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Impact of accreditation on organizational identity: A case of two international business schools.

Abstract

This paper examines the impact of accreditation on organizational identity within two recently accredited international business schools. Conversations between the authors about the impact of accreditation on their workplace identity, led to a wider dialogue on the possible implications for organizational identity.

Using the schools as an empirical case study, we initially interviewed faculty about their role in their own organization and secondly, we focused on how faculty evaluated a potential university for employment purposes via the schools' websites. Findings reveal potential contradictions in perceptions of organizational identity; as the schools and the role of faculty shift between 'research oriented' and 'teaching oriented'.

This paper contributes to the literature on organizational identity by linking business school accreditation processes with identity. A change in emphasis from teaching to research, recognized as an outcome of accreditation, can result in an identity dilemma which impacts on faculty recruitment.

Keywords : Organizational Identity, Faculty Identity, Faculty Recruitment and Retention, Business School Accreditation

Introduction

The article responds to calls for further examination of socially situated managerial identities (Gotsi et al., 2010). We examine the impact of accreditation on organizational identity in two international business schools. The literature on organizational identity is explored together with that of workplace identity for faculty. The article particularly responds to Khurana and Spender (2012), "What ails business schools", for influences of accreditation on organizational identity.

Two international business schools are the focus in this initial study, as they experience the context of international accreditation, (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, AACSB), for its influence on both the institution and the faculty. Conversations between the authors about the impact of accreditation on their workplace identity, led to a wider dialogue on the possible implications for organizational identity.

The purpose of this article is to investigate how faculty identity is constructed within the context of external accreditation for Schools of Business (SB). External accreditation is valued for its international standard of quality, a particular example of which is accreditation through the AACSB. A shift in emphasis from teaching to research is recognized as an outcome of successful accreditation. We argue that organizational identity is mediated through external accreditation, thus a conflict of identity arises through this shift in emphasis. The subject of organizational identity is an important one for a university, for its effect upon recruitment and employee retention.

The article begins with a brief background to the AACSB accreditation requirements, in recognition of the standards to be achieved. In a literature review of identity construction, we consider theories to support an investigation of organization and faculty identity.

We follow the methodology of Kirk and Napier (2009) in citing examples from our "ongoing empirical research to highlight some perspectives voiced" (p.304). We therefore invited trusted colleagues to firstly talk about their role in the organization in which they worked. Secondly, how they would evaluate a potential university for employment purposes; employees from School A explored the website of School B, as a potential employer, and likewise for School B. In collected narratives from employees of two AACSB accredited schools, we hear about the perceptions of the organizations as 'teaching oriented' and 'research oriented'.

Findings reveal a shift in organizational identity for a university because of accreditation. We find contradictory perceptions of the organizations as 'research oriented' or 'teaching oriented', that may lead to confusion about the organizational identity. From which findings, a framework of analysis is created. A discussion evolves as to the proposed value of the framework for interpretation of organizational identity in international Schools of Business (SB).

The contribution of the article is to articulate organizational identity through narratives about the organizations. We argue that organizational identity is mediated through external accreditation. Because of a change in emphasis from teaching to research, recognized as an outcome of accreditation, the process raises a dilemma of identity for those exposed to the institution. In this study, we concentrate on organizational identity, and a further article explores the influences of accreditation on workplace identity.

Background

To establish our perceived gap in the research, we begin with a brief background to the AACSB accreditation requirements, in recognition of the standards to be achieved by SB. SB that are accredited by AACSB are subject to monitoring arrangements for the maintenance of those standards. A key feature of the AACSB model is that the standards are considered as benefits to three audiences; parents/students; business partners; faculty. This article concentrates on the latter, however, it is pertinent to give insight into other audiences to contextualize organizational identity.

AACSB accreditation reassures students and parents that the SB provide a high quality education. AACSB accredited schools have the highest quality faculty, relevant and challenging curriculum, and provide educational and career opportunities that are not found at other business schools (AACSB, 2012, Welcome, para. 1).

The accreditation standards confirm to business partners, as potential employers, that the graduates are ready to "perform on day one" (AACSB, 2012, Are you hiring quality business graduates? Para. 1).

The primary advantage of accreditation for faculty is interpreted within a focus on “research”; evidence for our claim is cited from the AACSB website, “at an AACSB-accredited school faculty and staff have higher quality peers with advanced academic and professional credentials” (AACSB, 2012, Faculty, para. 1).

For SB to receive a positive evaluation in the research criteria, it follows that the recruitment process searches for applicants with evidence of a strong research portfolio. To be considered a candidate for employment by AACSB accredited SB, a terminal degree is required, which academically qualifies those to teach within the discipline. There is a stated preference for applicants with degrees granted by an AACSB or EQUIS¹ accredited school of business, with a demonstrated record in pursuing research and teaching (extracted from an anonymous business school website, 2012). Alternatively, there is a desire to recruit early career researchers, “Assistant professors must have a demonstrated interest in pursuing research and teaching in the field” (extracted from anonymous school of business website, 2012).

The websites of international SB are a forum of organizational identity information to prospective faculty, students, and business partners. That triumvirate creates a multiplicity of website messages to attract the various audiences:

- 1) Faculty: Evidence of the high quality research performed by faculty.
- 2) Students: The potential employability of graduates.
- 3) Business partners: The relevance of programs/courses to industry.

The practical applicability of learning is the recruitment message for students - as future employees, and business partners - as potential employers. This practical applicability is rendered through website communication about the teaching profile in SB. As well, university websites are an informative portal for potential faculty applicants, particularly so in the case of international SB as unfamiliar (foreign) institutions. The practical application of teaching and learning in SB is in potential competition to the accreditation obligation for research scholars.

To date there has been very little analysis of organizational identity in the evolving role of accreditation, and almost no work on the impact of AACSB on faculty identity in the international context. This article fills the research gap on the link between organizational identity and recruitment. We do not in this paper seek to study web site design for recruitment. Also outside the remit of this article is the potential that accreditation may offer for increased business partnership and student recruitment. Although these avenues remain a future direction for research. We seek instead to investigate the role and impact of accreditation on the construction of organizational identity in accredited SB. A literature review to support this investigation follows.

Literature Review

Balmer (2001) summarizes the complexity of “business identity” through three related concepts; corporate identity; organizational identity; visual identity. This paper focuses on the visual identity of organizations, where Olins (1989) has a seminal role in defining the role of logos, names, symbols, and buildings. The design of the latter sends powerful messages about an organization’s identity to “convey ideas about what they are like both to insiders and to the outside world” (Forty 1986, p.222).

Identity and how it is formed

Identity is the act of forming, engaging, and repairing our constructions about an entity to give a sense of coherence and distinctiveness (Alvesson, 2003). Identity involves asking, “Who am I?” or “Who are we?” (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). “Identity” itself is the meaning or meanings that individuals attribute to themselves (Dutton, Roberts, & Benar, 2010, p. 267). Identity is not a singular construction, as we acknowledge the existence of multiple identities within the same individual (Burke, 1937; Feldman, 1979). Ybema et al., (2009: 306) argue that identity is “a matter of claims, not character; persona, not personality; and presentation, not self”. Identity is concerned with how individuals shape and author their world

¹ EQUIS is the European Quality Improvement System. Accessed at <http://www.efmd.org/index.php/what-is-efmd/overview>.

and explain the relationship between themselves and the “other” (Clarke, Brown and Hope-Hailey, 2009). Identity is concerned with the construction of similarity and difference, good and bad, right and wrong (Czarniawska, 1997). However, the diverse literature on identity and identity work has “helped to complicate understandings” of the concept and its application (Gotsi et al., 2010, p. 783).

We now review two theories, Organizational Identity Theory (OIT), and Workplace Identity Theory (WIT), and link them to the symbolism elements in the website. These elements construct the identity of the organization that is communicated to potential applicants.

Organizational Identity

There is as yet little agreement over the definition of organizational identity (Hatch & Schultz, 1997; Rodrigues & Child, 2008). The term “corporate identity” is also used, through which interpretations of the organization are formed by the worker and in turn impact on their identity, “a social reality [that] is socially constructed and that the world, both social and natural, exists independently of any of us, even though we only know it through interpretation” (Rodrigues & Child, 2008, p.894). We use the term “organizational identity”, rather than “corporate identity”, more appropriate to our study that relates to institutions of Higher Education.

Rodrigues and Child (2008) point out two levels relevant to organizational identity; organization as social actor, as part of a sector, and the other is as individual organization. The external and internal relations of an organization can no longer be separated as its identity is built out of its position in society, and in turn draws on external relationships to maintain or indeed change the “construed external image” (Dutton et al., 1994, p.239). The image of the organization (held externally) influences the organizational culture (internally), and melded together the organizational identity is formed (Hatch & Schultz, 2002).

Organizational identity is also defined as comprising those characteristics that members perceive are fundamental (central) to a uniquely (distinctive) description of the organization, and that persist over time (enduring) (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). The aspect of “enduring”, as stable, has caused some discussion since its introduction by Albert and Whetten (1985). Institutions of higher education have an organizational identity that is entangled with “time, place, history, society, and culture” from which arises organizational strategies and rationales for action (Khurana & Spender, 2012, p.621). Raising a question of just how enduring is organizational identity. Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yavetz (2004b) recommend further research to examine the temporal stability of dimensions of artifacts as they “may change over time” (p.107). This paper adopts the more recent definition of identity as “a process in which individuals create several more or less contradictory and often changing managerial identities (identity positions) rather than one stable, continuous manager identity” (Alvesson & Svengingsson, 2003).

The purpose of a study from Dutton, Roberts and Benar (2010) lies in the construction of work related identities. They note that conflicts of identity occur for cultural minorities when these employees are suppressed in the expression of individual values because of conflict with organizational values. It is more healthy for the employee when her/his identity is compatible with that of the organization (Dutton et al., 2010). Michailova & Hutchings (2006) recognize that knowledge sharing varies because of cultural diversity. The loss for the organization, through suppression of worker identity, is the diverse information that could have fed into organizational strategy. A more positive managerial approach is to ensure that the organization learns from differences in worker identity to construct “positive identity” for both employee and organization (Dutton et al., 2010, p.285).

The organizational identity is therefore not only derived and constructed by management, although a “political tool” approach is where managers construct the organization identity to direct organizational members to achieve objectives (Rodrigues & Child, 2008). Actually, a resistance by workers to the managerial construction of organizational identity has been shown to “provide workers with satisfying and meaningful identities” (Learmonth & Humphreys, 2011, p.425).

For clarity, organizational identity is defined as what employees “perceive, feel and think about their organizations”, an understanding of which derives from the enduring organizational characteristics (Hatch & Schultz, 1997, p. 357). What employees think about the organization leads to their adoption of the “defining characteristics of the organization as defining characteristics for themselves” (Dutton et al., 1994, p. 242). Employees understand organizational identity through their interpretation, the consequences of the identity are “to some degree independent of the process by which it was generated” (Rodrigues & Child, 2008, p.894).

In a higher educational setting, Khurana and Spender (2012) consider “what ails business schools?” They maintain that business schools require “an interdisciplinary approach”, although this is difficult given the various bodies of knowledge that are present (Khurana & Spender, 2012, p. 629). Another “ailment”, according to the AACSB (2003; Khurana & Spender, 2012) is that the state of some programs is not good because of resource constraints. Both the space and time to facilitate an interdisciplinary approach and resources (buildings, internal furnishings/technology) are aspects of organizational identity that may affect SB.

Symbols

An understanding of the identity of the organization can be gained from an interpretation of the symbols within, and that surround the organization. The importance of symbols communicated on SB websites is important for this study because of the international aspect. Many applicants will be located at a distance, and have little or no knowledge of the region in which the schools are physically based. Interpretation of organizational identity is therefore found through symbols from their exploration of SB websites. Potential employees seek for reassurance in familiar symbols rendered through images e.g. of buildings and office space, and through text relating to the organization e.g. mission and values.

Organizational identity and worker identity are intertwined with concepts of culture and image, that Hatch and Schultz (1997) argue are all “symbolic constructions” (p. 364). A function of a symbol is its effect on the organizational culture, and the identity of worker and institution (Elsbach & Bechky, 2007). Within organizations behavior is shared, and a cultural form e.g. a symbol encodes that behavior (Dutton et al., 1994). For example, prior research on organizational identity and symbolism has found “a complex relationship between office design and individual employee attitudes and behaviors” (Elsbach and Bechky, 2007, p.81).

Hatch (1993) extends Schein’s theory of organizational culture with a model where symbolization (artifacts-symbols) is shown to be a cultural process. A process of “cultural realization”, where the organizational values become real, and is made tangible through the “production of artifacts-symbols” (Hatch, 1993, p. 666). Hatch and Schultz’s (2002) model explains the identification process as comprised of four aspects; expression, mirror, reflection, and impressions.

The organizational identity is expressed through symbols, in a process by which culture becomes known through identity claims; as displayed for example in the architecture. Mirroring is the reflection of an organization, as socially constructed through the opinions and judgements of others; where image is linked to identity. Reflecting embeds identity in cultural understandings, and results from how organizational members perceive themselves. Reflection is manifested out of the organization’s history, and is made explicit in the organization’s values. Impressing refers to the images of an organization projected externally through marketing communications or outreach. In the Hatch and Schultz (2002) model, the physical symbolic artifacts of an organization are restricted to the expression aspect of the identification process. The significance of which is important for less known international SB due to a reliance on substantial symbolic artifacts revealed through the websites.

Artifacts, e.g. buildings/furnishings, are a point of reference within the environment from where people make sense of their interpretation (Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004a). Rafaeli and Vilnai-Yavetz (2004b, p.91) define artifacts as “artificial products, something made by human beings, and thus any element of a working environment”. It is considered that symbolic artifacts convey the cultural values of an organization, although as yet “there is no solid theory about how they operate or how they can be managed”; the authors consider that emotion is what connects organizations with artifacts (Rafaeli & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2004a, p.671).

Brown and Humphreys (2006) study a college, identifying “place” as an oft overlooked symbolic resource of space, filled “with meanings” where individuals and groups “defend, contest and promote preferred versions of their identities” (p. 233). In the study, buildings are a symbol of the past imbued as they are with longing. Buildings became a symbol of present troubles in the separation between senior management and other employees. Symbolism is captured in the description of the senior managerial office location as “God’s corridor” (Quality Manager, Brown & Humphreys, 2006, p. 236). Furthermore, the poor condition of the buildings was symbolic of the organizations’ inability to change to attract a diverse body of students (Brown & Humphreys, 2006). That study involved “self-narratives” which “help people revise and reconstruct identities during work role transitions” (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010, p.135). Becker (1977) posited that a variety of components in the built environment can give information to users. This supports

the view that employees may utilize external environmental cues either to categorize or make inferences about the organization.

Alvesson and Willmott (2002) argue that the turbulent, large scale organizational change that individuals face in SB, post and during accreditation, may lead to an increase in identity work. The notion of identity work, put simply, describes the activities undertaken by individuals to make sense of themselves and their organization (Davies and Thomas, 2008). This is particularly true when "change is targeted at redefining employees self-images and work orientations" (Alvesson and Willmott 2002: 8). Organizations are a site of identity construction that is shared through discursive contexts (talk, symbols and labels) (Down & Reveley, 2009; Maitlis, 2005). Accessing identity claims can then be achieved through the review of narratives and stories (Clarke, Brown & Hope-Hailey, 2009; Watson, 2009a).

Completion of the literature review has led us to examine the construction of organizational identity in a study of two AACSB accredited business schools, one in Europe and the other in the Middle East.

Methodology

The research takes a social constructionist approach, as it was centrally concerned with identity as a contextually situated self-narrated construction (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003; Watson, 2009b). This research approach enabled us to understand the identity work participants undertook to understand the world in which they work. However, while emphasizing, epistemologically, the interpretations and narratives of the research participants, we recognize that the interpretations do not exist in isolation from an external world.

Therefore, the study adopts a realist ontology, alongside a social constructivist epistemology, in order to accept that there is a reality that exists outside of the experience or knowledge of the participants (Sayer, 2000; Watson, 2011). This reality consists of structures and mechanisms, including discourses, which can and do inform individual practices, whether or not we may be aware of, or could be said to have "knowledge" of them (Sayer, 2000; Watson, 2011). Claims that arise are therefore generalizable to theory, and not to individuals or populations (Fitzgerald & Dopson, 2009; Yin, 2009).

Sample

We chose the two SB to study for two interesting reasons. The SB in the sample are both accredited by AACSB, but operate outside the USA. One is based in Europe and the other in the Middle East. The second justification for study is that these schools, although international in nature, are less known to potential employees because of their geographic locations. The SB websites are therefore a major source of information for recruitment. The third reason is that the SB are international because of the multicultural composition of the faculty and the students.

Data collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with existing employees of both SB because worker narratives are important in identity studies. Interviews are "contextually situated social interactions" (Murphy et al., 1998, p. 64), which "should be treated as both socially constructed and as reflecting the peculiarities of the context" (Hammersley, 2008, p. 90). Therefore, an interview "represents a special storytelling context" (Ylijoki, 2005, p. 562) that gives the interviewee a structure for self-reflection to be examined as data (Rhodes & Brown, 2005). Interviews provide access to the social and cultural meanings in organizations, where a narrational-discursive approach can identify common managerial/leadership through self-narrated construction (Boje, 1991; Boje, 1995; Collins, 2003).

We interviewed two employees from SB A (Middle East) and asked them to evaluate SB B (Europe) as a potential employer. We also asked six faculty of SB B to do the same with SB A. Participants were exposed to the website of the other institution for this activity, and invited to talk about their role in the organization in which they worked, and how they would evaluate a potential university for employment purposes. The participants had no knowledge of the other school when they were asked to discuss their perceptions of the website.

Secondly, we examined the number of faculty job offers issued and compared this with job offers accepted for one of the institutions (SB B). We interviewed faculty who had applied for a post, and had

received an offer. We conducted this interview to find out applicants perception of the school in terms of quality of research and teaching, and to find out why they had accepted or rejected the offer of employment. Thirdly, for SB B, we interviewed faculty with more than five years of service; these were those who had experienced the institution prior to and post accreditation. We also interviewed new faculty at SB B, who had completed their first year of service, to find out their perception of the emphasis on research and teaching, as reflected through the faculty evaluation documentation.

Analysis

Reflecting the discursive emphasis, we invoked explanation building as the main analytic technique (Pettigrew, 1997; Rouleau, 2005; Yin, 2009). Most explanation building occurs in narrative form (Yin, 2009), and is strongest when linked to theoretical elaboration or contributions (Pettigrew, 1997). The goal of explanation building is to generate explanations of a phenomenon, and to examine how and why something has happened. The interview transcripts were thus the driver for the exposure of themes, in order to undertake study that paid close attention to individual accounts.

The focus was initially on the perception of the recruitment page of the website, and subsequently the faculty evaluation document. Both were used as primary units of analysis, to reflect the concern in identity research with social accomplishment of identity (Essers and Benchop, 2009). We interviewed faculty during the annual self-evaluation review period (April), that assesses employees on research output and teaching practice:

1 We examined how each of the SB was perceived by the participants through its web site content, to ascertain if there were contradictions between the symbolism on the website and the recruitment strategy.

2 We examined potential faculty experience of the recruitment process and their perception of SB B, post interview and offer.

3 We examined how SB B was perceived by existing faculty who had been employed by the schools throughout the accreditation processes. And how new faculty, completing their first year of service, evaluated changes in SB B, as reflected in the faculty annual evaluations.

We used Hatch and Schultz's (2002) model of the four aspects of the identification process, expression, mirror, reflection, and impressions. We read and reread the transcripts for data that related to the four aspects. Key words were coded and subcoded as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Keywords and themes in the identification process - goes here

Findings

After sorting of the data, the following narrative themes emerged:

1. Expression. The expression of the self emerged, alongside the conflict between research and teaching, in the theme of 'performance'.

When faculty review the websites of SB, they do so not only to acquire information, but also as part of an identity work process. No direction was given to them to discuss performance or performance targets specifically, but it was a recurring theme in participants' accounts.

Participants at both SB A and SB B perceived the "other" school as having an emphasis on teaching rather than on research. Evidence to support this was stated to be from the images on both sites that illustrated students "enjoying themselves". Recurring words from narratives about both sites were "sun" and "fun", gained from symbols relating to student activities. Participants generally concluded that both SB emphasized the student experience. Participants attempted to find information relating to research orientation of the institutions, but failed to do so.

2. Mirroring was found through participant discussion about the opinions and judgements of others.

One third of the successful applicants in SB B refused the offer of employment, and of these, half stated either personal reasons, the implications of international relocation were impractical, or a more competitive offer had been received from another university.

For the other 50% of successful applicants, and for candidates who accepted, there were indications of confusion about what constituted performance. This confusion appeared to be based, from their website evaluation, on a perception of teaching and student satisfaction as performance. That perception contrasted with expected performance indicators in relation to research. There were qualitative differences expressed about the descriptions and definitions of what constituted performance.

Performance measured through research and publication was identified as a core component of the faculty role in the narrative accounts of participants in both SB. A department manager in SB B showed where organizational identity mirrored accreditation, "AACSB accreditation performance targets have taken over what we do".

3. Reflecting was manifested in narratives of the organization's history and about the organization's values.

The nature of reflection on performance lay within identification of individuals as research or teaching faculty. Reflections described how, in the past, performance was driven by relationship building,

what we don't have is a relationship culture. That's difficult to explain. But, previously we invested a lot of time in discussing with students, giving tutorials, talking to people, building relationships.

The quality of those relationships determined how well we did. Now we act the good relationships bit – and do what we can to achieve the targets.

The present is driven by semi-contractual targets established by management,

we are driven by the student's evaluations of faculty which influence our own annual performance results. This evaluation is the most visible way we demonstrate how we are serving our students.

Achieving performance targets was elevated in importance over a culture of relationship building, although the latter was seen as a contributor to the former.

4. Impressing refers to narrative about the external projection of the organizations.

All faculty identified the drive for research performance through the faculty evaluation. To clarify the challenges inherent in the SB,

we've got to meet the research targets at all costs.... I wonder how sustainable what we do is. We get the research outcomes but without any real funding for major research projects unlike state universities. It is really difficult to achieve funding for research programs. ... In the end it is only the research evaluation that matters. You can have an excellent student evaluation, but without an excellent research evaluation you will not achieve a good evaluation. However you can have a poor or average student evaluation, and this is not relevant if you have a great research evaluation. Not what I understood the school was about when I applied.

Discussion

The article responds to Khurana and Spender (2012), "What ails business schools", by highlighting the dilemma that these two SB are experiencing in their organizational identity. Organization identity in post accreditation SB is a process "of negotiation between social actors and institutions, between self and others, between inside and outside, between past and present" (Ybema et al., 2009, p. 303).

Previously, SB A and SB B were able to self proclaim their distinctiveness in what was a less competitive market, where both schools were historically strong regional players in the higher education market. Hatch and Shultz (2002) term it as 'narcissism', i.e. an expression of organization identity using self absorption and self seduction. Now, having gained accreditation, there is an organizational identity dilemma. The dilemma lies between organization identity as 'teaching oriented' and 'research oriented'.

The similarity between the SB is that they have both fairly recently been awarded AACSB accreditation, and this has impacted on their faculty recruitment policies. Prior to accreditation the recruitment

processes in both schools were less formal. Priority was given to those currently working in the geographic region who had experience of teaching in either the Middle East (SB A) or Europe (SB B).

Previously teaching staff were primarily from a professional business background, few had a terminal degree, and a majority were natives of the countries where the SB were located. In latter years, in readiness for AACSB application, and since accreditation, both SB have increased the percentage of faculty with PhDs, revealing a recruitment process to meet those requirements.

Prior to accreditation, in SB B, a very high percentage of teaching hours (over 70%) were taught by hourly paid adjunct faculty who were recruited by non academic program directors. Since accreditation, teaching hours for both schools have reduced to 12 per week, a symbolic representation of time for research and publication.

Post accreditation, both schools are apparently in a phase of adaptation to the AACSB standards. There is evidence of change from their previous organizational identity as they react to the requirements of accreditation. We concur with Hatch and Schultz (2002) who concluded that cultural heritage is lost in the bid to respond to accreditation criteria. Both SB remain in the change process, from 'teaching orientation' to 'research orientation', in adaptation to assumptions and values of performance.

Evidence about organization identity was interpreted through the four aspects of expression, mirroring, reflection, and impression. We found a conflict between images on the websites as 'teaching orientation' with accreditation standards of 'research orientation'. That conflict leads to confusion of organizational identity for those seeking employment. Furthermore, we discovered confusion for recently hired, and existing faculty in the change in organization identity. A change that is somewhat considered a loss in organizational culture.

Limitations and directions for research

In this study we concentrated on organization identity, and a further article explores the influences of accreditation on workplace identity. We did not in this paper seek to study web site design for recruitment. Also outside the remit of this article is the potential that accreditation may offer for increased business partnership and student recruitment. Although these avenues remain a future direction for research.

Conclusions

The purpose of this article was to more thoroughly understand organization identity in the context of international accreditation. The contribution of the article has been to articulate organization identity through narratives of performance in two international SB. Contradictory perceptions of the organizational identity influences the recruitment of potential employees. We found definitions of performance as teacher at odds with the definition of performance required by research standards of accreditation. Arguably, the manner in which employees understand "who they are" has a significant impact on "what they do", and on the range of options that they consider to be available within the organizational identity. The article has responded to calls for further examination of socially situated identities (Gotsi et al., 2010), through an initial study on changes in organization identity rendered by accreditation.

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Table 1. Keywords and themes in the identification process.

Aspect	Keyword	Theme
Expression	Fun, enjoyment	Teaching
Mirror	Performance, not serious,	Recruiting, research
Reflection	Contradictions, pressure, lack of transparency	Student faculty evaluations Faculty research evaluations
Impression	Inaccuracies on the website	Research , teaching