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University–Industry Partnerships: An Exploratory Perspective on Strategic Management in Brazilian Higher Education

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Abstract

This study examines partnerships between higher education institutions and industry from an exploratory and applied perspective, viewing them as strategic management mechanisms that foster innovation, economic development, and closer alignment between academic education and workforce needs. Drawing on the Triple Helix framework, which emphasizes collaboration among universities, industry, and government, the research explores the dynamics, challenges, and opportunities associated with these partnerships. A mixed-methods approach is employed, integrating qualitative and quantitative techniques, including a literature review, document analysis, interviews, case studies, and comparative analyses of Brazilian and international higher education institutions. The first phase focuses on mapping existing partnerships within Brazilian universities, while subsequent stages investigate successful collaboration models and identify critical success factors. The expected outcomes include the development of structured guidelines for establishing and managing sustainable partnerships that enhance educational quality, graduate employability, technological innovation, and institutional performance. The study also highlights recurring challenges, including cultural differences, bureaucratic constraints, and strategic misalignment between higher education institutions and industry. By proposing a systematic framework for partnership management, this research contributes to both the theoretical understanding and practical implementation of university–industry collaboration, offering recommendations that can strengthen innovation ecosystems and support the continuous improvement of professional and technological education.

Keywords: University–Industry Partnerships; Higher Education; Strategic Management; Innovation; Triple Helix; Employability.