STAKEHOLDER INFLUENCE ON BRANDING STRATEGY AT AN
INTERNATIONAL BRANCH CAMPUS

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Abstract

The number of international branch campuses (IBCs) has grown exponentially in recent years and higher education institutions are investing significant resources in them. IBCs are complex organizations, operating in a competitive environment that is simultaneously local and global, in an industry where reputation and brand are paramount. This single-site case study, conducted at an established IBC located in Eastern Europe operated by a private U.S. university, investigated how stakeholders were engaged in and influenced a specific strategy to more closely align the brand of a maturing IBC with that of the home university. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document review, and the researcher used the Stakeholder-brand Value Model (Jones, 2005) as a framework to identify and describe key stakeholders and explore their influence on the development and implementation of the branding strategy. Findings revealed that the IBC branding strategy was influenced by stakeholder expectations that changed over time, collaboration at the leadership level provided a clear vision and direction for the branding strategy, collaboration between stakeholders at the IBC and HC created value for the strategy and the enhanced brand, stakeholders and their networks facilitated information sharing and communication, and stakeholder engagement created legitimacy and established credibility that helped to validate the enhanced brand.

Keywords: international branch campus, stakeholder influence in higher education, branding in higher education, cross-border education, international higher education
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## Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... 2
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................................ 4
List of Tables .................................................................................................................................. 7
List of Figures ................................................................................................................................. 8
Chapter I: Introduction ................................................................................................................... 9
  Problem Statement ......................................................................................................................... 9
  Significance ................................................................................................................................. 11
  Purpose ....................................................................................................................................... 13
  Research Question ...................................................................................................................... 13
  Theoretical Framework ............................................................................................................... 14
  Definition of Key Terms ............................................................................................................. 16
  Summary ..................................................................................................................................... 17
Chapter II: Literature Review ...................................................................................................... 19
  Cross-Border Education ............................................................................................................ 19
  International Branch Campuses ............................................................................................... 23
  Theoretical Framework ............................................................................................................. 35
  Stakeholder Theory .................................................................................................................... 36
  Stakeholder Theory in Higher Education ................................................................................ 39
  Corporate Brand ........................................................................................................................ 41
  Branding in Higher Education ..................................................................................................... 44
  Stakeholder Relationships and Corporate Brand ..................................................................... 45
Conclusion ............................................................................................................................ 46

Chapter III: Research Methodology .................................................................................... 48
  Research Paradigm ............................................................................................................. 48
  Qualitative Research ........................................................................................................ 48
  Case Study Method ........................................................................................................... 49
  Site Selection and Description ......................................................................................... 50
  Participants .......................................................................................................................... 51
  Data Collection .................................................................................................................. 55
  Data Analysis ..................................................................................................................... 58
  Trustworthiness .................................................................................................................. 59
  Positionality Statement .................................................................................................... 60
  Data storage ........................................................................................................................ 63
  Protection of Human Subjects .......................................................................................... 64

Chapter IV: Research Findings ............................................................................................ 65
  Site description ................................................................................................................... 65
  Findings ............................................................................................................................... 67
  Stakeholder Engagement in Branding Strategy ............................................................... 68
  Value Creation in Stakeholder Relationships ................................................................... 93
  Summary ............................................................................................................................. 118

Chapter V: Discussion of the Research Findings ................................................................ 120
  Discussion of Major Findings ......................................................................................... 122
  Summary of Major Findings ............................................................................................. 136
  Findings related to theoretical framework ...................................................................... 137
Discussion of findings in relations to literature ................................................................. 142
Implications for Practice ................................................................................................. 153
Limitations ....................................................................................................................... 157
Recommendations for future research ............................................................................ 158
Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 159
References ....................................................................................................................... 162
Appendix A: General Institutional Participant Recruitment Letter ........................................ 183
Appendix B: Individual Participant Recruitment Letter .................................................... 184
Appendix C: Interview Protocol ....................................................................................... 185
Appendix D: Unsigned Consent Document ....................................................................... 187
Appendix E: Document Summary Form ............................................................................ 189
Appendix F: Observation Summary Form ......................................................................... 190
Appendix G: Case Timeline ............................................................................................. 191
Appendix H: Stakeholder Expectations Map .................................................................... 193
### List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Stakeholders Groups</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>Document Summary</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>Observation Summary</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5</td>
<td>Themes Emerging from the Research Sub-questions</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 1</th>
<th>The Stakeholder-brand Value Model</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Chapter I: Introduction

Problem Statement

Globalization is forcing changes in the way practitioners and scholars think as economic, political, and societal forces push higher education institutions (HEIs) toward greater international involvement (Altbach & Knight, 2007). According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2015) the number of students studying outside their home country grew from 2.1 million students in 2000 to 4.5 million students in 2012, a number that is projected to reach 8 million by 2025. As student mobility and the demand for higher education worldwide increases, colleges and universities have become aggressive about developing academic programs and educational models that transcend national borders to meet changing expectations and needs (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Altbach & Teichler, 2001; Coryell, Durodoye, Wright, Pate & Nguyen, 2012; Erickson, 2012; Looser, 2012; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). One of the fastest growing cross-border education initiatives over the past two decades has been international branch campuses (IBCs) which grew tenfold, from 24 in 2002 (Knight, 2013) to 247 in 2017 (Cross-Border Education Research Team [C-BERT], 2017). While the number is expected to continue to grow, scholars argue that IBCs can be risky endeavors and urge colleges and universities to proceed with caution when considering investing in them (Tierney & Lanford, 2015). At the 2015 annual conference of the Comparative and International Education Society, sociologist Anna Kosmutzky compared the development of IBCs to the California Gold Rush, indicating that “while a great number of institutions hoped to strike it rich, only a few will succeed” (Redden, 2015).

Scholarship on IBCs is relatively recent and has focused on describing and identifying the reasons for their growth and on understanding the motivations and expectations of those who
invest in them (Agnew, 2012; Lane, 2011b; Lane & Kinser, 2011). Research has demonstrated that HEIs develop IBCs in an effort to enhance global reputation, attract international students, establish alternative sources of revenue, and provide opportunities for students and faculty to engage globally (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Kinser & Lane, 2014; Lane, 2011b; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). On the other hand, scholars have argued that host country institutions, governments, and individuals support the development of IBCs in order to enhance economic development, increase higher education access and capacity, and enhance the quality of education in the host country (Kinser & Lane, 2014; Lane, 2011b; Olcott, 2009; Wildavsky, 2012). Scholars and practitioners agree that to be successful IBC leaders and managers must understand both local and global issues and perspectives in order to meet the needs of multiple stakeholders in both the home and host countries (Altbach, 2015; Agnew & VanBalkom, 2009; Altbach & Knight, 2007; Mahani & Molkai, 2011; Lane, 2011a; Owens & Lane, 2014; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009; Shams & Huisman, 2012; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012).

While expectations and motivations for engagement vary, HEI and IBC partners in both the home and host countries are concerned with brand image; specifically perceptions of quality, prestige, and reputation (Chee, Butt, Wilkins & Ong, 2016; Hill, Cheong, Leong & Fernandez-Chung, 2014). Studies document the importance of stakeholder influence on brand development (Balmer, 2013; Gregory, 2007; Gyrd-Jones & Kornum, 2012; Hatch & Schultz, 2010; Iglesias, Ind & Alfaro, 2013; Merz, Yi, & Vargo, 2009), an issue that is especially important for IBCs as they rely on stakeholder perceptions and support to establish legitimacy and reinforce brand image in both locations (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012; Farrugia & Lane, 2013). The reputation of the HC can have strong influence on the image of the IBC, and the brand image of the IBC can affect the overall image of the home university (Wilkins & Huisman, 2015; Yuan, Liu, Luo, &
Yen, 2016). Leaders and managers who establish and operate IBCs must be able to engage and rely on diverse stakeholders in both the home and host locations in order to develop and maintain a strong reputation and brand both locally and globally.

Although scholars have recognized that stakeholder relationships play a key role in development and success when establishing HEIs and IBCs (Jongbloed, Enders & Salerno, 2008; Owens & Lane, 2014), there is a lack of field-based study and evidence-based research on how stakeholder relationships influence ongoing decision making and strategy at IBCs (Lane, 2011b; Wilkins, 2016; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). In addition, while quality academic programs, reputation, and brand are key to success for both home and host campus partners (Kinser & Lane, 2014; Pyvis, 2011; Yuan et al., 2016) and studies have argued that stakeholders influence reputation and brand (Farrugia & Lane, 2013; Gregory, 2007; Karram, 2014), there is limited empirical research on how stakeholders influence brand in HEIs (Waeraas & Solbakken, 2009) and at IBCs in particular (Wilkins & Huisman, 2015). Lane (2011b) identified the need for more field-based study on stakeholder influence on strategy development at IBCs and Owens and Lane (2014) called for more empirical evidence that goes beyond current research using secondary data. Shams and Huisman (2012) argued the need for more coherent studies to address the issue of stakeholder influence on IBC strategy and operations and Wagner Mainardes, Alves, and Raposo (2011) suggested that additional research based on stakeholder theory in higher education is needed to help IBC managers to better understand and more actively engage in strategic management of stakeholder relationships.

**Significance**

Higher education leaders and practitioners, many of whom lack experience working across borders, are being called on to develop and engage in cross-border education programs
and IBCs (Tierney & Lanford, 2015; Wilkins, 2016). Growing interest worldwide in foreign investment in local education, greater demand for high quality education delivered locally, the rise of English-language instruction around the globe, and favorable policies and incentives by host governments have created significant incentives to invest in cross-border education and IBCs (Looser, 2012; Miller-Idriss & Hanauer, 2011; Verbik & Merkley, 2006). Government officials and leaders worldwide recognize the importance of knowledge in the political and economic growth of their countries, as well as the quality of life of individuals, and invest to increase educational access and quality (Altbach, 2013) and advance the knowledge and human capital agendas in both the home and host country (Lane, 2011b; Wildavsky, 2012). Home and host partners establish IBCs to enhance their position in a competitive environment, support financial, reputational, and academic goals (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007), and increase image and prestige (Verbik & Merkeley, 2006). As a result, higher education professionals worldwide are being called on to develop and manage these increasingly complex cross-border organizations and operations.

Data from the Cross-border Education Research Team (2016) confirms that, while 25 new IBCs are currently planning to open, 27 IBCs are known to have closed; in some cases resulting in significant financial, reputational, and resource losses for the home university (Miller-Idriss & Hanauer, 2011; Sidhu, 2009). Closings by such high profile universities as George Mason University and Michigan State University in Dubai and University of New South Wales in Singapore have drawn attention to risks that are both financial and reputational for HEIs and IBCs, as well as the governments, private foundations, organizations, and individuals that are investing significant resources in them (Kinser & Lane, 2014; Lane, 2011a; Tierney & Lanford, 2015). This study was designed to provide information for higher education leaders and
practitioners who are expected to develop and manage these increasingly complex cross-border initiatives. The research offers new insights, based on empirical evidence, to help higher education leaders better understand and consider the role stakeholders play in strategic decision-making at IBCs.

In addition, the study adds to scholarship on stakeholder engagement and influence in higher education in general, and on IBCs in particular. While current research argues the importance of stakeholder engagement in the home and host countries (Chee et al., 2016; Hill et al., 2014; Wilkins, 2016) and their influence on brand in both locations (Shams & Huisman, 2016; Yuan et al., 2016), scholarship on how stakeholders influence brand development at IBCs is limited. This study was designed to address this gap, using stakeholder theory and branding theory as a conceptual framework to explore how stakeholders were engaged in and influenced a branding strategy at an existing IBC. The research evidence and findings are especially relevant for scholars and practitioners who are engaged with IBC expansion and need more information to better understand changing competition and the increased emphasis on higher education branding in the global marketplace.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this single-site case study was to explore how stakeholder engagement influenced a branding strategy designed to more closely align the brand image of an established IBC with that of the home university.

**Research Question**

The primary question of this research study was: *How did stakeholder engagement influence a branding strategy designed to more closely align the brand image of an established international branch campus (IBC) with that of the home campus (HC) of a comprehensive,*
The theoretical framework is important to ground a study and to connect the overarching theoretical approaches (Creswell, 2012). This study used the Stakeholder-brand Value Model (Jones, 2005) as a lens to explore how stakeholders were engaged in and influenced a specific branding strategy at an established IBC. The model, grounded in stakeholder theory and branding theory, assumes that stakeholder relationships create and influence brand value. Understanding and analyzing stakeholder relationships is especially relevant for HEIs operating IBCs, as when they expand globally stakeholder relationships and their influence on corporate brand become increasingly complex (Jongbloed et al., 2008; Werhane, 2011; Yuan et al., 2016).

The Stakeholder-brand Value Model provided a framework to identify and analyze these complex stakeholder relationships and explore how they influenced a specific branding strategy designed to enhance brand value for both the home and host campus. The model is based on a stakeholder approach to the conceptualization and measurement of brand value and equity, and argues that long term brand value is co-created through interactions between the brand and multiple stakeholders. According to Jones, “brand value considers the role stakeholder relationships play in value creation, and brand equity is the assessment of the value that is created through these relationships” (2005, p. 13). The Stakeholder-brand Value Model provides a holistic approach to the identification of key stakeholders, and a lens through which to examine the role stakeholders play in value creation (the nature of the relationship, or how they were engaged in the rebranding process and how value was created in these relationships).
engaged in the branding initiative) and the value that is created through these relationships (the nature of the exchange or how they influenced the outcome). The Stakeholder-brand Value Model is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The Stakeholder-brand Value Model. (Jones, 2005, p. 26)

According to the model value resides in the interaction between and among the members of the organization and its stakeholders and value is created through the meeting of stakeholder expectations. In terms of stakeholder identification and prioritization, Jones (2005) built on the work of Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997) to develop a stakeholder salience model based on:

1) Dependency: how reliant the organization is on the stakeholder for resources

2) Strategic significance: alignment of stakeholders with strategic thrust of the organization
3) Salience/attractiveness: how important stakeholder is to brand image

4) Actuality: relative importance of the relationship at that moment (varies over time)

The model describes stakeholder identification and prioritization as a continual process based on the value of the relationship and the nature of the exchange (functional, symbolic, hedonic), and argues that both managers’ actions and the actions of other stakeholders affect stakeholders’ perceptions of the brand. Managers’ actions, referred to as total communication in the model include: 1) leadership behavior and company performance, 2) controlled communication and public relations, and 3) third party communication. According to Jones (2005) these communication actions provide important signals about the overall evaluation and performance of the organization with respect to desired outcomes for stakeholder relationships. Outcome expectations are specific to each stakeholder and may include; profitability, reputation, loyalty, synergy, and political influence. Understanding the interaction between total communication (managers’ actions) and outcomes (stakeholder expectations) are the basis for analyzing and managing stakeholder relationships which, in turn, influence brand value.

The Stakeholder-brand Value Model (Jones, 2005) was used in this study to explore how stakeholder engagement influenced a branding strategy designed to more closely align the brand image of an established IBC with that of the home university. The model provided a framework to identify and prioritize stakeholders and to analyze how stakeholder interactions and relationships influenced performance outcomes that enhance brand value in this case study.

Definition of Key Terms

This section provides definitions for terms used throughout this study. The definitions are based in higher education and management literature presented in the literature review.
Brand equity: the assessment of the value that is created through stakeholder relationships (Jones, 2005, p. 13).

Brand value: the role stakeholder relationships play in value creation (Jones, 2005, p. 13).

Corporate brand: “the conscious decision by senior management to distil and make known the attributes of the organization's identity in the form of a clearly defined brand proposition” (Balmer, 2001, p. 281).

Corporate branding: “how the organization expresses and differentiates itself to various audiences in relation to stakeholders” (Hatch & Schultz; 2008, p. 13).

Cross-border education: situations where people, programs, or providers move across national jurisdictional borders in order to provide education (Knight, 2004).

International branch campus: “an entity that is owned, at least in part, by a foreign education provider; operated in the name of the foreign education provider; engages in at least some face-to-face teaching; and provides access to an entire academic program that leads to a credential awarded by the foreign education provider” (Lane, 2011a, p. 5).

Stakeholder: “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm’s objective” (Freeman, 1984, p. 46).

Transnational education: situations where learners are located in a country different to the one where the awarding institution is based (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012, p. 627).

Summary

As HEIs continue to expand and invest in cross-border education programs and IBCs, higher education professionals worldwide are being called on to step outside their comfort zone and engage globally (Kinser & Lane, 2014; Lane, 2011b). While IBCs can enhance global reach
and reputation, such ventures also present significant risks and challenges for those who establish them. In many cases, higher education professionals with limited international perspective and experience are being asked to leverage opportunities and manage risk in both locations. Most are making decisions with limited experience working with stakeholders across borders in general, and limited information about how stakeholder expectations influence brand development in the home and host locations in particular (Tierney & Lanford, 2015; Wilkins, 2016). This research, which is grounded in stakeholder theory and branding theory, was designed to provide information to address this issue. The study used the Stakeholder-brand Value Model (Jones, 2005) as a lens to explore how stakeholder engagement influenced a branding strategy designed to more closely align the brand image of an established IBC with that of the home university.

The next chapter of this study (Chapter II) provides background information on the development of cross-border education and IBCs and introduces relevant literature on the topic of stakeholder relationships and their influence on IBCs. In addition the literature review introduces stakeholder theory and branding theory as a foundation for the Stakeholder-brand Value Model, the theoretical framework for this study. Chapter III outlines the research design for this single-site, descriptive case study, and Chapter IV presents a detailed description of the findings based on interviews, observations, and document review. Chapter V includes an analysis of the key findings, a discussion of the findings related to the theoretical framework and literature review, and and recommendations and implications for practice.
Chapter II: Literature Review

The following literature review was conducted as a foundation for this single-site case study designed to explore how stakeholder engagement influenced a branding strategy designed to more closely align the brand image of an established international branch campus (IBC) with that of the home university. Literature related to the growth and development of cross-border education and international branch campuses, in particular the opportunities and challenges and local and global influences higher education institutions (HEIs) and IBCs encounter when establishing and operating campuses across borders, provides background for this study. Current research confirms that IBCs are complex organizations that operate in an environment that is simultaneously local and global and are influenced by many different stakeholders with diverse and often conflicting needs (Healey, 2015; Shams & Huisman, 2016; Wilkins, 2016). This review considers literature related to stakeholder influence on reputation and brand for both the home and the host partners and, in particular, how IBC leaders and managers understand, engage with, and meet the needs of stakeholders both locally and globally. An overview of literature on stakeholder theory and branding theory, with emphasis on existing research related to stakeholder engagement and branding in higher education and at IBCs, provides a foundation for the understanding of the Stakeholder-brand Value Model and its application as the theoretical framework for the study.

Cross-Border Education

The movement of higher education across borders is not new, in fact the basic European university model first established in Italy and France at the end of the 12th century serves as the common foundation for most universities worldwide today (Altbach, Gumport & Berdahl, 2011, p. 18). Higher education institutions and organizations have traditionally encouraged and
supported the circulation of scholars and students worldwide, in fact the Institute for
International Education (IIE) was established in 1919, the German Academic Exchange Service
(DAAD) in 1925, and the Fulbright Program in 1948 to support international education and
exchange (Bartell, 2003). Government programs and policy decisions such as ERASMUS
(EuRopean Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) and the Bologna
Declaration were developed to support regional and global student mobility and exchange in the
European Union, and the Association of South East Asian Nationals (ASEAN) has spurred
growth in mobility in that region (Rizvi & Lingard, 2009). Growth in participation in
international education worldwide in recent years has expanded exponentially; in 2013, over 4.1
million students went abroad to study, up from 2 million in 2000, representing 1.8% of all
tertiary enrollments or 2 in 100 students globally (United Nations Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2015).

Increased competition among HEIs to engage internationally and to attract students from
abroad has also led to the diversification of destination countries and participation rates
(McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
[OECD], 2015). For example, while the United States continues to attract the largest number of
students (974,926 in 2014-2015), the share of international students who chose the United States
as their country of destination for tertiary education dropped from 23% in 2000 to 16% in 2012
and countries like Korea and New Zealand grew by at least one percentage point (OECD, 2015).
More higher education institutions, governments, and private organizations are engaging globally
and students and faculty, scholarship and research, and teaching and learning are flowing across
national borders more than ever before (Altbach, & Teichler, 2001; Erickson, 2012; Knight,
2013; Looser, 2012). HEIs are establishing new programs and models that include distance
education, franchised programs, collective ventures, and international branch campuses (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). While governments worldwide have supported cross-border education, significant growth has occurred in the private sector because the local public sector and system cannot meet increasing demand (Kinser et al., 2010; Naidoo, 2009; Sidhu, 2009). Private universities, individual proprietors, profit seeking business interests, charitable organizations, and cultural foundations are offering training programs, courses, and degrees to students and learners who will never leave their home countries.

Cross-border education, “the movement of education across national jurisdictional or geographic borders” (Knight, 2004, p. 2), also referred to as transnational education, “situations where learners are located in a country different to the one where the awarding institution is based” (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012, p. 627), has become a focus for scholars worldwide. Rapid expansion has been stimulated by globalization, the growth of the knowledge economy, and the need for a more diversified and mobile workforce (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Hudzik, 2014; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). Demand for high quality education worldwide has been accelerated by the convergence and harmonization of world higher education systems, the changing global academic marketplace, and the increase of English as an international language (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Edwards, 2007; Levy, 2010). Increased interest in cross-border education has also been attributed to changing demographics, increases in the number of secondary school graduates and participation in higher education worldwide, and the growing trend of lifelong learning (Gilroy, 2009; Olcott, 2009). Researchers have documented the role of technology, especially the development of the internet and communication technologies, and the ease of international travel on the increased movement of higher education across borders (Altbach & Teichler, 2001; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012; Tierney & Lanford, 2015). Changing demand and the
expansion of cross-border education has led scholars to move beyond studies on student and faculty mobility to investigate emerging issues related to cross-border education (Altbach & Teichler, 2001; Bartell, 2003; Eckel, Green, & Affolter-Caine, 2004; Edwards, 2007; Knight, 2006a, 2006b, 2011; Tierney & Lanford, 2015; Shams & Huisman, 2012; 2016).

Tierney and Lanford (2015) described cross-border education as a natural evolution of economic trends that began with the cross-border flows of goods and services which has grown to include knowledge-intensive services that exist in higher education. They compared student mobility, the “first wave” of cross-border education, to the increased flow of goods and services that occurred as a result of globalization and argued that the first wave has been supplanted by a “second wave” that includes an increase in academic staff, programs, and institutional mobility (Tierney & Lanford, 2015, p. 284). Knight (2011) described similar first and second stages in the development of cross-border education and predicted a third stage that involves the growth of education hubs. These hubs, a critical mass of local and international education partners in a strategic location, are a strategy by the host country, often supported by the local government, to actively solicit foreign providers to increase capacity for tertiary education and to support economic development (Kinser et al., 2010; Knight, 2011). Regional hubs have received increased attention in recent years as governments worldwide increasingly link economic competitiveness to workforce capacity and strength of higher education in the host country (Lane & Owens, 2012; Shams & Huisman, 2012).

Cross-border education programs can be complex and have challenged traditional paradigms and fundamental assumptions around higher education (Knight, 2006b; Tierney & Lanford, 2015). Models and programs vary, ranging from wholly owned subsidiaries and satellite campuses to joint venture partnerships with local host country partners (Naidoo, 2009;
Wilkins, 2010). Knight (2006a) illustrated the complexity of cross-border education programs in a framework that attempted to account for the diversity of actors engaged, types of models and delivery methods, and rationales driving the expansion. The framework identifies four categories and three distinct typologies for cross-border programs based on the different types of providers, the means of program mobility, and the various ways that providers are moving across borders. Increasing interest in cross-border education, as well as the complexity and range of programs and models being developed, continue to attract the attention of scholars worldwide (Hill et al., 2014; Shams & Huisman, 2016; Wilkins, 2016).

**International Branch Campuses**

The focus of this study is the international branch campus (IBC), a type of cross-border education program through which an institution in one country, referred to as the home country, opens a campus in another country, or the host country (Lane, 2011b). While there is not one agreed upon definition for an IBC, this study uses the following definition from Lane (2011b):

An entity that is owned, at least in part, by a foreign education provider; operated in the name of the foreign education provider; engages in at least some face-to-face teaching; and provides access to an entire academic program that leads to a credential awarded by the foreign education provider. (p. 5)

Current data indicates that there are 247 IBCs operating worldwide in 76 countries, with an additional 22 planning to open in the near future (C-BERT, 2017). New IBCs continue to open as educators, government officials, and the public recognize the important role education plays in responding to global trends and worldwide demand (Knight, 2013; Owens & Lane, 2014). Aggressive growth has been attributed to a shift from the natural evolution of joint degree programs based on cooperation and partnerships (Tierney & Lanford, 2015) to competitive
commerce among educational, government, and private partners (Knight, 2012). IBCs offer short term opportunities for developing countries to tap into the expertise, research, and knowledge of highly developed education systems, and longer term opportunities to build high quality, sustainable higher education systems worldwide (Lane, 2011b; Olcott, 2009; Wildavsky, 2012). Education providers, including for-profit companies as well as traditional colleges and universities, have established IBCs to respond to global demand for education and to enhance their participation and reputation in the global marketplace (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012; Miller-Idriss & Hanauer, 2011).

**Opportunities and challenges.** While IBCs can offer significant benefits and opportunities for constituents in the home and host countries who establish and support IBCs, their motivation for doing so can be quite different. Lane and Kinser (2011) identified push factors that encourage home institutions to establish IBCs: the potential to gain additional resources, favorable regulations in the host country, the opportunity to enhance reputation, concerns over rising tuition rates, affordability for students, declining government subsidies at home, and increased competition for students. In addition, many home institutions perceive that global engagement will enhance reputation and offer increased opportunities for innovation in locations where regulations of the host country do not constrain innovation (Lane & Kinser, 2011). In a study of the reasons HEIs engage in IBCs, Wilkins and Huisman (2012) found legitimacy, status, institutional distance, risk-taking, risk-avoidance, and the desire to secure new sources of revenue to be the key motivating and decision-making factors for leaders at HEIs who establish and operate IBCs.

On the other hand, studies have shown that host partners engage in IBCs in order to support economic development and increase access to higher education, reduce outgoing flow of
talent or brain drain from the host country, and expand the range of research activities and opportunities for academic and technology innovation and transfer locally and globally (Agnew, 2012; Becker, 2009; Lane, 2011b). Access to global knowledge can support the local agenda for the development of human capital by preparing citizens capable of addressing such problems as social justice, the environment, and security on a global scale (Asgary & Robbert, 2010; Edwards, 2007). In addition to providing global perspective, IBCs can leverage resources through the global system to enhance education for the host country by offering high quality, affordable options that increase access for citizens without significant investment of government and in-country resources in public education (Lane & Kinser, 2011). In Latin America and Asia, for example, IBCs offer relevant, affordable options and have increased capacity in high demand areas for students who may not otherwise be able to access the overcrowded public higher education system (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Silas Casillas, 2010).

While the ability of IBCs to develop and deliver programs that absorb high demand and increase access can provide benefits for both, they also present significant challenges and engagement without attention to home and host partner needs and expectations can be problematic. In a national review of transnational higher education programs in South Africa in 2001 the ministry of education found that most foreign providers focused on profit and the education of the elite rather than the access agenda and human development needs in the country, lacked social engagement in the local area they served, had only a small number of full-time faculty members, and relied heavily on part-time professors (Naidoo & Singh, 2007). The ministry, concerned that the rapid growth of foreign providers and programs would adversely affect the quality of education and the goals of the public higher education system, developed strict policies to regulate and monitor partnerships and programs with foreign providers that
resulted in a significant decrease in the number of cross-border providers in Africa (Altbach & Knight, 2011). In another study, Mahani and Molkai (2011) argued that the success of IBCs in the UAE required that those who established them focus on the government agenda for the development of high quality education system and their interest in establishing the UAE as a regional hub for higher education. Those institutions that have been successful have had to consider local customs and cultures, and understand and work within the legal and regulatory issues in the host country and the region (Shams & Huisman, 2016).

Such challenges require that IBC leaders and managers understand and meet the needs of stakeholders in both the local and global systems (Agnew & VanBalkom, 2009; Altbach & Knight, 2007; Shams & Huisman, 2016; Wilkins, 2016; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). While the overall number of IBCs has grown, C-BERT (2017) identified 42 IBCs that recently closed which, in some cases, resulted in significant losses to partners in both the home and host country. The closing of a University of New South Wales branch campus in 2007 resulted in a loss of $38 million to the Australian university (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). Kinser and Lane (2014) attributed the unanticipated closing of George Mason University, Michigan State University, and University of Laverne to the fact that they encountered unexpected market and cultural conditions. Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology closed a campus in Malaysia due to the financing partner going bankrupt, and Sylvan was not allowed to operate in India because they did not receive accreditation from the Indian government (Lane, 2011b). These and other high profile cases have raised questions about the reasons behind IBC successes and failures (Owens & Lane, 2014) and scholars have begun to investigate how these entities, most of which lack experience operating internationally, can succeed in meeting diverse and often conflicting
expectations in an environment that is simultaneously local and global (Healey, 2015; Shams & Huisman, 2016; Wilkins, 2016).

**Complex organization and environment.** Higher education institutions are by nature complex organizations that operate as loosely coupled systems which are highly idiosyncratic (Agnew & VanBalkom, 2009; Bartell, 2003; Weick, 1976). Historical foundations of academic freedom, shared governance, and a traditional internal focus have led to a unique higher education operating system and culture (Agnew, 2012; Coryell et al., 2012; Erickson, 2012) and a diffusion of power resulting in highly decentralized internal structures and systems (Silver, 2003). In addition, HEIs operate in a dynamic and complex environment (Manning, 2012) and function in a highly fragmented organizational field where they depend upon, and are confronted with, diverse constituents (Scott & Meyer, 1994). Leaders and managers operating IBCs must balance and address the needs and expectations of many different stakeholder groups including faculty and administrators, students and parents, government agencies, accrediting bodies, business and industry, and the public in general (Jongbloed et al., 2008; Wilkins, 2016).

For those operating IBCs, these challenges are exacerbated by multiple levels of influence that are both local and global and are tied to financial, academic, and reputational goals, as well as operational considerations, in both the home and host countries (Healey, 2015; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007; Shams & Huisman, 2016; Wilkins, 2016). They are influenced by unique and sometimes conflicting structures, cultures, perspectives, and motivations of administrators, faculty, and staff at both the home and host campuses (Tierney & Lanford, 2015). While IBCs may be regulated by private or public provisions in the host country, the home campus (HC) retains academic authority and control over degrees and curriculum (Lane & Kinser, 2011). They face legal issues, regulations, and normative pressures in the host and home
country (Mahani & Molki, 2011), as well as academic and curricular demands and cultural differences between and among students, faculty, and administrators (Shams & Huisman, 2016). IBCs extending to a new environment will likely draw resources from entities that differ from those of the HC (Farrugia & Lane, 2013), and both global trends and local forces influence competition and market forces (Marginson, 2004; Marginson & Rhoades, 2002; Owens & Lane, 2014). Marginson (2004) described global competition in higher education as, “networked relationships between the different national education systems and the institutions within them” (p. 199), and argued that HEIs operating IBCs can benefit from different strategies and experience different results when operating in the national, trans-national, and world market. Portnoi and Bagley (2011) found that common discourse about global forces contributing to competition in higher education was mediated by local and national trends, resulting in varied stakeholder response in local and global markets. Miller-Idriss and Hanauer (2011) argued that the growth of branch campuses across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has been the result of regional trends rather than either national or global forces.

Scholars agree that higher education professionals must step outside traditional national paradigms and consider the influence of local, regional, and global forces when developing and delivering academic programs across borders (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Hudzik, 2014; Looser, 2012). Operating multiple locations from a distance requires consideration of local conditions and culture (Lane, 2011a; Tierney & Lanford, 2015), as well as structure, procedures, and programs (Green, Kinser & Eckel, 2008; Shams & Huisman, 2016), communication strategies, infrastructure and operating policies (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012) from both the local and global perspectives. Resource allocation, financial, and political systems in the home country may be very different from the host country and need to be clearly understood and carefully navigated.
(Altbach & Teichler, 2001; Levy, 2010; Looser; 2012). Mahani and Molkai (2011) conducted a case study of IBCs in the UAE and described the complexity of opening and operating a foreign branch campus, citing challenges related to finding and managing financial support, faculty members, administrative staff, students, and a location for facilities, all in different cultural setting. Harding and Lammey (2011) found that the establishment of successful IBCs required “understanding the local culture and expectations of the government, engaging academic and administrative leadership early in the process, establishing employee hiring and retention practices to address cultural values and differences, and establishing adequate budgets and timelines” (p. 78). Shams and Huisman (2016) described the challenges HEIs operating IBCs faced as they reconcile the need for standardization and quality control across borders with the need to accommodate local entities and needs. They identified a strategic dichotomy of global integration vs local responsiveness and cautioned against taking polarized strategic stances – global integration or local responsiveness – when dealing with strategic and operational issues.

**Stakeholder influence.** Managers and leaders operating IBCs must understand and balance conflicting needs of multiple stakeholders in order to effectively accommodate local needs while operating as part of a larger global network (Altbach, 2015; Healey, 2015; Owens & Lane, 2014; Shams & Huisman, 2016; Tierney & Lanford, 2015). IBCs face ongoing realities of conflicting demands and resources issues, often relying on resources and support from the home and host government, philanthropic support from local, regional, and global constituents, and the support of the local and global community and economy (Alves, Mainardes, & Raposo, 2010). They operate across local and global systems, cultures, and markets and those who establish and operate them must understand the role the IBC plays in the host environment, as well as the intentions and requirements of the home country (Lane, 2011a). According to Owens and Lane
(2014), “cross-border activities tend to be more successful when administrators and practitioners acknowledge the different needs of multiple stakeholders” (p. 79). Scholars recognize the importance of stakeholder influence and expectations for both the home and host country partners, and studies document in particular the influence of government entities, students, faculty, administrators, and the public on the growth and development of IBCs (Lane & Kinser, 2011; Lane & Owens, 2012).

In many countries IBC growth has been facilitated by loosening of government regulation and favorable policies and incentives on the part of the host government (Looser, 2012; Lane & Kinser, 2011; Miller-Idriss & Hanauer, 2011; Verbik & Merkley, 2006). Government policies in host countries have favored foreign providers in order to foster access, support economic development, and enhance educational quality. In Mexico, for instance, private higher education emerged during a rapid shift from a rural society to an urban society at a time when the national education system lacked technological infrastructure, resources, and skills required to support the shift. The government recognized this and supported aggressive expansion policies, attracting diverse education providers that could address the market demand with flexible delivery models that met technological and educational needs (Silas Casillas, 2010). The expansion of IBCs in the United Arab Emirates and Singapore occurred after government officials decided that education would be critical to future economic growth and the development of human capital in the region (Sidhu, 2009; Miller-Idriss & Hanauer, 2011) and encouraged IBC development to create demand and increase the number of students in the country (Lane, 2011b). In the United Arab Emirates, Singapore, and Qatar the government has developed special economic zones and regional IBC hubs that are exempt from federal regulations, taxes, and the local laws of the country (Knight, 2010; Lane, 2011a; Looser, 2012; Sidhu, 2009; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012).
Local governments have established policies designed to attract and support foreign higher education institutions to invest in branch campuses, which are closely tied to the local economy and economic policy, thus encouraging branch campuses as a strategy for economic development, increasing access and workforce capacity, and building the quality of higher education system locally (Lane & Kinser, 2011; Lane & Owens, 2012).

On the other hand, government policy that is protectionist can create barriers to entry and discourage the development of IBCs. In China, where there are more than 124 million college age students and high demand for higher education, government policy and bureaucracy have discouraged and restricted foreign education investment (Gilroy, 2009; Green et al., 2008). Development of IBCs in India has been limited because there is no government support or regulatory framework for establishing IBCs (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). A clear understanding of government stakeholders and their perspective is crucial to the successful establishment and ongoing operation of IBCs (Lane & Kinser, 2011; Shams & Huisman, 2016).

Researchers have also investigated the role of students as stakeholders at IBCs, in particular the importance of student perceptions and student satisfaction. Wilkens et al. (2011), in a quantitative study of 320 students at international branch campuses in the UAE, found that, unlike students who chose to study abroad, convenience and country attractiveness were key to their decision to select and enroll at an IBC. In a study of students at IBCs in the UAE Wilkins, Balakrishnan, and Huisman (2012) found that, despite the fact that the branch campus did not replicate the educational offerings or services of the HC, student satisfaction was as high at the branch campus as at the HC and negative issues were similar to those of students in higher education institutions worldwide. In another study of 407 students at 9 international high schools in the UAE, Wilkins and Huisman (2013) found that students’ personal experiences with local
branch campuses and ranking information in the media most affected their perceptions of the quality of the branch campus. Understanding student satisfaction and perceptions are key for IBCs that depend on student enrollment to generate tuition revenue, enhance brand/reputation for the home and host campus, and graduate alumni who can meet human capital and workforce needs (de Wit et al., 2013; Erickson, 2012).

The academic tradition of shared governance has long established faculty as key stakeholders in higher education decision-making. Scholars have argued that, while not generally the primary impetus for IBC development, faculty commitment and engagement are essential to the success of cross-border education initiatives (Edwards, 2007; Stohl, 2007; Shams & Huisman, 2016). Stohl (2007) found that increased levels of awareness and participation in international education was concentrated in specific academic departments, often based on one or two faculty members who were committed to the initiative. However, engaging faculty at IBCs can be difficult when they are motivated by opportunities to engage in cultural research and scholarship as such opportunities can be limited at IBCs where the agenda is typically teaching (Kinser & Lane, 2014). In addition, faculty may not engage because they have limited cultural experience and interest (Shams & Huisman, 2016), believe that making decisions to engage globally detracts from local commitments (Agnew, 2012), or believe that international education is the responsibility of another department on campus (Brustein, 2007; Lee Olson & Kroeger, 2001; Stohl, 2007).

IBCs must also contend with differences in organizational culture, administrative structures, systems, and policies in both the home and host locations (Coryell et al., 2012; Shams & Huisman, 2012; 2016) as they shift from national to international organizations. Harding and Lammey (2011) argued that leaders and managers operating IBCs must adapt business
operations to meet cultural, legal, and environmental conditions that are very different from the HC. Shams and Huisman (2012) developed a framework to encapsulate the managerial complexities of running offshore branch campuses, highlighting the importance of considering both local integration and global responsiveness. Establishing and managing an IBC requires multinational leaders who can balance the requirements of diverse stakeholders in the home country with the demands of those in the host environment, operate across multiple cultures, and have the capacity to deal with the ambiguities and challenges of start-up ventures (Lane, 2011a).

**Reputation, quality, and brand.** IBCs are subsidiary organizations operating in vastly different contexts than their HC (Farrugia & Lane, 2013). A study of IBC mission statements found that, while IBCs used the fact that they operated in a global environment to increase legitimacy, most were bound ideologically and culturally by the host location and needed to be able to articulate how they met host country needs to establish legitimacy (Farrugia & Lane, 2013). The role the institution plays in the host country may not be in line with the role it plays in the home country (Lane, 2011a) and building legitimacy requires understanding and meeting diverse stakeholder expectations in the global, regional, home and host environment (Farrugia & Lane, 2013). Despite differences in their perspectives and expectations, stakeholders at both the home and host locations are concerned with reputation and quality (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Chee et al., 2016). Those who invest in IBCs demand high quality, accessible global higher education options that fulfill regulatory and assessment standards and meet public perceptions and expectations (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2009). IBCs are expected to deliver high quality options in the host location and HEIs in the home country often expect that the IBC will enhance their reputation in the global marketplace (Lane, 2011b). Meeting these expectations, while essential
to success, continues to challenge leaders and managers at IBCs as they are called on to meet expectations and quality standards in both locations.

Historically, quality assurance for higher education has been based on national standards with individual governments and countries responsible for accreditation, degree recognition, regulatory environments, academic program relevance and financial issues as well as the cultural and social issues surrounding education (Altbach & Knight, 2007). However, as higher education programs and institutions have ventured across borders, processes, systems, and measures of quality assurance have changed (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2009; Naidoo, 2009; Wilkins, 2010). Cross-border education has led to a decoupling of the academic enterprise from the home government, especially in cases where IBCs are developed by public institutions in their home country or are being supported by the local government in the host country (Lane & Kinser, 2011; Lane, 2011a). In addition, many countries lack quality assurance mechanisms and those that do exist may not be properly equipped to cope with cross-border provision (Knight, 2006b). In many cases IBCs are held to home country standards or rely on more global standards and measures to fill the gap.

In addition, HEIs and IBCs worldwide are increasingly preoccupied with competitiveness, global branding, and ranking systems which has led to increasing reliance on world rankings as a global measure of quality (Hazelkorn, 2015; Knight, 2013; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2009; Wildavsky, 2012). As a result the criteria and mechanisms for assessing quality for IBCs are being influenced by stakeholders at the home university, the local partner, home and host country governments, and national and global accreditation and professional bodies. McBurnie and Ziguras (2007) illustrated the complex stakeholder influences on quality measures in a study that identified common criteria used for ranking transnational education programs. The
criteria include: indicators of beginning characteristics (academic ability of students entering the program), indicators of learning inputs (staff qualifications), resources (budget, library resources, physical infrastructure), indicators of learning outputs (graduation and retention rates), indicators of final outcomes (employment and continuing education), indicators of research (publications, citations, funding and awards), and indicators of reputation (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007, p.108-110). IBCs are expected to meet global standards and provide education equivalent to that offered at the home university (Altbach, 2015) while simultaneously meeting quality measures that vary based on local and global expectations and standards (Pyvis, 2011).

Understanding how stakeholder expectations and perceptions influence reputation and brand will be even more important for IBC leaders and managers as both local and global measures and expectations for quality become more complex. Stakeholders who engage in and support IBCs are often seeking prestige and expect that the IBC will enhance the reputation of the home institution and also bring something different and superior to the host location (Lane, 2011b). Those that are unable to meet stakeholder expectations around quality, reputation, and prestige based on a well-respected brand will run the risk of losing funding, students, and rankings; all of which are key to the successful establishment and ongoing operation of IBCs (Wilkins & Huisman, 2012).

**Theoretical Framework**

This case study used the Stakeholder-brand Value Model developed by Jones (2005) as a lens through which to explore how stakeholders were engaged in and influenced a specific branding strategy at an established IBC. The model is grounded in stakeholder theory and corporate branding theory, and posits that stakeholders influence brand development and brand value. Stakeholder theory assumes that stakeholders influence organizations, and that it is
important to engage stakeholders to achieve goals and increase value and competitive advantage (Freeman, 1984; Phillips, 2011). Corporate branding theory asserts that stakeholders influence corporate brand, and a strong brand creates value for the organization (Balmer, 2013; Balmer & Wang, 2016; Gyrd-Jones, Merrilees, & Miller, 2013; Hatch & Schultz; 2010; Wagner Mainardes et al., 2011). The following section includes a review of research on stakeholder theory and branding theory as a foundation for understanding the Stakeholder-brand Value Model (Jones, 2005) and its relevance for this study.

**Stakeholder Theory**

Stakeholder theory originated in management research as an alternative to the traditional view of shareholder wealth as the singular goal of the firm. Stakeholder theory from a management perspective assumes that: 1) stakeholders influence decisions, 2) stakeholder engagement increases competitive advantage, and 3) managers must effectively engage and manage stakeholder relationships to create value for the organization (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks & Parmar, 2010; Wagner Mainardes et al., 2011). Freeman (1984) in a seminal work defined a stakeholder as “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm’s objective” (p. 46) and argued that that corporate leaders needed to look beyond shareholder wealth and consider stakeholder satisfaction in order to increase the value of the firm. According to Freeman (1984) the role of the manager should be to develop relationships and create communities of engaged stakeholders who work together to deliver the value the firm promises. Subsequent studies based on stakeholder theory agreed that the success of an organization depends on the ability of its managers and leaders to select activities and direct resources to obtain benefits for legitimate stakeholders (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, Wicks & Parmar, 2004; Noland & Phillips, 2010).
Over time, management scholars have developed theories and models designed to identify and describe stakeholders and analyze how they influence the organization. One of the most widely accepted is a model of stakeholder salience developed by Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997), used to identify and prioritize stakeholders in order to determine the level of claim each has on an organization. The model posits that stakeholder influence varies based on three key attributes (power, legitimacy, and urgency) and has been used as a foundation for ongoing scholarship and practice to better understand how managers prioritize stakeholder relationships in a complex operating environment (Kivits, 2011; Jones, 2005).

While management theorists initially considered stakeholder relationships as dyadic, based on connections between individual stakeholders and the organization, current research identifies complex connections between stakeholders, stakeholder groups, and the organization. As stakeholder theory developed, scholars in the management field began to argue that stakeholder influence was based on the collective interests of multiple, interdependent stakeholders and the interactions between them (Frooman, 1999; Neville & Mengue, 2006; Rowley, 1997). In stakeholder literature value creation was examined as a relational rather than transactional exchange between the firm and its stakeholders. Jones (1995) used an instrumental approach to define the theoretical connections between a firm’s practices and the resulting states based on the contracts (relationships) between the firm and its stakeholders. Jones (1995) found that stakeholder relationships created competitive advantage for the firm or organization through acquisition of additional resources, legitimacy, and population ecology, and argued that behavior that was trusting, trustworthy, and cooperative rather than opportunistic gave the firm a competitive advantage. Frooman (1999), in a seminal paper that considered stakeholder
influence and resource dependency, argued that understanding how stakeholders will respond is critical to acquisition of resources and to the success of the organization.

Scholars have long argued that strategic stakeholder engagement and management requires that managers identify and understand how the interactive relationships of multiple stakeholders influence the organization (Freeman et al., 2010). Szwajkowski (2000) identified the connection between stakeholder and shareholder performance and argued the importance of actively structuring and managing stakeholder relationships to achieve increased value for the organization. Prior studies from the management perspective have argued that engaging stakeholders helped managers to present and resolve conflict, coordinate efforts of internal and external stakeholders to achieve goals, and manage resources to achieve competitive advantage in the marketplace (Johnson-Cramer, Berman & Post, 2003) and create value for the firm (Aaker, 2004; Gregory, 2007; Hatch & Schultz, 2010; Noland & Phillips, 2010; Phillips, Freeman & Wicks, 2003). While researchers have long agreed that managers have a role to play in stakeholder engagement and value creation, more current research focuses on the interaction between and among the stakeholders and the organization in creating value for the firm (Balmer, 2013; Balmer & Wang, 2016; Gyrd-Jones & Kornum, 2012; Iglesias et al., 2013). Over time scholars have argued an even more dynamic relationship between and among stakeholders and the firm, finding that stakeholders influence goes beyond that which is easily measured to include brand value and brand equity (Jones, 2005; Phillips, 2011; Freeman, 2015). In addition, studies have demonstrated the importance of stakeholder engagement in value creation and to the overall success of the firm (Alves et al., 2010; Balmer, 2013; Balmer & Wang, 2016; Freeman et al., 2010; Freeman, 2015; Iglesias et al., 2013). The Stakeholder-brand Value Model developed by Jones (2005), which is grounded in stakeholder theory and builds on the stakeholder salience
model developed by Mitchell et al. (1997), recognizes the importance of stakeholder engagement and management (Frooman, 1999; Jones, 1995). The model also allows for the incorporation of more current scholarship on the interdependence and influence of stakeholder relationships on value creation (Balmer, 2013; Balmer & Wang, 2016; Iglesias et al., 2013; Dean, Arroyo-Gamez, Punjaisri & Pich, 2016), attesting to its relevance as a framework to better understand stakeholder engagement and influence in this study.

**Stakeholder Theory in Higher Education**

While initially focused on investor owned corporations, scholars have applied stakeholder theory and concepts to non-profit organizations, including colleges and universities. Stakeholder theory and analysis offers a lens through which to consider the complex influences and unique needs of public sector organizations (Nutt and Backoff, 1992; 1993) and can help leaders and managers at non-profit and educational institutions determine how to utilize resources to support diverse stakeholder relationships (Alves et al., 2010; Bryson, 2004).

Burrows (1999) proposed a framework to help HEIs develop detailed profiles of stakeholders and their expectations based on four dimensions: 1) internal or external, 2) active or passive, 3) according to potential for cooperation or threat to goals and vision, and 4) the types of stake and influence they have to use those stakes. Follow up studies have used this framework as a foundation to assess stakeholder influence on policies and strategies (Benneworth & Jongbloed, 2010; Jongbloed et al., 2008). In addition, stakeholder theory has been used in higher education literature to investigate relational marketing in HEIs (Wagner Mainardes et al., 2011), assess how HEIs respond to the expectations of stakeholders (Urbanović & Wilkins, 2013), and assess student satisfaction (Mainardes, Alves & Raposo, 2013; Wilkins et al., 2012).
Scholars increasingly recognize the importance of stakeholder engagement and influence in higher education (Jongbloed et al., 2008; Shams & Huisman, 2016; Wilkins, 2016) and argue that success depends on: 1) identifying stakeholders, 2) concretely establishing the needs of each entity, and 3) understanding the level of importance to attribute to each respective relationship (Alves et al., 2010; Wagner Mainardes et al., 2011). The variety and number of external interests that HEIs serve and rely upon has increased significantly, making it more challenging than ever to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with key stakeholders (Hill et al., 2014; Jongbloed et al., 2008). IBCs face increasing expectations and are being held accountable by stakeholders who are local, national, and global (Farrugia & Lane, 2013; Jongbloed et al., 2008; Wilkins, 2016). Success and long term viability requires that higher education professionals in both locations are able to engage stakeholders and create and sustain strategic alliances and coalitions to deliver a value-added global experience (Bolton & Nie, 2010; Bryson, 2004; Wilkins, 2016). Benneworth and Jongbloed (2010) described the complexities of stakeholder influence on HEIs within wider networks of relationships; at the macro level national systems frame a hierarchy of university stakeholders, at the meso level relationships between key government actors and the university sector, and at the micro level interactions between individual universities, agencies, and community stakeholders.

Leaders and managers need to understand the full system in order to take action at the sub-system level (Freeman et al., 2010) and those at IBCs in particular need to be able to identify, prioritize, understand, and engage stakeholders at all levels in order to achieve goals both locally and globally (Alves et al., 2010; Shams & Huisman, 2012; Wagner Mainardes et al., 2011; Wilkins, 2016). In addition, they must recognize that stakeholder relationships change over time (Marginson, 2004; Mitchell et al., 1997) and be able to adapt to changing needs in
order to create value for the organization (Harrison, 2011; Hill et al., 2014; Shams & Huisman, 2016).

**Corporate Brand**

Corporate brand is a complex concept that is relevant for institutions in the public, not-for-profit, and private sectors as well as organizational entities such as industries, alliances, trade associations, business units, and subsidiaries. The concept has roots in both organizational theory and management theory and recognizes the role of interpersonal as well as mediated communication in ongoing interactions between internal and external stakeholders (Hatch & Schultz, 2010; Jones, 2005; Balmer, Liao, & Wang, 2010). Corporate brand, considered from the organizational theory perspective, is a construct that is based on the organization as the foundation and incorporates both organizational identity and image. Organizational theory scholars historically viewed organizational identity as distinct from organizational image with identity representing the internal insiders and image based on external appraisals (Gioia & Thomas, 1996). Dutton and Dukerich (1991) described organizational identity as, “what organizational members believe others see as distinctive about the organization” (p. 550), and Hatch and Schultz (2002) defined organizational image as, “a set of views held by those who act as the organization’s others” (p. 995). Over time scholars have explored the connection between identity and image and found that the two are closely linked (Gioia & Thomas, 1996; Hatch & Schultz, 2002; 2010). Identity and image are seen as collective phenomenon that evolve over time (Gioia & Thomas, 1996), incorporate old institutional values and characteristics as well as new ones (Waeras & Solbakk; 2009), are continuously reconstructed (Schultz & Hernes, 2013), and include the perceptions of external stakeholders to an organization (Brown, Dacin, Pratt, & Whetten, 2006). In organizational theory identity and image form the foundation for corporate
brand, where an organization’s identity is, “a summation of those tangible and intangible elements that make any corporate entity distinct”, and the corporate brand, “involves the conscious decision by senior management to distil and make known the attributes of the organizations identity in the form of a clearly defined brand proposition” (Balmer, 2001, p. 281).

Branding theory also has roots in the management field and, although originally focused on marketing and promoting products or services, has evolved to include promoting the organization rather than its individual products or services. Merz et al. (2009) described the evolution as a series of brand eras; the Goods Era from 1900 -1930, the Value Era from 1930 – 1990, the Relationship Era from 1990 – 2000, and the Stakeholder Era from 2000 forward.

Stakeholder scholarship based in management theory historically emphasized the importance of the management role in company-stakeholder relations, arguing that management could and should control and influence how stakeholders perceived and expressed brand value (Schultz, Hatch & Larsen, 2000; Jones, 2005; Merz et al., 2009). This perspective of management control over brand development has changed over time and scholars recognize the complex nature of stakeholder engagement and how stakeholders perceive and influence corporate brand (Balmer & Wang, 2016; Dean et al., 2016; Iglesias et al., 2013; Jones, 2012).

Despite these different approaches, scholarship based in both management and organizational theory has argued that corporate brand and branding strategies are influenced by both internal and external stakeholders (Burmann, Jost-Benz & Riley, 2008; Gotsi & Andriopulos, 2007; Hatch & Schultz, 2003; 2010), require synergy at all levels (Balmer, 2013; Balmer & Wang, 2016), and should be complementary and mutually reinforcing in order to create value (Madden, Fehle & Fournier, 2006; Williams & Omar, 2014). Development of a strong corporate brand requires managers and leaders to define and communicate the corporate
brand to ensure that the labels and values associated with the brand are clearly recognized and understood (Jevons, Gabbott & de Chernatony, 2005) so that all members of the organization understand, articulate, and “live the brand” (Ind & Bjerke, 2007).

Current scholarship argues that brand is a negotiated process that is dynamic, recognizes the importance of stakeholder influence, and argues that brand value is co-created through the interactions between and among stakeholders and the organization (Iglesias et al., 2013). Corporate branding is seen as a dynamic social process based on collaborative relationships and interactions between and among firms and all their stakeholders rather than a dyadic relationship between the organization and the consumer (Balmer, 2013; Jones, 2005; Hatch & Schultz, 2010; Merz et al., 2009). In addition, recognizing that brand value is created through networks of stakeholder relationships that are constantly changing and evolving, managers develop branding strategies based on understanding and adapting to the needs and expectations of stakeholders (Balmer, 2013; Gregory, 2007; Gyrd-Jones et al., 2013; Iglesias et al., 2013). Balmer (2013), Balmer and Wang (2016), and Iglesias (2013) advocate a multidisciplinary, strategic approach to corporate branding, and argue that the role of management is to work with stakeholders to co-create a brand orientation, or sense of direction for the brand, that allows for flexibility and differentiation over time and across locations.

Understanding corporate brand and creating value through stakeholder engagement is especially difficult in complex organizations that need to achieve multiple outcomes while differentiating the brand, communicate different values to multiple stakeholders through diverse internal structures, and allow for multiple perspectives and sub-cultures within the organization (Gyrd-Jones & Kornum, 2012). In a study of marketing managers and brand consultants Iglesias et al. (2013) found that brand value was a social process that was constantly changing and co-
created by multiple stakeholders and, while they had some influence, managers no longer had control over brand meaning and value. Balmer (2013) and Jones (2012) support the continuously changing, dynamic nature of corporate brand and posit that corporate brand is a starting point or sense of direction that is constantly influenced and negotiated by stakeholders. Balmer and Wang (2016) also challenged the management-centric approach to brand management, arguing that leaders and managers in today’s complex organizations need to understand diverse challenges, motivations, and priorities of all stakeholders to understand brand value.

**Branding in Higher Education**

As the marketplace for higher education has become increasingly competitive and complex, HEIs have engaged in branding strategies to promote and position themselves locally, nationally, and globally (Mazzarol, 1998). The concept of corporate branding continues to gain popularity as colleges and universities seek to promote and position themselves in a highly competitive field (Balmer & Liao, 2007; Balmer, Liao & Wang, 2010; Chapleo, 2005; Chee et al., 2016; Pinar, Trapp, Girard & Boyt, 2010; Waeraas & Solbakk, 2009). Developing and articulating a consistent brand is especially difficult for higher education institutions that are dealing with diverse stakeholders, unique organizational structures and cultures, and a complex operating environment (Barnet; 2011; Shams & Huisman, 2016; Williams & Omar; 2014).

Research on branding in higher education has traditionally focused on how to promote a university to attract students, rather than on understanding the holistic nature of what constitutes a brand and the role that the full range of stakeholders play in developing and supporting that brand (Jevons, 2006; Pinar et al., 2010). Studies related to branding at IBCs have considered students as stakeholders, investigating such factors as student satisfaction and the experience of students as a customer (Wilkins et al., 2012), student perceptions of image and reputation at
home and host campuses (Chee et al; 2016), and the importance of student experiences in creating brand image (Pinar et al., 2010). In a study designed to investigate brand identification of students enrolled in three closely linked programs offered by a leading UK business school, Balmer and Liao (2007) found that students’ brand identification depended on their relationship with brand and shifted over time. While studies on student expectations and perceptions of brand have become more prevalent in higher education in recent years, the focus has been on identifying core values associated with brand equity (Waeraas & Solbakk, 2009) and the student as the customer (Chee et al.; 2016; Pinar et al., 2010; Wilkens et al., 2012) rather than on the role students and other stakeholders play in creating and supporting brand image.

**Stakeholder Relationships and Corporate Brand**

As HEIs develop cross-border operations and IBCs their organizations become more complex, as do the challenges they face as they work to develop and differentiation their brand. Albert and Whetten (1985) described universities as dual identity organizations that must balance normative influences of maintaining the culture of the academy with utilitarian perspectives oriented toward economic production. In a case study that attempted to define a university’s essential characteristics Waeraas and Solbakk (2009) argued that a university may be too complex to be encapsulated by one brand or identity definition and that to be successful over time HEI managers needed to allow for decentralized interpretations of corporate brand, understand and engage stakeholders, and develop different strategies based on diverse stakeholder needs. Changing higher education models and globalization have led to even more complex internal structures and more dynamic operating environments (Healey, 2015; Shams & Huisman, 2012). As a result, IBCs today are dealing with stakeholders operating from different frames of reference, perspectives, and ideologies (Shams & Huisman, 2016; Wilkins, 2016).
Launching and sustaining an IBC involves operating in a highly complex organizational environment with multiple stakeholders whose values, expectations, and goals are likely distinct from the stakeholders in the home environment (Farrugia & Lane, 2013; Hill et al., 2014; Shams & Huisman, 2016; Wilkins, 2016).

Understanding stakeholders and their influence on brand development can be especially challenging for HEIs operating IBCs across borders. Scholars have found that corporate brands can leverage sub-brands (Aaker, 2004), and that ambidexterity of brand can allow higher education organizations operating in complex environments to pursue contrasting opportunities simultaneously (Foroudi, Melewar & Gupta, 2014). Universities that develop IBCs in order to position themselves as global are likely to find that reputation varies across locations (Xavier & Alsagoff, 2013) and that legitimacy in the home country may not carry over to the host country (Farrugia & Lane, 2013; Hill et al., 2014). In some situations the HC brand may increase the prominence of the branch campus because associations with the HC dominate as primary elements, while the host campus brand becomes secondary (Chee et al., 2016; Yuan et al., 2016). Leaders and managers at IBCs need to understand and engage stakeholders in order to develop and communicate a clearly understood, shared brand while simultaneously leveraging differences in stakeholder engagement with the brand in both the home and host locations (Chee et al., 2016; Farrugia & Lane, 2013; Karram, 2014; Wilkins & Huisman, 2015).

Conclusion

This literature review provides an overview of cross-border education and describes the rapid growth of IBCs worldwide, with particular emphasis on the motivations, expectations, and influence of stakeholders who are engaged with them. While IBCs offer benefits and opportunities for partners and stakeholders in the home and host countries, they also present
significant challenge and risks. IBCs are complex organizations that operate in an environment that is simultaneously local and global, and success depends on meeting the needs of stakeholders who have diverse, often conflicting needs. This literature review finds that while priorities and needs may vary within and across campuses and stakeholder groups, partners and stakeholders in both locations consistently expect IBCs to enhance their reputation and brand. As HEIs expand internationally stakeholder influence in general, and on brand development in particular, becomes even more complex. This is especially true for IBCs that are required to meet expectations for quality and are being measured by standards and ranking systems in both the home and host environment. These conclusions, drawn from a review of relevant literature on stakeholder theory and branding theorand on stakeholder influence and branding in higher education in particular, led to the selection of the Stakeholder-brand Value Model (Jones, 2005) as theoretical lens for this study.

While scholars recognize the importance of stakeholder influence on IBC development and brand development, there is a lack of empirical research on how stakeholders influence brand development over time at IBCs. This study was designed to address the gap by collecting empirical evidence to help scholars and practitioners better understand how stakeholders influenced a specific rebranding strategy at an IBC, an issue that is at the forefront for many higher education institutions today. The next chapter explains the research design and methods used in this study which explored how stakeholders were engaged in and influenced a specific branding strategy at an established IBC.
Chapter III: Research Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the research tradition, methodology, and rationale for the decisions and procedures used to implement the research study. The focus of this descriptive case study is the overarching question: How did stakeholder engagement influence a branding strategy designed to more closely align the brand image of an established international branch campus (IBC) with that of the home campus (HC) of a comprehensive, technological university in the United States? The study was guided by the following sub-questions, which are based on the Stakeholder-brand Value Model (Jones, 2005).

1. How were stakeholders engaged in the rebranding process?
2. How was value created in these relationships?

Research Paradigm

The study was conducted from the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, which assumes knowledge is socially constructed and reality is multiple and relative (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The study was exploratory, which allowed for the experiences and meanings of the participants to emerge and be considered during the research process and analysis (Merriam, 2002).

Qualitative Research

The qualitative method was selected for this study because it is best used when the goal is to gather in-depth information from the perspective of the participants in order understand how they interpret and make meaning of their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Miles & Huberman, 1994). In addition, qualitative methods are appropriate when the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, Stake 1995). While the study was focused by the theoretical framework and research questions qualitative methods also allowed for flexibility, in depth analysis based on multiple methods of data
collection and interpretive, reflective analysis so that issues could emerge and discovery would occur as part of process (Creswell, 2013).

**Case Study Method**

This single-site, exploratory case study was conducted at a branch campus of a comprehensive, technological, U.S. university. The case study method was selected because it allowed the researcher to conduct a holistic, in depth exploration of a bounded system in its natural setting (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015) based on multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2013) in order to address the research question. While Stake (1995) emphasizes the focus of the case as the object of the study and Yin (2013) argues the importance of clearly defining the unit of analysis to focus the research, both agree that the case study method allows the researcher to consider issues within their broader contexts; including those that are temporal, spatial, historical, political, economic, cultural, social, or personal. This case study was bounded by the international branch campus (IBC) site, the focus of the research questions on stakeholder engagement in a specific branding strategy, the participants at the IBC, and the timeline of rebranding initiative. However, it is important to recognize that the IBC is a complex organization operating in a highly fragmented organizational field that is simultaneously local and global. The case study method allowed the researcher to focus the investigation on the experience of the participants in their naturalistic, local setting while also allowing for consideration of the global context of the organization (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2013). In addition, the case study method supported a qualitative research design that was inductive, investigative, emergent, and flexible, while also allowing for verification of findings through triangulation of data collected through multiple sources (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).
Merriam and Tisdell (2015), Stake (1995), and Yin (2013), key theorists of case study research, each outline approaches and methodologies for case study research. While all agree that case study research involves an in-depth exploration of a bounded system within a real-life context, that case study research is field oriented and observable, and that the researcher is the primary instrument for research that is inductive and investigative, each advocates for a somewhat unique approach (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2013). The research design for this case study was based on the framework outlined by Merriam and Tisdell (2015) as it provided a balance between the unstructured and emergent design suggested by Stake (1995) and the more prescriptive, analytical approach outlined by Yin (2013). The framework and approach outlined by Merriam and Tisdell (2015) supported an emergent and flexible design, while at the same time offered a structure and guidelines to focus the data collection and analysis on the research questions.

**Site Selection and Description**

The site for this study was selected through purposeful sampling in order to better understand how stakeholders were engaged in and influenced a strategic branding decision at an IBC. The site was identified as a typical case, in anticipation that lessons learned would be informative for other HEIs that operate IBCs. The criterion for the site selection included an established IBC that was recently engaged in a specific, defined strategic branding initiative. The site selected for this case study was accessible to the researcher and focused the investigation, data collection, and analysis based on the perspective and experience of the participants, as well as the timeline and definition of the specific branding initiative.

The case study site was the IBC of a private, comprehensive U.S. university, initially established in 1997 in a small coastal city in Eastern Europe with support from the host
government. The IBC was the first private university in the country and continues to be the only university in the country to offer both a U.S. and a local diploma. The IBC expanded in 2011 by opening a second campus in a nearby city, the industrial center of the country. In 2009 the decision was made to more closely align the brand image of the host campus with that of the home campus (HC), a four-year process which culminated in an official name change from American College to IB University in 2013. Enrollment increased from 400 students in 2013 to 760 students in 2016, and at the time of this case study the IBC offered three undergraduate degrees in hospitality, business, and information technology and one graduate degree in business. More than 70% of students enrolled were from the host country, with most of the remaining 30% from surrounding countries. In addition approximately 70 students from the HC studied for at least one term each year at the IBC. While faculty from the HC occasionally taught at the IBC, more than 90% of the faculty were citizens or expatriates living in the host country. The IBC, originally established with significant host government support to meet a specific economic development need, evolved over time to be a self-sustaining private university that competed in a broadening national and regional market.

Participants

The study was based on the perceptions of participants engaged at the IBC and designed to explore how they identified and prioritized stakeholder interests and described stakeholder relationships and their influence on the rebranding strategy. Participants were initially selected through purposeful sampling, and were either leaders or managers from the IBC who interfaced regularly with stakeholders or individuals from key stakeholder groups who were engaged with the IBC at the time of the rebranding initiative. Document review and an initial conversation with the site coordinator provided perspective and insight to identify key stakeholder groups.
Interviews and observations conducted during the six-day site visit informed the selection of the stakeholder groups based on the perspective of the participants at the IBC. Stakeholder groups identified for this study included government, trustees, leadership, faculty, staff, students, alumni, business and industry, and the public. During the case study the researcher realized that in many cases, stakeholders from the same stakeholder groups were engaged and responded differently depending on their affiliation to either the HC or IBC. As a result, key stakeholder groups were also segmented based on their affiliation to either the IBC or HC. Attribute coding of interview data was used to validate stakeholder identification for the case study.

Table 1

*Key IBC Stakeholder Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Groups</th>
<th>Key IBC stakeholder groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Host country government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustees</td>
<td>IBC trustees, HC trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>IBC faculty, HC faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>IBC staff, HC staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>IBC students, HC students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>IBC alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and industry</td>
<td>Host country business and industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders</td>
<td>IBC leaders, HC leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prospective students and parents</td>
<td>Host country prospective students and parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Host country public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Seven participants were identified for the study based on the initial document review and consultation with the site coordinator, the IBC President and a participant himself. One additional participant, a leader from the HC who was particularly engaged in the rebranding initiative, was added based on feedback and data collected during the initial interviews and site visit. The eight participants represented a range of stakeholder groups including IBC and HC leaders and IBC faculty, staff, students, alumni, and host country government and business leaders. Reed et al. (2009) argues that while research on stakeholder influence can be conducted without active participation of the stakeholders themselves, active participation may be needed if there is incomplete knowledge or unclear information. Participants for this case study were selected to share their personal experience as a member of a key stakeholder group, as well as their perception of the influence of stakeholders in general on the branding strategy. The length of time they were involved with the IBC ranged from more than 20 years to 7 years, and all except one staff member were still actively engaged with the IBC at the time of this study. Participants spoke openly about their own experiences and were forthcoming when sharing their perceptions of how other stakeholders were involved in the rebranding process. Table 2 provides a summary of the participants, their roles at the time of the branding strategy, and a brief summary of their relationships with the IBC.
Once IRB approval was given for the study the researcher contacted the president of the branch campus in order to obtain formal site permission, identify prospective participants, and develop a timeline for participant recruitment and research (Appendix A). Participants were contacted directly by the researcher via email using the Individual Participant Recruitment Letter in Appendix B. The researcher provided detailed information about the study, their role, and the expected timeline and publication dates as outlined by the Recruitment Letter in Appendix B. Each participant was informed of the confidential nature of the study and the names of participants and associated institutions were changed at the point of transcription. Data and the researcher’s data files were password protected and only the researcher and the adviser have

### Table 2

*Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Relationship with IBC or HC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IBC President</td>
<td>President of the IBC</td>
<td>Started at IBC as a faculty member and administrator, later became IBC President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry representative</td>
<td>Business owner and IBC trustee</td>
<td>Business owner in host country, and member of IBC Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty member</td>
<td>IBC professor</td>
<td>Professor in hospitality and tourism program at IBC campus in coastal city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment manager</td>
<td>Staff member</td>
<td>Member of enrollment staff at IBC, later joined HC enrollment staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government official</td>
<td>Government official and IBC trustee</td>
<td>Served as a minister in host country government, and IBC Trustee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>IBC student and alumnus</td>
<td>Enrolled as a student at IBC during rebranding initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumnus</td>
<td>IBC alumnus</td>
<td>First generation graduate of IBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HC VP</td>
<td>Vice President at HC and IBC trustee</td>
<td>Senior leader at HC, became IBC Trustee during rebranding process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
access to the files. There were no benefits of participating in the study to research participants, other than the opportunity to share their experience for the benefit of the profession. No known risks (psychological, physical, economic, social, or legal) were associated with this study.

**Data Collection**

The study relied on multiple sources of evidence to conduct an in-depth exploration of the problem based on document review, interviews, and observations of the participants in their natural setting. Data collected from interviews, observations, and document review was analyzed and triangulated in order to inform the processes, identify common themes that emerged, describe the participants’ experiences, and verify the analysis. Data was collected according to the case study protocol suggested by Merriam and Tisdell (2015), using document review, semi-structured interviews, and observations. Consistent with Creswell (2013) multiple sources of evidence were necessary to gain an in-depth understanding of the case study topic and to verify findings as suggested by Yin (2013).

Data collected prior to the site visit through document review provided information and context for the case study design and was used to develop the interview questions, establish the case timeline, and to identify key stakeholders and participants for interviews. Documents consisted of email correspondence between leadership and staff at the IBC and HC related to the rebranding strategy and implementation, IBC promotional materials including brochures and recruitment publications, advertisements and billboards, and articles and newsletters produced between 2008 and 2013. These documents, as well as IBC and HC websites and planning and administrative documents related to the rebranding initiative, provided both current and historical data and information. Website data and email correspondence, promotional brochures, advertisements, and newsletters informed the analysis of brand development in terms of visual
identity and messaging. Planning documents, presentations and email correspondence were used to clarify administrative and academic roles and structures at the IBC and the HC, to better understand the strategic focus and position of HC leadership and their involvement with IBC, and to triangulate data collected through interviews and observations. Authenticity of all documents was verified through member checking with the participants and the site coordinator and electronic and paper documents were stored in the case database and in a locked file. A document summary is outlined in Table 3 and detailed notes recorded using the Document Summary Report in Appendix E are stored in the case file.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Description</th>
<th>Document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Websites             | HC website  
                      | IBC website |
| Email correspondence | Email correspondence (12) between leadership and staff at IBC and HC related to rebranding strategy and implementation |
| 2009 – 2012          |          |
| Promotional brochures| IBC Recruitment publications, ads, billboards, and newsletters 2008 – 2013 |
| and advertisements   |          |
| Presentations        | HC Provost Update 2009  
                      | Global Education Taskforce Recommendations: 2012  
                      | HC Enrollment VP Presentation to Trustees 2009  
                      | HC Provost Town Hall Meeting 2015 |
| Articles and Newsletters| HC News Articles; global strategy and IBC: 2010 -2013  
                          | HC Magazine Article: Going Global, IBC featured  
                          | IBC Newsletters |
| Planning and         | HC Strategic Plan 2005-2015  
                      | administrative documents |
|                      | HC KRA Scorecard (progress toward SP goals)  
                      | Enrollment Planning: IBC/HC collaboration  
                      | IBC Marketing Plan for rebranding  
                      | Global Delivery Corporation Overview |
Interviews were conducted by the researcher according to the Interview Protocol (Appendix C) which was based on pre-determined questions designed to address the research question and sub-questions. Semi-structured interviews lasted 40 – 50 minutes each and were conducted using reflexive interviewing techniques in order to elicit participant experiences, perceptions, and feelings. Six participants were interviewed in person in a neutral location during the site visit, one online using Skype, and the final participant in an in person interview at the HC. All were semi-structured interviews conducted by the researcher which allowed for the researcher to probe as necessary in order to better understand each participant’s personal experiences as a stakeholder as well as their perception of how other stakeholders were engaged in and influenced the branding strategy. Interviews were audio recorded and the audio recordings were transcribed by a transcriptionist and verified by individual participants.

Observations were conducted during a six-day site visit that included visits to both IBC locations and two off-site meetings. The site visit included formal observations with the researcher in the role of participant/observer during a high school visit and a public presentation, an enrollment staff meeting and tour at the capital city campus, and a tour at the coastal city campus. In addition visits to both IBC campuses included informal interactions with several staff members, faculty members, and students. Observations were conducted and data was collected through field notes based on the guidelines and protocol outlined in Appendix C and notes were compiled into overall observations and reflections in a summary report in the case file. The role of the researcher as participant/observer provided the opportunity for interaction and conversation with a range of stakeholders at the site, resulting in in-depth observations and
perspective. Table 4 provides a summary of the specific observations conducted during the site visit.

Table 4

*Observation Summary*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site visit to IBC campus in coastal city</td>
<td>Formal observation of a tour of the IBC; informal interactions with IBC students, faculty, and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site visit to IBC in capital city</td>
<td>Formal observation of a tour and a two-hour meeting with recruitment and admissions staff; informal interactions and observations with IBC faculty, staff, and students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school visit</td>
<td>Formal observations of a meeting with HS principal and teacher; formal observation of a presentation by IBC recruitment assistant and IBC student to HS students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public presentation</td>
<td>Formal observation of an admissions presentation to 30 prospective students and parents at an educational advising center in the host country</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Analysis**

Overall data analysis occurred through an iterative process using the data spiral model (Creswell, 2013). Consistent with Miles et al. (2014) data was analyzed on an ongoing basis during the collection process, with information obtained in each phase of research informing the ongoing process and analysis in the phases that follow. Analytic memos were used throughout the process to document new ideas and for analytic reflection as recommended by Saldaña (2013).

Transcribed notes from document analysis, participant interviews, and site observations were coded and analyzed using Saldaña’s (2013) approach to first and second cycle coding.
According to Saldaña (2013) coding is a cyclical process, where first-cycle coding involves reflecting on the data to figure out its essence and identifying the datum with a code, and second-cycle coding involves linking and clustering the first-cycle codes together into categories or patterns to focus the analysis. First-cycle coding was inductive and consisted of open-coding using descriptive, in-vivo, and process codes that were driven by the data in the interview responses. In-vivo codes were used to assist with sensitizing the researcher to the perspective and voice of the participant and process codes facilitated a more dynamic account of events that occurred over time (Saldaña, 2013). Second-cycle coding used pattern codes to identify and assemble the data into categories and themes for further data analysis and reduction. The researcher used interpretive, reflective analysis to understand the meaning the participants attributed to their experiences and the constant comparative method to condense data into smaller categories based on patterns or themes that emerged during analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Summaries of overall themes were developed based on perceptions of participants and observation data, resulting in a detailed descriptive analysis which included identification and use of vignettes to illustrate themes. Analysis of key themes in relation to the theoretical framework and current literature was also conducted to support development of findings.

**Trustworthiness**

Validation strategies are necessary to assess the accuracy of findings and to assure credibility and trustworthiness (Creswell, 2013). Understanding and establishing these strategies is especially important for qualitative studies conducted from the constructivist/interpretivist paradigm where measuring results against a particular reality is inappropriate (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). The design of this particular case study provided the foundation for credibility
and trustworthiness. Protocols for data collection were developed and adhered to throughout the study and detailed records of interviews, observations, and document review were documented through recordings and transcriptions, detailed field notes, and data summary sheets. Through member checking transcriptions of interviews were shared with participants who reviewed them for accuracy prior to data analysis. Verification and triangulation of data collected through document analysis, interview transcriptions, and observations notes occurred through all stages of analysis, including first and second cycle coding. A detailed case report that includes rich descriptions and the details of the research process and findings has been developed.

It is important to consider the issue of researcher bias, especially when the researcher is the primary vehicle for data collection and analysis and has previous experience at the research site (Josselson, 2013). In this case the fact that the researcher was an employee of the HC, had a professional role in the development and management of the IBC, and had ongoing contact with the staff at the IBC has both positive and negative implications. While prior knowledge of basic information and history can serve as a foundation and allow for more detailed investigation of the specific problem, if not carefully considered such knowledge can also lead to bias in the research process (Josselson, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The researcher used analytic memos in this case study throughout research process in order to articulate, reflect on, and constantly be aware of positionality in order to minimize researcher bias.

**Positionality Statement**

As a scholar-practitioner I recognized that my personal background and experience could influence my research, especially given that the research was conducted abroad and involved participants from different cultures. Briscoe (2005) argues that we all construct horizons of meaning based on our history and experiences to make sense of the situations we encounter, and
I was vulnerable to this in this particular study. As a first-generation college student raised by working class parents in a predominately white, rural town, I was guided by conservative values and traditional gender roles, rarely traveled more than 100 miles from home, and had limited exposure to international people and cultures. While I studied Spanish in college and became very interested in other cultures and languages, I was hesitant to step outside my comfort zone and travel abroad. Thankfully, Briscoe (2005) also asserts that while postionality affects the attitudes, goals, and skills of researchers, it is also complex and fluid. I also recognize that as time passes my own horizons of meaning change based on each new experience. While my upbringing and early education was very local, my interest in other people and cultures have led to personal and professional opportunities that have allowed me to travel and to expand my international perspective and experience. I have traveled to China, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Colombia, Peru, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Russia, Croatia, Canada, Mexico, and the United Arab Emirates, and have been exposed to issues of cultural diversity and difference by thousands of students and professionals from other countries that I have met throughout my career. However, while I interacted regularly with others and have traveled extensively, my primary role during those interactions has been to represent a U.S. University, educational agency, or perspective. I have not lived in another country for a long period of time and recognize that my perspective and frame of reference is that of an American. While I can be empathetic to such issues as civil war, ethnic and cultural bias, extreme poverty, and limited educational opportunity, the fact that I have not experienced these issues first hand in another country limits my personal perspective. I have a traditional view of gender roles, and sometimes overlook issues of gender bias because of my upbringing and family values. As I conducted this study I understood that I must take care to be sure that my personal perspective, experiences,
biases, and ideological positionality with respect to cultural differences and international experiences did not inappropriately influence my research and the resulting discourse.

On the other hand, as a higher education enrollment management professional at a university with multiple branch campuses, I have personally experienced the challenges of operating across borders. The development and ongoing management of the IBCs, established in 1997, 2003, and 2008 respectively have presented challenges based on geographic and cultural differences, unique operating systems and structures, and varying perspectives and expectations of stakeholders in the home and host locations. My experience and scholarly research has helped me realize that my perspective was initially myopic, based on the HC needs and expectations. Through interaction with stakeholders in both the home and host locations and through my research I have developed an appreciation for the importance of stakeholder relationships, as well a broader understanding of diverse stakeholder perspectives and expectations in both the home and host locations.

As a higher education professional with 30 years of experience, I am a strong advocate for cross-border education and believe that exposure to global issues and other cultures and perspectives is essential for students, faculty, and administrators in higher education. In our rapidly changing world, educators face the challenge of preparing students to be citizens of the world who can understand complex economic and political issues, social systems and values, and are able to consider problems and issues from a global perspective. Unless higher education professionals actively engage across borders and personally connect with and experience other cultures, they will have difficulty understanding diverse perspectives necessary to successfully educate our students for life and work in our global society. I have been aware that my personal background and perspective on cross-border education, as well as my professional experience
and engagement with personnel and students at the research site, influenced my perspective and could unintentionally influence my findings or bias my research. I used analytic memos throughout this study as a tool to reflect on my personal bias and to be aware of and better understand this influence on my research.

**Data storage**

The researcher verified the authenticity of all documents; all data for the case was collected and recorded in a case study file, stored on both a USB and hard-drive computer, and password protected. The data files included electronic copies and links to any documents considered during document review as well as transcriptions of interviews, scanned copies of field notes and observation reports, data summary sheets, and other relevant data and document analysis.

MAXQDA, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS) software, was used for electronic coding in order to more efficiently manage and analyze data. While Miles et al. (2014) caution against the computer manipulation of data as the only approach to data analysis, they also advocate for its use and efficiency for managing, organizing, and manipulating date.

Document summary sheets and contact summary sheets were developed for each document, interview, and observation in order to concisely record key points and initial impressions of the interaction or document review. Interviews were recorded and transcribed word-for-word, with both recorded and transcribed versions saved on a computer hard-drive and backed up on an external hard drive. Observation summaries and notes, transcripts, and other information gathered based on interactions with participants were scanned and recorded in a database. Electronic documents were password protected and original paper copies of data, documents, and interaction notes were kept in a locked file in a secure location.
**Protection of Human Subjects**

This study was conducted based on the ethical research guidelines and with the approval of Northeastern University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the approval of the IBC being studied. Consent forms describing the purpose of the study and contact information for the researcher were provided to all participants prior to interviews and observations (Appendix D). Participation was voluntary, and those engaged were informed that they could leave the study or decline to provide information or respond to any questions at any point. Participants remained anonymous, and pseudonyms and position descriptors were used to protect the identity of the participants and their titles. Documents provided by participants prior to or during the study were treated as confidential, and while information included in them may be referred to in the study, the actual documents and their contents were not included in the case description.
Chapter IV: Research Findings

The purpose of this single-site case study was to explore how stakeholder engagement influenced a branding strategy designed to more closely align the brand image of an established international branch campus (IBC) with that of the home university. The study is conducted from the perspective of IBC stakeholders, and is designed to better understand how stakeholders influenced IBC brand development over time. This chapter presents the case study findings based on the overarching research question: *How did stakeholder engagement influence a branding strategy to more closely align the brand image of an established international branch campus (IBC) with that of the home campus (HC) of a comprehensive, technological university in the United States?* To support the question, two sub-questions are addressed.

1) *How were stakeholders engaged in the rebranding process?*

2) *How was value created in these relationships?*

The Stakeholder-brand Value Model (Jones, 2005) was used as a lens to explore how stakeholder engagement influenced a specific branding strategy. Stakeholder groups identified during document review included trustees, leadership, faculty, staff, students, alumni, business and industry, government, and the public. Participants from key stakeholder groups were selected for in-depth interviews to share their own experiences, and also to share their perspective on how other stakeholders were engaged in and influenced the process. Document review and observations provided additional information that informed the analysis and was used to triangulate data collected during the research process. The next section includes a brief summary of the case study site followed by the findings for the study.

**Site description**
The site for the case study was an IBC in Eastern Europe, operated by private, technological university in the US. The relationship between the home campus (HC) and the IBC began when a government official from the host country in Eastern Europe visited the US, learned that the HC was interested in opportunities for academic collaboration in the region, and made an unplanned visit to the HC. Ongoing conversations led to a plan to develop an academic program that would support post-war economic development in the tourism industry in the region. In 1995 the Ministry of Science in the host country approved the establishment of private higher education institutions, naming HC University as a partner in these efforts. The IBC was subsequently approved and accredited to offer both a U.S. degree and a local diploma in hospitality and tourism, and the first class entered in 1998. The IBC was established as the first private university in the country, with support from the government that included subsidized tuition and facilities shared with a local public university.

The government tuition subsidy ended and the IBC moved to separate facility in 2003. Enrollment began to decline and trustees and leaders, recognizing that reliance on the local market and one degree was not enough to be self-sustaining, began to consider possibilities for expansion. Ongoing discussions led to the decision to expand by adding academic programs and a campus in the capital city, in conjunction with a strategy to more closely align the brand image of the IBC with that of the HC. This strategy was referred to as “rebranding” and “brand enhancement” by participants and in data collected for the study. This sequence of events is summarized in the Case Timeline (Appendix G).

The HC in this case study was a private university of 18,000 students offering undergraduate and graduate degrees in business, liberal arts, engineering, computing, art and design. While the IBC offered the HC degree in hospitality and tourism, the IBC brand when
established did not overtly connect to or directly reflect the HC brand. Prior to the rebranding initiative IBC brochures, newsletters, and marketing collateral were designed in red, white, and blue and the name featured “American College.” Messages in the brochure stated “65% of classes taught by American professors,” described a “learning environment that nurtures each individual,” and a “dually accredited program that offers both home country and American degrees.” Marketing materials focused on the location in a “historic coastal city” and “popular tourist destination” and included images of the local campus and the surrounding city. A marketing brochure used during that time described the degree in hospitality and tourism as a program offering “applied knowledge” and “training.” The brochure also listed 50 employers of IBC graduates, most of which were in the local area and were hotels and hospitality and tourism companies.

The branding strategy that is the focus of this study was developed to more closely align the IBC brand image, including the name, logo, images, visual identity, brand messages, and brand experience, with those of the HC. The goal was to elevate and enhance the existing IBC brand by leveraging the connection to the HC and offering a broader academic portfolio and enhanced educational experiences. The strategy was expected to support the decision to open a second campus in the capital city, help expand the market for new students, and enhance opportunities and outcomes for students and alumni.

Findings

The findings in this chapter are presented and organized as themes that emerged from the data collected during the case study. These themes are organized around the research questions outlined and described in Table 5.
Table 5

*Themes Emerging from the Research Sub-questions*

*How were stakeholders engaged in rebranding process?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acting as ambassadors</td>
<td>Stakeholders engaged in the rebranding process by advocating for the change, leveraging contacts, providing guidance and advice, and sharing the message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating something different</td>
<td>Stakeholders were engaged in creating unique educational experiences and enhanced opportunities and outcomes that were essential to the enhanced brand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting expectations and</td>
<td>Stakeholders were engaged in setting expectations and informing and engaging others in the rebranding process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engaging others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinforcing the brand</td>
<td>Stakeholders were engaged in emphasizing the IBC/HC connection, participating in activities and events, and adopting symbols and traditions that reinforced the brand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enhancement</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*How was value created in those relationships?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shaped and supported the</td>
<td>Stakeholder relationships informed and shaped the strategy, and helped to secure resources and support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded engagement and</td>
<td>Stakeholder relationships enhanced brand engagement, loyalty, and pride and increased brand awareness and reach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced the brand</td>
<td>Stakeholder relationships enhanced the brand experience by increasing HC/IBC collaboration and expanding academic and professional opportunities and networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validated the brand</td>
<td>Stakeholder relationships created legitimacy and established credibility that helped to validate the brand in an expanding market and community.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stakeholder Engagement in Branding Strategy**
The following section presents a detailed description of the research findings and the themes that emerged from the data collected that relate to the first research sub-question: *how were stakeholders engaged in the rebranding process?*

**Acting as Ambassadors.** In this case study stakeholders acted as ambassadors for the rebranding strategy by advocating for the change, making and leveraging connections, providing guidance, expertise and local perspective, and sharing the information during the process.

**Advocating for the change.** Interviews and data collected during document review and observations showed that leaders, faculty, staff, students, and alumni in the IBC country not only supported but advocated for the rebranding strategy. The trustee and industry representative and the alumnus described the connection between the IBC and the HC before the rebranding as “copy/paste” and according to the faculty member his colleagues, “were all rooting for let’s happen…when will this happen not whether this is a good or bad idea but when are we going to do this.” IBC leaders and trustees advocated for the change, and one described the role of the IBC President as an advocate, “it was his vision that the [IBC should] become IBC University. So yeah, definitely not only did he share that idea, he championed that idea.” The recruitment manager also described how IBC faculty, staff, and students welcomed and advocated for the rebranding:

Well I would say it was coming from all of us. From the students, from the staff, from the professors, I would say that from my start working with the IBC we all very much so felt that we should have that co-brand you know at least and a stronger connection to the main campus. In other words something in black and white that did state that we are one and the same and that we’re just an international branch campus.
As the IBC developed stakeholder engagement expanded to include IBC students and alumni, many of whom understood and leveraged the connection to the HC by listing both institutions on their resumes even before the rebranding strategy began. Industry and government representatives were not identified or described as advocating for the brand in interviews or observations and, when asked, participants described government engagement as bureaucratic. However the alumnus and the student described how they introduced the IBC and its connection to the HC to the employers who hired them. As the number of students who graduated and entered the workforce increased alumni and industry networks expanded, and so did the number of individuals who served as ambassadors and advocates for the rebranding.

*Leveraging contacts.* Leaders, faculty, staff, and alumni at the IBC often utilized personal and professional contacts to advocate for and support the rebranding strategy. Participants demonstrated a strong personal commitment to the IBC, most having become involved themselves through a personal or professional contact. The faculty member met the IBC President through an industry contact, a friend recommended the industry representative to the advisory board, and the prior government official and trustee was the initial contact between HC administrators and the government during his visit to the US in 1994. The industry representative described how personal connections and relationships influenced selection and the makeup of the advisory and trustee boards:

So I mean the school picked for those advisory roles in the advisory board and the board of trustees when it comes to local members they picked people who could be the ambassadors you know. So the brand whether being American College or later on IBC University had the ambassadors with their own networks.
The VP described IBC trustee board members as, “informed, engaged, proactive”, and spoke about how they worked together to advocate for and support the process:

Because we have [government official] who was a minister in the government when we were formed so he has that history, he has those connections. We’ve got [the industry representative] who is in PR advertising and we have [a business leader] who is [local] by birth but also an entrepreneur and very successful business man in the United States who also has a location in [the host country]. So we’ve got this combination I think that works pretty well together.

These stakeholders were committed to the IBC and were willing to leverage their personal and professional contacts to support the rebranding strategy and to introduce and reinforce the enhanced IBC brand to others.

*Providing guidance and advice.* In addition to serving as advocates, IBC and HC leaders, faculty, and staff, as well as alumni and government officials in the host country, provided guidance and advice by sharing their insights and expertise during the rebranding process. Three participants mentioned the role the HC President and other HC leaders had in decision-making and guiding the rebranding initiative. The VP, who became engaged when the government subsidy ended and IBC enrollment began to decline, recognized the inconsistencies between the IBC and HC brand and raised questions that helped to guide the process:

If we’re going to change something how do we become more strategic about our engagement in [the host country]? How do we broaden the portfolio? How do we get an institutional viability, and what are the types of things we need to do to strengthen the overall posture for the future?
The industry representative described the VP as, “a champion of the process”, and the recruitment manager also described how his expertise and commitment, along with support and guidance from other HC staff members, provided additional information and perspective that informed and supported the process:

But really the major collaboration in the rebranding was happening between the HC and the IBC enrollment [staff] to make sure that we had the messaging correct, to make sure that we understand really from the HC enrollment [staff] who has so much more experience on that at the end of the day on how to do this right.

In another example, the business owner described how the government official’s experience and advice supported the process:

Navigating the system definitely and then sometimes you know also using some influence over the stakeholders on the government side…. [he] was very helpful sometimes you know when this process would get stuck for no apparent reason.

The industry representative, a local business owner who owned an advertising firm, provided leadership and guidance as a trustee and also shared her marketing expertise during the rebranding. The recruitment manager described how the enrollment team relied on her expertise, and also on the enrollment staff at the HC, for advice and guidance:

I would say major part was really happening between the main campus and IBC campus with of course insights and kind of you know information gathering as far as what all needs to be encompassed by this change.

Participants also consistently described situations where stakeholders in the host country provided local perspective during the rebranding process. During his interview, the alumnus shared insight on the local culture and perceptions that influenced and informed the process:
Okay so you need to understand those with the mentality of [host country] people that very often they value opinion of a foreigner…this is changing now, but let’s say that this was the start of school in the last ten years. If something is from the outside, if something is foreign it must be good. Not necessarily always true but you know the perception is perception.

The VP described how important understanding different internal, external, IBC, and HC stakeholder perspectives were to create the message and visual identity for the enhanced brand:

And then I think the other part was how does the look, the feel, and the messaging fit in the HC core brand, but also worked and translated so it resonates with the local market. Because we can say something here in the US in English that when translated means something very different. And certainly the IBC I think picking from the design, using [HC publications staff], and fitting into that brand, I think cross training, I think the advertising and stories that came out of there…the orientation of the connectedness of the faculty with the students, all of those things.

The IBC President also shared a story about how the acronym for HC University was actually a slang word in a local dialect. While the name was still used, meeting notes and the marketing plan showed that considerable attention was given to the visual treatment and use of the HC University name in the marketing plan. In another example, the government official described how local stakeholder perceptions influenced the name change:

We are now 20 years from the war on terror and practically already 7-8 years back or even more we started to talk. We would probably need to change the name. There is no need any more to have American College which means nothing to people, just like American doughnut or something like that or the American state. Twenty-five years ago
this was something, this was something from America. But now that’s not the case and on the other hand this IBC was always practically associated with HC because this was one of the ideas that all the programs which would be performed in IBC and nowadays HC will be licensed also according to [host country] licensing.

The VP described how industry representatives, leaders, faculty, staff, and alumni from both the host country and the US provided advice and guidance during the rebranding strategy:

So we had expertise from the [host country] side in markets in [host country] and how does that work. We didn’t have history or experience on the [host country] side with two degrees. We didn’t have history of working with an American institution. We didn’t have the U.S. accreditation side but we had the [host country] accreditation side. It all then started to dovetail.

Throughout the rebranding process stakeholders from these different groups provided valuable insight into the local and home country culture and customs, markets, regulations, and perceptions as well as personal and professional expertise and insights that influenced decisions and informed the strategy around the rebranding.

Sharing the message. Stakeholders were also involved in informing others and sharing the enhanced brand message. Data revealed that faculty, staff, alumni, students, leaders, and trustees were willing to share their IBC experiences with others, and they played an important role by communicating and reinforcing the enhanced brand message. During the observation at the campus in the coastal city an enrollment staff member, who was also an IBC alumnus, described how she shared her IBC experience with every prospective student and parent who visited. She pointed out “brag boards” that displayed business cards from business and industry representatives who had recently hired IBC students and graduates. Planning documents and
publications designed during the rebranding strategy featured profiles of successful alumni, as well as testimonials from business and industry representatives, who were willing to share their experiences which reinforced the brand message.

In addition students and alumni served as ambassadors by communicating and sharing the IBC brand message. Participants consistently mentioned the importance of word of mouth for receiving and getting information in the host country. According to the industry representative:

You know [the host country] is tiny. You have to also be aware of the fact that we are talking about 4.2 million people all together in the whole country. So given the size of the market then also word of mouth is quite an important channel. And with so many years of IBC presence here that the strength coming from the word of mouth was already quite significant.

The IBC President and the recruitment manager also talked about the influence personal conversations had on prospective students and parents, and the alumnus described the influence alumni from his generation had on prospective students:

I know that three of my really good friends who have younger siblings all of their siblings they go to IBC University. So you know they would probably not advise brothers and sisters to go there if they would not believe that it is good.

The faculty member also talked about sharing the message during his interactions with others:

For example when I have some of my colleagues, some of my friends, some people who approach me when they have questions with regards to enrolling their children into IBC University it’s so much easier for me to explain who we are just by saying we are IBC University because I tell them the history of it, how we came about in [the host country], and you know what was the development here, what we do, what are the programs. But
then my last sort of speak sales pitch is listen we are...go visit HC main campus web page and see who we are. This is who we are. We are just a member of this big family. Participants described other examples like these where alumni, students, faculty, leaders and trustees served as ambassadors by sharing their experiences and information about the IBC with others. Business and industry professionals and government officials who served on IBC and HC advisory and trustee boards also leveraged their connections, advocated for the change, and shared information and advice that informed and supported the rebranding decision and strategy. IBC alumni and students, as well as faculty and staff from the IBC and the HC, provided feedback and perspective that informed decision-making and the rebranding strategy in general. Data showed that stakeholders in the home and host locations regularly, albeit at times unknowingly, served as ambassadors by leveraging connections, acting as advocates, providing guidance and advice, and sharing and communicating information during the rebranding strategy.

**Creating something different.** Data showed that IBC faculty, staff, and students were also engaged in creating a unique educational experience at the IBC, which participants consistently described during interviews and observations as “something different.” When asked to elaborate they described the American degree, a personalized experience in a close community, a practical, applied approach to education, and the opportunity to gain experience through internships. While these key elements remained part of the core IBC brand, the branding strategy also called for more global recognition, educational experiences, and career outcomes, and closer alignment of the HC and the IBC brand. Faculty, staff, and student engagement, as well as increased support and participation from alumni and business and industry professionals,
helped create the experiences, opportunities, and outcomes that were key elements of the enhanced brand.

*Unique educational experience.* When talking about their experience with the IBC, participants described small classes and a unique teaching style, extracurricular events and activities, and personal relationships between professors, students, and staff. Data from interviews and observations showed that faculty, staff, and students at the IBC played a key role in creating these experiences. The alumnus described how his own interactions with faculty influenced his experience as a student at the IBC:

I think that it was really that this small community kind of feeling about IBC… professors were giving us their phone numbers, cell phone numbers, we were working on different projects, we were able to call them any time and ask you know we have a problem with this or that…you know the students-professor relationship was much closer. The professors are the one who sit next to you, not in front of you. They really want to make you succeed. This is completely opposite from what the [host country] education is all about…so this was more about interaction. It was about a team. It was about you know joint work and so on. All the professors were tight, you know easy going, I mean fair and friendly. And then on weekends we go out and we meet them at the same club.

The student who was enrolled in and graduated from the IBC during the rebranding offered a similar perspective:

I mean at least we connected very fast you know. We were all sticking together but not just the students. There was only maybe 50 of us or something like that in the first year…you have a really small number so it is like a family.
He described how the relationship between the professors and the students during his studies at the IBC, and his interactions with other IBC and HC students through student government activities, contributed to the unique educational experience he had at the IBC.

The other things…okay so as time went by you know we were in contact much more as a student government with other colleges so first of all with IBC [coastal city] campus, okay. Both were in [host country] but also with [another IBC campus] and then even I think it was my third year here then even once per year one of the campuses I think organized an event where student governments from all the campuses would at least partially would meet, exchange experiences. This was very useful you know. Something like this has never happened before…But I think with this change of the brand name and the brand in general I think that this cooperation also between students and formal student governments increased a lot.

The faculty member also talked about how IBC and HC professors worked together to create a unique educational experience, and how it changed during the rebranding.

These days it’s different really because now I don’t know whether you are aware of the change that we have. We have now six area heads responsible for different areas program based [at the IBC]. And now it’s bottom up really. So it is all of the topics that are actually coming through faculty members, through area heads, and then discussed at the level of the faculty meetings. So the practice has changed, so it is expected that there is more ideas and more things that are happening now then 10-15 years ago.

While he described how interactions between HC and IBC professors increased during rebranding, he also indicated that he hoped there would be even more opportunities in the future. He indicated that fewer professors came to spend the full semester or year at the IBC, even
though there was more frequent interaction and exchange between IBC and HC professors. The VP described how these increased interactions between the HC and the IBC faculty and students during the rebranding strategy enhanced academic offerings and created opportunities for more global experiences for both HC and IBC students:

I think we probably have a higher profile student academically then we had maybe back then...a baccalaureate degree with a wider curriculum and being able to offer more of an exchange with HC from a faculty perspective, more student opportunity to go both ways. For the HC to have students on either of the IBC campuses it’s a cultural immersion because you’re with so many young people mostly from [the host country] whereas a lot of study abroad sites you can be with a lot of U.S. students studying with U.S. students in a study abroad site from other colleges and universities but you’re all U.S. And only when you reach out into the community do you start to get into a cultural immersion. Here it’s living in the community, it’s studying in the classes, it’s working in the projects. It’s all of the above and it becomes a potential cultural immersion.

Leaders, faculty, staff, and students in both locations worked together to develop and support study abroad and cultural immersions, new academic offerings, and student activities that created a unique educational experience during the rebranding process.

*Enhancing opportunities and outcomes.* Interactions between host country business and industry and IBC faculty, students, alumni, and staff also expanded career related opportunities and experiences for students and alumni. Data collected during document review and observations showed that student interactions with faculty and business and industry provided practical knowledge and real world experience that were important to the brand experience. The student talked about this during his interview:
I was looking for practical knowledge mostly because, and that was as I understood at that time one of the advantages of U.S. based…I’m thinking in general U. S. based education because in [the host country] before I was already a part of [a local public university] here and I knew that it’s all based on theory.

The interviews and experience potential employers had with the IBC students and graduates, as well their performance in the workplace, influenced their perceptions of the IBC and their willingness to hire graduates. The alumnus, also an industry professional who hired employees for a management consulting firm, verified this in his interview, “in our work it’s more important not just the name of the school but it’s really about your experience and what you can do.”

These interactions were important to the rebranding strategy, since IBC students and alumni were hired and worked in business and industry and many eventually became employers who hired the next generation students. Faculty and trustees interacted on a regular basis with business and industry representatives and the public as part of their personal and professional lives, sharing their experiences with the brand as they did so. The industry representative described how important these relationships were to the IBC brand:

Because a lot of them were aware, a lot of them actually, were aware of the link between IBC and HC obviously because when you talk about business community primarily you are talking about businesses that have already participated in the core programs. So a lot of former students are now themselves employees or managers in different companies all over [the host country] and they take in interns. All of them were already aware of this link and so the rebranding was just you know making it official.

Observations and interviews showed that engagement between IBC students, alumni, and business and industry representatives expanded during the rebranding, as did the role of staff,
faculty, leadership, and alumni in establishing and maintaining those relationships. The student described how the number of multinational companies recruiting on campus increased during the rebranding, and how an IBC staff member was engaged in the process.

They were very happy. I remember from you have this career day organized by the [IBC staff]…But there were better…especially the number increased of this let’s say the best companies in [the host country] of course the multi-national companies who first of all are big so you can really find easily your own happiness in any of them. So it grew, it grew, definitely. I don’t know how they did it. [IBC staff member] was in charge of that and she did her job very well I think because every year I could see the difference. There was at least I’ll say just a number for example 30% more companies and still these were really good companies who liked to present themselves.

The alumnus from an early generation shared how his professional relationships and network expanded beyond the hospitality industry and the local region during the rebranding:

I’ve been you know since this has happened I’ve been in for this management consulting company that I work at so we always had you know like people come in for an interview…I would say 30%-40% went to hospitality but the rest of the people are business or law. You know all kind of industries. And they’re all quite successful in what they do so I would say that we get a really good footing for the much faster career advancement than if you go to the faculty of economics in [a local public university].

He also provided an example of how his own interactions and relationships with other IBC alumni extended beyond the local area and business community. After graduating from the IBC he was awarded a Fulbright grant to study in the US and needed help relocating. He contacted an IBC alumnus who helped him find an apartment and relocate to the US. He has since returned,
and owns an apartment in the capital city which he only rents out to “IBC people.” Documents reviewed, as well as observations and interviews showed that IBC faculty, staff, alumni, and business and industry engagement during rebranding led to enhanced educational opportunities, as well as personal and professional opportunities, that expanded beyond the local region.

**Setting expectations and engaging others.** Stakeholders were actively engaged in setting, clarifying, and communicating expectations and getting others involved both before and during the rebranding initiative.

*Setting expectations.* In this case study leadership and trustees who were engaged with the IBC were actively engaged in making decisions and setting expectations for the rebranding strategy. The IBC leaders and trustees expected that the strategy would increase the IBC reputation and reach and support the IBC agenda for expansion. While some were resistant at first, HC leaders became more actively engaged when they realized that the IBC would support the HC strategic agenda for internationalization. According to the IBC President:

> The person who really brought it to a head was when [the HC President] came on board because his very first trip…would have been almost at the end of his first year…and our colors under IBC were the red, white, and blue and his first thing is where’s the HC. That was his first comment.

The IBC President and the VP described this visit by the HC President as a turning point. While internationalization had been identified as a priority in the HC strategic plan in 2005, this visit reinforced the HC commitment to make the IBC and the rebranding initiative a priority in that strategy. The recruitment manager described how important the engagement and commitment of HC leaders and managers were to the rebranding strategy.
I think the leadership especially at the main campus understood the importance to get involved and to truly sit down and finalize the decision of the rebranding and whether or not that was something that the HC was affirmative with and agreeing and moving forward with. That moved fairly quickly once the top leaders decided that that was a way to go.

Emails and planning documents provided examples of how HC and IBC leaders and trustees collaborated after this visit to set timelines and expectations and to engage others at the HC in the rebranding strategy. A Town Hall presentation highlighting the changes and the opportunities at the IBC, and a series of articles highlighting activities and opportunities to engage with the IBC, appeared in internal HC newsletters and press releases.

The industry representative also described the role of the IBC President as “crucial” as he worked to balance the needs and expectations of stakeholders in both locations:

He was in this position that would very often put him between the rock and the hard place, being a bridge between the IBC and the HC. And obviously being an employee, practically an employee of the HC and answering for the results and everything that was happening here back to them he had to defend the interests of the HC but also [support] the advancement of this local operation.

Leaders and trustees in both locations influenced the process and were actively engaged in setting and managing expectations during the rebranding process.

*Informing and engaging others.* In addition to setting expectations, email correspondence, meeting notes, and presentations showed that leaders who were engaged with the IBC worked to inform and engage staff, faculty, alumni, and students in the rebranding
process. The industry representative described the challenges of reaching and informing such a broad range of stakeholders:

You had to explain to all the stakeholders and where you have direct communication with your stakeholders it’s not a problem you know with your alumni or different institutions, public administration, etc. You can solve things with mailings, direct communication, etc. But how do you reach all the potential you know students and their parents very important decision makers in this market as well. How are you going to reach them? You know how are we going to explain to them that this great school that was once called American College is now called IBC University but it’s the same thing and even better now.

She had advocated for increased marketing and outreach, including television advertising, and also indicated that the request was not supported by the finance people. The VP also indicated that he did not support mass advertising and marketing as a strategy in the rebranding process, and the recruitment manager described how the process relied on IBC faculty, staff, and students to communicate a relevant and consistent message to prospective students and the external public:

So there was always talk about that we needed to be stronger with our messaging to the students and that whole co-branding started with the whole initiative of making sure that it’s black and white on paper that we are HC as well because a lot of the times in talking to the students you know representing ourselves as American College lacking the brand of the main institution we had to a lot of times as recruiters - because my position as well was a recruiter going to schools - we had to a lot of times make sure that we are emphasizing the fact that HC and show them pictures of HC as well.
Participants described how the enhanced brand provided the opportunity to reach out more effectively to a broader geographic market. Leaders and staff worked to inform and actively engage students, faculty, staff, alumni, and industry representatives so that they would understand and support the rebranding initiative. The IBC President shared information with the IBC community through weekly emails, during joint faculty and staff meetings, and with students in every class each semester. The student participant described how students were informed and engaged in the rebranding decision and initiative:

So I mean it was announced. It’s not that it was hidden or it was secretive. It was announced through emails and every step of the way I think there was some update from the dean or the professors would inform us but mostly I think it was the dean or our associate dean at the time who was in charge…So even if we had some questions what will this mean, how will this happen, you know we could always ask [him] at least. But even without that we were informed very well at every step of the way how it will happen.

The IBC President encouraged students to share ideas and feedback, and recognized the importance of their ongoing engagement with the IBC:

The fact is with students in some ways it’s an easier thing to do because they are there with you all the time. Like when I think about say a company changing brand where somebody’s making a purchase decision you know because they make that purchase. Like when our people make their purchase decision they’re kind of for the most part with you for four years…so it’s a little bit different so you also get the feedback.

These relationships continued after graduation and the recruitment manager described how the IBC staff worked to not only inform, but also to engage alumni in the rebranding process.
The alumni were involved in the re-branding in a way that we number one sent them communication during the time or the phase that we were initiating the whole process. I think we did a very good job in involving them and having them understand the importance of the co-branding when that first started as well. It happened a little bit later. As I said it really was first the brochure then the letterhead and then we kind of figured oh we really need to have the alumni community and the entire community understand why we’re doing this and the entire co-branding thing.

The strategy relied heavily on word of mouth and stakeholder networks to share information and engage others, both before and during the rebranding process. According to the industry representative:

"Rebranding happened without that type of campaign that you would normally do for a major rebranding because you are talking about the rebranding here… I was strongly advocating that we get the budget that would allow us to use TV commercials but it never happened. So in terms of channels we ended up being restricted to our own media, the school’s own media, some print and portals and that was it."

As the industry representative indicated, advertising was limited and any communication about the change was directed not only at students and parents as customers, but also at alumni, industry professionals, and the public in order to leverage existing stakeholder relationships and networks. Email correspondence revealed particular energy and enthusiasm about a billboard in a central location in the capital city announcing new campus which, although designed with prospective students in mind, was effective in sharing the message with alumni, business and industry representatives, and the public in general.
Evidence showed that during rebranding HC and IBC leaders and trustees worked together to set clear expectations, communicated with other stakeholders, and worked to actively engage others in the process. As they did so, faculty, staff, students, alumni and business and industry representatives also became engaged and utilized their networks to shared information and engage others in the process. However, the alumnus and the student both indicated that not all of their classmates and friends were aware of the rebranding strategy. In some cases, while alumni had already been using the HC name on their resumes and talked about the IBC/HC connection in their interviews, they did not realize they were engaging in the process. In addition the IBC President and the alumnus and the industry representative all described the focus of business and industry representatives on the quality of the graduates and their ability to do the job rather than the names and details of the brand image. In this case study expectations of all industry representatives and alumni were important and informed the strategy and communication plan, whether or not they were actively engaged in the process.

**Reinforcing the brand enhancement.** The rebranding strategy was designed to more closely align the brand image of the IBC with that of the HC. IBC students and alumni reinforced this strategy by emphasizing the connection between the IBC and the HC, engaging in activities and events, and adopting HC brand symbols and traditions.

**Emphasizing the IBC/HC connection.** IBC students and alumni actively engaged in the branding strategy, albeit sometimes without realizing it, by emphasizing the connection between the IBC and the HC. Because they earned a degree from both, most listed either the HC or both the IBC and the HC on their resumes. This reinforced the message in the market, in particular with business and industry representatives, prospective students and parents, and the public in general. According to the alumnus:
For me personally it was not a big surprise, it was just like okay finally they get it that it’s HC. So it wasn’t a big change. And like even when I was writing the CV’s my resume whenever I was applying for the jobs I never put IBC, I always put HC…the brand of HC was always so much bigger.

Alumni contacts and connections like these reinforced and supported the rebranding initiative.

The recruitment manager also described how, as the rebranding strategy unfolded, more alumni began to emphasize and leverage the connection between the IBC and HC:

But I must say that during my time in the marketing position I noticed many more alumni on Facebook you know putting their education as HC than they did IBC. So I think they all welcomed that and understood the importance and really kind of just reinforcement of their HC diploma which is primarily the reason that they enrolled at the IBC during that time even if you look at the student surveys.

The industry representative described how interactions between current students, alumni, and business and industry representatives helped to reinforce the connection between the IBC and the HC:

Because a lot of [the industry people] were aware, a lot of them actually, were aware of the link between IBC and HC obviously because when you talk about business community primarily you are talking about businesses that have already participated in the core programs. So a lot of former students are now themselves employees or managers in different companies all over [the host country] and they take in interns. All of them were already aware of this link and so the rebranding was just you know making it official.
While participants indicated in general that alumni were supportive and helped to communicate and inform others, the IBC President also described his concern that IBC alumni from the early generation might resist the change because of their strong attachment and nostalgia to the American College brand:

I was anticipating a little bit from the alumni group that there was maybe going to be some unhappy campers because we heard some rumblings in it. But that was absolutely not the case. Everybody was very supportive of it. They understood why it was...so we didn’t really have any backlash. I think the thing is we’ve been very sensitive about to that initial group that still has that emotional attachment with American College so we haven’t like squashed it you know...you know we’ll have a raffle with an old American College shirt or something like that sort of thing. So I think we’ve kept it alive the right way in it so sort of from a nostalgic sake I would say more than anything else. And sort of helped to show them that we really are...we’re not different.

He and the VP also described some resistance from HC leaders and faculty to the closer alignment of the IBC brand to the HC brand because they were concerned about how that would impact the HC reputation and brand. The resistance from HC stakeholders dissipated during the rebranding strategy, and IBC students and alumni as well as IBC and HC faculty and staff supported the rebranding strategy by communicating and demonstrating the connection between the IBC and the HC.

Engaging in events and activities, adopting traditions and symbols. Stakeholder engagement in activities and events also reinforced the connection between the HC and IBC and the enhanced brand image. Leaders, faculty, staff, and students traveled between locations and
connected with one another during meetings and events. Trustees attended meetings that alternated between the IBC campuses and the HC, and leaders in both locations encouraged and provided support for joint faculty, staff, and student meetings and activities. As the academic portfolio expanded to include business and information technology more faculty and staff from those departments at the HC worked directly with IBC faculty, staff, and students. The IBC President described a student’s reaction to a business class that was taught by an IBC professor to students in both locations:

I think there’s six on the IBC side and ten in the HC side…I asked about the technology because that’s always a concern, but he says it’s nice to have the difference of opinion and different perspective. He says that’s what I really like about it.

Faculty and students participated in these types of joint academic initiatives, study abroad, and other extracurricular activities and events in both locations, which reinforced the IBC/HC connection and brand alignment and supported the branding strategy.

Students, faculty, staff, and alumni were also included as the IBC leaders and staff introduced new traditions and symbols that supported the rebranding strategy. The recruitment manager described how the IBC staff used HC traditions and symbols to engage business and industry representatives and alumni, and to reinforce the connection between the IBC and the HC.

As far as how we educated the industries and the community, we started even before the full re-brand with certain things that really identified the HC kind of traditions and culture. One of those was HC or Tiger Pride Day. So you know we did a lot of things in marketing to just kind of like introduce that. I think the mascot was a big thing as well that recently joined the [host country] campuses as well. And the Spirit Day we would get
involved with…of course the other branch campuses but include the alumni when we would host those, so invite them. A lot of the times when you invited the alumni that includes the industry because they’re working in those industries that we collaborate with, and they are the first ones to be contacted when we have any kind of events.

The student participant also talked about how students willingly adopted HC traditions and symbols, and how their engagement supported the rebranding strategy.

Actually the student government was the best tool to reach the students if you wanted to do that because…what was it called? Memorabilia? All this stuff that you get you know this is not normal for [the host country] at all. For universities you don’t have colors. Okay first of all you don’t have fraternities or sororities. This doesn’t exist. We even tried to you know do that here but…anyway you don’t have all this, you don’t have a mascot. So at one point we had this huge tiger mascot that someone from student government was wearing during some events and there was this HC tiger day or barbeques that the college organizes at least once per semester you know.

During site visits to both IBC locations the IBC President, staff, students, and faculty also shared and described visual symbols and colors, posters for activities and events, and traditions that reinforced the enhanced brand. One staff member proudly pointed out signs that included HC logos and photos, memorabilia from the HC, and advertisements for activities and events that demonstrated the connection between the IBC and the HC. A number of participants referred to the fact that during the rebranding strategy the IBC adopted the HC color, orange. Students wore t-shirts and caps that displayed the IBC University name, logo, and colors. The IBC President talked about how he used the colors to engage stakeholders and reinforce the enhanced brand:
That’s an interesting thing here that we’ve got…you know I’m constantly…like they think I’m crazy for probably all kinds of reasons, but really with the orange. The fact about that and they’re like does everything have to be in orange. And I’ve given in to some of the grey into this stuff but I said yeah it does. And I at events and I have my orange socks…As soon as we start going and okay yes they’ve been able to do different color t-shirts for events and I’m not that crazy but as soon as we start going away from it we run that risk of it that here…okay HC campus you can do that. You can do one event and you can have that everybody is going to wear pink shirts or the pink tiger or something. You can’t do that here. We’ve got to be really selective about it.

As students, faculty, staff, alumni, and other stakeholders were exposed to and actively engaged with these visual symbols, traditions, and activities they reinforced the rebranding strategy. However, the IBC President also described how some alumni, faculty, and staff from the early generation, as well as people living in the coastal city, still referred to the IBC as American College. During his interview the alumnus also used the American College and IBC University names interchangeably. While he described the benefits and value of the rebranding strategy, he also described a strong attachment to the American College brand and the name and images associated with it.

**Summary of stakeholder engagement themes.** Themes that emerged from the data collected provide evidence that stakeholders were engaged and included in all aspects of the rebranding strategy. IBC leaders, trustees, faculty, staff, and alumni acted as ambassadors and were actively engaged in advocating, making decisions, and setting expectations for the enhanced brand. Faculty, staff, and students at the IBC and HC were engaged in developing unique educational experiences and enhancing the opportunities and outcomes that students,
industry professionals, alumni, and the public in general expected from the enhanced brand. Alumni, faculty, staff, leaders, and trustees in the home country shared information through their networks informing others and reinforcing the brand enhancement. Participants in the study demonstrated a strong personal commitment to the IBC and the HC, and used their individual connections and networks to share information and engage in the process. Data also showed that alumni, student, faculty, and staff interactions increased during the rebranding strategy, however participation from government officials and industry representatives who were not alumni or trustees did not increase. Data showed that concern over resistance from early generation alumni, and resistance from HC leaders and faculty influenced and may have delayed the process, but did not change the outcome over the long term.

**Value Creation in Stakeholder Relationships**

The next section presents a detailed description and analysis of the findings based on the themes that emerged from the data collected that relate to the second research sub-question: *How was value created in those relationships?*

**Shaped and supported the rebranding strategy.** Stakeholders at the HC and IBC collaborated and shared expertise and perspectives that influenced decision-making, helped to establish the brand vision, and helped to secure resources and support for implementation. These relationships created value by helping to shape and support the rebranding strategy and process.

**Informing and influencing the strategy.** Data in this case study showed that while faculty, staff, students, and leaders in both locations, and alumni at the IBC engaged in the process and acted as ambassadors and advocates, the collaborative efforts of IBC and HC trustees and leaders were key to establishing the vision, expectations, and strategy that set the foundation for the brand enhancement. Governance and advisory boards provided a forum for discussion and
decision-making, engaging leaders and trustees from the HC and IBC as well as industry and government officials and alumni from both locations. The industry representative provided an example of how leaders engaged and influenced decisions in these forums:

And I understand that historically you know the reason why HC was kind of I don’t know reluctant to name the branches to name them HC University was that they felt that they did not have the full control over what was happening here, the quality of the program, you know the delivery…So it took us like as I said almost or close to ten years to convince everybody at the table that opening a campus in [the capital city] was a good idea. Only when it eventually got support from the people in that board who are taking care of finances then it started to happen and it proved to be the best move. I mean actually I think if it wasn’t for that decision I don’t know if IBC would still be around if it wasn’t for that.

Participants also described how local stakeholder perspectives and expertise informed decision-making and implementation during the process. According to the VP:

It was a matter of probably being strategic overall but you have to be locally informed, and one of the really strong things from the [host country] side is how do you connect them, how do you operate in that market.

In a follow up response the VP described how one leader in particular, the IBC Trustee Board Chair, influenced the rebranding strategy:

The board was more intentional about it…the chair did more in-depth research in [the host country] and became an early advocate of an alternative in [the capital city], and broadening the curriculum.
He also provided an example of how having local students and alumni engaged and sharing their perspectives informed and influenced the brand message and strategy:

So the name change, along with the name change was a look and a feel. Given the sensitivity to the market when we think back to that time with the unemployment rates being what they were in that region versus where we are with the fact that it was predominantly undergrad we actually used a tag line that HC had used for a number of years that we were no longer using. It was still part of the brand thrust image which really took a core element of our brand and applied it to the [host country] market.

Data showed that enrollment staff working together in both locations informed and guided the marketing communications and messages, and the faculty member described how IBC and HC professors working together influenced the academic programs and experiences that served as a foundation for the brand enhancement.

Participants also described how the engagement of respected leaders at the IBC and HC, as well as others in positions of power in government and industry in both locations, added credibility and prestige to the rebranding process and to the brand itself. According to the industry representative:

Some other you know connections that other trustees, the local trustees I’m talking about on the [host country] side, some of our connections were also helpful to open doors with the government or business community.

These leaders had the authority to help establish priorities and were able to work together to develop a shared vision that resonated with and helped to engage others in the process. The VP and IBC President both described a specific example where a particular department head at the HC resisted the rebranding early on.
And the HC President said in the meeting he said why don’t we have business? Well [the faculty] they’re not interested in doing that. And he said we’re going to put business in there. So it was a directive and that didn’t sit very well quite honestly.

While this resistance caused delays and interfered with the process early on, the HC President worked together with leaders and faculty in both locations to engage students and professors from the department. Over time faculty and students got involved and supported the strategy and the degree program in this department grew to be the largest at the IBC.

*Resources and support.* Stakeholder engagement, in particular from prospective students and parents in the home country, faculty and staff in the HC, and trustees and leaders in both locations also influenced resources to support operations. This included financial support, resources to develop new academic programs, and government and legal support and approvals for new facilities, licenses, and accreditation. When the tuition subsidy from the government ended the IBC had to rely on tuition from students and their families to fund operations. The VP described how expectations from parents and students changed as the amount they had to pay increased:

> And when the federal subsidy ended in [the host country] we had to raise the tuition quite a bit so then it starts raising other questions about image, quality, ROI, brand, and the numbers dropped.

At the same time competition from other private universities was increasing, and HC and IBC leaders decided that they needed to expand and grow to generate more tuition revenue. A key goal for the rebranding strategy was to attract more students and, as the government official indicated, “raise the numbers.” In addition to more closely aligning the brand image of the IBC with the HC, the strategy included opening a second campus in the capital city and adding two
new academic programs. The industry representative described how this decision coincided with the rebranding strategy and relied on engagement and commitment from leaders in both locations:

So they opened in [the capital city] and added some new programs and now you know it’s completely different ball game. And then we started to think about rebranding as well because it make all the sense in the world when they finally made that decision you know to commit even more financially and obviously for long term with opening this presence in [the capital city].

The second campus opened in 2011, enrollment increased, and participants consistently credited IBC leaders, faculty, and staff working together with their colleagues from the HC as the key to success in achieving enrollment goals and increasing IBC resources.

Faculty and staff from the HC also partnered with IBC faculty and staff to share expertise, information, and resources that created value and enhanced the brand. Staff from different academic and student support departments traveled to the IBC to share advice and expertise and worked together to develop systems and processes that would support the rebranding initiative. The faculty member described how interaction between faculty at the HC and IBC changed during the rebranding strategy:

It’s more intensive. Truly it is more intensive and many times we had faculty members telling us how…HC Faculty members telling us how they do things there. So it was almost like a learning experience when they were here. Again from different programs….They were telling us okay so when we have our meetings this is what we do. This is what the role of department chair is. This is what…so really it was them educating
us of how to run these things and how to adjust the infrastructure of the school and how it should be.

The IBC President and student also described joint classes and activities that were developed through collaboration between IBC and HC stakeholders, drawing on resources and support in both locations.

While stakeholder engagement was generally described as supporting the rebranding strategy, participants also provided examples of resistance from some leaders, faculty, and staff at the HC who were not supportive of the IBC or the rebranding strategy. According to the industry representative HC trustees and leaders were initially cautious about a more overt connection to the IBC:

You know at the advisory board meetings later on our board of trustees meetings we would always have this very cautious representatives of HC saying yeah but you know their financial side…and then increasing staff and faculty and all these problems linked with opening another campus, another school practically…. yes, cautious yes, primarily for financial reasons. And also you know because they didn’t have that in-depth insight of the local market.

The IBC President also indicated that HC faculty were initially hesitant about stronger brand alignment between the HC and IBC based on their perception of the potential risk to the HC brand:

Because there were some deans who were quite honestly kind of happy when the international thing was a little further removed. Like when it was the American College for the marketing but the other thing was if it wasn’t successful HC didn’t shut down. IBC shut down. So there was less brand risk to the parent brand from it.
While this led to some challenges and delays in the rebranding process, participants indicated that the tensions that developed also led to discussions and interactions that influenced the process.

Faculty and staff in both locations were engaged and provided information, resources and support that influenced academic programs, student services, joint classes, events, and activities that were considered during the rebranding strategy. Enrollment staff at the HC and IBC also worked together to develop recruitment strategies and produce messages and marketing materials for the enhanced brand. Interviews and document review showed that these relationships between IBC and HC faculty, staff, students, and leaders, though not always harmonious, influenced decision-making and strategy development, increased buy-in and support in both locations, and helped to secure operational and financial resources and support that created value in the process and for the enhanced brand.

**Expanded brand engagement and awareness.** The rebranding process offered a positive opportunity to renew IBC stakeholder relationships and to actively engage alumni, prospective students, parents, and the public with the brand and with one another. These relationships created value by strengthening stakeholder connections, increasing brand loyalty and pride, and expanding brand awareness and reach. The recruitment manager described how important faculty and staff in both locations, as well as IBC alumni, were to the success of the rebranding strategy:

Making sure that there is collaboration between both faculties, staff as well as understanding the alumni perspective and kind of incorporating all those but most importantly going back to the main campus …. I think the biggest challenge was really getting everybody on the same page So in other words not just to the media, not just to
the students, not just to the faculty, not just to the staff, alumni, but to kind of incorporate all that to happen as simultaneously as possible so that there’s no misunderstandings about this major positive change.

Engagement, loyalty, and pride. Interviews, planning documents, publications, and publicity analyzed during document review showed that alumni engagement increased during the rebranding, that interactions were positive, and that most stakeholders at the IBC and HC were enthusiastic and proud to be involved. Students, faculty, staff, alumni, and leaders in both locations shared feedback, attended activities and events, engaged with business and industry representatives, and supported the strategy through personal and professional connections. As IBC alumni became involved they better understood the enhanced brand value proposition and reasons for the change, and helped leverage and communicate them to others. One participant provided an example of how he and other alumni leveraged their own IBC contacts and relationships to create value for other IBC stakeholders.

Like a colleague could say I have a cousin, not a cousin but maybe a friend or somebody who wants to go for a job somewhere and then you know please take a closer look. I’m not asking to be for nepotism but just to you know look at it. I’m in a position to open the door for somebody but let somebody else walk through the doors. So these kind of favors that we can make [even more now].

Trustees and leaders in both locations recognized the value of these relationships and networks, and IBC alumni, students, and faculty were considered important participants in the rebranding strategy. Data showed that they felt informed, their perspective was important, and they were actively engaged in and supported the rebranding process. According to the faculty member:
So the communication is very open. It is very…people are engaged you know to make contribution, make suggestions you know in any aspect. From the very beginning we were aware of the name change so it wasn’t that we were I don’t know kept in the dark or that this was please don’t spread this. Really it was a very open discussion among colleagues.

They created value in the rebranding process by facilitating communication and sharing information about the enhanced brand. The rebranding strategy relied heavily on stakeholder networks and word of mouth, and the student shared an example in his interview of how the strategy worked:

There was a family friend of ours who was just finishing in [the coastal city campus]. And then it was the only campus in [the country] and it was called American College. So at that time I was seriously considering enrolling in a college like this one and I met with her and she told me about this…It was important for me… so you had to have some faith that IBC will be a great program and it fairly was.

Participants consistently described how parents, students, alumni, industry professionals, and IBC leaders and trustees created value by sharing information with and through their networks during interactions with the brand and with one another. Their personal connections and experiences with the brand added credibility and provided strong testimony and support for the enhanced brand.

HC and IBC leaders and trustees also recognized the strong connection alumni had with the initial IBC brand, and also the strong brand awareness the American College name had for prospective students and parents, industry partners, and the public in the local market. The IBC President indicated in his interview that his concern that alumni from the early generations may
not support the strategy may have delayed the process in the beginning. However, participants also described how this information created value in the process through what many participants referred to as the “cobranding” strategy. The strategy was designed to slowly introduce the enhanced brand including a new name, enhanced messaging, and a new visual identity that would introduce and reinforce the connection between the IBC and the HC over time. The IBC President describes how alumni and industry perspectives influenced this decision:

I would say even from a potential student point of view and maybe even from the companies we were working with who were taking graduates, they all related to American College and not so much HC University. So that was why the co-branding was the way of going instead of the complete switch to IBC University. And even that like I said was done with the phasing in of the colors keeping the American College still the red, white, and blue logo with HC University and before the switch to the orange and brown.

The recruitment manager describes how the cobranding strategy unfolded:

So it happened kind of in stages. I want to say that the first thing that came out was the brochure, then the letterheads started to change slowly, and then it came to the point where at that time my colleague and I would correct individuals in different emails to say it’s American College/HC University as well as then later kind of transitioning that to the outside community as well where they had things that they would publish in the past with just American College information. As we grew with our additional campus and our program offerings it certainly was a big step to make to transition from being American College to IBC University. I believe that for the enrollment management division it was a huge step because it assisted with an additional marketing strategy to further place
ourselves as a leading institution, private institution, in [the host country] with the new campus in [the capital city] and the two additional programs that we were offering. IBC staff and faculty were engaged in developing and implementing this cobranding strategy, which then facilitated the acceptance and adoption of the new name and visual identity and served to enhance engagement, loyalty, and pride. During the site visits staff proudly displayed memorabilia, logos, and symbols developed during rebranding and described how the colors and design of the facilities at the IBC were now aligned with the HC brand. Document review showed how a short video produced by the HC during the rebranding, and a billboard displayed in the host country capital city square reached faculty, staff, alumni, and students and created a sense of pride in their respective locations. The student described how students and alumni adopting the new visual identity and brand symbols also helped increase brand engagement and awareness:

So during all these events you also have T-shirts, you also have all this stuff which is very unusual and it spreads around. So at one point you know you look at a restaurant or if you place just a huge bar where this was organized and then you see seven out of eight people are wearing orange or brown you know the colors. So things like that. Then you really start thinking you know this way. Before with the American College story I cannot remember we didn’t even have anything.

Engagement between and among alumni, students, faculty, staff, and industry professionals expanded during rebranding and provided the opportunity to renew and reaffirm relationships between and among these key stakeholders. By engaging in activities and initiatives during rebranding stakeholders renewed their own sense of pride and loyalty to the IBC which, in turn,
encouraged them to leverage their networks, share their positive experiences, and engage others in the process.

*Increased brand awareness.* Stakeholder engagement also created value by increasing brand awareness and reach, which supported the IBC agenda to expand to new markets, locations, and industries, and the HC strategic objectives for internationalization. Leaders, trustees, faculty, staff, students, and alumni were engaged and invested in developing and sharing the message around the enhanced brand. IBC and HC leaders worked together with staff in both locations to develop clear messages and a comprehensive communication plan and strategy that was designed to reach all stakeholders. This collaborative effort created stronger connections between the HC and the IBC, clarified the brand message, and resulted in a consistent way to articulate the enhanced brand. The recruitment manager described the challenges as well as the value created by this collaboration:

> Just a lot of work, just a lot of re-communicating. The major difficulties if you will were really to get the internal stakeholders if you will on the same page because we all had the same interest at hand and that was to enhance the brand and you know ultimately strengthen IBC, and to ensure that it’s going to be alive so to say for many more years to come.

She described the role the recruitment staff played in constantly reminding others and reinforcing the brand message with faculty, staff, and students in order to be sure that internal IBC stakeholders were communicating accurate and consistent information to the external market.

IBC student and alumni engagement in particular helped to increase brand awareness, as sharing their stories and experiences reinforced the connection between the IBC and the HC and was key to reaching more new students, business and industry representatives, and the public in
general. Students and alumni were engaged throughout the rebranding process, in fact many learned of the change through others who shared information through their networks. The faculty member described how students and alumni interacting on social media helped to increase awareness:

Students are looking at this transition as a positive transition. They are changing their LinkedIn profiles from American College to IBC University and HC University which is again a stronger brand because whoever is interested employers, stakeholders, whatever, when you click on HC University obviously there is something to it. There is substance. But when you click the American College you really had no…there was no…how do I assure my stakeholder and employer that this is not a fake diploma or whatever.

Interactions between alumni and business and industry representatives also enhanced brand loyalty and helped to expand awareness beyond the local IBC community to national and international markets. The IBC President indicated that after the rebranding initiative began more HC alumni were visiting the IBC during their travels to the host country region. The alumnus also provided a personal example of how his relationships with alumni expanded during rebranding:

I have an apartment in [the capital city] which I rent out. So far in the last 6-7 years it’s only been rented out to IBC people…[working in] all kind of industries. And they’re all quite successful in what they do so I would say that we get a really good footing for the much faster career advancement than [the public university].

In this case, the rebranding initiative provided an opportunity to expand his personal contacts and connections and also served to create opportunities for other IBC students and alumni to connect
with him. He also described how, in his professional role as a consultant in a multinational firm, he was able to connect with others and increase brand awareness:

You know in the consulting world the resumes are filtered through HR and then they are landed on let’s say consultant’s desk, and there they want to evaluate whether you want to bring him to the interview or not. So for somebody let’s say in the CEE the Central Eastern Europe if somebody has not heard about IBC you know for them this definitely HC has a bigger brand value and the recognition factor. So probably it might be a factor why they would pull somebody because of the name.

Relationships like these helped to increase brand awareness and engagement and reinforce the IBC connection and brand alignment to the HC. In addition, as faculty, staff, and students at the HC became more aware of the IBC they included and engaged IBC faculty, staff, and students in their ongoing work and activities. The IBC President talked at length about how increased faculty engagement in travel and academic initiatives and joint student government activities and events enhanced student engagement with the brand and with one another. The faculty member described how faculty interaction and engagement created value for the rebranding strategy.

I would like to see even more connections at different levels, more faculty members coming over so that we become even more visible to local market but not only local rather we would like to have more international appeal as well. With that regards the HC University as a name, as an institution really can only help us. So more, more, more, more ties, more integration, more everything.

As faculty, students, alumni, and staff at the IBC and HC connected their relationship with the brand and one another became stronger. As relationships between alumni, business and industry
professionals, and other external stakeholders expanded they also shared their stories and experiences and utilized their networks to communicate with and engage others, which created value by increasing brand engagement and awareness.

**Enhanced the brand experience.** Stakeholders were also actively engaged in creating the unique educational experiences and opportunities that were critical to the enhanced brand. Participants described how relationships between faculty and staff leveraged the connection between the HC and the IBC and expanded access to resources, expertise, and academic and professional networks and opportunities that supported the rebranding strategy.

**Increased collaboration between the HC and IBC.** During the rebranding strategy, increased interaction between IBC and HC leaders, faculty, staff, and students created the opportunity to leverage the connection between the IBC and the HC. Stakeholder relationships at the leadership level created value by setting expectations and providing opportunities for ongoing collaboration. Faculty, staff, and students created value by working together and developing the experiences and opportunities that were the foundation for the enhanced brand. The recruitment manager talked about what different stakeholders from the IBC expected from the rebranding, and about how integral relationships with colleagues at the HC were to meeting those expectations:

I think it’s different layers for different people. If I think of faculty first I would say that they probably expected to be included in a lot of different things from trainings through [learning technology] to trips to HC for additional trainings, to possible exchanges between the campuses for teaching, not just from the HC to the IBC but also them going to the HC and maybe other international branch campuses as well. I would say first among the staff as well it would probably be the same but just the assistance, the
expertise, the kind of open line of communication was probably that much more expected now that we have again solidified this bond by changing the name I think. Increased engagement and interactions between IBC and HC faculty, staff, and students helped to meet these expectations, and also enhanced the brand experience for all stakeholders. IBC staff and faculty had more access to HC resources, including faculty and staff expertise, that helped them develop stronger academic experiences and extracurricular activities. The addition of two new degree options led to faculty and student interactions beyond the hospitality and tourism department, which enhanced the quality of the academic programs and experiences for students and faculty at the IBC and the HC. The industry representative described how these interactions increased during the rebranding process:

Well there were other things involved in the process definitely because what has started happening since this rebranding is a much, much better cooperation in terms of visiting faculty members then bringing…what are they called, the cohorts, the groups of students from the home campus…study abroad program, yeah. So this all started you know picking up and then growing only after this rebranding. As if with the name change and the visual identity change finally this became officially a part of HC.

These interactions and relationships also supported the HC agenda for globalization and provided enhanced experiences and opportunities for faculty, staff, and students at the HC. According to the IBC President:

The other thing is what’s happened is in connection with that at the same time like study abroad became more…we started having students come in for study abroad. So that also reinforced the connectivity.
The industry representative also described how interactions between IBC and HC faculty, staff, and students influenced strategic discussions and planning in trustee and advisory board meetings:

I am thinking in terms of what we are discussing in the board meetings now we are discussing you know different how this cooperation can be improved in many different ways. But there’s now already so many examples of exchange and cooperation and this was unthinkable ten years ago.

Relationships among and between IBC and HC stakeholders, including leadership, faculty, staff, and students, created value by helping to establish and leverage connections and create enhanced opportunities for faculty, staff, and students in both locations.

Expanded academic and professional networks: Engagement between and among faculty, industry professionals, staff, and alumni also created value by expanding the academic community and external employment and professional networks. The faculty member described how his relationship with the IBC helped to expand his network and also created value for his business and industry contacts:

So [working at the IBC] is almost like I have an entrance ticket for me to say listen I work for this institution and we would like to know more about you. We would like to assist you. We would like you to assist us. So it’s a good springboard for me to reach the industry. So it’s a two-way communication in a way. So that’s my motivation.

He also explained how the academic community expanded for faculty at the IBC and the HC as they worked together. Expanding stakeholder relationships also resulted in broader industry networks and employment and professional opportunities for students, alumni, and staff. The VP described an international hospitality conference that was hosted at the IBC and provided the
opportunity for HC and IBC faculty, staff, students, and alumni to engage with professional and academic contacts worldwide. As the alumni base expanded, stakeholder networks and industry professional contacts and connections also expanded. Faculty, staff, students, industry professionals, and alumni had access to broader contacts, information, and expertise that would enhance their learning experiences, resource and information base, and opportunities to engage internationally. Faculty and student opportunities for participation in academic exchanges and study abroad increased, as did industry participation at career fairs, which enhanced experiences and opportunities for students and alumni as well as business and industry representatives.

Alumni and faculty relationships helped to expand professional networks and also created value for business and industry representatives. According to the student, potential employers came to the career fair, “with the goal to just take the best students that they could you know as their future employees.” The alumnus described their motivation for engaging with IBC:

Well qualified employees for them. Well employees either short-term workers on through the co-ops or people that they would hire upon graduation. So that was more important to them then versus where they were coming from.

The alumnus also pointed out that business and industry relationships were based on their interactions and experiences with IBC students and graduates. As the IBC President indicated, most were corporate partners who had been through takeovers, name changes, and brand changes and were not concerned about the visual identity or rebranding strategy. They were, however, concerned about access to qualified employees and their engagement with the IBC would continue as long as they were able to hire graduates with the education, skills, and experience they needed. The alumnus described how important relationships between business and industry
representatives and IBC graduates were to promoting the IBC in the business community and to prospective students and parents:

So people thought you know like okay if you had this American degree you know parents are willing to pay because the kids will get a better education. They would get a better employment afterwards and so on. But in case of IBC I think that they backed it up with the figures that people after going to the IBC and HC they really do find good employment afterwards. And I think there was like a poll of like the salaries of people that went to the university three years after graduation, five years, or eight years and they’re considerably higher than…I’m not talking about [host country] average wage but much, much higher. So obviously they did something good.

Employers increasingly demanded graduates with global perspective and knowledge of business and technology. As the IBC broadened the academic offerings and expanded geographically, faculty, alumni, and business and industry engagement and network connections also expanded and helped the IBC to meet these expectations. These relationships created value for all stakeholders by providing increased access to broader academic, professional, and employment opportunities and networks.

**Validated the brand promise.** Stakeholder relationships also created value by reinforcing and validating the enhanced brand. Trustees, leaders, faculty, and staff influenced the development of the brand image, including messages, name, and visual identity. Faculty, staff, and students helped to create the brand experiences, and ongoing relationships between alumni and business and industry representatives reinforced the value of the IBC experience and brand in the marketplace. Students and alumni helped to create legitimacy and establish credibility as the brand community and reach expanded during the rebranding initiative. Their experiences and
successes, and their willingness to share them with the broader IBC community and other stakeholders, created value by validating the brand promise.

*Creating legitimacy.* The IBC relied on stakeholders reinforcing the connection between the IBC and the HC to create legitimacy for the enhanced brand. The recruitment manager described how important the connection to the HC was in creating legitimacy for prospective students and the public in general:

For the students I think just clarification especially for the newer generations that they truly were HC students because we always had to verbally and additionally communicate this that you are a student there too and you can go and study there for up to two terms. You know you still pay the same tuition and you do get this diploma and it is an American diploma and let us show you this picture. And I think for them it just meant that they are a HC student and that they could identify with it now. For the community most definitely I think it was just again go back to this like it solidified it. We really were HC campus. You know we didn’t have to kind of explain that with the little additional information underneath branch campus of you know.

IBC students and alumni also actively reinforced and leveraged the connection between the IBC and the HC brand to legitimize their degree. The alumnus indicated that, “the fact that you get a diploma from HC makes it for me legitimate …I always thought that they got the name wrong.”

The government official described how and why alumni reinforced the IBC/HC connection:

Why [are] you not HC when everything the infrastructure, the dean, the professors, you know the whole system is just copy paste? No, it’s like a sister college but okay. So why put it in the CV? It was because of the brand, because of the high likelihood you’re going to get a better…you know you’re going to get pulled more often in interviews.
Engagement between stakeholders at the IBC and the HC created value by creating stronger connections and working relationships, which in turn legitimized the IBC and validated the brand promise. The IBC President described how increased interaction between faculty and students reinforced the connection between the IBC and HC and legitimized the brand in both locations.

I think from a student point of view that helps cement the legitimacy of the degree program that they were completing. So I really think that was a positive thing that they got out of it from that end of it.

The recruitment manager described how feedback from current IBC students and alumni influenced the brand message, and how sharing their experiences helped her reinforce the connection and validate the brand in her interactions with prospective students and parents and those who influenced them:

The HC actually was the key in our initiatives to enroll the students because everything that we had received back from the students even the current students as well as future potential students was very much so aligned with it. Their number one reason for enrolling at the IBC was that they wanted a HC diploma… My position as well was a recruiter going to schools we had to a lot of times make sure that we are emphasizing the fact that we are HC and show them pictures of HC as well. So we did a much better job I believe.

She also described how relationships between IBC and HC faculty, staff, and students changed during rebranding, and how they created value by reaffirming and legitimizing the HC commitment and connection to the IBC.

You know even during different talks you know, different meetings, it was not explicitly said but it was kind of like HC can’t back away now from us. Like we really are HC now
you know. I don’t know how else to say that. …I could even feel the difference when I came and joined the HC. Like they were all identifying more with the IBC campus. Like I said I think it was kind of like the other way around as well. The same way that we felt it solidified that relationship and that bond and truly being a branch campus, international branch campus of HC, I think it did that for a lot of the faculty and staff that I interacted with. …I think that helped too to kind of strengthened that bond as well and probably encouraged exchanges between those campuses as well. That’s quite important.

The faculty member also described how important stronger connections between the HC and IBC stakeholder groups were in legitimizing the brand for both internal and external stakeholders.

We felt that we have to somehow strengthen the connections and ties with HC including re-branding ourselves to IBC because we are not some kind of a small you know self-established institution that says American education but rather we are a part of a family. We are part of an institution that really has a history, rich history, knowledge, expertise, global mindset. We hoped that this is something that we should do in order to say this is who we are and we are an extension. We are a campus. We are an international location of that school. Really we felt that the strength and the power of HC as a brand could help us tremendously even in enrollment.

On the other hand, some participants described how some faculty and leaders and the HC questioned the legitimacy of the IBC because it was not established through the typical governance process. This, and the fact that some feared the IBC would take resources away from the HC, created some suspicion and resistance by stakeholders on the HC faculty and staff early in the process. Despite this the strategy moved forward, most stakeholders engaged and created
value by reinforcing and supporting the connection between the HC and the IBC, which created
legitimacy that was necessary to validate the enhanced brand promise.

Establishing credibility in an expanded community. A key expectation of the rebranding
strategy was the opportunity for stakeholders to participate in and engage with a larger, global
academic and educational community. Students expected to engage with the expanded campus
community, faculty to become part of a larger academic community and all, including trustees
and leaders, expected the strategy to enhance the IBC reputation and prestige to support
expansion into new industries and geographic regions. Increased stakeholder engagement and
relationships were key to meeting these expectations. The recruitment manager described how
important this was to the rebranding strategy:

But not only that I would say also our relationship with the main campus even when it
came to our team, you know our team as internationally and at the home branch. From
professors would come and visit to even the students that were studying abroad, and to
connect that further to the other international branch campuses.

As these interactions increased the connection between the IBC and the HC became more
institutional, which also increased credibility and validated the enhanced brand. The faculty
member describes how relationships changed during the rebranding initiative:

Well that was a long time ago but we were always connected in a way. But at that time
the connection was really more based on individuals. If you needed someone you go to
[ask] that person. If there is an issue…then you…so it was really more of a personal level
of connecting with people from the HC. But you could see that as we moved forward that
cooperation or connection was actually being more on an institutional level. You saw
some of the projects being developed. You saw some of even the departments being
established back at HC with global village, some of the offices there. The study abroad intensified. And now you see that there are so many ties, there are so many things that we do together which was really not even imaginable 15 years ago. So yes we had some of the professors and that’s maybe one thing…overall the cooperation and coordination has improved dramatically from institution to institution.

In addition to expanding opportunities in the academic community, the rebranding strategy depended on enhanced opportunities for students and alumni after graduation. Although their engagement with the brand would change over time, long term relationships remained essential to the success of the brand as students, alumni, and business and industry representatives continued to interact with the brand and one another. The government official described how the IBC graduates and the business leaders who hired them created credibility and validated the brand promise:

[Businesses were] employing those kids which graduated hospitality management but not for the hospitality. They even employ them for some other jobs you know because they knew about financing, they knew about shares, new business, and things like that.

The alumnus described how important interactions and relationships between alumni and business leaders were to creating enhanced opportunities and establishing credibility:

Since this has happened I’ve been in for this management consulting company that I work at so we always had you know like people come in for an interview but I didn’t see that there was a big difference. You know we had some people that applied with IBC, some people with HC. It didn’t really make a difference because in our work it’s more important not just the name of the school but it’s really about your experience and what you can do.
More closely aligning the IBC brand to the HC brand was also expected to enhance employment opportunities and outcomes for graduates. As stakeholder relationships increased beyond the local area and the tourism industry IBC industry contacts and employer networks expanded. The student participant described how these interactions influenced opportunities for IBC students, alumni and business and industry:

The [employment and career] outcome yes definitely especially now with the size I think this is very good. Now it’s really a part of something bigger. So I’m always thinking with this brand with this college I’m always thinking of how other people perceive students which is the most important when they leave. What’s the college’s reputation actually? Which companies hire us right after graduation? Of course everyone goes in different directions but still you can make some conclusions you know. So I think multi-national companies are definitely loving this practical knowledge that we get…When it was still American College I don’t think that anything changed when it comes to this bigger picture or this reputation that maybe IBC now could have…I’m screening these CV’s and nobody has that what IBC now has.

Many business and industry representatives had existing relationships with IBC students, faculty and staff, and their ongoing interactions helped to reinforce the fact that, while there were changes, the core strengths of the IBC brand were still intact. The IBC President described how interaction with IBC students and graduates reinforced this with business and industry:

And I think the thing is too with the students they’re still…and there was almost like with the companies we didn’t change what we were doing. Still what was going on in the class room. It’s still you know some things are going to be called a little bit different. You will see in some of our literature or whatever you know the name on the door, those kind of
things that you will see that’s a little bit different but same place. Nothing’s changing, those kind of things.

As the stakeholder community grew and expanded, relationships like these supported the rebranding strategy by reinforcing the brand enhancement for existing partners and helping to establish credibility and validate the brand in the expanded stakeholder community. Alumni, students, faculty, staff, and business and industry representatives, and their relationships with one another and the brand, were essential to creating legitimacy and credibility that helped to validate the enhanced brand.

**Summary of value creation themes.** Themes that emerged from the data collection and analysis suggest that stakeholder relationships created value in the rebranding process. Stakeholders from all of the different groups shared their perspective and informed the process, which helped IBC and HC leaders to set expectations and a vision that shaped the strategy and guided the process. Leaders and trustees in both locations collaborated to identify and provide resources and support for the strategy which, in turn, enhanced engagement and increased awareness of internal and external stakeholders. Faculty, staff, alumni, students, leaders, and trustees shared information and communicated the change through personal and professional networks which increased brand awareness and engagement. IBC and HC faculty, staff, and students collaborated to enhance the brand experiences, opportunities and outcomes, and stakeholder engagement in both locations created legitimacy and credibility that validated the brand promise.

**Summary**

Data collected through interviews provided in-depth information about the experiences of each participant, as well as their perceptions of how stakeholders were engaged in the process.
Themes that emerged from the data found that stakeholders acted as ambassadors, created the educational experience, communicated the message, and reinforced the branding strategy. The analysis also found that stakeholder relationships created value by shaping and supporting the rebranding strategy, expanding brand engagement and awareness, enhancing the brand experience, and validating the brand. The themes that emerged and analysis of the data behind them showed that stakeholders were actively engaged in strategy to more closely align the brand image of IBC with that of the HC, and that these relationships created value for the rebranding strategy.

The following chapter (Chapter V) outlines and describes the major findings of this study. The chapter also considers the findings against the theoretical framework and empirical studies presented in the literature review, and suggests recommendations for practice and for future research.
Chapter V: Discussion of the Research Findings

Higher education organizations, private foundations, and individuals are investing significant resources in international brand campuses (IBCs) (Kinser & Lane, 2014; Lane, 2011b; Tierney & Lanford, 2015) which grew from 24 in 2002 to 247 in 2017 (C-BERT, 2017). Higher education professionals who lead and manage them are being forced to step outside traditional academic roles and models to make strategic decisions about operational and academic issues that transcend national boundaries (Lane, 2011a). They are dealing with complex organizations and balancing stakeholder influences and expectations that are simultaneously local and global (Jongbloed et al., 2008; Werhane, 2011; Yuan et al., 2016) and operate in a competitive international market where global branding and ranking systems are key measures of success (Hazelkorn, 2015; Knight, 2013; McBurnie & Ziguras, 2009; Wildavsky, 2012). While IBCs can offer advantages and opportunities for the organizations that operate them, and for the students who enroll, a number have failed resulting in financial and reputational losses (Miller-Idriss & Hanauer, 2011; Sidhu, 2009; Wilkins & Huisman, 2012). As a result, IBC leaders and managers are being called on to understand and manage reputation and brand (Chee et al., 2016; Hill et al, 2014) and to measure and document the value of activities that contribute to the bottom line (Jones, 2005).

As HEIs and IBCs expand scholars have argued that stakeholder networks become increasingly complex (Jongbloed et al., 2008; Werhane, 2011; Yuan et al., 2016) as does their influence brand development (Tierney & Lanford, 2015; Wilkins, 2016). Scholars have recognized the importance of stakeholder engagement in HEIs (Jongbloed et al., 2008; Shams & Huisman, 2016; Wilkins, 2016) and on brand development in general (Balmer, 2013; Balmer & Wang, 2016; Iglesias et al., 2013; Dean et al., 2016). However, there is limited empirical
information on how stakeholder engagement influences brand development at IBCs and, in particular, on how stakeholder relationships and interactions between and among stakeholders and the organization create brand value.

The purpose of this single-site case study was to explore how stakeholder engagement influenced a branding strategy designed to more closely align the brand image of an established IBC with that of the home university. The primary question of this research study was: How did stakeholder engagement influence a branding strategy designed to more closely align the brand image of an established international branch campus (IBC) with that of the home campus (HC) of a comprehensive, technological university in the United States?

Chapter IV presents a detailed description of the themes that emerged from the data collected. The research and analysis were guided by two research sub-questions:

1) How were stakeholders engaged in the rebranding process?

- Acting as ambassadors. Stakeholders engaged in the rebranding process by advocating for the change, leveraging contacts, providing guidance and advice, and sharing the message.
- Creating something different. Stakeholders were engaged in creating unique educational experiences and enhanced opportunities and outcomes that were essential to the enhanced brand.
- Setting expectations and engaging others. Stakeholders were engaged in setting expectations and informing and engaging others in the rebranding process.
- Reinforcing the brand enhancement. Stakeholders were engaged in emphasizing the connection between the IBC and HC, participating in activities and events, and adopting symbols and traditions that reinforced the brand.
2) *How was value created in those relationships?*

- Shaped and supported the strategy. Stakeholder relationships informed and shaped the strategy, and helped to secure resources and support.
- Expanded brand engagement and awareness. Stakeholder relationships enhanced brand engagement, loyalty and pride, and increased brand awareness and reach.
- Enhanced the brand experience. Stakeholder relationships enhanced the brand experience by increasing IBC/HC collaboration and expanding academic and professional opportunities and networks.
- Validated the brand. Stakeholder relationships created legitimacy and established credibility that helped to validate the brand in an expanding market and community.

**Discussion of Major Findings**

Findings for this study are based on the themes discussed in Chapter IV, which were developed through iterative analysis and examination of data collected through interviews, document review, and observations. This analysis led to five major findings that address the primary research question of this study:

1. Changing stakeholder expectations influenced the rebranding strategy.
2. Collaboration and stakeholder engagement at the leadership level provided clear vision and direction for the rebranding strategy.
3. Collaboration between stakeholders at the IBC and the HC created value for the branding strategy and the enhanced brand.
4. Stakeholder networks facilitated information sharing and communication that supported the rebranding strategy.
5. Stakeholder engagement created legitimacy and established credibility that helped to validate the enhanced brand.

**Changing stakeholder expectations influenced the rebranding strategy.** Research from this study shows that many different stakeholders were engaged with the IBC. The themes that emerged based on data analysis showed that IBC and HC leaders and trustees shaped and supported the strategy, acted as ambassadors, and engaged IBC alumni, industry representatives, faculty, staff, and students who provided information, guidance and advice and influenced the strategy. Faculty, staff, and students at the IBC and HC collaborated with others to create the enhanced brand experiences and opportunities that shaped and supported the rebranding strategy. In this study engagement and expectation of key stakeholder groups, in particular those of government, HC leadership and faculty, and IBC alumni and business and industry representatives, changed over time and that these changing expectations informed and influenced the strategy.

The influence of the host country government was initially very strong because when the IBC was established it relied on the government for financial resources and facilities. The hospitality and tourism degree was offered to address the government agenda for economic development in the region, a decision made based on government expectations with guidance and support from a few professors and staff members at the HC. However when the host country government subsidy ended their salience as a stakeholder decreased, as did their engagement and influence on the IBC. Over time the IBC became more dependent on IBC and HC leaders for strategic direction and guidance, their salience increased, and they became key stakeholders in the development of the rebranding strategy. IBC leaders expected that the enhanced brand would help them meet their goals for increased enrollments and experiences and opportunities for
students. As the IBC developed HC leaders and trustees realized it could be important to the HC strategic agenda for internationalization. As a result leaders in both locations actively engaged and developed the strategy with the expectation that it would expand brand engagement and awareness and enhance the brand experience. According to the VP, this would support the HC strategic agenda, and the goal to enhance the IBC reputation and increase enrollment and, “ensure a long term financial viability.” He went on to describe these changing perspectives and expectations:

Policies changed in [the host country] and it was getting more expensive to operate in the coastal city, and enrollment was going down. Longer term, the American College really did not fit the HC brand…And then when the federal subsidy ended in [the host country], we had to raise the tuition quite a bit so then it starts raising other questions about image quality, ROI, brand, and the numbers dropped.

Findings also demonstrated that once HC leaders became more engaged HC staff and faculty expectations and influence on the rebranding strategy increased. Research showed that early on there was limited support, and in fact some resistance, from HC leaders and faculty for the rebranding strategy. However once the strategic agenda for internationalization at the HC became a priority and HC leaders realized that the IBC could be an important aspect of that strategy their expectations and influence on the rebranding strategy increased. The VP described how leadership expectations changed:

We concluded over time you need to be in these locations not just to offer programs to those in the local region but also to encourage HC students and faculty to be participating. And it needed to be a two-way street. There needed to be a lot more synergy and if there’s going to be more synergy there’s got to be a consistency of
delivery, of quality, of outcomes for any of the campuses… and had significant ramifications for what we would do and how we would address quality, market position, curriculum, interaction with this campus.

As HC leaders became more involved they worked closely with IBC leaders to set expectations and clarify the vision for the strategy and to engage more HC faculty and staff in the process.

As the IBC developed students and alumni, and the industry representatives who hired them, became high salience stakeholders who influenced the rebranding strategy. When IBC students graduated they expected to establish careers and make connections in the broader business and industry community. Findings demonstrated that graduates had positive opportunities and continued to engage with the IBC by acting as ambassadors, reinforcing the IBC/HC connection, and validating the brand. As the number of alumni grew so did their salience as a stakeholder group. They interacted with the IBC and among themselves, which created value by reinforcing the brand experience and enhancing brand awareness and engagement as they shared information and connected with business and industry representatives, prospective students and parents, and the public. IBC faculty expectations and engagement evolved in a similar way. As relationships between HC and IBC faculty grew and expanded they expected, advocated for, and developed more collaborative academic opportunities and experiences which, in turn, created value for the enhanced brand.

Research also showed how business and industry and alumni expectations, engagement, and influence on the branding strategy changed as alumni graduated and began to work. Employers hired IBC students and alumni who performed well in their jobs which helped to expand the IBC reputation and reach in the business and industry community. As a result the IBC reputation and the demand for graduates grew stronger and employment opportunities
expanded beyond the tourism industry and the local area. Potential employers needed graduates with broader business and technology knowledge and global perspective and students wanted to earn degrees in these areas. Students, alumni, and business and industry representatives were salient stakeholders whose expectations and engagement both influenced and supported the agenda for new academic programs and geographic expansion, key components of the rebranding strategy.

Findings from this case study show that IBC stakeholder engagement and expectations changed over time and that these changing expectations influenced the development and implementation of the rebranding strategy. Evidence also suggests that engagement of IBC and HC trustees, leaders, faculty, and staff in both locations, as well as IBC students and alumni, helped the IBC leadership to recognize and respond to these changing needs and expectations and created value for the rebranding strategy.

Collaboration and stakeholder engagement at the leadership level provided clear vision and direction for the rebranding strategy. Themes that emerged and data collected during this case study showed that HC and IBC leaders and trustees acted as ambassadors, set expectations and engaged others, and reinforced the branding strategy. Their engagement helped to shape and support the rebranding strategy and to engage others in the process which, in turn, helped to expand brand engagement and awareness. Research showed that, while their interactions were not always harmonious, HC and IBC leaders and trustees worked collaboratively, often through oversight and advisory boards in both the home and host countries, to develop and support the branding strategy. Participants consistently described and referred to board meetings which provided a forum for information sharing and participative decision-making between stakeholders from different groups and locations. Findings demonstrated how
IBC and HC leaders and trustees, many of whom were government officials, alumni, and industry professionals, acted as ambassadors during the rebranding strategy. They advocated for the change, provided guidance and advice, shared information and expertise, and leveraged their contacts and connections to support the process. Findings also showed that despite some resistance from HC leaders and trustees early in the process, leaders and trustees in both locations worked together to make decisions and develop strategies that set expectations and engaged others in the process. The VP described how leaders and different board members collaborated to develop and set the vision and direction for the strategy:

I think coupling to the brand of HC was a little bit of a push-pull here. There’s [global oversight board] here at HC that has broad oversight of all the campuses…The board in [host country] does include [host country members] as well as from the HC. So from a brand perspective and a quality control perspective it’s important that the chairman of the board be from HC. It’s also important that the balance in the board be such that HC does not give up control of curriculum or other kinds of things…On the branch campus side I mean a lot of the push on this side to do that came from strategic planning of the HC board and some members really thought it had to be both ways.

Research showed that leaders from the HC and IBC interacted regularly, both inside and outside formal board meetings, to discuss and set expectations, make decisions, and inform and engage others in the rebranding strategy and process. Findings from interviews and document review revealed regular correspondence and communication between IBC and HC leaders where they shared information and collaborated with other leaders to make decisions and set expectations and the vision for the rebranding strategy. Research also demonstrated how IBC and HC leaders worked together to encourage and support staff, student, faculty, and alumni
engagement throughout the process. HC and IBC leaders, for example, worked together to develop the vision for the cobranding strategy which was designed to leverage alumni and other stakeholder connections and affinity to the existing brand. Collaborative efforts to encourage and support exchange and study abroad, allocate resources for travel, activities, and events that reinforced the IBC/HC connection, and develop the marketing and communication strategy also show how HC leaders and trustees were engaged in the branding strategy.

Evidence from this case study and the themes that emerged during analysis demonstrate that collaboration between IBC and HC stakeholders at the leadership level helped to establish a clear vision and direction for the rebranding strategy, and that trustees and leaders in both locations worked together to lead and support the initiative. Findings revealed that governance boards and a collaborative leadership style established a foundation for leaders to work together to set expectations that helped to shape and support the branding strategy. Academic leaders worked together to address curriculum, educational experiences, and academic oversight and accreditation issues in both locations and trustees from government and industry provided insight and support that informed the strategy. Trustees and leaders on advisory boards in both locations contributed unique perspectives and expertise and collaborated to establish the vision and secure resources and support for the rebranding strategy.

This study also found that IBC and HC leaders set expectations, advocated for, and supported the rebranding strategy on their own campuses, and worked to engage other stakeholders in the process. Findings demonstrated the strong role the IBC President had in the implementation process at the IBC and the role the HC President had in moving the rebranding strategy forward at the HC; in particular the decision to offer the business degree at the IBC despite resistance from HC faculty. Evidence from this study suggests that IBC leaders and
trustees working together, as well as each collaborating with individuals at their respective HC or IBC campus, was key to the success of the rebranding strategy. They set the vision and direction for the strategy, set expectations for IBC/HC collaboration between IBC and HC, and worked to engage staff, faculty, students and alumni on each campus in the branding strategy which, according to the recruitment manager, “moved fairly quickly once the top leaders decided that was a way to go.”

Collaboration between stakeholders at the IBC and the HC created value for the branding strategy and the enhanced brand. Findings from this case study showed that stakeholders at the IBC and HC influenced the branding strategy. Analysis of the themes that emerged during data analysis also showed that collaboration between IBC and HC faculty, staff, and students helped to shape and support the strategy, create enhanced brand experiences, expand brand engagement and awareness, and validate the brand.

Evidence from this study suggests that leaders and managers in both locations recognized that enhanced experiences and opportunities required collaboration between faculty, staff, and students, and that leaders encouraged and facilitated engagement and interaction between these individuals and groups. Leaders on both campuses held and participated in meetings, presentations and public forums, developed internal and external publicity, and continuously reinforced the brand messages and visual identity in order to inform and encourage collaboration between IBC and HC faculty, staff, and students. Document review and interviews provided examples of presentations, town meetings, online announcements and updates, newsletter articles and videos designed to inform and engage HC and IBC stakeholders. The IBC President held regular meetings with students, faculty and staff at the IBC and described his own insistence on enforcing the visual brand including the use of the name, colors, and logos that were part of the
enhanced brand. IBC and HC staff and faculty allocated funding for travel and videoconferences, joint academic programs, activities, new traditions, and events for faculty, staff, and students to promote interaction and collaboration that would create value for the rebranding strategy.

Findings from this study showed that interactions and relationships between faculty, staff, and students at the HC and IBC led to the development of enhanced experiences and opportunities that established the foundation for the enhanced brand. While there were challenges initially with some leaders and faculty at the HC, over time relationships grew stronger and faculty from the IBC and HC collaborated to develop new academic programs and experiences and to establish quality standards and accreditation requirements that were called for in the brand enhancement. They worked together to enhance global engagement and participated in faculty and student exchanges, joint teaching and classroom experiences, conferences, activities, and events in both locations that supported the rebranding strategy. IBC and HC staff collaborated to develop student services, systems, and processes that would enhance the student experience and facilitate access and opportunities for students. HC and IBC enrollment leaders and staff worked together to develop and implement the marketing and communication plan. Evidence suggests that these relationships and the challenges, collaborative activities, and initiatives that resulted from them influenced the branding strategy and created value for the enhanced brand.

Findings showed that as more IBC and HC students, faculty, and staff became aware and engaged, they in turn helped to create and validate the enhanced brand experience. Evidence suggests that stakeholder interactions with the brand and with one another created credibility and legitimacy and validated the brand promise. The IBC President described how collaboration
between the faculty, staff, and students at the HC and IBC supported the branding strategy and created value for the enhanced brand:

Because some of the things that we did was…because there was sometimes some feelings that we were part of HC University but we weren’t. Like these days, nobody questions that we’re part of HC University because of our connectivity in it just continues every year to get stronger and stronger and stronger and stronger. And what we’re involved with and how were connected and departments and academic affairs and you know, through enrollment everybody know you know realizes. Like I don’t think there is one person in the organization that feels like were not a part of HC University.

Evidence from this study suggest that engagement and collaboration between the IBC and HC trustees and leaders, as well as faculty, staff, and students influenced the rebranding strategy. Findings suggest that this collaboration created value for the enhanced brand by helping to shape and support the strategy, increase stakeholder awareness and engagement, enhance the brand experience, and validate the enhanced brand.

**Stakeholder networks facilitated information sharing and communication that supported the rebranding strategy.** Findings from this study consistently identified stakeholder networks and described the interactions and relationships stakeholders had with the IBC and with one another. Alumni, students, faculty, and staff spoke with pride and loyalty about their connections to the IBC and the industry representative and government official both spoke positively of their experience with the IBC and the success of IBC graduates. Students and alumni referred to the close community and unique educational experience they shared; as one participant said, “we’ve all been brainwashed, we think differently.” Data revealed personal connections and intense interaction between faculty, staff, students, and alumni, as well as a high
level of stakeholder engagement and support both before and during the rebranding. Findings showed the importance of these interactions and relationships to information sharing between and among internal and external stakeholders, and of the power of “word of mouth” in communicating and validating the enhanced brand through their networks.

This case study found that stakeholder relationships and networks were complex and interconnected. Students became alumni, staff members had been IBC students and alumni, faculty had worked in business and industry and, as the IBC expanded, the number as well as diversity of stakeholders and their relationships grew. As the IBC stakeholder community expanded in size and geography these individuals and their networks became increasingly important to communicate the message, expand brand awareness and reach, and connect other stakeholders with the brand and with one another. Data showed that faculty, staff, alumni and IBC students shared their perspectives with prospective students, parents, business and industry, and members of the public who relied on their information and experiences to validate the brand. Research also showed that prospective students and parents relied on these networks to communicate and share information and demonstrated that word of mouth and the opinions of others were important in the host country culture and for the IBC. Data revealed some concern early on that alumni from the early generations might resist the rebranding strategy and the IBC would lose their support. Findings showed that they were considered a key stakeholder group throughout the process, and that their engagement influenced the development of the cobranding strategy designed to leverage the affinity and brand recognition of the American College brand.

Findings also showed that during rebranding IBC stakeholders acted as ambassadors and used their personal and professional networks to advocate for the IBC, obtain and share information and expertise, and contact and engage others in the process. Whether government
officials making connections and sharing information with business and industry, faculty reaching out in their academic and professional communities, or staff sharing information with others at the HC and IBC or in their professional areas, findings showed that these networks were used to establish connections, access information, and engage others in the rebranding strategy. IBC stakeholders who understood local processes and procedures were able to access their networks and work together with HC stakeholders who understood and were connected to accreditation agencies in the US. Document review revealed how interactions between members of the career services staff provided access to new networks and industry contacts in both locations that led to enhanced opportunities for students, alumni, and faculty. Interviews and observations provided examples of how alumni, faculty, and staff, interacting with business and industry representatives and connecting with potential partners through professional networks, supported the branding strategy and created value for the enhanced brand.

Stakeholder networks at the HC and IBC provided the opportunity to re-engage and connect students, alumni, and business and industry partners with the brand and with one another and to create and expand professional networks for stakeholders. In addition, networks that developed between and among IBC and HC faculty, staff, and students encouraged and leveraged information sharing, opportunities, and resources that created value for the enhanced brand. Evidence from this case study suggests that stakeholder networks facilitated information sharing and communication that helped to shape and support the strategy, increase brand awareness and engagement, enhance the brand experience, and reinforce and validate the brand promise.

Stakeholder engagement created legitimacy and established credibility that helped to validate the enhanced brand. The rebranding strategy to more closely align the brand image
of the IBC to the HC was designed to enhance the reputation and reach of the IBC and to support the strategic agenda for internationalization at the HC. At the time the IBC was established private education was considered inferior to public education in the host country and the IBC relied heavily on the government connection and the U.S. degree and American College name for legitimacy and credibility. However findings from this study showed that when the government subsidy ended the IBC reputation and brand became more dependent on student experiences at the IBC and on the career opportunities IBC alumni had after graduation. Data provided several examples and success stories and findings showed that students and alumni were very satisfied with the education they received and the opportunities they had after graduation. Research also found that faculty, staff, students, and alumni engaged during rebranding strategy and helped to create and develop the unique experiences, opportunities, and connections that created value for the enhanced brand.

Findings demonstrated that the rebranding strategy relied on these stakeholders to share their experiences to establish credibility for the enhanced brand. Data provided several examples of how alumni stayed engaged and supported the IBC after graduation by recommending and hiring students, sharing their stories and recommending the IBC to prospective students and parents, attending and supporting IBC events and activities, and communicating and reinforcing the IBC brand through their personal and professional contacts and networks. The faculty member described how he used his IBC connection to expand his professional network, and during observations staff members provided examples of employers that hired students and graduates. Research showed that throughout the process trustees, faculty, alumni, students, and staff shared their experiences with parents, students, industry representatives, and the public which helped to establish credibility for the IBC brand. Evidence in this study suggests that these
stakeholder interactions and relationships helped to communicate and reinforce the enhanced brand, which created credibility and helped to validate the enhanced brand.

The branding strategy also relied on the closer brand alignment and increased connections between IBC and HC stakeholders to establish legitimacy and validate the enhanced brand. Findings demonstrated that increased interaction between faculty, staff, and students led to the development of academic experiences and opportunities that enhanced the brand experience and reinforced the brand promise. Students, faculty, and staff engaged in exchanges, study abroad, and academic programs with students and professors from both campuses and worked together on projects and initiatives that supported the rebranding goals of both institutions. These interactions and the enhanced experiences and opportunities they created reinforced the IBC/HC connection, created credibility and legitimacy, and helped to validate the brand promise.

Stakeholders engaging with the brand messages and visual identity also helped to establish legitimacy and validate the enhanced brand. Data provided examples of how IBC leaders, students, faculty, and staff adopted and shared the new messages, visual identity, colors, logos, and the name change which reinforced the brand. Students and alumni listed the HC University on their resumes which helped to communicate and reinforce the IBC/HC connection and created legitimacy for the brand. Students, alumni, faculty, and staff engaged with visual brand by sharing literature and websites, wearing t-shirts, attending events, and displaying memorabilia and signs, which also reinforced and legitimizes the connection between the HC and the IBC and helped to validate the brand.

Findings suggest that successful students and alumni sharing their stories with others helped to establish credibility and legitimacy with prospective students, parents, business and
industry representatives, and the public in general. Faculty, staff, and students helped to communicate and create the enhanced brand experiences that reinforced the brand promise and ongoing relationships between alumni and business and industry created credibility and legitimacy for the enhanced brand in the marketplace. In addition, faculty engagement expanded and enhanced the academic experiences for faculty and students in both locations, and interactions between staff, faculty, and students created credibility and legitimized the connection between the HC and the IBC.

Findings from this study suggest that, while the government initially played a strong role in legitimizing the brand, over time faculty, students, and alumni relationships and engagement were key to creating legitimacy and credibility which in turn validated the brand promise. Evidence suggests that stakeholder relationships reinforced the connection between the IBC and the HC and helped to create the opportunities, experiences, and connections that created credibility and legitimized the brand promise which, in turn, helped to validate the enhanced brand.

**Summary of Major Findings**

This study found that stakeholder engagement between and across all groups, and also between groups at the HC and IBC, influenced the rebranding strategy. Evidence suggests that the strategy was developed in response to changing stakeholder expectations and that leaders and trustees worked together to establish a clear vision and direction for the strategy based on information and guidance from stakeholders in the home and host countries. Findings showed that leaders, faculty, staff, and students at the IBC and HC collaborated to develop strategies, experiences, and opportunities that were key to the branding strategy and their engagement, as well as that of alumni and business and industry representatives, created legitimacy and
credibility that validated the enhanced brand. Evidence also suggests that stakeholder influence changed over time, that value was co-created through interactions between the brand and multiple stakeholders, and that stakeholder engagement and networks facilitated information sharing and communication that supported the rebranding strategy.

Findings related to theoretical framework

The Stakeholder-brand Value Model (Jones, 2005) was used as a lens in this study to explore how stakeholder engagement influenced the specific branding strategy. The model served to focus the study and provided the foundation for the research sub-questions 1) how were stakeholders engaged in the branding initiative? and 2) how was value created in those relationships? The model takes a holistic approach to determining the sources of brand value, and emphasizes the importance of identifying and prioritizing stakeholder relationships, and understanding the nature of the exchange, or understanding stakeholder expectations. This section will consider the findings in relation to these key points, and also identify two areas where the researcher discovered gaps in the model as a lens for this particular study.

Identifying and prioritizing stakeholder relationships. Stakeholder identification and prioritization are continual processes because stakeholder relationships and their importance to the organization change over time. Findings from this study showed that the salience of stakeholder groups, the nature of their relationships, and their influence on the rebranding process, changed over time. Stakeholder groups were identified for this study based on the perspective of leaders and managers at the IBC and included trustees, leaders, staff, faculty, students, alumni, government, business and industry, prospective students and parents, and the public in general. The identification and prioritization process in this study was complicated by the fact that each stakeholder group needed to be further broken down by the affiliation to the
IBC or HC. In this study prioritization and analysis of each stakeholder group, as well as their primary campus affiliation, was important because expectations were different for each stakeholder group and each relationship had its own logic in terms of how brand value was co-created.

This study found that, consistent with the Stakeholder-brand Value Model, stakeholder prioritization based on dependency, strategic significance, salience and actuality varied across groups at the IBC and HC, as did how value was created in each relationship. For example, when the IBC was established the host country government was a high priority stakeholder because the IBC relied on them to subsidize tuition and facilities and for approval to award a U.S. degree. However, over time dependency changed, government influence was more focused on bureaucratic processes and approvals, their strategic significance decreased, and the relationship became a lower priority. In another example students at the IBC were a high priority stakeholder group during rebranding because their engagement was crucial for tuition support, creation and development of the brand experience, and validation of the brand promise. Dependency and strategic significance continued to remain high when they became alumni because they created value by supporting and validating the brand. On the other hand, student engagement at the HC was low priority and much less crucial to the development of the rebranding strategy.

Understanding the nature of the exchange. Jones (2005) argues the importance analyzing stakeholder relationships based on the nature of the exchange, which he described as functional, symbolic, and hedonic in the model, in order to understand how individual stakeholder relationships contribute to brand value. Findings showed that the relationship and the nature of the exchange varied for each different stakeholder group and also varied for the same groups at the HC and IBC. For example, while faculty from the IBC and HC were high priority stakeholder
groups, the nature of their exchange was different for the IBC faculty and the HC faculty. Faculty at the HC initially resisted the rebranding strategy because they were concerned about the academic reputation of the IBC and were not willing to share their resources and expertise because they thought the rebranding strategy would weaken the HC brand and resources. The IBC faculty, while also concerned with reputation and resources, actively engaged because they expected the IBC academic reputation to benefit from the relationship with the HC.

Detailed findings outlined in Chapter IV suggest that the nature of the exchange varied for each stakeholder group and each relationship had its own logic. Stakeholder roles and relationships, and consequently the nature of the exchange for each, were complex and interconnected. Prospective students became IBC students who then graduated and became alumni, many of whom then became business and industry partners who hired IBC graduates. Industry and government representatives served in leadership positions on trustee and advisory boards and some IBC alumni were also members of the faculty and staff. The nature of the exchange varied for each, and often included aspects that were functional, symbolic, and hedonic. From a functional perspective, for example, IBC students and alumni expected a return on their investment; in particular a unique academic experience and access to enhanced employment and career opportunities. However in most cases the nature of the relationship was also symbolic, based on the enhanced prestige and reputation the brand enhancement would bring, and also hedonic as alumni often felt nostalgic about their time at the IBC. This study found that the nature of the exchange was multifaceted for faculty, staff, students, alumni, leaders, and trustees, however relationship logic varied by stakeholder group and by location. Faculty, staff, alumni, and students at the IBC, for example, were anxious to proceed by adopting a new name, visual identity, symbols and tradition as well as expanding academic programs and
facilities as they expected it would enhance their reputation. HC leaders, trustees, and faculty on the other hand were initially resistant to the rebranding strategy based on potential risk to the HC reputation and resources. As a result, the communication plan developed to promote the enhanced brand included a component for the broader community and public, as well as a strategy to promote the enhanced IBC brand to the HC community. In this case study prioritization and analysis of individual relationships was important to understanding stakeholder expectations and influence, as was the fact that stakeholder expectations and the nature of the exchange were complex and changed over time.

While the application of the Stakeholder-brand Value Model as a lens for this study proved useful, the researcher identified two gaps that limited its value for this study: 1) the model focuses on the role of management in stakeholder relationships and 2) the model does not address relationships between and among stakeholder networks. The following section provides more detailed information about these gaps in relation to this study.

The model focuses on the management role in stakeholder relationships. The Stakeholder-brand Value Model takes an overtly management approach, focusing on the role managers play in stakeholder relationships and communication. In particular, the model describes total communication as leadership and performance, controlled communication, and third party communication (Jones, 2005). This study found that leadership performance and third party communication were important to the development of the rebranding strategy, in particular collaboration and stakeholder engagement at the leadership level provided clear vision and direction for the rebranding strategy. However, a broader interpretation of management in this case study could include a range of stakeholders, including IBC and HC trustees, and HC leaders, faculty, and staff as well as IBC leaders, faculty and staff. Collaboration between
individuals in all of these groups at the HC and IBC led to the development of the 
communication strategy and plan, as well as the development of the academic experiences and 
opportunities, necessary to the enhanced brand. While leaders at the IBC and HC played an 
important role in facilitating and setting the vision and expectations, this study found that faculty, 
staff, students, and other stakeholders in both locations also served in management and 
leadership roles and helping to develop and manage strategies and initiatives that supported the 
rebranding strategy and created value for the enhanced brand.

*The model does not address relationships between stakeholder networks.* The model 
considers only the relationships between stakeholders and the brand and does not consider the 
value created in the networks of relationships between and among the stakeholder groups. These 
relationships were especially important in this case study, which found that the branding strategy 
depended on commitment and collaboration of stakeholders at the IBC and HC and that 
stakeholder networks facilitated information sharing and communication that supported the 
strategy. Participants consistently described how stakeholders from all groups shared and 
received information through networks, how these interactions between stakeholders helped to 
enhance brand awareness and engagement, and how they served to reinforce and validate the 
brand promise. In this case study leaders and managers created value by facilitating and 
supporting opportunities for stakeholders to engage and interact with one another in addition to 
the work they did in setting the vision, direction, and expectations during the rebranding. 
Stakeholder interactions between alumni, faculty, business and industry representatives and their 
broader networks created value by expanding stakeholder engagement and awareness, creating 
enhanced experiences and opportunities, and validating the enhanced brand.
Despite these limitations, the Stakeholder-brand Value Model provided a valuable lens for this study. The model helped to focus the analysis on the identification and prioritization of primary stakeholder relationships, on understanding stakeholder expectations, and on analyzing how value was created in the individual interactions between stakeholders and the brand. The study found that stakeholder relationships and their importance to the organization varied over time, as did the nature of the relationship. The rebranding strategy developed based on changing stakeholder expectations and leaders and managers recognized and leveraged the fact that the exchange was a two-way interaction that required support and engagement across the organization.

While this study was not designed to address outcomes or measure brand value, findings suggest that stakeholder relationships created value by increasing brand engagement and awareness which resulted in increased enrollment and tuition support. Findings also suggest that formalizing and strengthening the connection to the HC enhanced experiences and opportunities for stakeholders at the IBC and HC and addressed and supported strategic goals for both. Increased engagement also enhanced brand loyalty as both IBC and HC students, faculty, and staff, and IBC alumni and business and industry representatives engaged during the rebranding process. Synergy based on increased connections and interaction between HC and IBC stakeholders, as well as expansion of broader networks created an expanded industry, professional, and academic community and opportunities that created value for the enhanced brand.

**Discussion of findings in relations to literature**

Research has shown that HEIs engage in cross-border education programs and establishing IBCs to attract new students, generate revenue and resources, enhance their
reputation, and establish a global footprint (Kinser & Lane, 2014; Lane, 2011b). IBCs are complex organizations operating in an environment that is simultaneously local and global (Healey, 2016; Wilkins, 2016) and rely on support and resources from multiple stakeholders (Farrugia & Lane, 2013). They are expected to meet the diverse and sometimes conflicting needs of stakeholders in the home and host country (Hill et al., 2014) and face pressure to simultaneously conform to host country requirements and to maintain parent identity across borders (Shams & Huisman, 2016; Yuan et al., 2016).

As HEIs and IBCs expand globally competition increases and stakeholder relationships and their influence on brand become increasingly complex (Yuan et al., 2016). In addition, HEIs that establish IBCs face increased emphasis on higher education branding and rankings in the global marketplace, and researchers have begun to investigate how IBCs and the stakeholders who influence them affect the home and host campus brand (Chee et al., 2016; Hill et al., 2014).

A comprehensive review of related literature in Chapter II explores the expansion of cross-border education and IBCs, and stakeholder engagement and influence on brand development in higher education institutions and IBCs in particular. This section examines the findings of this study against empirical studies presented in the literature review, specifically related to stakeholder engagement and influence on the branding strategy and IBC that are the focus of this study.

**Brand as a dynamic social process where value is co-created by multiple stakeholders interacting with the brand and with one another.** While there is limited empirical research on stakeholder influence on brand development in IBCs over time, studies have investigated stakeholder engagement and influence on corporate brand. Hatch and Schultz (2010) found that corporate brand was co-created through interactions and dialogue between and
among stakeholders and Schultz & Hernes (2013) found that stakeholder perceptions of brand were based on their engagement and experiences with the brand over time. Aspara, Aula, Tienari, & Tikkanen (2014) found that brand evolved through the interaction of both internal and external stakeholders and Dean et al. (2016) found that employees at HEIs in Mexico co-created and delivered brand meanings through social as well as brand interactions. Findings from this research are consistent with Aspara et al., (2014) in that data showed that both internal and external stakeholders were actively engaged in the branding strategy, and with Hatch and Schultz (2010) and Schultz and Hernes (2013) in that stakeholder collaboration and interactions with the brand and one another over time created value for the enhanced brand. Findings showed that leaders and staff at the IBC and HC worked together to develop and shape the brand messages and to communicate them to alumni, business and industry representatives, and other external stakeholders. Faculty, staff, students, and alumni engagement and collaboration helped to co-create the brand by developing and sharing brand experiences and the brand message, reinforcing the connection between the HC and IBC, and interacting with the brand and other stakeholders. Expanding alumni and industry networks provided the opportunity to increase brand engagement and awareness which also created value for the enhanced brand.

This study also found that the branding strategy relied on increased connections and collaboration between HC and IBC stakeholders, in particular leadership, students, faculty, and staff, to create enhanced experiences and opportunities that would reinforce and validate the brand. Shams and Huisman (2016) described the challenges IBC leaders and managers faced as they managed local and global expectations and Healey (2016) found that IBC managers in China, Malaysia, and the UAE were constantly working to balance competing stakeholder demands in both locations. This study found that expectations in the home and host country were
sometimes conflicting and that leaders and trustees, as well as key faculty and staff, played a key role in addressing, balancing, and managing IBC and HC stakeholder expectations. Consistent with findings from Aspara et al., (2014) this study found that brand evolved through interaction of multiple stakeholders in situations where resistance and tension as well as harmonization influenced the rebranding strategy. The study also found that multiple stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, and business and industry representatives interacted with the IBC and one another to co-create the strategies, experiences and opportunities, and outcomes that were key elements of the enhanced brand.

**Collaborative leadership and stakeholder management.** Empirical studies in recent years have challenged the traditional role of management in brand development, suggesting that stakeholder engagement influences the development and creation of corporate brand. Balmer and Wang (2016) found that business school leaders conceived stakeholder management to be a key dimension of brand development, and Gyrd-Jones and Kornum (2012) found that managers helped to create brand innovation and synergy by leveraging and coordinating stakeholder interactions that encouraged them to advocate for and support brand development. Balmer and Wang (2016) emphasized the important role of the CEO in brand development, and Healey (2016) emphasized the role of the IBC manager in stakeholder management.

Findings in this case study showed that IBC and HC leaders and trustees actively engaged with one another and other stakeholders to develop a clear brand vision and direction early on in the process. Leaders and trustees in both locations served together on trustee and advisory boards and engaged with one another and the brand through formal and informal meetings and interactions. This case study found that, consistent with Balmer and Wang (2016), stakeholder management was key to the branding strategy and development. However they study also found
that leadership for the branding strategy came from more than just one CEO or manager and included a number of trustees, leaders, and managers from the HC and IBC, many of whom had very different expectations for the IBC and the rebranding strategy. These leaders, managers, and trustees solicited feedback and considered differing perspectives and relied on advice and guidance from one another and other stakeholders. Consistent with Healy (2016) the IBC President played a key role in stakeholder management, this research found that many leaders and trustees from different functional areas, stakeholder groups, and campus locations collaborated on both campuses to establish the vision and expectations for the brand, identify resources and support for the strategy, and inform and engage others in the process. They facilitated internal and external communication, provided forums and opportunities for HC and IBC faculty, staff, and students to engage with one another, and personally advocated with government officials, business and industry representatives, and alumni to create credibility and legitimacy. Findings suggest that in the case study ‘management’ consisted of different groups of leaders, trustees, and managers from the HC and IBC who collaborated together to develop and implement the rebranding strategy. Leaders and trustees from both locations also actively engaged others to implement the strategy and gave them the flexibility to develop and manage initiatives and strategies based on their expertise and perspective. This study found that collaborative leadership, rather than a specific leader or manager in a particular location, resulted in broad stakeholder engagement that influenced and contributed to the success of rebranding strategy.

Healey (2016) also found that IBC leaders in Malaysia, UAE, and China had little senior management experience or international experience and that they lacked operational support. Wilkins, Butt & Annabi (2017) found that organizational support, a strong predictor of employee
commitment, was rated lower at IBCs than at HCs. In both studies IBC leaders and staff thought that the lack of organizational support influenced quality at the IBC, which in turn negatively influenced brand. This study found that leaders and managers at the IBC and HC were willing to collaborate with and engage others which, in turn, enhanced decision-making and strategy development, increased stakeholder buy-in and engagement and helped to secure resources and support for the strategy. This collaboration resulted in stronger organizational support for the IBC that ranged from enrollment staff to develop brand messages and communication strategy, to career services and advisors supporting students, to faculty engagement in academic offerings. This case study found that collaboration between IBC and HC leaders and trustees, while not always harmonious, resulted in a clear vision and expectations that provided a sense of direction for the rebranding strategy, encouraged faculty, staff, and students in both locations to engage and participate in the process, and helped to secure the resources and support necessary to implement the strategy.

**Brand communication, strategies, and experiences that are complementary and mutually reinforcing create value.** While specific studies on brand development at IBCs are limited, separate studies on brand development at HEIs and on brand development in multinational organizations demonstrate the complexity of stakeholder engagement and influence on brand in organizations that operate globally. Williams & Omar (2014) found that strategies that were complementary and mutually reinforcing created value in a rebranding initiative at an HEI in the US. In a study of brand development in a multinational firm Gyrd-Jones & Kornum (2012) found that new values developed in any location had to be consistent with the overall core brand to support co-creation. In a separate study Gotsi & Andriopulos (2007) showed the importance of complementary strategies and initiatives to create brand value.
and identified key pitfalls in corporate brand development in multinational organizations that included: emphasizing labels and not meanings, stakeholder myopia, disconnecting with the core brand, and the challenge of multiple identities. In a case study at an HEI in Finland, Aspara et al., (2014) found that university brand evolved through complex and long-term relationships with internal and external stakeholders who over time were both suppliers and consumers of resources.

This study found that both internal and external stakeholders had long-term relationships with the brand and with one another, informed and shared the brand message, and developed branding experiences and strategies that were synergistic and complementary. Trustees and leaders established a vision and expectations that were clear and encouraged others to participate in the branding strategy. IBC and HC leaders and staff developed and implemented the communication plan and faculty, staff, and students, as well as alumni and business and industry representatives, created the experiences and opportunities for the enhanced brand. Enrollment staff relied on perspective and advice from internal stakeholders and feedback from alumni, business and industry, and prospective students to be sure the messages and visual identity resonated with the target audience and also reflected the core strengths of the brand. Messages and visual identity for the enhanced brand were consistent with the experiences, activities, and events that were simultaneously being developed by HC and IBC faculty and staff which, as suggested by Gyrd-Jones & Kornum (2012), supported brand co-creation. As the process unfolded, faculty and staff at the IBC and HC were able to deliver the enhanced academic opportunities and experiences that were articulated by the enrollment staff and leaders in the communication plan. In addition, alumni and students reinforced the brand promise which helped to validate the brand for business and industry representatives, prospective students and parents,
and the public in the host country. Consistent with Williams & Omar (2014) and Gotsi & Andriopulos (2007), stakeholders in this case study were engaged in setting expectations and engaging others, communicating the message, and creating strategies and experiences that were consistent with one another and the brand.

Balmer & Wang (2016) found that students who had high exposure to the business school brand were likely to continue advocacy and, in an exploratory case study at a university in the UK whose business school operated a collaborative degree program in China, Balmer and Liao (2007) found that the strength of student identification with the brand depended on their awareness, knowledge, and experience with the brand. They described three increasingly supportive stages of corporate brand identification that included brand member, brand supporter, and brand owner. This study found that IBC leaders, alumni, faculty, staff, and students had intense, long term relationships with the brand and were engaged through complex connections and networks that cut across different stakeholder groups. Alumni had siblings who had attended the IBC, students had become alumni and worked for the IBC, trustees were also government officials or industry representatives. As a result, the stages of corporate identification described by Balmer & Liao (2007) were not clearly discernable, however evidence from this study suggests that IBC student awareness, knowledge and experience, and identification with the brand were strong.

Dean et al. (2016) also found that employee/customer interactions were extensive and lasted longer than those in other service industries. In this case, relationships between faculty, staff, and students remained strong after graduation and alumni continued to create value for the brand by providing feedback and information, clarifying changing expectations, and informing and engaging other stakeholders with the brand. As the number of faculty, staff, and alumni
grew, their engagement with business and industry representatives and their professional networks also expanded. These relationships and shared experiences supported the development of branding communication, strategies, and experiences that were complementary and mutually reinforcing and created value for enhanced brand.

**Balancing stakeholder expectations and brand perceptions in the home and host country.** In separate studies of IBC leaders and managers Shams and Huisman (2016) and Healey (2016) identified stakeholder management, in particular balancing the needs of local and global stakeholders as a key challenge for IBC leaders and managers. Balmer & Wang (2016) found that senior managers played a key role in stakeholder management at business schools and their partner institutions in Asia and also found a clear link between strategic direction and corporate brand. This research showed that while trustees and leaders in the home and host countries worked together to develop and implement the branding strategy, their expectations and interests, in particular leaders and faculty in the home and host country, were not always aligned. IBC faculty, staff, leaders, and trustees in the host country were early advocates for the strategy because they thought it would help them to grow enrollment and obtain resources to enhance the IBC offerings and reputation. On the other hand, HC leaders and faculty in the home country initially resisted the closer brand alignment because they were concerned it might divert resources or negatively impact the HC brand in the home country. However once they understood how the IBC could support the HC strategic agenda for internationalization, leaders, faculty, and staff at the HC became more interested and engaged. Consistent with Balmer & Wang (2016) this study found a link between strategic direction and brand and, consistent with Healy (2016) and Shams & Huisman (2016), that the IBC President and other leaders in the home and host country worked together to balance the demands of competing stakeholders in
both locations. However, in contrast to Shams & Huisman (2016), this study did not find IBC staffing presented the greatest challenge, but rather that collaboration between IBC faculty, staff, and students created value for the branding strategy.

Studies have also investigated how stakeholder perceptions and influence on brand development at IBCs vary in the home and host locations. In a study at an HEI in Singapore that positioned itself as a global university Xavier and Alsagoff (2013) found that reputation and brand depended on local perceptions in each location. In a separate study that surveyed 206 students at IBCs in the UK and India Chee et al. (2016) found that student perceptions of brand varied across country of origin. This study found that, consistent with Chee et al. (2016) and Xavier and Alsagoff (2013), stakeholder perceptions of the IBC and HC brands in the home and host country were different. Research showed that the HC brand was not initially well-known in the host country and that, although the IBC offered the HC degree, some IBC brand elements like the close community and the emphasis on tourism were not necessarily key elements of the HC brand. During the rebranding alumni, faculty, and staff worked together to develop experiences that reinforced the connection between the HC and IBC and, while this more closely aligned brand messages and experience of the IBC with the HC, brand perceptions of each remained somewhat unique in the home and host countries.

This study also found that, consistent with Farrugia and Lane (2013), legitimacy of the HC brand did not transfer to legitimacy of the IBC in the host country and the legitimacy of the IBC was based on perceptions of local stakeholders. Hill et al. (2014) found that management, staff, and students at IBCs in Malaysia and the UK perceived that foreign was better and local worse, even though they had little understanding of operations in the host or home country. In this case study research showed that the IBC was established as the ‘American College’ based on
the fact that, consistent with Hill et al. (2014), many in the host country at that time believed that foreign, in particular US, was better. Brand perceptions in this study were further complicated by host country perceptions that public education was better than private education and, as a result, the government engagement validated and created value for the IBC brand in the host country. Findings from this study showed that as perceptions changed and the government connection and ‘American’ education became less valuable in the local environment the closer alignment to the HC brand became more important.

In a study of an IBC in China operated by a UK university Yuan et al. (2016) found that, while students who enrolled at the branch campus valued congruence between HC and IBC brand, they also expected the branch campus to reflect and incorporate local culture and perspective. This is consistent with the findings in this study where, while they advocated for and supported closer alignment to the HC, IBC students, alumni, and faculty still continued to describe and value the close connections and personal relationships at the IBC that were unique elements of the initial IBC brand. Evidence from this case study, including the co-branding strategy that was designed to leverage the strength of both the existing American College brand and the enhanced IBC brand, suggests that understanding and balancing home and host country stakeholder perceptions was key to the success of the branding strategy.

While findings describe differences between home and host country stakeholder perceptions and expectations, the study found that the rebranding strategy benefited from support and engagement from stakeholders in both the home and host country locations. While Hill et al. (2014) found that divergent objectives of collaborating parties can lead to tensions in international partnerships this study found that, consistent with findings from Aspara et al., (2014), stakeholder tensions and resistance also resulted in interactions and co-creation that
influenced brand development. Evidence from this case study suggests IBC and HC stakeholders, though their expectations and perceptions were not the same in both locations, influenced the branding strategy.

**Implications for Practice**

Higher education professionals today are being called on to evaluate new academic opportunities, make strategic decisions, and manage operations in highly complex organizations. Those who lead and manage cross-border education programs and IBCs are dealing with global competition, complex stakeholder expectations and influences, and increasing emphasis on global ranking systems and quality measures. Faculty and administrators are being asked to evaluate options, manage academic and operational issues, and address quality issues in both locations. Higher education professionals, often with limited experience with cross-border education and IBCs, are expected to manage reputation and brand on a local and global scale. Many are dealing with complex organizations that are influenced by diverse stakeholders and, while scholars agree that stakeholders influence reputation and brand, there is limited information on how stakeholders influence brand development in cross-border programs and IBCs. This research was designed to address that gap and has led to the following recommendations for practice based on the findings of this study.

**Recommendation 1: Develop stakeholder maps in order to clearly identify and understand stakeholder expectations and needs.** This study found that stakeholder expectations influenced the rebranding strategy, and that these expectations changed as the IBC developed and matured. While data showed that understanding and addressing these expectations was key to the success of the rebranding strategy, the study also found that stakeholder expectations were diverse and complex and were not consistently understood and articulated by
all participants in the study. Findings showed that perceptions and expectations for the IBC brand varied among stakeholder groups, as well as across the same stakeholder groups at the IBC and HC. While findings from this study suggest that IBC leaders worked to engage stakeholders and address their expectations, data showed that not all leaders had a consistent understanding of stakeholder expectations across all groups and locations. Appendix H provides an example of a Stakeholder Expectations Outline that was developed based on the data collected for this case analysis. Developing and updating such a document regularly could support decision-making and strategy development as stakeholder relationships change. Identifying key stakeholders and outlining their expectations as IBCs mature would help higher education professionals to better understand and address these expectations, engage stakeholders in the process, and work with them to develop strategies that meet their needs and support brand development over time.

Recommendation 2: Create opportunities and systems that support collaborative leadership and include representatives from key stakeholder groups. Findings from this study suggest that higher education professionals who lead and manage IBCs should support collaborative leadership and develop systems that encourage ongoing engagement and interaction between internal, external, local, and global stakeholders at the leadership level. Leaders and trustees at the HC and IBC, as well as representatives from a range of stakeholder groups, were actively engaged in the management and oversight of the IBC. Trustee and advisory boards provided a forum for sharing information and expertise, decision-making and establishing expectations, and engaging others. Representatives from stakeholder groups ranging from industry leaders and government representatives to alumni, students, and leaders from both the HC and IBC brought different perspectives and information that informed decision-making, leveraged connections, expertise, and resources, and created broad advocacy and support for the
branding strategy. Findings from this study suggest that ongoing interaction and open lines of communication with leaders and representatives from stakeholder groups in both the host and home country can help leaders to better identify, understand, and address stakeholder expectations and how they change over time. Those who lead and manage IBCs should work to develop a culture, systems, and processes that support leadership collaboration, encourage feedback, and engage representatives from key stakeholder groups in both the home and host country in order to better understand and address stakeholder diverse perspectives and expectations.

**Recommendation 3: Develop systems, processes, and opportunities that facilitate collaboration and interaction between IBC and HC faculty, staff, and students.** This study found that collaboration between IBC and HC faculty, staff, and students was also essential to the success of the rebranding strategy. In this case study HC and IBC leaders worked together to create, establish, and communicate a clear vision and expectations for the branding strategy. In turn, they engaged faculty, staff, and students in both locations who developed the communication strategies, activities, events, experiences, and opportunities that created value for the branding strategy and the enhanced IBC brand. Leaders, faculty, staff, and students on both campuses acted as ambassadors and communicated with others through town hall meetings, publicity, announcements, activities, and events and encouraged other stakeholders in both locations to engage and support the strategy. They allocated resources worked together to develop programs, activities, academic and professional opportunities that would enhance the brand experience. Evidence suggests that faculty, staff, and student engagement and collaboration, facilitated through a range of systems, processes, and activities at both the home and host campuses was key to the success of the branding strategy. Higher education
professionals who lead and manage IBCs should identify and support systems, processes, initiatives, and activities that encourage and promote collaboration between IBC and HC stakeholders.

**Recommendation 4: Engage key stakeholders to act as ambassadors, enhance engagement and awareness, and validate the brand.** Evidence from this case study demonstrated that stakeholders, including HC and IBC leaders, staff, students, and faculty, and IBC business and government representatives served as ambassadors and influenced the rebranding strategy. Their engagement informed and shaped the strategy, facilitated communication and that increased engagement and brand awareness, and validated the enhanced brand. This study found that stakeholder relationships were intense and complex, and interaction and engagement occurred through and between many stakeholders and their networks. Students and alumni remained connected with the IBC faculty and staff and with one another over the long term. In addition, alumni, staff, and faculty connected with business and industry representatives who developing personal and professional networks that reached out into the community and industry. Stakeholders acted as ambassadors, providing information about stakeholder expectations that informed and supported the rebranding through networks that served as channels for outreach and communication with external stakeholders including prospective students, parents, and the public that helped to enhance brand awareness and engagement, and validate the brand. Findings from this study suggest that those who lead and manage IBCs should identify and actively engage key individuals from different stakeholder groups to serve as ambassadors in order to collect information, leverage their expertise, resources, connections, and networks to develop branding strategies and create value for brand.
Recommendation 5: Develop branding communication, strategies, and experiences that are complementary and mutually reinforcing. In this case stakeholders were engaged in the branding strategy throughout the process, from setting the vision and expectations and guiding the change, to communicating the change, to developing and engaging in the academic programs and experiences that created the brand experiences, to reinforcing and validating the brand promise. Leaders and trustees established a clear vision and expectations for the brand, faculty, staff, alumni, students, and industry representatives, and government partners were consistently included and informed. As a result internal stakeholders at the IBC and HC were informed and aware of the rebranding initiative and developed branding strategies and experiences that were complementary and mutually reinforcing; in particular brand messages and communication were consistent with brand experiences, and opportunities upon graduation were consistent with the brand promise and met stakeholder expectations. Findings from this study suggest that higher education professionals who develop and manage branding strategies at IBCs should engage, inform, communicate, and collaborate with all stakeholders to be sure that brand messages, experiences, and outcomes are consistent with the brand promise, and that brand enhancements are accurately portrayed and delivered.

Limitations

While this case study allowed for in-depth exploration of stakeholder influence on a branding strategy at an IBC, there were some limitations. The study was an exploratory study designed to collect in-depth information based on the experiences and perceptions of the participants. The data collected is based on the experiences and perceptions of a small number of participants at the IBC site and on the specific branding strategy and the unique circumstances of
this particular case study. Therefore generalizations cannot be made and the findings are not transferrable.

The researcher also recognizes the fact that the participants in the study were all actively engaged at the site at the time of the study, and that each had a long term relationship with the IBC that may also be a limitation of the study. While the ongoing contact and experiences the participants had with the IBC supported in-depth observations and detailed responses, the fact that all of the participants had such strong connections to the IBC may have influenced the findings. Additional interviews with participants who were more removed from the site and the rebranding strategy would be necessary to test this limitation.

**Recommendations for future research**

This study was designed to explore stakeholder influence on brand development at an IBC. While the study provided in-depth information based on the experiences of the participants at this particular site, further research is needed to better understand how stakeholder engagement influences brand development at IBCs.

The findings from this study are based on a unique situation and branding strategy at one IBC of a comprehensive U.S. university that currently operates multiple IBCs. A cross-site case study designed to explore stakeholder influence on brand development at the other IBCs of this same university would provide comparative information and insight into stakeholder engagement and influence on IBC brand development. Conducting additional studies at the IBC sites of other U.S. universities could also add to the body of knowledge in this particular area.

The focus of this study was on exploring how stakeholders were engaged in the rebranding strategy and on how those relationship created value and influenced the process. The study did not attempt to measure or quantify the value created in those relationships. Additional
research is needed to address how brand value is measured and quantified in stakeholder relationships in general, and at IBCs in particular.

This study was designed to consider how a broad range of stakeholders were engaged in and influenced a branding strategy at a particular IBC. While the study took a narrow view of the role of government as a stakeholder in the rebranding strategy, background research revealed significant changes in the political and economic climate in the region and in the host country prior to, and during, the rebranding strategy. While there are some references to this in the findings, this study was not designed to focus on these changes and their influence on the development of the IBC brand. Additional research designed to explore the broader influence of political and economic issues and influence, in particular on brand development at this IBC and on the development of higher education in the region, would provide valuable information for scholars and practitioners conducting research and working on cross-border education initiatives in the region.

Finally this research was designed to explore stakeholder relationships broadly, considering how interactions between and among stakeholders influenced the branding strategy. It did not focus specifically on stakeholder network interactions or consider how interactions between stakeholders in a particular network might differ from interactions between stakeholders and the organization. Additional research focused on specific stakeholder networks in the IBC environment, in particular how those networks develop and how network relationships influence brand value is needed to address better understand stakeholder influence on IBC brand development.

Conclusion
The purpose of this single-site case study was to explore how stakeholder engagement influenced a branding strategy designed to more closely align the brand image of an established IBC with that of the home university. The qualitative method was used in order to collect detailed data and information based on the experiences and perceptions of the participants, and the case study design chosen to allow for an in-depth exploration of stakeholder engagement and influence on a specific branding strategy at the IBC site. The study resulted in a detailed case description that includes rich descriptions and vignettes to support the analysis. The study contributes to research on stakeholder theory and branding theory in cross-border education and, in particular, on stakeholder influence on brand development at IBCs. This study found that stakeholders were actively engaged in and influenced the branding strategy and the detailed findings and analysis from the study provide valuable information for higher education professionals who are engaged in decision-making, leading, and managing IBCs.

IBCs are complex organizations that operate in a constantly changing environment and are influenced by local and global stakeholders who have a broad range of expectations and needs. IBCs present significant challenges for higher education professionals who are expected to demonstrate outcomes, achieve enrollment goals, and manage home and host country reputation and brand; often with limited experience and information about cross-border education and IBCs. This study was designed to provide higher education professionals with information about stakeholder influence on brand development and strategy at IBCs and to add to the scholarly research on stakeholder influence on brand development at IBCs. Evidence from this study suggests that collaborative models and systems that encourage stakeholder interaction and engagement and actively solicit feedback and advice from stakeholder groups can inform and guide brand development strategies. In addition, findings suggest that brand value is created
in the interactions between stakeholders and that stakeholders should be encouraged and supported to create and share the strategies, experiences, and opportunities in order to create value for the brand. While IBCs present challenges, higher education leaders who actively encourage and engage stakeholder engagement at all levels will be better prepared to understand and respond to changing needs and expectations, influence brand, and create new learning opportunities for the students they serve as well as the stakeholders who engage in the process.
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Appendix A: General Institutional Participant Recruitment Letter

Dear (IBC President):
My name is Diane Ellison, and I am a doctoral candidate at Northeastern University, in Boston, Massachusetts, and also an Associate Vice President at HC University. My doctoral focus is in higher education administration with a particular interest in exploring the development of international branch campuses. Specifically, I am conducting a qualitative case study that explores how stakeholders are engaged in and influence strategic branding decisions and strategy at IBCs.

The study would entail interviewing faculty and staff at the IBC who were engaged during the rebranding initiative designed to more closely align IBC with the HC, in order to explore their perspective on how stakeholders were engaged in the process and influenced the outcome. In addition, I would like to review IBC documents that include references to the rebranding decision and its implementation, including IBC websites and publications, staff meeting minutes, planning documents, and branding assets including advertisements, online resources, videos and images, strategic plans, and annual reports.

If you are willing to participate in this study, I would secure consent from your campus Institutional Research office, and then work with you to secure participation from individual faculty and staff who were engaged with the IBC at the time of the branding initiative. Individual interviews should last between 45 minutes and one hour, and would be conducted using open-ended and semi-structured questions. With your permission, and the permission of individual participants, I would like to record all interviews and committee meetings.

The information collected would remain strictly confidential and pseudonyms would be used to protect the identity of both the institution and the individuals who participate in the study. Participation in the study is completely voluntary and individuals may withdraw from the study at any time. If you are willing to participate, please email me by ________________.

If you have questions, please email or call me at 315-569-4351. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this study.

Diane Ellison
Appendix B: Individual Participant Recruitment Letter

Dear ______________:

My name is Diane Ellison, and I am a doctoral candidate at Northeastern University, in Boston, Massachusetts, and also an Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management at HC University. My doctoral focus is in higher education administration with a particular interest in exploring the development and ongoing operation of international branch campuses. Specifically, I am conducting a qualitative case study that explores how stakeholders influenced the branding strategy to transition from IBC University to IBC University to more closely align the brand images of the two campuses.

I am writing to invite you to participate in a case study addressing this topic. The study will entail interviewing individuals who were engaged with the IBC during the branding strategy to transition the IBC from American College to IBC University to explore their perspective on the process and results of the change.

If you are would be willing to participate, interviews would be scheduled at a time and location convenient to you. Individual interviews should last between 45 minutes and one hour, and would be conducted using open-ended and semi-structured questions. With your permission, I would audio record the interview. The information collected would remain strictly confidential and pseudonyms would be used to protect your identity.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time. If you are interested in participating, please email me by ________________.

If you have questions, please email or call me at 585-261-1390. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this study.

Diane Ellison
Appendix C: Interview Protocol

Introductory Questions:
Tell me about your connection to/role at the IBC. How long have you been engaged with IBC University?
Now, I’d like you to think back, to the period just before 2013, when the college engaged in a rebranding strategy and became IBC University; what was your role/connection at that time?

Interview Questions:

Leaders and Trustees
1. What was the impetus for the IBC to engage in the rebranding strategy?
2. Can you describe for me how the rebranding strategy unfolded, and your role in the process?
3. Who were the key stakeholders at that time, and why were they important to IBC University?
4. What was important to them and what did they expect from their relationship with the IBC?
5. What were their perceptions/expectations for the change, and were they considered in the decision process?
6. Can you provide some examples of how stakeholders were engaged in the process?
7. What challenges did you face with stakeholders, and how were they addressed?
8. How do they feel about the change now?
9. Is there anything else about how stakeholders were involved and influenced the rebranding process that you think is important to mention?

Administrator/Marketing
1. Describe for me how you first learned of the decision and how you felt about the change?
2. Can you describe how the branding strategy was developed, and how you were involved in the process?
3. Who were the key stakeholders at that time, and why were they important to the IBC?
4. What was important to them and what did they expect from their relationship with the IBC?
5. Can you provide some examples of how you interacted with stakeholders in the process?
   (probe: strategic initiatives or individual outreach, formal or informal communication)
6. What challenges did you face when working with stakeholders, and how were they addressed?
7. What were their perceptions/expectations for the change at the beginning?
8. How do you think they feel about the change now?
9. Is there anything else about your work with stakeholders in the rebranding process that you think is important to mention?

Faculty
1. Why did you choose to work at IBC, and what is important to you in your relationship with the IBC?
2. Can you describe for me how you first learned of the rebranding decision?
3. How did you feel about the idea at the time, and why? What do you think now?
4. How did other faculty members react to the decision?
5. Can you describe how faculty were engaged in the process?
6. Is there anything else about your involvement, or other faculty in the rebranding process that you think is important to mention?

Student and Alumnus
1. Tell me about what was important to you when you first chose IBC for your studies.
2. Describe your experience with the American College before the change, and describe if/how it is different now that it has become IBC University?
3. Can you describe for me how you first learned of the rebranding decision and how you felt about it at that time?
4. What do you think now and why?
5. How did other students react to the decision?
6. How were you, and other students, engaged and involved in the rebranding process?
7. Is there anything else about your relationship with the IBC that might be important for me to know?

Industry Representative
1. What were your initial expectations of your relationship with the IBC?
2. How does your relationship with the IBC help you achieve your goals?
3. Describe for me how you first learned of the rebranding decision and how did you feel about the change?
4. Did your expectations change when you learned about the rebranding? If so, how and why?
5. Can you give me some examples about how you were engaged with the IBC during the change process? (probe: personal contact, meetings, publicity)
6. Is there anything else about your relationship with the IBC that might be important for me to know?

Government Official
1. Tell me about your perception of the decision to rebrand the IBC, and your role during the implementation?
2. Describe the IBC relationship with the host country government, and how the organizations have worked together over time.
3. Can you describe role the government has had in oversight of the IBC, and in the decision to rebrand the IBC?
4. What do you think the government expectations are from the IBC, and how the rebranding initiative supported or hindered those expectations?
5. Can you provide examples of how support or communication with/among/from/between the IBC and the government supported the decision or implementation?
6. Is there anything else about the relationship between the IBC and the government that might be important for me to know?
Appendix D: Unsigned Consent Document

45 CFR 46 117(c) In certain instances, an IRB may waive the requirement for the investigator to obtain a signed consent form for some or all subjects. In cases in which the documentation requirement is waived, the IRB may require the investigator to provide subjects with a written statement regarding the research.

**Only the IRB can waive or modify the consent process. Researchers are not authorized to make this decision.** When a signed informed consent is not required, this consent form may be given to participants to keep. Please modify the following information as necessary.

Northeastern University, College of Professional Studies, Graduate Programs in Education

**Name of Investigator(s):**
Tova Sanders, Ph.D., Principal Investigator,
Diane Ellison, Candidate Ed.D. Northeastern University

**Title of Project:** Exploring Stakeholder Influence on Brand at an IBC

Request to Participate in Research
We would like to invite you to take part in a research project. The purpose of this research is to explore stakeholder influence on brand development at an IBC.

You must be at least 18 years old to be in this research project.
The study interview will take place at a time and location convenient for you and will take about 45-60 minutes. A follow-up interview of not more than 30 minutes will also take place after the initial interview, at a time and location convenient to you by web conference call, to review the transcript and clarify any of the responses, if necessary. If you decide to take part in this study, we will ask you to reflect on your experiences as a professional within your division with assessment related activities.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to you for taking part in this study.

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in the study. However, your answers may help us to learn more about how various strategies help professionals integrate assessment activities into their work.

Your part in this study will be handled in a confidential manner. Only the researchers will know that you participated in this study. Any reports or publications based on this research will use only group data and will not identify you as any individual as being of this project.

The decision to participate in this research project is up to you. You do not have to participate and you can refuse to answer any question. Even if you begin the study, you may withdraw at any time.

You will not be paid for your participation in this study.
If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to call Diane Ellison at 585-261-1390, the person mainly responsible for this research. You can also contact Dr. Tova Sanders, the Principal Investigator at 857-271-8279.

If you have any questions about your rights in this research, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, 960 Renaissance Park, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115. Tel: 617-373-4588, email: n.regina@neu.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

You may keep this form for yourself.

Thank you.

Diane Ellison
Appendix E: Document Summary Form

Reference name of document:

Date of review:

3. Official name and description:

4. Relevance to the study:

5. Summary of document:

6. Important quotes:

7. Additional notes:
Appendix F: Observation Summary Form

Reference name of observation/event:

Date of observation:

Participants:

1. Event description:

2. Purpose of this observation/event.

3. Describe stakeholder/management interactions and relationships.


5. Reflection: Stakeholder influence on brand/branding strategy.

Notes:

Additional Comments:
## Appendix G: Case Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Government official visits US, referred to and visits HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Ministry of Science initiates establishment of private higher education institutions, naming home university as partner in these efforts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>IBC established as first private college granting dual degrees; U.S. degree from HC and local degree from IBC; facilities shared with public university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>First generation enrolls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Connection to public university ends, (tuition and facility subsidy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>First generation of graduates earn hospitality management degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Global Delivery Corporation established at HC to provide services to IBCs and global programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>HC identifies internationalization as one of five key pillars of 2005-2015 strategic plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>New facility – historic building in coastal city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>IBC enrollment begins to decline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>New President hired at HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/2008</td>
<td>HC President visits IBC, asks “where is the HC University”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/2009</td>
<td>HC VP presents IBC Enrollment Planning Strategy to Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/2009</td>
<td>IBC enrollment staff visit HC to share information, plan branding strategies; IBC/HC cobranding strategy begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>IBC expands to offer BS information technology degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>IBC offers MS leadership degree in partnership with HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/2010</td>
<td>IBC Enrollment reaches 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/2010</td>
<td>Directive and vision from trustees and leaders from both locations to formally align IBC brand with HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/2010 +</td>
<td>IBC and HC leaders communicate/coordinate rebranding strategy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2011  Second IBC campus opens in temporary location in capital city; offers BS in business and information technology

2011  IBC opens industry training center in IBC location in coastal city

2013  Name changes officially to IBC University

2013  IBC moves to new, permanent location in capital city

2015  IBC enrollment exceeds 600 students
### Appendix H: Stakeholder Expectations Map

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Group</th>
<th>Host Country Expectations</th>
<th>Home Country Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trustees</td>
<td>Increased resources</td>
<td>HC brand quality assurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enrollment growth</td>
<td>Support for HC strategic agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic development in region</td>
<td>for internationalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human capital in region</td>
<td>Prestige based on global engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhanced prestige/reputation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBC Leaders</td>
<td>Enhance IBC reputation</td>
<td>Limit financial risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve academic quality</td>
<td>Limit reputational risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offer more degree options</td>
<td>Enhance global understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support geographic expansion</td>
<td>and experiences for HC faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and enrollment growth</td>
<td>and students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase resources</td>
<td>Support HC strategic agenda for internationalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBC Staff</td>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>Professional experiences and connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Validation of IBC/HC connection</td>
<td>HC reputation/prestige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhanced reputation</td>
<td>Support for HC goals in their area</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Resources and support from HC</td>
<td>Professional experiences and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>connections</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional experiences and connections</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>Enhanced IBC reputation</td>
<td>Limited expectations:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing community/connection with IBC- being part of something different</td>
<td>Global connection/exposure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase value of their degree</td>
<td>Increase value of their degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prestige and legitimacy in the external market</td>
<td>Enhanced prestige for HC based on global campuses and engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Career opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal connections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Quality education</td>
<td>Increased international exposure experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality degree</td>
<td>Study abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong reputation and prestige</td>
<td>Activities and events with global campuses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Practical experience</td>
<td>Global engagement and prestige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal attention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unique educational experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expanded career opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Faculty | More engagement with host campus faculty  
Access to broader academic community  
Increased resources and support  
Discipline knowledge and expertise  
Professional resources and development | Ensure HC reputation and quality  
No resource drain on HC  
In some cases:  
Discipline specific connections and resources  
Global engagement opportunities |
|---|---|
| Government | Economic development  
Human capital development  
Quality education  
Compliance | Limited expectations:  
Compliance |
| Industry | Knowledgeable employees  
Experienced employees  
Access to the best graduates | Limited expectations:  
HC graduates with global perspective |
| Public | Good, affordable education  
Good career preparation and outcomes  
Economic development  
Human capital development | Limited expectations:  
Consistent education and outcomes for those awarded HC degree |