

Internationalized Academics in Argentina: A Privilege or an Option?

Arjantin'deki Akademisyenlerin Uluslararasılaşması: Bir Ayrıcalık mı Yoksa Bir Seçenek mi?

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Özet

Üniversiteler için kamu politikası gündeminin bir parçası olarak uluslararasılaşma, Arjantin'de nispeten yenidir. Uluslararasılaşmaya yönelik politikalar şimdiye kadar kıt ve gelişmiş ülkelerden gelen finansal fırsatlara bağlı idi. Akademisyenler uluslararasılaşmanın gelişiminde kilit aktörler olduğundan ve Arjantin'deki akademik meslek heterojen ve parçalı olduğundan, yükseköğretime ilişkin son zamanlardaki uluslararasılaştırma politikalarının Arjantin akademik faaliyetlerinin uluslararası düzeyini ne ölçüde etkileyeceği hala bilinmemektedir. Bu makale Arjantinli akademisyenler için uluslararası olmanın bir seçenek mi yoksa bir ayrıcalık mı olduğu ve bu durumun üniversitedeki merkezi rolleri göz önüne alındığında çalıştıkları kurumlarda uluslararasılaşmanın değerine ilişkin algılarını nasıl belirlediği sorularını araştırmaktadır. Bunu yapmak için, kişisel ve profesyonel niteliklerle ilgili olarak Arjantin'deki akademik uluslararasılaşma düzeyini analiz etmek için 2018 Bilgiye Dayalı Toplumda Akademik Meslek (APIKS) anketinden yararlanıldı ve kurumsal uluslararasılaşma için uygun akademik ortamların nasıl yaratılabileceği soruları yanıtlanmaya çalışıldı. Bulguların, kurumsal uluslararasılaşma ve kurumsal kalitenin artırılması yönündeki kapsamlı değişikliklere katkı sunması beklenmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Akademik uluslararasılaşma, APIKS, Arjantin, yükseköğretimde uluslararasılaşma.

Abstract

Internationalization, as part of a public policy agenda for universities, is relatively new in Argentina. Policies oriented toward internationalization have been scarce and have depended on financial opportunities from developed countries. Since academics are key actors in the development of internationalization, and the academic profession in Argentina is heterogeneous and fragmented, the extent to which recent internationalization policies on higher education might impact on the international level of Argentine academic activity is still unknown. This article delves into the questions of whether being international today is either an option or a privilege for Argentine academics, and how this condition determines their perception of the value of internationalization at the institutions where they work, given their central role at the university. To do this, we have relied on the 2018 Academic Profession in the Knowledge-based Society (APIKS) survey to analyze the level of academic internationalization in Argentina in relation to personal and professional qualities. We, therefore, examine our questions aiming toward the creation of favorable academic environments for institutional internationalization. Our findings could be helpful in thinking up a comprehensive change for institutional internationalization and, therefore, institutional quality.

Keywords: Academic internationalization, Argentina, APIKS, internationalization in higher education.

Internationalization, as part of a public policy agenda for universities, is relatively new in Argentina. Until the beginning of the twenty-first century, being “international” was subject to the missions, histories, and interests of institutions and academics. The emergence of internationalization as a quality or institutional modernization parameter coincided with the development of global processes, with the subsequent

financial opportunities that allowed for the creation of networks with institutions or academics from developed countries, for whom internationalization was high in their agendas.

Since then, policies oriented toward internationalization have been scarce and have depended on those processes. Nevertheless, internationalization has been incorporated gradually to the national agenda and to that of universities,

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although the extent to which these efforts are a staple of Argentine university life is still unclear.

Academics are key actors in the development of internationalization, both as a driving force and as recipients of those policies. During the first decade of this century, studies have demonstrated that internationalization is generally driven by academics' individual motivations and their networks of relationships with colleagues from abroad (Finkelstein, Walker, & Chen, 2009; Huang, 2007; Schwietz, 2008). In later decades, being international was dependent on individual interests, the framework of the discipline chosen for practice (Finkelstein et al., 2009), and institutional missions with the concept of "internationalization at home" (de Wit, Hunter, Howard, & Egron-Polak, 2015). Recently, a new phase showing a counterreaction of nationalist-populist movements, anti-globalist protests, and anti-integration trends might have negative implications for the internationalization of higher education (de Wit & Altbach, 2021). The extent to which recent internationalization policies on higher education have impacted on the international level of Argentine academic activity is still unknown.

The high level of heterogeneity of the Argentine academic profession may help explain the current scenario. The questions this article attempts to resolve are whether being international today is either an option or a privilege for Argentine academics and how this *status* influences the way in which academics institutionally perceive internationalization, given their central role at the university.

In this sense, the aim of this work is to study the level of academic internationalization in Argentina in relation to personal and professional qualities and how this condition determines academics' perception of the value of internationalization at the institutions where they work. We have relied on the 2018 Academic Profession in the Knowledge-based Society (APIKS) survey to delve into these questions. We examine the concepts and issues related to the literature consulted for this study in regard to internationalization and the academic profession, and its relation to the Argentine case in terms of policies and characteristics of the profession. Next, we describe and justify our sample, outlining data and methods, and describing the variables used for this study. Finally, we present and discuss our results and provide conclusions.

Theorizing Internationalization and the Academic Profession

During the early the twenty-first century, internationalization was mostly understood as a measure enabling collaboration between institutions and governments to reduce the uncon-

trollable effects of globalization (Enders, 2004; Knight, 2005; Teichler, 2004). Since then, many researchers have studied internationalization as actions undertaken, under different forms, by a country, an institution, an academic department, or an individual professor to understand or manage global realities (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009).

Internationalization has, throughout the years, changed from being a reactive question to a proactive one, from being an added value to becoming a generalized feature. Its focus, scope, and contents have significantly evolved as well (de Wit & Altbach, 2021). Thus, the concept of internationalization has increasingly taken on an essential role as a dimension of institutional quality. In recent years, de Wit et al. (2015, p. 29) defined internationalization of higher education as "the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society."

The universities' efforts to incorporate internationalization often originate from individual, institutional, and local factors, and lead to a number of strategies and outcomes for different areas, such as teaching and research. These efforts also vary according to region, country, type of institution, and discipline. Other factors are also influential in prioritizing the motivations, strategies, and outcomes of internationalization (Rumbley, 2010). Therefore, internationalization may counteract or contribute to greater dependence, academic concentration, a hegemonic thought, and a deepening of inequalities (Didou Aupetit, 2006; Knight, 2020).

The study of the impact of internationalization processes on the academic profession is relatively new. The traditional distinction made by Clark (1980, 1987) between "cosmopolitans" and "locals," as part of the variations of academic cultures around the world, was deepened by Altbach (2004) in his study of the impact of globalization on academic work on faculties of industrialized and emergent countries. The interest for this subject lies in the analysis of the individual, professional, and local factors (e.g., gender, academic position, discipline, research/teaching preference, research and teaching activities, language, national economy, etc.) that may influence the internationalization of the academic profession (Ackers, 2008; Finkelstein & Sethi, 2014; Li & Tu, 2016; Nokkala, Bataille, Siekkinen, & Goastellec, 2020; Teichler, Arimoto, & Cummings, 2013; Rostan, Finkelstein, & Huang, 2013; Teichler & Cummings, 2015).

Additionally, other studies have considered different indicators to identify internationalized academics, who can be



grouped in either individual, institutional, or system based: international travel for research and study; research published in another country; conducting research or publishing with colleagues from abroad; campus climate for international perspectives and actions; or policy implications, among others (Finkelstein et al., 2009; Huang, 2007, Schwietz, 2008). These studies focus on the way international perspectives shape the academic activity and how national boundaries restrict faculty professional networks (Finkelstein & Sethi, 2014).

Contextualizing Internationalization and the Academic Profession in Argentina

Since its emergence in the 1990s, especially after the passing of the Higher Education Act of 1995 and in a context of a neoliberal government that included the idea of opening the country's economy to the world (Marquina & Luchilo, 2021), the internationalization of higher education has remained high on the agenda of Argentine policies. Several programs from the Ministry of Education began to foster internationalization at universities, such as the Programa de Promoción de la Universidad Argentina of 2008 (Argentine University Promotion Program), which funded the constitution of networks for research with academics from different countries. A new unit was also established in 2003 at the Secretary of University Policies, called Programa de Internacionalización de la Educación Superior y la Cooperación Internacional (Higher Education and International Cooperation Internationalization Program), promoting internationalization with a focus on student and academic mobility. Nevertheless, policies for the internationalization of higher education in Argentina have been scarce, poorly funded, and mostly motivated by external projects (e.g., ERASMUS+Latin America projects).

Universities have responded to policies or external funding opportunities related to the internationalization of higher education in different ways. Although changing and dynamic projects were put forth at their core, some of these institutions have organized proactively in regard to these incentives and as part of their institutional mission, showing interest in internationalizing their own processes, whereas others have responded in a reactive way (Ramírez, 2017). We should underscore, however, the increasing level of development of internationalization offices at these institutions, with the professionalization of staff (Marquina, 2020) and the introduction of an international dimension in their evaluation processes, such as in the case of the external institutional evaluation carried out by the Comisión Nacional de Evaluación y Acreditación Universitaria (National University Evaluation and Accreditation Commission). Moreover, international indicators have been included in the national statistics system of universities (SPU, 2020). In sum, it

could be argued that internationalization in Argentina is an incipient and developing process that still depends on external funding from governmental and international agencies and programs.

By 2018, foreign higher education students in Argentina represented 3.6% of the total vocational and undergraduate enrollment and 9.4% of postgraduate enrollment. The public sector had a concentration of foreign students of 75.2%, whereas the private sector had only 24.8%. Students from other Latin American countries represented 95%, and only 4% came from Europe. Yet, it is worth mentioning that barely 0.42% of the total number of enrolled students were considered international mobility students; that is, they conducted academic activities different from a full course as a result of internationalization efforts (SPU, 2020).

Many international efforts at Argentine universities, still motivated by individual interests, stem from researchers who have established networks with different colleagues around the world, promoting or even taking advantage of national or international opportunities (Ramírez, 2017). Considering the characteristics of the Argentine academic profession is crucial to understand the internationalization of higher education in the country.

The academic profession in Argentina is heterogeneous and fragmented, with characteristics that are related to a massive higher education system (free tuition and open admission), with professional training as its main objective (Marquina & Luchilo, 2021). There is a high presence of part-time faculty at both private and public institutions. In the public university sector, close to two-thirds of academics are part-time teachers (10 hrs. per week), with a tendency toward growth in recent years. The other third is distributed among full-time teachers, who oversee research, academic, and management activities (SPU, 2020). In the private sector, the presence of part-time faculty is even higher. The percentages of women and men have evened out at 50% each. While women concentrate more in full-time positions than their male counterparts (54.7% vs. 45.3%) (SPU, 2020), men comprise the highest-ranking positions (38.5% for women and 61.5% for men in full professor positions) (SPU, 2020). This is critical since the Argentine academic profession is strongly hierarchical. The chair system is the most common type of organization of academic work, especially in more traditional institutions, which also have the largest number of students (Marquina, Pérez Centeno, & Reznik, 2021).

The differences among faculty are not distributed by type of institutions (e.g., research oriented) but rather within their own academic structure. Therefore, each institution may

gather full-time faculty, involved in institutional life, and a vast majority of part-time faculty whose main activity is teaching. The composition of these groups in Argentina may vary according to each institution, but it is common to identify a selected group or “elite” (Marquina & Rebello, 2013) that is more satisfied with their work and shares specific features among its members, such as full-time dedication to academic work, access to funding that guarantees a higher level of equipment and resources for research, and the possibility of being “international,” given that they have a closer involvement with colleagues from abroad than their local peers. In this sense, the analogy between this group and an elite coincides with other research conducted in the European context (Kwiek, 2016; Wagner, 2008).

Questions, Analytical Model, and Hypotheses

As discussed above, the role of academics in internationalization processes around the world is crucial for institutional development. We assume that internationalized academics do not constitute a large group in Argentina, given the characteristics of the academic profession in this country (Marquina & Rebello, 2013). Thus, we will study the level of internationalization in Argentina according to the personal and professional attributes of academics, as well as to how this status determines their perceptions of the value of internationalization at the institutions where they work. Since academics are important drivers of beliefs and values at the institutions (Clark, 1980, 1987), and personal and professional conditions may influence the status of internationalized faculty (Finkelstein & Sethi, 2014; Li & Tu, 2016; Teichler et al., 2013; Teichler & Cummings, 2015), it would be possible to predict whether academics’ opportunities of being more or less internationalized are conditions for perceiving internationalization as a key dimension at the institutions where they work. Consequently, the main questions in this study are:

- Is being international an option for any academic, or do personal and professional factors limit or enhance the international profile of academics in Argentina?
- How does the value given to internationalization by academics at the institutions where they work vary according to their international profile?
- Is the value given to internationalization by academics at the institutions where they work a result of their international profile?

Since we are paying special attention to how the personal and professional characteristics of academics determine their profile as “internationalized,” for the purposes of this study, we will define the following factors as main personal characteristics: (a) gender (Abramo, D’Angelo, & Murgia, 2013;

Ackers, 2008; Fox, Realff, Rueda, & Morn, 2016; Vabo, Padilla González, Waagene, & Naes, 2013), and (b) family composition (Finkelstein & Sethi, 2014; Nokkala et al., 2020). These studies have shown that many of the traditional gender differences in academic work are reproduced through international academic activities; that is, the influence of personal factors such as gender and family composition become barriers or facilitators of academic internationalization. For instance, Ackers (2008) argues that, in the European Research Area, these personal factors shape scientific mobility and influence the relationship between mobility, internationalization, and excellence. Likewise, Nokkala et al. (2020) find differences in academic policies in Finland and Switzerland, in particular those referred to the importance of international mobility, which are more noticeable in Switzerland and place women at a greater disadvantage. Based on these results, we set out to analyze the impact of gender and family composition of Argentine academics on their academic internationalization, given that we also have variables related to these factors in the survey. Although other factors could have been considered—such as having lived abroad, the international character of parental composition, or language—we found no variables in that regard in the survey.

We will also define the following factors as main professional characteristics: (a) generation (Kyvik & Aksnes, 2015; Stephan & Levin, 1992); (b) highest degree (Kwiek, 2020); (c) employment status (Kwiek, 2020); (d) rank (Kwiek, 2020); and (e) discipline (Kwiek, 2020). These studies have demonstrated that, in the European context, the level of internationalization increases along with a greater progress in the academic career—such as academic experience and age, as well as position—and certain disciplines such as physics, mathematics, or life sciences.

As other studies have demonstrated, the personal and professional characteristics of the Argentine academic profession are determinants of its fragmentation and heterogeneity (Marquina et al., 2021; Marquina, Yuni, & Ferreiro, 2017). These results are important because of their implications on the level of internationalization of the academic activity.

■ Table 1 shows how these characteristics are manifested in our sample.

In order to determine the level of internationalization of Argentine academics, we will consider four conditions according to specific studies and how many of these conditions are met: (a) country of degree (El-Khawas, 2002; Rostan & Höle, 2013; Welch, 1997); (b) collaboration with international colleagues in research (Kyvik & Larsen, 1994; Wagner, 2008); (c) publications published in a foreign country; (d) publications



■ **Table 1.** Personal and professional characteristics of the Argentine academic profession.

Personal characteristics	Gender	Male	50.5%
		Female	49.5%
	Family composition	Dependents	57.8%
		Nondependents	42.2%
Professional characteristics	Generation (according to year of first position)	Young (2008–2019)	45.4%
		Intermediate (1995–2007)	30.8%
		Old (before 1995)	23.8%
	Highest degree	Undergraduate	35.5%
		Specialization	20.1%
		Master	17.0%
		Doctoral	18.5%
		Postdoctoral	9.0%
	Employment status	Full time (40 hrs/week)	15.2%
		Part time (less than 40 hrs/week)	84.8%
	Rank	Junior	62.3%
		Senior	37.7%
	Discipline	STEM	34.3%
		No STEM	65.7%

coauthored with colleagues located in foreign countries (Kwiek, 2020). Although we attempted to include academic internationalization on teaching, learning, or curriculum (Coates, Dobson, & Goedegebuure, 2013) in the current study, we found a low level of positive responses in the three questions related to this factor in our questionnaire. The presence of international subjects in teaching, as well as the increase in international students, did not produce significant results (neutral responses based on a Likert scale). Neither did the language used for teaching, whereby in 98.5% of the cases it was Spanish. This is the reason why we considered those professional factors mostly related to research to be more influential on the level of internationalization, as the literature on the matter demonstrates, which is a limitation of the study.

Finally, to measure the value given by academics to institutional internationalization, we will consider the perceptions of academics on different “outcomes” of internationalization: (a) enhances prestige; (b) enhances academic quality; (c) increases revenue; (d) enhances research networks; (e) increases mobility of students; (f) increases mobility of faculty; (g) weakens cultural identity; (h) increases brain gain; (i) increases costs associated with internationalization.^[1]

We relied on an analytical model that sustains the hypotheses of this work and the methodological proposal (■ Figure 1).

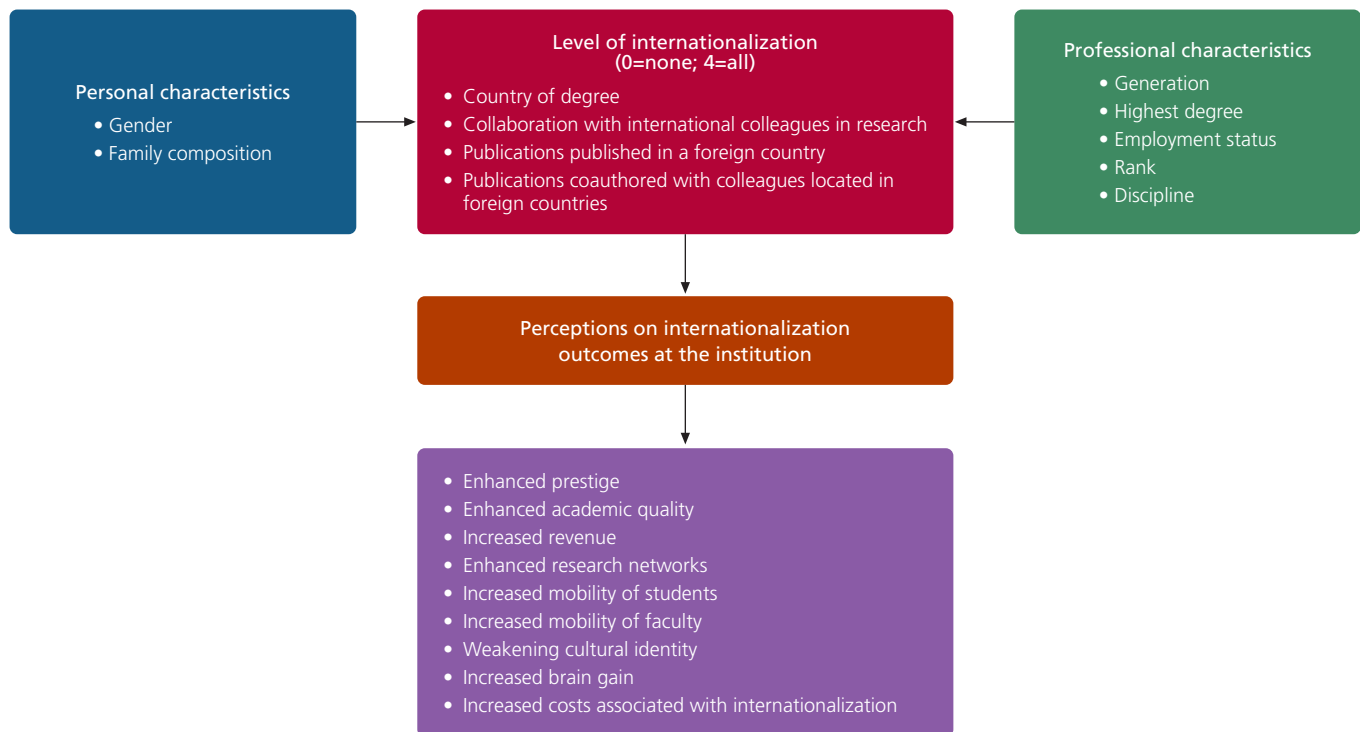
We worked with three main hypotheses and an introductory hypothesis based on this model that aim at confirming previous studies (Marquina & Rebello, 2013):

- **H0-** A low level of internationalization predominates among Argentine academics.
- **H1-** Academics’ personal characteristics, such as gender and family composition, influence the level of academic internationalization.
- **H2-** Academics’ professional conditions—such as employment status, rank, discipline, highest degree, and generation—are factors that determine the level of academic internationalization.
- **H3-** The level of academic internationalization influences academics’ perception of institutional international outcomes (the higher the level, the better perception of international outcomes).
- **H3a-** More internationalized academics tend to place a higher value on the positive institutional effects of internationalization, whereas less internationalized academics tend to place a higher value on negative institutional effects.

Method

The Argentine APIKS survey was carried out in 2018, with an overall number of 1450 responses obtained from academics from all public universities of the country. The resulting data-

[1] These nine “outcomes” correspond to question F5 in the APIKS survey.



■ **Figure 1.** Analytical model for the study of internationalization of academics in Argentina. *Source:* APIKS Argentina, 2018.

base was screened, and 362 incomplete responses and 63 invalid ones were eliminated. The overall total of valid responses amounted to 1025. The database was then weighed to balance the responses obtained in terms of dedication, gender, and position for the results to be representative.

After this screening process, we worked with a total of 954 valid cases, a sample that complied with the parameters to ensure representativeness established by APIKS for databases from all participant countries. We considered the whole sample and classified academics into “levels of internationalization” according to a grouping criterion. The analysis of H0, H1, H2, and H3 was based on an analytical model, which allowed us to relate dependent variables to independent ones (■ Appendix 1).

Four key variables^[2] were taken as grouping criterion to establish the level of internationalization of academics: (a) country in which you obtained your degree; (b) collaboration with international colleagues in research; (c) publications in the last three years published in a foreign country; and (d) publications in the last three years coauthored with colleagues located in other (foreign) countries. The first two are Yes/No questions, whereas the last ones are assessed from a percentage greater than zero. Therefore, the “levels” of internationalization

were defined according to how many of these conditions were applicable, being “level 0=none condition=null or low level” and “level 4=four conditions=high level.”

This grouping allowed us to analyze H0, whereby we measured the level of internationalization of Argentine academics. After the analysis of this hypothesis, we addressed the level of internationalization as dependent variable to analyze variations by personal (H1) and professional (H2) characteristics. In H1, our intention was to distinguish differences according to gender and family composition as independent variables. In H2, we examined professional characteristics that may influence the level of academic internationalization by considering the differences between generation, highest degree, employment status, rank, and discipline, as explained in the Annex.

Finally, in H3 the main variables of interest are representative of a set of assessments that reveal academics’ perceptions of the importance of nine outcomes of internationalization at their institutions. The outcomes were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (from “Not at all” to “Very much”). First, we carried out a descriptive analysis based on the means of the responses according to the level of internationalization. Then, to test H3, we ran multivariate regression models for each of

[2] ■ Appendix 1 shows the number of questions in the questionnaire and the way they are formulated.



Table 2. Level of internationalization.

		Level of internationalization										Total	
		0		1		2		3		4			
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
		510	53.5	192	20.1	108	11.3	105	11.0	39	4.1	954	100

Source: APIKS Argentina, 2018. XA5_C/D1_5/D4_2/D4_4

the nine outcome variables because we assumed that these assessments might be expected to be related to additional factors beyond differences on the level of internationalization alone (Appendix 2).

It is worth noting that, in our last analysis, we decided to move forward with the creation of multiple regression models despite the results not showing high values of significance, as we shall see below. This is because we considered it important and complementary to the descriptive analysis to be able to underscore some interesting findings about the incidence of the factors considered, which could be further deepened with future studies with different approaches to the subject. As can be observed in Appendices 1 and 2, we relied on statistical indicators and measures—the percentage distribution and the mean—for conducting a descriptive analysis, and we employed chi-square whenever the variables allowed it to evaluate the association between these variables. For the regression analysis, we applied the variables mentioned above. All the analyses were performed in IBM SPSS Statistics v.25 (Appendices 1 and 2).

Results

Descriptive Results

Table 2 shows that more than 70% of academics have a level of internationalization equal to 0 or 1, a group that can be identified clearly as “locals” (Kwiek, 2020). On the other hand, 11.3% have some level of internationalization in their academic activity (level 2), and only 15.1% can be considered to have a level of internationalization equal to 3 or 4, a group that can

undoubtedly be considered “internationalized.” Thus, these figures allow us to confirm that a low level of internationalization is predominant among Argentine academics.

Table 3 registers how gender and family composition of academics varies among the different levels of academic internationalization. No significant variations exist in the different levels of internationalization as regards gender or family composition. There is a slight predominance of internationalized women but having family dependents does not affect the results. However, Table 3 also shows that these personal factors are not statistically associated with the level of internationalization. In consequence, the results indicate that personal characteristics do not influence academics’ level of internationalization, and therefore, H1 is not confirmed.

Table 4 shows the level of internationalization of Argentine academics according to professional characteristics. The older the generation, the higher the rank and the better the employment status; and the better the qualifications, the higher the level of internationalization. Considering that level 3 and 4 of internationalization represent only 15.1% of the total, we observe that the categories of old generation (26.8%), doctoral degree (32.0%), postdoctoral certification (64.7%), full-time status (29.6%), and senior rank (23.4%) are more represented in this group. This table also shows that the level of internationalization is statistically associated with the abovementioned professional factors. The same relationship is observed when we focus on the disciplines, with results in favor of STEM (18.0%) but with no statistical association.

Table 3. Personal characteristics.

		Level of internationalization										Total	
		0		1		2		3		4			
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Gender	Male	272	56.5	90	18.6	46	9.5	54	11.2	20	4.2	482	50.5
	Female	238	50.4	103	21.7	62	13.2	51	10.7	18	4.0	472	49.5
Family composition	Dependents	297	53.8	112	20.4	58	10.5	57	10.4	27	4.9	551	57.8
	Nondependents	214	53.0	80	19.8	50	12.5	47	11.8	12	2.9	403	42.2

Source: APIKS Argentina, 2018. LI by H1 & XH3.

Table 4. Professional characteristics.

		Level of internationalization										Total	
		0		1		2		3		4			
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%		
Generation	Young	267*	61.7	80	18.5	45	10.4	38	8.8	3	0.7	433	45.4
	Intermediate	153	52.0	60	20.4	38	12.9	28	9.5	15*	5.1	294	30.8
	Old	86	37.9	50	22.0	30	13.2	38	16.7	23*	10.1	227	23.8
Highest degree [†]	Undergraduate	258*	76.8	47	14.0	14	4.2	17	5.1	0	0	336	35.5
	Specialization	136*	71.6	32	16.8	17	8.9	4	2.1	1	0.5	190	20.1
	Master	70*	43.5	50	31.1	25	15.5	12	7.5	4	2.5	161	17.0
	Doctoral	23	13.1	53	30.3	43	24.6	46	26.3	10*	5.7	175	18.5
	Postdoctoral	7	8.2	13	15.3	10	11.8	29	34.1	26*	30.6	85	9.0
Employment status	Part time	470*	58.1	157	19.4	81	10.0	77	9.5	24	3.0	809	84.8
	Full time	40	27.6	35	24.1	27	18.6	28	19.3	15*	10.3	145	15.2
Rank	Junior	356*	60.0	121	20.3	57	9.6	54	9.1	6	0.9	594	62.3
	Senior	154	42.7	71	19.8	51	14.1	51	14.1	33*	9.3	360	37.7
Discipline	STEM	171	52.3	62	19.0	35	10.7	42	12.8	17	5.2	327	34.3
	NO STEM	338	53.9	130	20.7	73	11.6	64	10.2	22	3.5	627	65.7

Source: APIKS Argentina, 2018. LI by XA8, XA5, XA3, XA1 & XA2. * $p < 0.001$; [†]Seven records without data.

As other studies reveal (Marquina et al., 2021), these professional conditions are far from depending on academic choices alone. On the contrary, these factors are subject to institutional and local opportunities, and they determine the level of belonging to an elite that, among other features, is more internationalized. Thus, H2 is confirmed: professional factors effectively determine the level of internationalization of academics.

Finally, Table 5 shows an association between the perception of internationalization of institutional outcomes and

the actual level of academic internationalization. The comparison of results shows that the positive outcomes of internationalization are more highly valued by more internationalized academics than less internationalized ones. The only two assessments that reinforce the negative effects of institutional internationalization—“weakening cultural identity” and “increased costs associated with internationalization”—are the most highly valued among less internationalized academics. This reinforces our hypothesis, since a direct relation between the types of judgments about internationalization

Table 5. Perceptions on outcomes of internationalization.

		Mean	Level of internationalization				
			0	1	2	3	4
Outcomes of internationalization	Enhanced prestige	3.78	3.94	4.08	4.13	4.10*	
	Enhanced academic quality	3.52	3.6	3.9	3.87	3.83 [†]	
	Increased revenue	2.79	2.93	2.87	3.33 [†]	2.78	
	Enhanced research networks	3.65	4.05	4.1	4.31	4.36 [†]	
	Increased mobility of students	3.51	3.83	3.79	3.81	3.99*	
	Increased mobility of faculty	3.30	3.71	3.56	3.59	3.82*	
	Weakening cultural identity	2.01 [†]	1.61	1.66	1.74	1.57	
	Increased brain gain	2.76	2.64	2.82	2.91	2.65	
	Increased costs associated with internationalization	2.79	2.61	2.46	2.7	2.56	

Source: APIKS Argentina, 2018. F5 by LI. * $p < 0.01$; [†] $p < 0.05$; [‡] $p < 0.001$.



and academic level of internationalization, be they negative or positive, do not necessarily need to be present. We also found a statistical association between these variables, except for “increased brain gain” and “increased costs associated with internationalization.”

Results of Multivariate Analysis

Based on the information presented in the descriptive analysis, we sought to provide an answer to the question of whether the value given to internationalization by academics at the institutions where they work is a result of their international profile. We have already demonstrated that the perceptions of the importance of internationalization outcomes tend to vary according to the academic level of internationalization. But this result might not be related to this aspect alone; rather, other factors might be at play. Therefore, we ran a multivariate analysis that, in addition to the “level of internationalization,” included other levels related to professional characteristics. We essentially sought to find out how these additional variables impact the abovementioned perceptions to conclude whether the level of internationalization is a determinant factor.

■ Table 6 shows that, in almost all the cases, the “level of internationalization” is the only variable that best explains the way in which academics perceive the outcomes of internationalization at their institutions. We also observe a positive relation between the level of internationalization and the perceived importance of internationalization outcomes. Positive outcomes are perceived as more important when the level of academic internationalization is higher. In contrast, the possi-

ble negative outcomes of internationalization are only evaluated when the level of internationalization is lower. Therefore, H3 is confirmed.

In relation to the rest of the variables included in the analysis, ■ Table 6 shows that there is certainly an incidence in the perception of the outcomes, but in almost every case this incidence is lower than the “internationalization level” variable for the same cases. More significant exceptions are the incidences of the “generation” variable for a greater assessment of “increased revenue” and “increased mobility of students” for the younger generations. The “discipline” variable also influences the assessment of internationalization as “increased costs associated with internationalization,” with a greater impact on academics in the STEM disciplines. Finally, the “increased brain gain” outcome does not reflect any level of incidence on the internationalization level, as neither do the rest of the variables.

Discussion and Conclusion

Most academics in Argentina are not internationalized. By “internationalized,” we refer to academics who have at least three of the following characteristics: they were educated abroad, have collaborated with international colleagues in research, published articles abroad, or published articles coauthored with colleagues located in foreign countries. This issue has been addressed by several scholars, who consider these characteristics to be indicators of internationalization, such as Welch (1997), El-Khawas (2002), Rostan & Höle (2013), Kyvik & Larsen (1994), Wagner (2008), and Kwiek (2020).

■ Table 6. Results of multivariate analysis.

	Enhanced prestige	Enhanced academic quality	Increased revenue	Enhanced research networks	Increased mobility of students	Increased mobility of faculty	Weakening cultural identity	Increased brain gain	Increased costs associated with internationalization
(Constant)	3.602	3.431	2.675	3.200	3.244	2.786	2.154	3.199	2.971
Level of internationalization	0.11*	0.09 [†]	0.06	0.19 [†]	0.09 [†]	0.10 [†]	-0.08 [†]	0.01	-0.08 [†]
Generation	0.03	0.02	-0.08 [†]	0.02	-0.10 [†]	-0.06	0.01	-0.04	0.07
Highest degree	-0.03	0.01	0.07	0.04	0.05	0.01	-0.04	0.07	-0.01
Employment status	-0.03	-0.02	-0.02	0.04	0.04	0.08 [†]	-0.02	-0.02	0.05
Rank	0.07	0.08 [†]	0.01	-0.02	0.07	0.06	-0.08 [†]	-0.08	-0.06
Discipline	0.02	-0.04	0.02	0.07 [†]	0.02	0.05	0.03	-0.05	-0.09*
R2 (Adjusted)	0.013	0.015	0.007	0.050	0.019	0.020	0.021	0.007	0.012
F	2.978 [†]	3.366 [†]	2.121 [†]	9.022 [†]	4.022*	4.093 [†]	4.195 [†]	2.135 [†]	2.854*
N	915	915	915	915	915	915	915	915	915

Source: APIKS Argentina, 2018. *p<0.01; [†]p<0.05; [‡]p<0.001.



Unlike many of these studies, which have demonstrated a rise in the level of internationalization in the context of significant reforms as a result of the Bologna Process, our findings seem to reject the idea that the introduction of internationalization policies for higher education has led to the implementation of an international profile among scholars in Argentina. It is likely that the sporadic character of external funding for academics to carry out internationalization efforts may help explain these very findings. The degree of being international today seems to depend on additional factors rather than merely on system-based or institutional aspects (Finkelstein et al., 2009; Huang, 2007; Schwietz, 2008).

We have analyzed how personal and professional factors limit or enhance the international profile of academics in Argentina. Further, we have reviewed different studies that have demonstrated the incidence of gender or family composition as limiting or facilitating factors of internationalization; more specifically, showing the reproduction of gender differences in academic activities related to internationalization (Abramo et al., 2013; Ackers, 2008; Finkelstein & Sethi, 2014; Fox et al., 2016; Nokkala et al., 2020; Vabo et al., 2013). Interestingly, our data suggest that unlike in the European context, personal characteristics such as gender or family composition are not factors that enhance or limit the international profile of Argentine academics. We understand that the strong presence of women in the academic profession in Argentina explains, to a certain extent, the advancement of academic trajectories unaffected by gender. Although glass ceilings do exist—for instance, in hierarchic positions—this phenomenon does not appear to be a limiting element in the international profile of academics in the country, contrary to what other studies have found (Abramo et al., 2013; Ackers, 2008; Fox et al., 2016;). Gender's not being a differentiating factor of internationalization could also be explained by the overall low level of internationalization of Argentine academics. However, a new line of research is opened to continue studying the relation between gender and the academic profession, a type of research that is still incipient in Argentina.

Our results demonstrate instead a significant effect of professional factors. Academics of older generations, higher positions, full-time employment status, and higher qualifications are more internationalized than colleagues who lack these characteristics, following a similar tendency as observed by Kwiek (2020). Nevertheless, our data do not support the view that academics in some disciplines are more internationalized than others, unlike, for instance, in STEM disciplines, as also evinced by Kwiek (2020). Our findings show that there are professional conditioning factors that influence the level of internationalization. Thus, to be internationalized means belonging

to an elite group of academics that occupy high positions, having a quite advanced academic career, good working conditions, and access to resources, etc., as has been demonstrated by research in other countries or regions (Altbach, 2004; Kwiek, 2016; Marquina & Rebello, 2013; Wagner, 2008).

In this study, we have investigated how the level of academic internationalization influences academics' perception of certain institutional and international outcomes. We thus found an association between both aspects. Yet we went a step further and demonstrated that the value given to internationalization by academics at the institutions where they work is, primarily, a consequence of the academics' international profile. This means that internationalized academics tend to see the positive outcomes of internationalization as important, while the possible negative outcomes are mostly evaluated by less internationalized academics. This does not necessarily have to be so. Further studies are needed with regard to the reason why less internationalized academics tend to underscore the negative effects of internationalization for their institution, for these types of judgments may be related to the fact that, in Argentina, having a more international character in academia is seen as a privilege for a few. This hypothesis can only be confirmed with further in-depth research.

Even though the level of internationalization emerged as the variable that best explains these perceptions of the outcomes of internationalization, these may also be slightly influenced by other variables. The youngest generation tends to value student mobility and higher incomes associated with internationalization, perhaps because these aspects better represent their best interests. Notably, regardless of the discipline they work in, academics do not show a positive appraisal of internationalization. In sum, there is an obvious effect of the level of academic internationalization on the assessment of its impact on the university. This effect should also be further studied along with other qualitative factors, which would allow to both confirm these associations and gain a deeper understanding the underlying reasons.

Our study also shows that the concentration of internationalization in a small group of academics coupled with external funding opportunities could be a sign of a more responsive, rather than proactive, internationalization process in Argentina. Also, internationalization in Argentina seems to reproduce the differences stemming from an academic profession of the periphery (Altbach, 2004), where an elite follows the global trends of academia, and the majority develops the profession locally. As such, being international is more a privilege than an option, and that these differences define the academics' assessment of internationalization for their institution.



If we think of institutional internationalization as a key qualitative element (de Wit & Altbach, 2021; de Wit et al., 2015), the results of this study then show the importance for institutions of strengthening the internationalization of faculty along the factors deemed determinant of internationalization. In this sense, it is necessary to delve into other aspects of academic internationalization not included in this study, such as those linked to international curriculum or experience in teaching foreign students—aspects that could not be addressed due to the lack of available relevant information on the subject in the sources consulted.

Our findings demonstrate that, as long as the internationalization of the academic profession continues to be limited to a small cluster of academics, it will be difficult to create a favorable academic environment for institutional internationalization. In this respect, institutional policies oriented toward quality improvement may actively include lines of action directed to “internationalization at home” (de Wit et al., 2015), such as the communication of experiences by internationalized academics at their institutions after their return from abroad and the participation of foreign colleagues in local activities to report on research results and their countries’ experiences. Thus, the factors influencing the level of internationalization of some academics, mainly those linked to research practices, may expand their effects not only toward the main beneficiaries but also to the institution as a whole. These factors could also be valued by those academics who are not internationalized. In this regard, our findings are essential for developing comprehensive institutional internationalization towards higher institutional quality.

Yazar Katkıları / Author Contributions: MM: Fikir, tasarım, danışmanlık / denetleme, kaynak taraması, makalenin yazılması, bulguların yorumlanması, eleştirel inceleme; NR: Veri toplanması, veri analizi, bulguların yorumlanması, makalenin yazılması, eleştirel inceleme. / *MM: Project idea, conceiving and designing research, study monitoring, literature search, writing manuscript, interpreting the results, critical reading and final check of the manuscript; NR: Data collection, data analysis, interpreting the results, writing manuscript, critical reading and final check of the manuscript.*

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■ **Appendix 1.** Descriptive analysis.

	APIKS survey	Category	Measure	Association measure
<i>Dependent variable</i>				
Level of internationalization	A5_C/D1_5/D4_2/D4_4	0 (level 0)–4 (level 4)		
<i>Independent variables</i>				
Personal characteristics				
Gender	H1	Male; Female	%	Chi2
Family composition	XH3	Dependents; Nondependents	%	Chi2
Professional characteristics				
Generation	XA8	Young; Intermediate; Old	%	Chi2
Highest degree	XA5	Undergraduate; Specialization; Master; Doctoral; Postdoctoral	%	Chi2
Employment status	XA3	Full time; Part time	%	Chi2
Rank	XA1	Senior; Junior	%	Chi2
Discipline	XA2	STEM; NO STEM	%	Chi2
Perceptions				
To what extent do you observe the following outcomes of internationalization at your institution?	F5	1 (Not at all) – 5 (Very much)	Mean	Chi2

■ **Appendix 2.** Variables used in regression analysis.

Name	Description	Range
<i>Dependent variable</i>		
Enhanced prestige	To what extent do you observe the following outcomes of internationalization at your institution? (F5)	1 (Not at all) – 5 (Very much)
Enhanced academic quality		
Increased revenue		
Enhanced research networks		
Increased mobility of students		
Increased mobility of faculty		
Weakening cultural identity		
Increased brain gain		
Increased costs associated with internationalization		
<i>Independent variables</i>		
Level of internationalization		0 (level 0)–4 (level 4)
Generation	Young (2008–2019) Intermediate (1995–2007) Old (before 1995)	1 = Young 2 = Intermediate 3 = Old
Highest degree		1 = Undergraduate 2 = Specialization 3 = Master 4 = Doctoral 5 = Postdoctoral
Employment status	Full time (40 hrs./week) Part time (less than 40 hrs./week)	1 = Part time 2 = Full time
Rank		1 = Junior 2 = Senior
Discipline		1 = STEM 2 = NO STEM