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Title

Why universities voluntarily pursue US accreditation: the case of Mexico / Beverly Barrett ; Frank Fernandez ; Elsa M. Gonzalez

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Abstract

Academic leaders at universities around the globe pursue US accreditation as a result of increasing globalization and internationalization of higher education. Few studies have examined administrators' experiences with US accreditation. We address the following research question: Why do some private higher education institutions in Mexico pursue and maintain accreditation by US accreditation agencies? We present findings from an exploratory qualitative study of the perceptions of higher education administrators and faculty from three private institutions in Mexico: Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (Tec Monterrey or ITESM), Universidad de las Américas Puebla (UDLAP), and Centro de Enseñanza Técnica Y Superior (CETYS). We identify two isomorphic processes that led the universities to undergo review by US accreditors and discuss how those processes relate to time and location. Additionally, we discuss how administrators discussed

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accreditation as an interplay between internal leadership motivations and responses to external influences. Finally, participants see accreditation as part of larger efforts related to pursuing international academic recognition and educational quality. At the end of the paper, we discuss implications for future research and practice. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)