches, and business linkages within curriculum significantly enhances students' acquisition of strategic and practical competencies. The program's success is evidenced by performance metrics exceeding national standards and strong employability rates, with graduates demonstrating proficiency in project management, organizational leadership, and cross-cultural communication. While methodological limitations affect generalizability, the research offers valuable insights for institutions seeking innovative approaches to business education. The study concludes that systematically connecting learning with authentic commercial ecosystems prepares graduates who possess not merely theoretical knowledge, but the adaptability and strategic acumen required for leadership in today's globalized marketplace.

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## Introduction

Today's commercial landscape is inherently global. The internationalisation of markets has fundamentally altered how businesses operate and the capabilities required for effective leadership. This shift has elevated international business education from a supplementary component to a core element in higher learning. Jane Knight suggests that incorporating global and cross-cultural dimensions into educational frameworks is vital for equipping students to navigate complex international trade environments and modern organisational challenges.

Learning programmes that connect with vibrant business communities, both regionally and internationally, are essential for developing key skills including leadership capacity, creative problem-solving, and flexibility. These environments help students gain practical knowledge of global business operations while bridging theoretical concepts with actual market challenges. This educational approach responds directly to workforce demands for professionals who can incorporate diverse cultural perspectives and excel in multinational settings.

In this context, a new system has emerged as a leader in educational innovation by connecting its teaching methodology with a commercial ecosystem that engages students with genuine corporate challenges. This strategy is particularly evident in their International Business Administration (MBA) courses, which utilises resources like laboratories, global talks, company tours, and international business workshops. These programmes represent an educational philosophy that connects classroom learning with field experience, offering students authentic global and local learning opportunities. Consequently, graduates possess both strong theoretical foundations and practical abilities that enhance their career prospects.

This paper examines how the connection between new International MBA programme and global commerce influences five critical areas: holistic student development through coursework, engagement with industry partners, collaboration with internationalisation networks and stakeholders, the development of global competencies in graduates, and formal recognition from regulatory bodies including the Ministry of National Education and National Accreditation Council. This research seeks to understand how these interactions prepare highly competitive professionals and create reproducible models for other institutions interested in innovative educational approaches that blend internationalisation with professional development.

The paper is organised into six parts. The introduction establishes the significance of integrating international business ecosystems into educational programmes and outlines research objectives, highlighting relevance for preparing students for global market demands. The theoretical section explores concepts of experiential learning, problem-based approaches, and curriculum internationalisation. The methodology outlines the single-case study approach and qualitative techniques used. The findings section presents results across five dimensions: curriculum impact, industry partnerships, collaboration with internationalisation networks, competency development evidence, and external validation. The discussion analyses these findings against theoretical frameworks, highlighting strengths while identifying improvement areas such as technology integration and expanded international experiences. The conclusion summarises contributions, considers replicability, acknowledges limitations including reliance on institutional data and lack of comparative analysis with similar programmes, and suggests directions for future research.

## Theoretical Framework

Combining hands-on practice with academic study represents an educational strategy that bridges scholarly knowledge with workplace application, delivering a comprehensive learning journey. This framework aims to equip learners with essential abilities like problem management, flexibility, and innovative thinking needed in today's international job market. This approach draws from David Kolb's experiential learning theory, which presents learning as an ongoing four-phase cycle: direct experience, reflective observation, theoretical understanding, and practical application. This process builds both knowledge acquisition and practical capability development crucial for addressing multifaceted challenges. From constructivist perspectives, Jean Piaget highlights how individuals learn through environmental interactions, while Lev Lev Vygotsky contributes his proximal development zone concept, underscoring the value of social interaction and group support in knowledge building.

Within university education, skill-focused training has become an essential tactic for narrowing the divide between academic institutions and workforce requirements. Giovanni Cardona Montoya explains that this method integrates conceptual understanding with practical application by developing versatile capabilities applicable to authentic situations, preparing graduates for contemporary business challenges. This educational philosophy emphasises connecting academic programs with industry dynamics, creating opportunities where learning becomes practically meaningful.

Henry Chesbrough suggests that open innovation enhances this perspective by linking educational processes with external networks that encourage knowledge sharing and collaborative solution development. This aligns with the need for educational institutions to actively participate in partnership ecosystems, involving students in projects reflecting both global and regional business realities.

Educational techniques including problem-based learning (PBL) and experiential education strengthen the connection between theoretical concepts and practical skills. Howard Barrows characterises PBL as an approach that presents students with specific challenges requiring analytical thinking, investigation, and teamwork. John Dewey supports hands-on learning methods, highlighting active engagement as fundamental to education, allowing skill development in realistic

yet structured environments. These approaches foster comprehensive development beyond mere information gathering, encouraging thoughtful action and creative solutions.

In today's environment, where both corporations and learning institutions navigate worldwide challenges, this integrated approach excels at producing adaptable professionals oriented toward meaningful contribution. According to Giovanny Cardona Montoya, strengthening connections between academia and industry enhances learning relevance while positioning educational institutions as leaders in developing talent equipped for globalised marketplace demands. This approach not only cultivates relevant, contextual learning but also facilitates effective knowledge application in professional settings, producing graduates prepared to guide and transform their organizations and communities.

This forward-thinking educational framework adopts a fresh approach addressing the needs of today's international workforce and ongoing societal shifts. Drawing from constructivist foundations, it views education as an engaging, purposeful journey where students build understanding through interaction with authentic business scenarios. Integrating concepts like Vygotsky's developmental proximity zone and Kolb's experience-based learning, this framework blends conceptual knowledge with practical application in a dynamic manner, fostering well-rounded development encompassing technical abilities, analytical thinking, and strategic planning skills.

The instructional approach, forming the core of this educational philosophy, incorporates techniques such as flipped classrooms, pervasive learning environments, and practical application methods, providing education that's both accessible and customizable to individual learner needs. This progressive strategy removes traditional constraints, ensuring inclusive and contextually relevant training. Following principles of pervasive learning, these methods cultivate student autonomy and self-direction, crucial traits in today's evolving competitive marketplace.

Rather than traditional subject divisions, the curriculum organises learning through cross-disciplinary problem-solving modules focused on addressing genuine business challenges. This structure allows theoretical concept application in real-world contexts while developing essential capabilities including critical analysis, teamwork, and innovative thinking. Courses cover key areas like sustainability practices, marketing strategies, financial management, and technological applications, merging these fields to create practical, innovative solutions. As Lodoño Ramírez and Boada note, cross-disciplinary curriculum design enhances student preparation and strengthens their ability to tackle complex issues and make effective choices in dynamic professional settings.

Global business integration serves as a fundamental element, connecting learners with international specialists, multicultural activities, and worldwide challenges. This orientation fosters global perspective development and cross-cultural abilities, preparing students to guide business initiatives with international scope. Institutional activities like academic exchanges and partnerships with multinational companies enable students to experience diverse cultural environments, building essential capabilities for leadership in a connected world. This approach aligns with Jane Knight's perspective that internationalization in higher education should be woven throughout the curriculum to ensure comprehensive global preparation.

Furthermore, the framework emphasises skill-based evaluation, ensuring learning outcomes reflect acquisition of directly applicable workplace competencies. By connecting theory with practice, students address business challenges related to international expansion, environmental responsibility, and market development. These opportunities not only enhance practical abilities but also create measurable impact for partner organizations, demonstrating the educational model's relevance and effectiveness.

This educational design combines innovation, adaptability, and global awareness, ensuring graduates are equipped for continuously evolving challenges. By integrating theoretical knowledge with practical application and providing an international, flexible perspective, it positions graduates as leaders capable of creating value and contributing meaningfully to commercial and community advancement.



The revamped International MBA aims to develop professionals with strategic vision and adaptability who can lead effectively in complex global environments. This educational approach, consistent with institutional teaching philosophy, builds upon theoretical frameworks including Mintzberg's strategic management concepts and Bertalanffy's systems perspective, combining theoretical foundations with essential practices for navigating today's business landscape.

The curriculum centres around a model featuring an innovative platform where students collaborate with existing businesses to address internationalization and global commerce challenges. This educational strategy engages students in practical learning while helping small businesses and entrepreneurs enhance their competitive position. This methodology applies theoretical concepts in practical settings while building skills in critical evaluation, strategic choice-making, and international project coordination. It represents a comprehensive approach to business problem-solving that promotes experiential learning and business-student partnerships.

The program incorporates initiatives that strengthen this approach and enhance student connection with global business networks. These include Global Talks and Global Business Seminars providing direct access to international expertise and market developments, plus platforms for applied research and case analysis. The program connects students with global business dynamics and regional internationalization networks, facilitating engagement with relevant companies and organizations.

This comprehensive approach ensures International Business Administration students receive specialised educational tools preparing them for leadership in global and regional contexts. These experiences develop understanding of economic, political, and social factor interactions affecting international business, expanding multicultural perspective and leadership capacity in competitive markets. A distinctive program feature is its alignment with contemporary priorities like sustainability and corporate responsibility. Training includes innovation methods, transition management, and solution development skills crucial for strategic leadership in evolving business environments. This ensures graduates possess both specialised knowledge and change leadership abilities to drive positive impact in their organizations and communities.

## Methodology

Research involving detailed examination of one specific instance is commonly employed in qualitative and investigative work to thoroughly examine events or situations in their authentic environment. This research approach proves valuable when addressing questions about processes or reasons, enabling comprehensive investigation to comprehend both internal workings and external influences affecting the subject matter. This method is suitable when examining instances that exemplify broader phenomena in remarkable or representative ways, allowing for conceptual rather than statistical generalization. Furthermore, intensive examination of individual cases can help develop new theoretical frameworks based on careful observation.

A key strength of this focused research approach lies in its ability to situate findings within particular circumstances, offering deeper, more textured understanding of the examined phenomenon. Such investigations allow researchers to delve into the intricacies and distinctive features of each case through diverse information sources including conversations, written materials, and firsthand observations. This multi-source verification enhances both accuracy and dependability of conclusions, ensuring analyses are not only comprehensive but methodologically sound. While this approach has certain constraints, particularly regarding broader applicability of results, its primary advantage comes from providing distinct, in-depth perspectives applicable to comparable situations.

This analysis centres on an exceptional example - the newly developed curriculum - notable for its groundbreaking and globally acknowledged approach to educating international commerce professionals. The selection of this educational program for examination is warranted by its innovative and transformative character in business education. Throughout its history, this program has gained recognition for its educational framework that integrates hands-on experience with

academic concepts through various initiatives including problem-focused learning, international discussions, global business workshops, and similar endeavours. These educational platforms challenge students with essential organizational problems, merging academic principles with practical application while promoting learning through addressing actual global market challenges.

This focused examination thoroughly investigates the program, delivering detailed, contextualized analysis of both implementation processes and achieved outcomes. Although findings cannot be statistically applied to broader populations, this investigation provides valuable insights for other learning institutions considering similar educational models. Concentrated case examinations generate profound understanding of specific phenomena, facilitating comprehension of how innovative educational frameworks function in practice. Additionally, this approach enables exploration of how experiential learning principles and global integration manifest in actual educational settings, offering significant insights for future educational developments.

A single-case technique based on secondary source research was used to guarantee the study's validity and depth. This strategy ensured methodological robustness by enabling the investigation of multiple aspects of the new program, such as its effects on students, samples, and categories of analysis. Through documentary analysis and active observation, secondary sources were used to create the information collection, enabling a thorough investigation of the new educational model's effects on students' development of global competences and business connections. The analysis's specifics are displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Sources of data collection for the study.

Description of the source	Aspects to be analysed
Evaluation of practical modalities and international academic missions.	Impact on employability, performance in strategic sectors, and development of international competencies.
Student experiences in real projects with national and international companies.	Competencies in market strategies, risk analysis, and internationalisation.
Perception of students and companies on the relevance of the educational model.	Level of student and business satisfaction, perceived usefulness of hands-on learning.
Comparative data on standardised test performance and employability rates.	Academic performance in specific and generic competencies and employability compared to national averages.
Conceptual framework and pedagogical strategies of the ANI program.	Fundamentals of curriculum design, learning methodologies, and interdisciplinary approach.
Pedagogical strategies that support the program's educational model.	Experiential learning principles and internationalisation approach in the curriculum.

Active observation was used to supplement the documentary analysis in program activities such business visits, professional projection sessions, global talks, global business seminars, SolversLab projects, and regular class dynamics. Table 2 provides a thorough overview of various observation operations. This approach allowed for the documentation of the ways in which the pedagogical principles are implemented in both curriculum development and real-world experiences. Active observation enables the real-time recording of interactions and dynamics, placing in context the ways in which teachers and students use collaborative tactics, make decisions, and relate theory to practice.

**Table 2.** Sources of data collection for the study.

Activity		Description	Aspects analysed
Global Talks		Interactive spaces with international experts and business leaders.	Application of collaborative strategies, global trend analysis, and intercultural competency strengthening.
Global Seminar	Business	Specialised seminars for the analysis of strategic variables in international business.	Connection between theory and practice, decision-making in business scenarios, and analysis of global cases.
Professional Projection Sessions		Activities aimed at linking students with real business projects.	Implementation of pedagogical principles in practical contexts interaction with the business sector.
SolversLab Projects		Business consulting models for resolving real problems in national and international companies.	It is developing technical and strategic competencies, team dynamics, and reflexivity in learning processes.
Regular Dynamics	Class	Academic activities are designed to integrate theory and practice through active methodologies.	Applied pedagogical strategies, teacher-student interaction, and use of methodologies such as PBL and experiential learning.
Business and institutional visits.		Direct observation experiences in national and international companies or institutions to analyse their operational and strategic processes.	Linking students with the business environment, analysis of organisational practices, and the relationship between theory and practice.

Finally, combining qualitative techniques made it possible to triangulate the findings, integrating data from institutional reports, observations, and academic and professional performance indicators.

4. Results

This analysis shows how the new International MBA programme has established itself as a benchmark in educational innovation and business linkage, achieving significant impacts in developing global competencies and connecting students with the international market. It stands out for its ability to integrate theory and practice in a dynamic pedagogical model adapted to the demands of a globalised environment. These international alliances strengthen institutional prestige and enrich the training of students, who have access to educational experiences and collaborative networks worldwide. It represents a significant step forward in strengthening its educational model. It provides students access to global resources, academic exchange programmes, and opportunities to collaborate with renowned universities in international business. These interactions broaden students' perspectives, exposing them to global academic and business dynamics that enrich their educational experience and strengthen their preparation to lead in international markets. The programme is also distinguished by its close ties with the business sector. It establishes strategic alliances with entities such as foreign trade promotion agencies, chambers of commerce; and public administration actors. These collaborations have allowed students to participate in real projects addressing challenges related to business internationalisation, sustainability, and innovation, consolidating practical skills highly valued in the labour market. The program's curriculum design, centred on interdisciplinary problem cores, has effectively integrated vital areas such as finance, technology, and sustainability around real business issues. This approach fosters critical thinking, creativity, and students' ability to solve complex problems in dynamic business contexts.

Furthermore, implementing innovative methodologies such as the flipped classroom and ubiquitous learning ensures an educational experience adapted to the demands of the global market, promoting autonomy and the effective transfer of knowledge to real work scenarios. At the pedagogical level, the constructivist approach translates into feedback processes that strengthen collaborative learning and the development of transferable competencies. Teachers, acting as facilitators, use digital tools and participatory methodologies to connect theory with practice, aligning with the principles of social mediation and active learning proposed by Lev Vygotsky. This approach ensures that students acquire technical knowledge and practical skills that enable them to lead in a globalised environment. The results of this analysis will be developed around five main axes: the impact of the curriculum on the integral formation of students, the linkage of the programme with the business sector, the synergy with networks and actors of the internationalisation ecosystem, the evidence of permeation of global competencies in students and the external validations received. Each of these aspects will be addressed to highlight the strengths of the educational model and its relevance in preparing highly competitive professionals in an international market.

### *The Curriculum*

The curriculum is structured as an innovative educational proposal designed to train professionals capable of leading in a globalised, dynamic and constantly changing environment. This academic model responds to the needs of a demanding labour market by combining theory and practice through an interdisciplinary and progressive approach organised around problem areas that directly integrate companies in the training process. Based on theories such as those of Lev Vygotsky and David Kolb, the curriculum promotes meaningful learning by resolving real problems and developing key competencies such as critical thinking, adaptability, and creativity.

The curricular structure spans four years and is organised progressively to ensure students' integral development. During the first year, the focus is on concrete thinking, providing students with fundamental skills to analyse business environments and foster creativity. In parallel, activities introduce students to the international landscape, connecting their learning to the real business world challenges from the earliest stages.

In the second year, the curriculum moves towards logical thinking, emphasizing innovation and strategic projection. Courses delve into advanced tools for managing and analysing business processes. The students apply these tools in international contexts, strengthening their understanding of global markets and cross-cultural management. This approach fosters the transition to more strategic and complex problem-solving-oriented learning.

The third year is designed to develop abstract thinking, allowing students to address global business creation and management issues in multicultural contexts. Courses prepare students to lead projects in international markets, integrating analytical, strategic, and collaborative competencies. This curriculum level represents a turning point, where advanced skills are consolidated to face the challenges associated with globalisation and competition in diversified markets.

Finally, the fourth year is structured around specialised cores integrating advanced topics such as foreign trade, global finance, and international affairs. Courses allow students to consolidate their learning in an advanced professional context. In addition, there is opportunity to apply the knowledge acquired in real projects, connecting it directly to the labour market. This component reinforces students' strategic vision and ensures they are prepared to lead business initiatives with global impact.

One of the distinctive elements of the programme is its focus on curricular internationalisation. The programme connects students with international faculty and peers through various initiatives fostering collaborative and multicultural learning. These activities enrich the curriculum by incorporating global perspectives into content and methodologies, ensuring students become familiar with international trends and establish meaningful academic and professional networks.

The organisation of problem nuclei, the central axis of the curriculum design, not only structures the academic content around real challenges but also connects students with the business sector from



the beginning of their training. Between 2020 and 2022, the programme managed to involve 731 students and serve 227 companies through projects integrated into the curriculum, demonstrating the effectiveness of this approach to link academia with market dynamics. These achievements reflect the institutional commitment to a practical and relevant education aligned with the expectations of the productive sector.

The modular design of the curriculum, based on eight-credit academic cores delivered in a bimodal manner, ensures that students can focus on specific areas of knowledge while developing transversal competencies that allow them to adapt to the changing demands of the global environment. Methodologies such as problem-based learning (PBL) and experiential learning (*learning by doing*) are fundamental pillars of this approach, as they allow students to apply their knowledge in real business scenarios, facing challenges such as internationalisation, sustainability, and innovation.

The curriculum also incorporates a professional performance map that guides the progressive development of competencies, ensuring that each core problem contributes specifically to the comprehensive training of students. This design is an innovative practice in higher education and has established itself as an exemplary model in training global business leaders. By integrating theory, practice, and business linkage, the ANI programme not only prepares its students to face the challenges of the globalised labour market but also promotes their ability to generate a positive impact in the organisations and communities where they work.

Linkage with the business sector is an essential strategy for developing global competencies in the programme students. This approach responds to the needs of a globalised market that demands professionals with practical, strategic, and multicultural skills capable of generating innovative and effective solutions in a dynamic environment. According to philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer John Dewey, meaningful learning arises when students experience and reflect on practical situations, a principle that guides the program's initiatives. Integrating models such as learning by doing and experiential learning allows students to connect theory with practice, preparing for their transition to the professional environment.

Among the initiatives that reinforce this connection is a business consulting model designed for students to work on real projects with national and international companies. This model is based on Lave and Wenger's principles of situated learning, which emphasise the importance of social and professional context in developing competencies. Through model, the students have impacted more than hundred companies, addressing challenges such as internationalisation strategies, geopolitical risk analysis, and export logistics. These experiences strengthen technical and strategic competencies and promote transversal skills such as decision-making, leadership, and project management. Global Talks complement this linkage by offering a space for direct interaction with international experts and business leaders. These sessions allow students to build professional networks, access cutting-edge knowledge, and strengthen their ability to analyse global trends. Global Talks also foster intercultural skills essential for leading in a globalised marketplace. According to Jane Knight, internationalisation in higher education should include experiences that expose students to multicultural and global dynamics, a central objective of these activities.

The Research Seminars represent another fundamental pillar of the business linkage fostering innovation and applied research in international business, allowing students to work on projects that address current issues such as market studies, sustainability, and international risk analysis. Based on Schön's principles of reflective practice, the seedbed develops students' ability to question, analyse, and propose strategic solutions to complex problems. It also strengthens the relationship between academic research and business practice, positioning participants as innovative leaders in the global business arena. In addition, the Business Seminars offer an academic and practical space where students analyse vital variables that affect the strategic decisions of exporting companies. Through various specialised seminars, students participate in preparing reports and strategic discussions, strengthening analytical competencies and practical skills essential to lead in

international markets. These activities reinforce their ability to understand global dynamics and propose strategic solutions in a business environment.

Finally, the strategy of business visits has been crucial in strengthening the connection between academia and the business sector. These visits allow students to observe organisations' internal processes directly, analyse real cases, and establish a practical link with the professional environment. In sectors such as foreign trade and international logistics, these experiences provide an enriching context that complements classroom learning, aligning with experiential and problem-based learning methodologies.

These initiatives not only strengthen the comprehensive training of students but also generate significant impacts on the business sector. The combination of experiential learning, interaction with international experts, and participation in real projects ensures that the graduates are prepared to face the challenges of a competitive global market. Various initiatives effectively bridge academia and the business sector, integrating theory, practice, and internationalisation to form highly competent professionals.

### *Synergy with Networks and Actors in the Internationalisation Ecosystem*

Internationalisation is a transversal axis in higher education that, according to Jane Knight, seeks to intentionally integrate an international and intercultural dimension in educational processes, strengthening the connection between academia and the global environment. In this context, the programme is integrated with the business internationalisation ecosystem that connects academic training with the global market dynamics. It establishes an effective bridge between students, companies, and the international environment, promoting analytical, strategic, and practical competencies necessary to operate in a globalised environment.

Following Lave and Wenger's principles of situated learning, the programme allows activities that connect applied research with the needs of the business sector. Specialised seminars offer detailed analyses of crucial variables affecting exporting companies' decisions. These activities contribute to a comprehensive understanding of international dynamics and enrich classroom discussions by transferring strategic issues from the business environment to academia.

The impact of the seminars transcends academic training by acting as a space for interaction between teachers, entrepreneurs, and students, integrating theoretical and practical perspectives. This approach allows for understanding the critical factors influencing international trade and developing essential skills for market analysis and strategic decision-making in a global environment. In addition, the model fosters interdisciplinary collaboration and active learning, aligning with the demands of the global labour market and the complex nature of international business.

Through a network of strategic alliances, the business internationalisation ecosystem of the programme strengthens its academic impact. Collaborations with diverse entities consolidate a strong link with the business sector. These alliances facilitate the topics discussed in forums and strategic working groups, such as the foreign investment roundtable to be integrated into the academic space, providing relevance and context to the training of students. These collaborations ensure that the International Business Administration curriculum is relevant and reflects the actual dynamics of global trade, enriching the educational experience with critical and contextualised analysis.

Integrating the strategic alliances into the programme allows for a comprehensive education that combines applied research, strategic analysis, and exposure to fundamental international market dynamics. This approach ensures that graduates acquire both a solid theoretical understanding and the practical skills necessary to meet the challenges of globalisation. According to Schön, reflective practice is essential to transform knowledge into action, and the programme offers precisely that space for students to combine theory and practice effectively.

### *Evidence of Permeation of Student Competencies*

The effectiveness of the programme is reflected in key indicators that show its impact on the formation of global competencies, labour market insertion, and the satisfaction of the actors involved. Based on experiential learning and social constructivism, this pedagogical model is aligned with current internationalisation trends and practical learning, allowing students to connect theory and practice in global business contexts. The performance of students in the programme in the professional tests highlights the educational model's strength and alignment with the demands of a globalised environment. In specific competencies such as "Project Formulation, Evaluation and Management", "Organisational Management" and "Financial Management", students consistently exceeded the national average in most of the years evaluated, reflecting their solid technical and strategic preparation. For example, in "Formulation, Evaluation, and Project Management," the average of face-to-face students reached a peak of 4.08 in 2019, evidencing significant mastery in business planning and evaluation skills.

In generic competencies, the programme also excels. In areas like "English," students obtained averages above national standards, reaching a 4.69 in face-to-face mode in 2019. This underscores the program's emphasis on developing essential language skills for internationalisation. Similarly, competencies such as "Written Communication" and "Quantitative Reasoning" show performance that equals or exceeds national standards consolidating the curriculum's comprehensive focus on essential skills for the global market.

These figures reflect not only the quality of academic training but also the capacity of the educational model to translate theoretical learning into practical competencies. According to De Wit, an internationalised curriculum should prepare students to address global challenges by developing critical competencies such as intercultural communication and quantitative reasoning.

Between 2017 and 2023, the employability rate of the programme graduates has remained consistently above the national average. This trend is explained, in part, by the students' ability to apply strategic and technical knowledge in their business internships, where more than a quarter of them are hired by the companies in which they completed their internship. According to Beelen and Jones, integrating practical experiences in local environments with a global perspective, *Internationalisation at Home*, fosters applied competencies that strengthen employability.

The professional projection core of the programme is essential to reinforce practical learning and link academic training with natural business dynamics. This core includes modalities such as consultancies, business internships, and international missions, which provide students with concrete experiences in strategic sectors such as international trade, exports, and global market management.

More than half of the students opt for the business internship modality, representing a significant increase compared to previous years. According to data from the Professional Projection Report, these internships were distributed in areas such as internationalisation, imports, and exports. Specific performance areas, such as logistics and international expansion, also directly align with the global market's needs.

These experiences strengthen students' technical and strategic competencies and generate a positive and tangible impact on organisations. Through projects that involve operational and strategic improvements, students apply knowledge acquired in the classroom, aligning themselves with Schön's proposals on reflective practice as a fundamental bridge between theoretical learning and its practical application in authentic contexts. This approach ensures a comprehensive education, preparing graduates to lead in an increasingly globalised and competitive business environment.

The international academic mission's modality has broadened students' cultural and professional perspectives. Students participated in cultural immersion during activities in countries such as Turkey and Argentina. They applied knowledge in authentic contexts, documenting their learning in publications like *"Academic Missions: A World to Discover."* These experiences strengthen intercultural competencies and adaptability, which are essential for leading in global markets, as

Jane Knight pointed out, emphasizing the importance of incorporating international experiences for the integral development of students.

The satisfaction indexes associated with the programme also reflect the positive impact of the educational model. This level of acceptance highlights not only the quality of the educational experiences but also the relevance perceived by companies that value the tangible contributions of students in areas such as international logistics and strategic management. The positive perception of integrated educational experiences is a vital indicator of the effectiveness of an internationalised curriculum.

The results demonstrate the effectiveness of the new educational model, which combines theory, practice, and business linkages with an international focus. The high rates of employability, academic performance.. This model prepares students to face the demands of the globalised labour market and positions them as agents of change capable of leading in multicultural environments. The program's ability to integrate local and international elements, in line with the proposals of Beelen & Jones and experiential learning, ensures that students understand the complexities of international trade and develop practical and strategic skills. Together, these characteristics position the ANI programme as a comprehensive educational model prepared to face the challenges of an ever-changing global environment.

#### *4.5. External Validations: Recognitions by MEN and CNA*

The MEN has renewed the ANI program's registration in its three modalities of offerings: classroom, virtual, and single. This evaluation process considers multiple criteria, including the curriculum's relevance, the faculty's qualifications, the technological and physical infrastructure, and the learning outcomes obtained by students. The face-to-face mode of the programme offers an immersive experience that combines theory and practice in a collaborative environment. In contrast, the virtual mode, recognised for its flexible and innovative design, allows students to access a high-quality education from anywhere. For its part, the single mode combines elements of both face-to-face and virtual modalities, adapting to the needs of students and expanding opportunities for access to higher education. These characteristics reinforce the program's capacity to serve a diverse population and meet the demands of the current educational environment.

The ANI programme has high-quality accreditation from the CNA in its face-to-face and virtual modalities, the highest recognition in the Colombian educational system. This accreditation validates compliance with strict standards related to academic excellence, research, social projection, and internationalisation. According to Harvey and Green, quality in higher education not only implies the satisfaction of minimum requirements but also requires exceeding these standards, an evident achievement. The innovative elements position the programme as a comprehensive educational model that connects academia with the business sector, effectively responding to the demands of the global market.

The MEN and CNA recognitions not only validate the excellence of the programme but also strengthen the confidence of students, companies, and other actors in the educational ecosystem in the quality of the training offered. As Altbach and Knight point out, recognition by external entities is a critical element in strengthening the reputation and competitiveness of educational programmes in an international context.

In addition, the flexibility of the program's offerings and the integration of technology in the training process ensure that the programme can respond to the changing needs of the global market. The accreditation also validates the program's positive impact on the employability of its graduates, who, thanks to the comprehensive and practical training received, can excel in strategic sectors such as international trade, global finance, and logistics.

The renewal of the accreditation and the high-quality accreditation not only represent a recognition of the quality of the ANI programme but also ensures its position as a leader in training professionals in international business. These achievements reaffirm that CEIPA's educational model

not only meets the established standards but also constantly innovates to exceed students' expectations and the labour market's demands.

In a globalised world, educational programmes must combine academic excellence, relevance, and connection with international dynamics, and the programme meets these requirements excellently. External validations confirm the pedagogical model's effectiveness and strengthen the program's ability to train business leaders capable of facing the challenges of a dynamic and competitive global market.

## Discussion

The results obtained in the analysis of the programme reflect the effectiveness of its educational model and its alignment with fundamental theoretical frameworks that support the formation of global competencies and the connection with the international market. This crossover between practice and theory makes it possible to highlight several critical dimensions. The curriculum based on interdisciplinary problem nuclei is an effective tool for connecting theory and practice. According to Lev Vygotsky, social mediation and interaction with real contexts enhance meaningful learning, a principle embodied in activities such as Global Talks, Global Business Seminars, and SolversLab. These initiatives develop specific competencies in areas such as business internationalisation and foster transversal skills, such as adaptability and critical thinking, which are essential in a globalised environment. This approach connects directly with the experiential learning theory of David Kolb, who points out that active experimentation and reflection are pillars in consolidating practical competencies.

For example, the results of the Saber Pro tests consistently show performance above the national average in specific competencies, such as "Project Formulation, Evaluation, and Management." This indicator validates the curriculum's quality and reflects how students internalise the principles of competency-based learning described by Giovanny Cardona Montoya. Through mirror classes and problem-based learning methodologies, students translate abstract knowledge into practical applications, strengthening their preparation to lead in international markets.

The connection between academia and the business sector emerges as essential in forming global competencies. For example, the SolversLab business consulting model resonates with the situated learning described by Lave and Wenger, as it allows students to engage in real-world contexts that enrich their theoretical understanding and strengthen their ability to solve complex problems. This model has impacted more than 200 companies, a tangible indicator of the effectiveness of the collaborative approach and its impact on employability.

The fact that more than a quarter of the interns are hired by the companies where they did their internships reflects the capacity of the learning model to close the gap between academic competencies and the demands of the labour market. This dynamic is aligned with the Schön's principles who emphasises reflective practice to consolidate theoretical knowledge in professional contexts.

Participation in the CINTANA network and its focus on internationalisation at home represent a significant advance in forming global professionals. Jane Knight's theory on integrating international dimensions in the curriculum is seen in activities such as the Global Signature Courses, where students collaborate with international peers. These experiences strengthen intercultural competencies and broaden students' perspectives on global dynamics, preparing them to lead in diversified markets.

The results of international assignments, such as participation in projects in Turkey, Portugal, Mexico, Italy, and Brazil, highlight how exposure to diverse cultural contexts enriches students' analytical and strategic competencies. This connects with Beelen and Jones' view on the impact of local and global internationalisation on the formation of applied competencies.

The MEN and CNA recognitions underscore the quality and relevance of CEIPA's International Business Administration program. The renewal of the program's accreditation and the high-quality accreditation validate the curricular design and institutional infrastructure and its capacity to train



professionals prepared to face the challenges of a globalised market. According to Harvey and Green, these recognitions reflect a standard of quality that exceeds the basic requirements. While the model has proven highly effective, there is room to strengthen its impact further. Integrating advanced technologies, such as business simulators and adaptive learning platforms, could enrich the practical component of the curriculum. In addition, expanding international assignments to new strategic destinations would diversify students' cultural and professional experiences.

Finally, promoting joint research between students, teachers, and companies could generate a more robust academic and business impact. These initiatives would reinforce the connection between theory and practice and contribute to the development of applied knowledge relevant to contemporary global dynamics.

## Conclusions

This study demonstrates the efficacy of integrating global business ecosystems into international MBA education for developing competent professionals equipped to navigate complex global markets. The findings reveal that embedding experiential learning, problem-based methodologies, and business linkages within the curriculum significantly enhances students' acquisition of strategic and practical competencies. These pedagogical approaches, grounded in Kolb's experiential learning theory and Vygotsky's social constructivism, facilitate meaningful knowledge transfer whilst providing authentic opportunities for applying theoretical concepts.

The programme's success is evidenced by performance metrics exceeding national standards and impressive employability rates, with graduates demonstrating proficiency in project management, organisational leadership, and cross-cultural communication. External validations from regulatory bodies further substantiate the model's effectiveness and relevance. Whilst the single-case methodology presents limitations regarding generalisability, this research contributes valuable insights for educational institutions seeking innovative approaches to business education. Future research might explore comparative analyses with similar programmes internationally and investigate the longitudinal impact on graduates' career trajectories. In conclusion, this educational model offers a reproducible framework for harmonising academic rigour with practical application in international business education. By systematically connecting learning with authentic commercial ecosystems, institutions can prepare graduates who possess not merely theoretical knowledge, but the adaptability and strategic acumen required for leadership in today's globalised marketplace.

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